



THE HOLIDAYS ARE HERE! We're all preparing to spend time with family and friends—including our furry family members. Unfortunately, rescue doesn't stop—it is 24/7 and we are still working hard to save lives. In this issue of our newsletter you will read about some wonderful pups who are hoping to be in their own forever homes for the holidays. It also includes an article on overfeeding our pets written by friend of **AFH** Reuben Hothersall.

Also in this issue we are sharing some pictures from **Mutt E Carlo**, our recent casino night and silent auction. It was a sell out crowd, everyone had a great time, and we raised \$15,000 for Brownie's Fund! Brownie's Fund was established to honor our first serious medical case. Brownie was a beagle mix puppy who had parvo and then developed pneumonia. She was very sick for a very long time. Brownie's care cost us over \$6,000 way back then, but she was restored to health and adopted by a wonderful family. We knew we would face other serious medical issues and established this fund to help cover some of the costs. In the years since Brownie's Fund was established, we've had a number of major medical cases. Without Brownie's Fund we would have been hard-pressed to provide the level of care that our dogs deserve.

We appreciate you—our adopters, volunteers, and donors—every single day. We work with cute furry animals but our work is heartbreaking. You keep us going. You adopt our dogs and you foster our dogs, and your financial support allows us to provide the best medical care—which every single animal deserves. **Please help us to continue our work by making a donation at <https://to-afh.org/Donate/> or by mailing a check to AFH, PO Box 222801, Chantilly VA 20153.**

While you're sitting in your comfortable home with your beloved pet by your side (or in your lap), please think of the unwanted and unloved shelter dogs who will be spending the holidays alone in a concrete kennel. Your donation can get them out of that kennel and into a loving home just like yours. Becoming an **AFH** foster parent is just as crucial. For information on fostering, email volunteer@aforeverhome.org. Fostering is an activity for the whole family.

From all of us at **AFH**, have a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy New Year! We would love to see holiday photos of your pets in our Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/aforeverhome>), There are no politics, arguing, or spam—just lots of pictures of **AFH** dogs and happy stories! ●

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Are you looking for a new furry family member? 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 to see our available pets.

LOOKING
FOR OUR
FOREVER
HOMES

COOKIE

Date of Birth: 02/14/2022

Breed: Foxhound Mix

Gender: Female (altered)

Cookie showed up at a house in southern Virginia with her sister. She is now doing well in her foster home and gaining confidence every day. She loves her foster mom, and now that she has been attending adoption events, she is getting more comfortable with all the new people and dogs. She is a super sweet, calm girl who is house trained and crate trained. She does very well with other dogs and would love a quiet home for the holidays. •

Email info@aforeverhome.org for more information



ROD



ELLE



SMITTY

CULVERT PUPS

Date of Birth: 07/15/2023

Breed: Bluetick/Coonhound Mixes

The Culvert Pups were found living in a culvert on an oil well site in rural Louisiana.

INTRODUCING THE CULVERT PUPS: A STORY OF HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

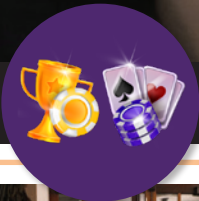
In the heart of rural Louisiana, on a forgotten oil well site, a remarkable tale of resilience began on July 15, 2023. It's the story of the Culvert Pups, a litter of Bluetick/Coonhound mixes whose journey from despair to hope is nothing short of inspiring.

Imagine a life in the shadows, sheltered beneath cold steel and concrete, surviving on the meager scraps of life in a culvert. That was the reality for these pups until the day fate intervened.

Rescuers discovered them, tiny and trembling, with the odds stacked against them. But what they found beneath that culvert was not just a story of survival, but a testament to the unyielding spirit of these pups.

With every passing day they've grown stronger, more vibrant, and ready for the love and care they've so desperately needed. As the holiday season approaches, our wish is for each of these pups to find their forever homes, where they can experience the warmth, comfort, and love that every dog deserves.

Their journey is a poignant reminder of the transformative power of compassion and the extraordinary resilience of these remarkable creatures. As they prepare to leave the shadows of their past, we invite you to join us in making their dreams of homecoming come true. •



2023 CASINO NIGHT WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!



We were a little hesitant to host our first large scale event after the pandemic given the cost and time required to plan and execute such an event. Would sponsors come forward? Would donors be willing to help? Could we get enough guests to attend? We decided to jump in with all four paws and the event was a huge success!

Thanks to all of you, we raised a little over \$15,000 for Brownie's Fund—our emergency fund that is used to cover extraordinary expenses.

Everyone had a great time and it was so nice to see a lot of our adopters, volunteers, and friends at the event. Thanks to all of you who made this event a success!

Continued next page



2023 CASINO NIGHT



THANK YOU!
We raised a little over \$15,000 for Brownie's Fund



Casino night would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors and donors. We encourage you to support them, and be sure to tell them that AFH sent you!

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The Silent Danger of Overfeeding: How to Identify and Stop It

Submitted by Reuben Hothersall

As a nation devoted to our dogs we love to feed them, but sometimes we take this too far. Do you sometimes overfill their bowl or hand out more treats? A lot of us do this, but it could be disastrous to their health. Overfeeding can lead to serious health problems. It's crucial to understand whether your dog is overweight and how to keep him/her healthy. If your dog is overweight, you're not alone because over half of US dogs were overweight or obese in 2018, but with the information in this article, you can make sure your beloved pup doesn't fall into this category. Overfeeding will cause issues in animals just like it does in humans.

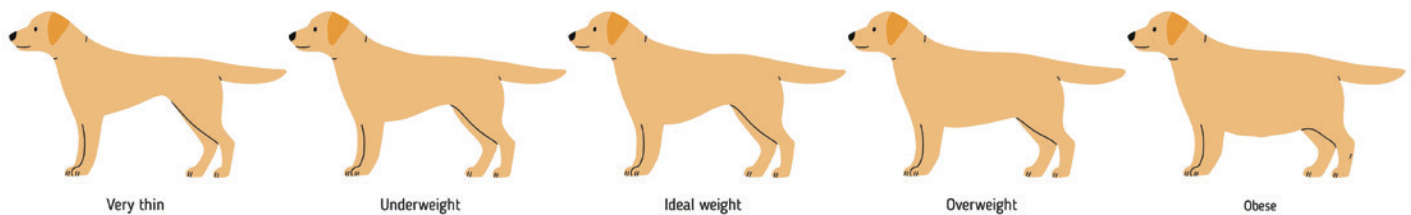
Decreased Longevity. A study conducted by The Association for Pet Obesity Prevention showed that an overweight dog might live up to 2 ½ years less than a dog with a healthy weight.

Constant Itching. An overfed dog is more prone to itching. Their digestive system is being overworked, which has an effect on the rest of their body.

Joint Pain and Arthritis Risk. Extra weight is a burden on their joints and can cause them pain and arthritis.

Emotional Costs. If our pets are hurting, we're hurting. They may feel pain from being overfed but they cannot tell us!

Financial Costs. Those extra vet visits and special diets to combat obesity? They will pinch your pocket. It's a long term battle once your dog is obese.



Four Trusted Ways to Spot an Overweight Dog

Is your dog overweight? Find out using these easy clues to see if your dog is overweight.

Birdseye View. Look at your dog from above and see if they have an hourglass shape to their body, dipping in just behind the ribs and extending back to the hips. Without this they're overweight.

From the Side. There should be a tuck in their belly just before their hind legs. If the tuck is missing, or there's obvious sagging and bloating, then they're likely overweight.

Rib Radar. Can you feel their ribs? If you can't or your pet's waist is wider than their ribs, they likely need to lose weight.

Professional Guidance. Have a quick trip to the vet and ask them if your dog is overweight. They will also give advice on diet and exercise.

Tackling the Fat with Food and Fun

Do you want to make sure your dog lives a longer and happier life? Here are some easy tips.

Feeding Fundamentals. When feeding your dog meals, stick to the recommended serving sizes and choose vet-approved dog food. Treats? They should be less than 10% of your dog's daily calories.

Great Exercise. Of course, exercise is essential for losing weight. This includes walks and playtime. Check with your vet how much exercise your dog needs because different breeds need different amounts.

Perfecting Your Portioning. Use a measuring cup for your dog's food to easily avoid overfeeding. You can also help by not giving table scraps or extra treats.

Dog Owners Teamwork. Do you want to make the solution easier? Connect with other dog owners, share tips, and ask for advice.

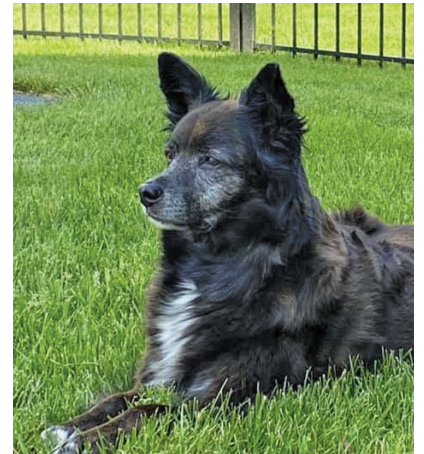
It might be tough to figure out how much food and how many treats to give your dog, and how it all adds up every day, but it is really important for keeping your pet healthy.

IN MEMORY

JENNY

Lisa & Tom Freeman

Jenny sadly crossed the rainbow bridge on February 6, 2023. She was a mystery mix of breeds, a wild child and escape artist in her early years, a hiking companion, toy-destroyer, and a soft and fluffy shedding machine. She loved her daily walks, no matter the weather. She was a people dog - absolutely loved everyone, and everyone loved her. Jenny was always the curious explorer and loved to go everywhere. She travelled cross-country by car twice in three years when we moved to California (then back) and travelled with us on many local trips. She saw the mountains and the beach on both coasts. Jenny brought us so many laughs and was our whole world. She started to have significant health challenges in late 2022 and passed at home with both of us by her side. We are heartbroken and miss our Jenny-dog tremendously. ●



SCRUFFY

Nesbitt Family

Our first AFH pup came to us as “Scrappy” a rescue from a Forward Operating Base in Iraq where he was the only survivor out of a litter of seven. When he came to our home, we renamed him Scruffy, the name he had for 12 years. Scruffy’s DNA showed he was predominantly Anatolian Shepard and Heinz 57. He was a stoic dog and the world ran on his schedule, especially mealtimes. His show of affection for his family was the “Scruffy Stomp,” nuzzling a family member and then stomping with the rear legs while getting a scratch on his back. He was a fighter and was in remission from Mast Cell cancer for almost a year. When it came back with a vengeance, he still did all the Scruffy things until his tumors ruptured. We love and have loved all our dogs, but Scruffy will forever hold a special place in our hearts. Phil, Laurie, Chris and Kim Nesbitt. ●

LETTER FROM HOME



LUNA

Farabaugh Family

My name is Lily, my family and I adopted a dog in 2021 from A Forever Home. We rescued Luna (original name was Dee Dee) and now she is a special member of our family. After our other dog passed away two years before, we were ready to open our hearts to a new family member. We spent weeks searching online for a dog and when we saw her picture we knew she was the one for us. Luna is a happy, silly, smart, loving, energetic girl who loves squirrels, peanut butter, belly rubs, and hikes, and she brings a smile to our faces every day. Luna lives in Tennessee now where we are exploring new places and meeting new people (and dogs!). Thank you AFH for bringing us together. We love Luna and we are forever grateful to have her as a part of our family. ●

If you would like to join the **AFH** team as a foster parent,
please email volunteer@aforeverhome.org



Volunteer SPOTLIGHT

AMANDA DAVIS

When I was little my family always had rescue dogs, and as I got older and it was time for me to have my own dogs I knew that rescuing a dog was the way to go. In 2008 I adopted Alexzander from **A Forever Home**. I could not have asked for a better companion. When he passed in 2022, I decided that in his honor I wanted to start volunteering with **AFH**. I started by attending events and helping with dogs and setup/cleanup. I quickly decided that I wanted to help even more. **AFH** has touched my life so much that I wanted to help to find furever homes for as many dogs as possible. After losing Alexzander and finding my path to **AFH**, I couldn't have found a better way to heal. What does **A Forever Home** mean to me? It means giving a chance to a dog and helping families find pure happiness. •



DENISE & MARLENY SPENCER

When I hear the name **A Forever Home**, what comes to mind is family. Six years ago, my daughter Marleny and I adopted a Border Collie/Hound Mix puppy named Roxy from **AFH** but we were always too busy to volunteer. With our love for dogs and **AFH**, one day we decided to volunteer at an adoption event and it changed our lives. We held, cuddled, and received plenty of kisses from all the precious puppies. Everyone was very welcoming and we met a lot of amazing people who have become our friends. Volunteering has brought my teen daughter and me closer together. Every week we look forward to hanging out with all the amazing dogs and getting the opportunity to help people find their forever dog. Over the summer, we decided to foster a puppy named Leena, who was the best pup ever and got along great with our dog. It was a great experience with fun memories that will last furever. We are thankful to be part of this family of volunteers with a common goal of saving lives and finding forever homes for dogs. •



LUKE PORTOFE

I first learned about **AFH** in 2012 when we adopted our dog Emily. My family had a wonderful experience with **AFH** and I am so grateful to **AFH** for allowing us to make Emily part of our family. I finally had the opportunity to start volunteering with **AFH** in October 2022. It's such a privilege to be able to support the community and work with such caring and dedicated volunteers, but the best part of volunteering is knowing I'm helping dogs get the homes they deserve. •



SHENA JOCUNS

Our family began fostering **AFH** pups during the pandemic. We were looking for something meaningful to do while the world was shut down. I never expected how much our experience would mean to our whole family. During our time volunteering with **AFH** my children have loved helping to care for all our fosters. As they are heading off to college, I am finding more free time to volunteer, and I am looking forward to helping more dogs find their families. There is nothing more rewarding than seeing a timid foster transform into a happy, confident dog and find his/her forever family. It is an honor to be an **AFH** volunteer and be a part of this journey. •