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Our featured pets



Meet Jesse!



Jesse is a beautiful shepherd mix boy who is about a year old. He is friendly, affectionate and sometimes just plain

silly! He is a sweet, medium-energy, guy who has had a rough start to the first year of his life. We are hoping to change that! Jesse has been in our system for months now and cannot seem to catch his big break. Although he loves all the volunteers, he doesn't love the kennel life and is feeling very down as the days go on.

Being a young shepherd, Jesse will require a family who is dedicated to helping him succeed. Luckily, AHF will provide 4 free in home training sessions to his adopters as well as have access to our training classes. We will be sure the family who adopts him is ready for success.

He has conquered "puppy dog eyes" in our kennel, so be ready to feel guilty when he wants something! Jesse walks nicely on a leash and gets along with some dogs. If his potential family has other dogs, a slow intro would be needed and his foster coordinator will be sure to make that happen! Sorry, no cats for Jesse!

If you're looking for your next sidekick, cuddle buddy, and playful boy, give Jesse a call! Fill out an application on our website.

Meet Axel!



Axel is a big personality that can be described as equal parts lazy Bengal and roly-poly. He loves to roam around the house, and getting in on the action. He doesn't like boredom, but with daily activities and complete freedom around the house (his kingdom), Axel makes a wonderful companion.

Axel loves chilling with his people and keeping them company. He greets people by rolling around on his back, revealing tufts of white fur on his belly and propping up his front paws for added cuteness. He isn't fond of too much idleness and needs to be able to wander around the house. He may be intrigued by other animals, cats and dogs, but has a tendency to be the alpha pet.

Sometimes when he plays, he gets a bit overstimulated. He starts running, chasing toys, and scampers around like a blur. Doing things on his terms is all he asks for, and he will return the favor by giving plenty of body side rubs and loud purrs. He's an excellent jumper and can leap over a baby gate as if it were a beginner's hurdle.

Of course, he loves treats and catnip, and is looking for a loving family that is patient, understanding and willing to ensure that he has lots of daily activities. For more info email: cats@almosthomefoundation.org

Tips for socializing an adult dog

Not all rescue dogs are puppies, ready to accept the world fearlessly. Many rescues are adults with questionable histories; they are shy, aggressive, afraid of the world because of their past. Chances are they lack social skills that should have been acquired during their first year. Is it possible to socialize adult dogs, to make them comfortable and confident around people, other dogs, and new locations?

It is never too late to socialize adult dogs as long as the process is not rushed and owner expectations are realistic. Although socialization will take time, patience, and consistency, the rewards are worth the effort. The dog will be happier and more relaxed while the owner will have peace of mind when interacting with family and friends. Even vet and groomer visits should be less stressful.

Start out slowly with short, daily walks. Routes can vary, but avoid noise and too many distractions. Do not punish fear by criticizing the dog if he growls or cowers because he will associate socializing with negative treatment. As behavior improves, mix the routine to include different situations such as meeting adult humans and dogs, puppies, and children. Avoid doggy day care, dog parks, and other overwhelming experiences until the dog is calm and focused. Remember to reward consistently by reinforcing positive responses. Over time, the dog should behave around other dogs and interact with at least one. Even tolerance is better than negative actions. As a last resort, a dog trainer or medication may be necessary.

Almost Home partners with Dog is my Copilot



AHF partnered with Dog Is My CoPilot, Inc., sponsored by Petco Love, to rescue dogs from an overcrowded facility in Texas where they are at high risk for euthanasia. The rescue flight departed from Athens, TX piloted by a volunteer flying one of two My CoPilot's Cessnas. They made stops in Michigan, Illinois and Wisconsin, where 31 dogs were transferred to rescues. AHF waited at DuPage County Airport to receive 15 mixed breed dogs ranging in age from 3 months old to 2 years old. The dogs were brought straight to AHF to get cleaned up, vaccinated, spayed, neutered and ready for us to find them a permanent, loving home.





Ask Homer and Hope



Homer, what advice do you have for introducing a new dog to a resident dog?

It's time to expand the family! The one-dog household is about to become a two-dog home. Here are some suggestions to make the transition a positive one.

After examining the reasons for owning another dog and considering the commitment needed to raise two or more, the next step will be to introduce them gradually. If there are two or more resident dogs, each must be introduced separately to the new dog. Begin outdoors in a neutral location, if possible, to avoid territorial behavior, controlling both dogs on short leashes, one person with each dog. Parallel walk them, using treats and a happy voice to encourage good behavior, but do not force interaction or play. This may take more than one meeting, but when they seem relaxed, try turning them loose in the restricted area. A positive relationship is the goal of this activity.

If meeting outdoors is not possible, meet in a neutral indoor location, again using short leashes for better control. When both dogs exhibit positive behavior such as a play bow or sniffing nose to nose and nose to rear, they may be allowed to move around freely for a brief time to end the introduction on a good note.

Before bringing the new dog home, remove items that could create a possessive response from the resident dog such as toys and treats. Provide bedding and food dishes for each dog. Also start the new dog on the same routine to help him settle in and to avoid stress in the resident dog. At first, keep the dogs apart using a baby gate or crate when they are alone. Separate them during feeding time, supervise play time, and provide personal attention to each dog. Although adjustment times will vary, a new routine should develop and true personalities emerge.

Hope, are there any hypoallergenic cat breeds?

Reactions to cat allergens occur in about 10% of the population worldwide. Several types of treatment are available for people who suffer from cat allergies but many people still ask if there are any hypoallergenic cat breeds.

First, the bad news. There is no such thing as a "hypoallergenic cat." All cats produce and emit allergens. Ten allergens have been identified in cats that cause reactions in humans. These allergens are secreted in cat's saliva and from other secretory glands. Cats lick their fur and skin and then shed the impregnated fur and dander that sticks to soft surfaces, clothes and furniture, which is in direct contact with people.

Now for the good news. There are a few breeds of cats that seem to be a little less allergenic. This is thought to be due to their short hair and lack of a long undercoat. They tend to shed less and emit less total allergen. Breeds in this category include: Balinese, Cornish Rex, Devon Rex, Sphynx, Bengal, Siberian and Javanese.

Keep in mind that each individual cat will shed a differing amount of allergens and while these breeds are commonly thought to be less allergenic than most, allergic reactions or symptoms can vary based on the individual or the cat itself.

Fun dog facts

The Chow Chow and the Shar-Pei are the only two dog breeds that have fully black tongues. Even more interesting, the cause of these black tongues is currently unknown.

Fun cat facts

You might think the Sphynx feels cold and scaly like a reptile, but the skin is actually covered in a fine down that feels like a peach.

Trancing

I've always had hunting dogs, so when my newly-adopted Pitbull seemed to be stalking through the outskirts of the bushes, I was surprised. I didn't think bully breeds hunted. On our walks, he'd pull up to a row of bushes or plants and his pace would turn to slow-motion. He was completely oblivious to what was happening around him.

When I looked closer, I saw that he was shaking or vibrating and his face looked strange. He seemed to look euphoric. I started asking other people who spent time with him if they'd seen it. Turns out, it was a common occurrence.

I took to google and soon learned that this behavior has a name! It's called trancing. It's also referred to as ghost-walking or weed-walking. It's often found in bully breeds or greyhounds. Vets have not been able to say for sure what is happening. There's something about low-hanging branches, leaves, or even fabric that sets off this behavior when the dog walks underneath.

The dog goes into a trance-like state. They creep along slowly with a far-away look in their eyes. This can last minutes. Vets speculated it's a compulsive behavior or even a small seizure but neither of these theories have been proven.



The bottom line is that if your dog is enjoying it, and it's not causing any harm then there's no need to worry. In fact, pull out your phone because it's fascinating to watch and share

Adopt, don't shop! Let's keep spreading the word!