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## LOOKING TO ADOPT?

Are you looking for a new furry family member?

Visit [www.aforeverhome.org](http://www.aforeverhome.org) or stop by an adoption event to find the perfect one. We have many wonderful dogs waiting for forever homes. Once you've fallen in love, the next step is to fill out an adoption application to get the ball rolling.

Go to [www.aforeverhome.org](http://www.aforeverhome.org) for our adoption schedule and available pets.



Hurricanes Harvey and Irma kept AFH busy during September and October! After Hurricane Harvey hit, we immediately reached out to our rescue partners in the affected areas to offer our help. At the same time, we put out a request for donations – and the response was overwhelming!

Our friends at Spanky's Shenanigans in Leesburg held a yappy hour to raise money and collect supplies – and boy did people respond! The event raised almost \$5,000 for AFH to help displaced dogs, and resulted in a truckload of supplies being donated! Not only did we collect supplies from this event, but the public responded in a big way by bringing their donations to a central drop-off point. We collected so many donations that everything wouldn't fit in our two vans! We had to hold some of the donations for a second trip to shelters in need.

Our disaster relief team took two vans to the Gulf coast. Both were packed from floor to ceiling with supplies. Two days and 1,100 miles later, we reached our destination. Our shelter partner was overwhelmed by the generosity shown by people who are complete strangers to them. Not only did we bring enough food and supplies to help them care for hurricane relief dogs, but they are giving some of the supplies to poor/low-income people in their community – with a concentration on elderly pet owners.

It was truly gratifying to not only be able to help them but to help them to help their community.

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On the third day, we got an early start and loaded up 31 puppies and dogs to bring back to Northern Virginia. As usual, our amazing foster parents stepped up to provide foster homes for these dogs. Once our dogs were settled in and started going to our veterinarian to be examined, we got hit with the realization that nine of them were heartworm positive, two had serious heart conditions requiring expensive cardiology care/treatment, one had to have all of his teeth pulled, and one had two luxating patellas (floating kneecaps) and hip dysplasia.

Shortly after returning from the Gulf Coast with Harvey dogs, one of our shelter partners in South Carolina asked us to help them. They were getting Irma dogs directly from Florida and needed our help to move some dogs out of the shelter to make room for incoming dogs. We didn't hesitate and were on the road with two vans full of crates to bring some of their dogs to Northern Virginia. It was a quick trip down and back and we brought back 14 dogs.

Needless to say, when we committed to saving these dogs, we committed to giving them whatever level of care is necessary to restore them to health. As you can imagine, treating these conditions is extremely expensive. The average price to treat one heartworm



positive dog is \$1,500 (that is on top of spaying/neutering, vaccinations, deworming, grooming if necessary, and treatment of any other condition that a dog may have). We could really use your help right now to cover some of these costs. Adding these additional expenses to our average \$30,000 per month vet bill was a big hit. Any donation that you can make at this time will help us to continue to provide top-notch care to all of our dogs. Our estimated costs (estimated because some are still receiving treatment) are over \$70,000. You can donate online at <http://to-afh.org/JustGive> or use the pre-addressed envelope included with this newsletter to mail a check.

## SPOTLIGHT ON

### A R A G O R N



Male (Neutered)

Breed: Australian Shepherd Mix

Age: 9 years old

Aragorn is a nice dog who loves to go on walks, run around, and play, but at the end of the day, he loves to curl up right next to you and sleep. Despite his age, he still acts like a puppy and is the perfect best friend. He is house-trained and crate-trained. Aragorn has been with us for a while and we can't figure out why. He is being well cared for in his foster home, but it's time for him to move into a forever home of his own. Maybe it's yours?

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Patty Vives has been volunteering since she was in high school and throughout college as part of Alpha Phi Omega (college service fraternity). After years of financially donating to AFH, there was no surprise when she started actively volunteering her time over 3½ years ago and recruited her boyfriend, Rick Reisser.

Patty and Rick have enjoyed partnering with some special fosters. They have driven dogs to/from events, worked adoption events, and helped unload dogs from transport. They have gotten to know AFH foster parents and work closely with the dogs to help get them



**PATTY VIVES &  
RICK REISSER**

adopted faster. Patty loves all dogs (has a cute one of her own) and enjoys the puppy breath! Rick's kindness, compassion, and patience have been a tremendous help with the bigger dogs and multi-puppy litters.

Patty's dedication resulted in a \$400 grant to AFH from her employer for the hours she volunteered in 2017. What Patty and Rick discovered is that volunteering for AFH is not just about helping dogs; it is about being part of a community dedicated to helping those most in need and one they are proud to be members of.

Amy's youngest son left for college in 2014. Although she had always worked full-time, after years of volunteering in schools, coaching teams, and chairing fundraisers and PTO meetings, she found herself with too much time on her hands! After reading about A Forever Home online and following us on Facebook, she decided to volunteer.

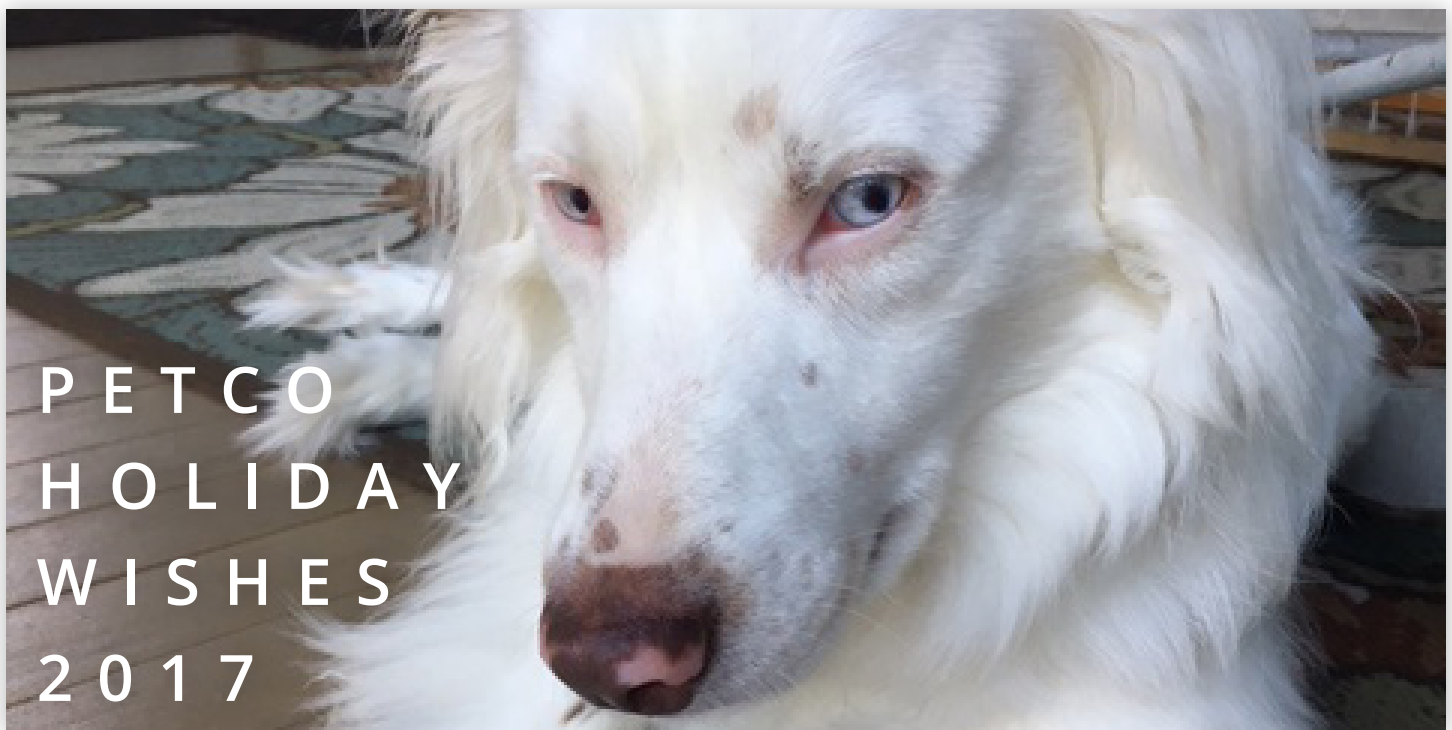
She started by volunteering as a home checker. From that, she moved on to working at adoption days as an interviewer. Now, 12 months later, she is at adoption day every Sunday and conducts home checks and interviews during the week. Amy tells us that getting to spend some time with adorable puppies and dogs on Sundays is one of the best part of volunteering!



**AMY PENCE**

Amy says that she thoroughly enjoys working with AFH and has met some wonderful people. She is amazed by the outstanding work done by the organization and our commitment to animal welfare. She also enjoys meeting adopters through the home check and interview processes and often gets follow up emails from them telling her how their dogs are doing. Her favorite thing as a volunteer is seeing the dogs who have been adopted going home on Sundays. She loves knowing that she has made a difference in helping a homeless dog find their forever home. Amy plans to continue to volunteer with AFH for years to come!





Several of our adopters submitted stories for the Petco Holiday Wishes 2017 campaign. Every one of them is a winner in our book, but we wanted to share one of them here. This story was submitted by Lana Hurdle.

It was her blue eyes... They haunted me...

It was summertime in 2016 and I was looking to fulfill a promise I made to my last rescued dog on the day he died. We were going to become a dog foster family. For several days I had been paging through A Forever Home's website looking for the right dog and then I saw her...mostly white with sad, piercing blue eyes. The website description was even more troubling. She was an Australian Shepherd found under a neighbor's shed with seven newborn puppies. The shelter volunteers that took her in suspected she was deaf. Deaf? It was bad enough that she was a stray with puppies, but to be deaf too! I knew we had to help.

We sent an email and offered to foster her. Lisa, a wonderful volunteer drove eleven hours each way to bring her back to Northern Virginia. We met Lisa and brought the Mom dog and her puppies home. Initially, we named her Merle. While her puppies slept peacefully, we gave Merle a bath and removed 40 ticks from her body. Her fur was tangled, her nails were long, and her breath was terrible. It was obvious she had been on her own for some time. As we would soon learn, Merle is a "double merle" – a genetic condition that sometimes occurs when

two merle patterned dogs produce puppies together. Double merles can be deaf, blind, or both. Some people consider them defective and they are often discarded.

As each day went by, we became more and more impressed with Merle. Despite her inability to hear them, she was a great mom to her growing puppies. At the same time, Merle was proving to us that she was just like other dogs. She watched our family dog Riesling for clues and followed him around constantly. She would play with a tennis ball by herself and chase it for an hour. She loved a walk, a turkey treat, and getting her tummy rubbed. In short, we came to realize that she was just like other dogs who need people to love and care for them.

Soon her puppies were all placed in new homes and it came time to think about Merle's future. I thought about all she had been through to survive. I admired what a good mom she was to her puppies and how much she adored my husband from the moment he carried her into our home. I knew it was now her home too. We filled out the adoption papers, bought her a new dog bed, and renamed her Pearl. It was my best decision in years.

Having a close relationship with a dog – another species – is a wonderful gift. That is even truer when you have a special needs dog. Pearl reminds me every day that there are lots of ways to communicate with those you love that don't involve words. Her paw on my hand speaks volumes.

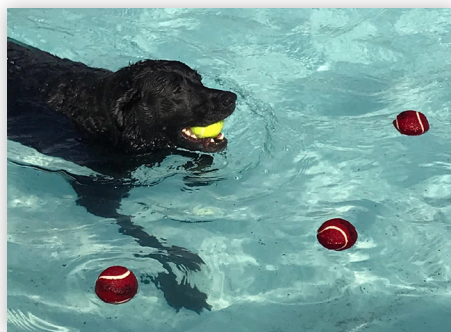
## GRANTS FOR VOLUNTEERING

Does your company have a grant program where they donate money to a charity that you volunteer with? Many companies do. They want to show support for the charitable work that their employees perform. If your company has such a program, please consider nominating AFH!



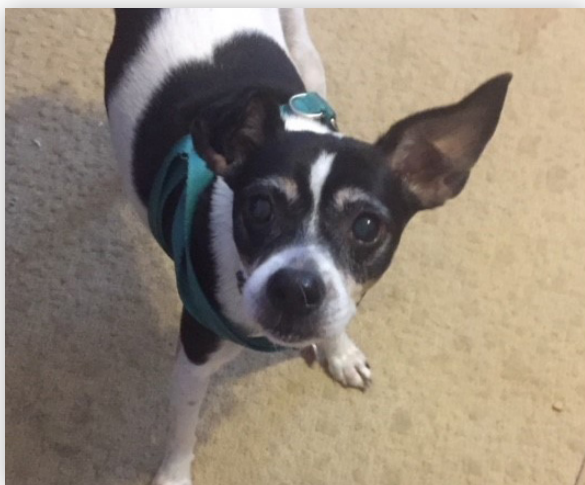
## BRAMBLETON COMMUNITY DOGGONE WILD POOL PARTY

AFH wants to thank our friends at the Brambleton Community Association. Their Brambleton Kids Care committee hosted their annual Doggone Wild Pool party and donated the proceeds to AFH to help our hurricane dogs! This was a fun event for the dogs and the humans who love them!



## SPOTLIGHT ON

### P R I N C E



Male (Neutered)

Breed: Rat Terrier Mix

Age: 9 years old

Prince wants a forever home For Christmas. He loves long walks, cuddling on the couch, and giving kisses. He gets along with all of the dogs in his foster home. He's just a sweet older guy who would love to have a quiet home – maybe with an older person/couple. He prefers a quiet household so he would be happier in a home without small, active children.



## WILL YOU COMMIT?

AFH relies on your donations to provide quality care to all of the dogs in our foster homes. This is a huge monthly expense for us, averaging \$25,000 - \$30,000 every month. Will you commit to a recurring donation of \$10, \$20, or even more? Please go to <http://to-afh.org/JustGive>, select "Monthly" to commit to an automatic monthly donation, and enter your donation amount!!

It's just that easy and will help us tremendously!



## RESCUE WORK SPANS GENERATIONS

Gina Croci, one of our adopters, wrote to share a story with us about her dad and his love of animals. We figured that we would print it since the statute of limitations has passed!

My Dad was born in Parma, Italy on a farm but all of their animals were pets. Dad used to walk into town with Giovanni his bull and Massimo his goat. He came to America when he was 17 to hide from Mussolini and his cruelty to the Italians.



Dad ended up running a historical gas station on Capitol Hill, that I took over and ran after his death... definitely not the plan.

Anyway, I was raised in Oxon Hill, Maryland, pretty much where National Harbor is now. Back in those days, it was all farmland and tobacco. Dad used to work on all of the vehicles for the DC government. When they would bring in the dog catcher's trucks to have work done, Dad would bring the dogs home at night.

We would drive around Oxon Hill and "take" dogs, cats, and god knows what else, that Dad said were being abused and needed help. Of course, no one questioned dad because he was in Dog Pound truck and he was a huge Italian!

Over the years I followed in his footsteps but in a more legal way!!!

Once again, thank you from the bottom of my heart and God bless A Forever Home.

## CONGRATULATIONS TREVOR!

Foster parents Joe and Jean Welch fostered Baxter (now Trevor) two years ago. He was one of the most fearful dogs they had ever fostered. He was afraid of the grass, the wind, and even curtains moving. They were patient and let him progress at his own pace, even though he spent a good part of each day plastered to the back of Jean's leg.

By the end of the first month in foster care, he was making good progress thanks to their crazy dog Lola taking him under her wing (she typically keeps to her own space but she actively sought out Baxter). Diana (who is a dog trainer and very active on the dog agility course circuit) was looking for a companion for her current dog...who was named Baxter! She adopted our Baxter and he has won many awards and has a life that far exceeds what anyone dreamed of for him.

Diana recently wrote to update us on Trevor's latest accomplishments!

*Dear Friends:*

*Just wanted to share a happy photo with you all. This past weekend, Trevor participated in his very first AKC Fast CAT trials, 3 days, 6 runs. Basically a 100-yard sprint after a white plastic bag lure in an enclosure. My sister and Mike acted as the release person at the start, and I was the catcher at the end to collect him. It was timed using automatic timing posts so it was quite accurate. Trevor did very well. He had several times much better than in his practices. His best time was 7.87 seconds for 100 yards, which equals 25.99 mph! This is very fast for a medium height (12-18 inches at withers) dog like him. He earned enough points after just 4 runs to earn the BCAT title with a pretty new title rosette to boot! Fun times, met a lot of new friends, had a great time.*



## IN HONOR OF JACKLYN

AFH wishes to acknowledge a very special donation that we recently received. Tina Butler's daughter Jacklyn was a huge animal lover. She started rescuing animals when she was just a little girl (horses, dogs, cats, etc.) and she supported the Fauquier SPCA. Unfortunately, Jacklyn was killed by a drunk driver in 2013, and Chuck (her father and Tina's husband) died of cancer just five months later. Tina wanted to make a donation to honor their lives and chose AFH as the recipient of her gift. Her generosity will allow us to help many dogs in honor of Jacklyn and Chuck.



## Name Our NEWSLETTER

Since we have a new layout for our newsletter, it's time to change the name! If you have any suggestions for a new name, please email them to [info@aforeverhome.org](mailto:info@aforeverhome.org)

# A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO...

## OLDE TOWN PET RESORT

Shortly after Hurricane Harvey hit, Olde Towne Pet Resort reached out to us with an amazing offer. They offered us free boarding space for up to 25-30 dogs for up to two months! Not only did they make this offer to us, but they also made the offer to several other rescue groups. This is an amazing display of generosity and compassion. This donated boarding space represented thousands of dollars worth of revenue generating space. Not only did they provide care for our dogs, but their trainer worked with a couple of our dogs to help them settle in after their ordeal. They also bathed all of our dogs upon arrival, and as needed during their stay. One dog even received medicated baths every few days. Finally, they trimmed nails, cleaned ears, and groomed our dogs as needed.

They opened their three locations to us – Rockville, MD; Springfield, VA; and Sterling, VA. Since Sterling was the most convenient location for us, immediately upon our return to Northern Virginia with our Harvey dogs, our first stop was at Olde Towne to get our dogs settled in. Their staff came in (after hours) to get everyone settled in and fed. They were efficient, professional, and caring – and every single person who helped us obviously loved dogs!

We plan on maintaining a working relationship with Olde Towne Pet Resort and we want to encourage all of you to consider them for your boarding needs. Be sure to tell them that AFH sent you! You won't be disappointed! Visit their website at <http://www.oldetownepetresort.com>.



## BANFIELD FOUNDATION



AFH was lucky enough to be awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Banfield Foundation! At the core of the Banfield Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, is the belief that all pets deserve access to veterinary care. In support of this belief, the foundation funds programs that enable veterinary care, elevate the power of the human-animal bond, provide disaster relief for pets, and advance the science of veterinary medicine through fostering innovation and education. It also leverages the expertise and passion of Banfield Pet Hospital associates to care for pets in need. The Banfield Foundation is committed to making a better world for pets because they make a better world for us. For more information, visit [www.BanfieldFoundation.org](http://www.BanfieldFoundation.org), or follow them at [www.Facebook.com/BanfieldFoundation](https://www.Facebook.com/BanfieldFoundation),

*"We are proud of the work A Forever Home Rescue Foundation is doing to help pets affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma"*

*Kim Van Syoc  
Executive Director of the Banfield Foundation*

In a recent press release Banfield stated "We are proud of the work A Forever Home Rescue Foundation is doing to help pets affected by Hurricanes Harvey and Irma" said Kim Van Syoc, Executive Director of the Banfield Foundation." In addition to transporting pets, they are providing the necessary veterinary care in order to help these pets find a new start and live happy and healthy in their forever homes. We hope our Disaster Relief Grant will enable A Forever Home Rescue Foundation to help as many pets as possible."