

Almost Home Foundation PAW PRINTS

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Our featured pets



Meet Briella!



They're real...and they're spectacular!

Briella and her ears are still looking for a foster or forever home. Briella is an 1-year-old shepherd/mix who loves to play--whether it's with toys, other dogs, or humans, she's always up for a good time. She gets along with everyone she meets and is even gentle with cats. Although she's friendly with kids, she can forget her size and might knock little ones down, so she's probably best with kids who can hold their own. Her energy and age make her a perfect candidate for someone with shepherd or large, energetic dog experience.

Briella is learning to sit, lay down, and give paw. She knows the words "no," "down," and "leave it." Briella loves treats and is very food motivated. She's proven herself to be a smart girl. She is house trained, walks well on a leash, and she sleeps through the night in her dog bed. Briella will benefit from her foster or forever family taking her to training classes, having a yard to run and play in, as well as socializing her with other dogs. Physical and mental stimulation are key for this young, beautiful girl!

Meet Marsh & Mello!



Marsh and Mello were rescued 10/3/20 at 5 months old and adopted on 11/22/20 at 6 months. They were in a home for over two years before being returned to us as they could no longer keep these two beautiful girls.

Marsh is deaf, but that does not stop her from pursuing a life of adventure. She is full of energy, fearless, and always ready to explore. Marsh loves to cuddle and purr, but her favorite activity is swatting crinkle balls and carrying them around the house in her mouth.

Mello is curious but shy. It will take a little time to earn her trust, but she nudges and purrs loudly once she is comfortable with your pets. Mello will show you her hunting skills whenever play mice are around, but she really comes out of her shell when the laser light is on.

Marsh and Mello are a bonded pair and they must be adopted together. These sisters love to play, chase, eat and sleep together. If you are looking for beautiful cats to join your family, these two beauties are for you.

If you're interested in Briella or Marsh and Mello, please go to our website to fill out an application.

www.almosthomefoundation.org



Ask Homer and Hope



Homer, where should a dog sleep at night?

A puppy sleeps up to twenty hours a day while an adult dog sleeps close to fourteen hours. Considering that a percentage of that time is at night, an owner should choose the best location that is quiet, comfortable, safe, and draft free with available fresh water. Although this is a personal choice, the owner should consider some options.

First, a decision should be made about type of sleeping arrangement. Should the dog sleep in the owner's bed, in a dog bed, or in a crate? While allowing the dog in bed can create a deeper bond, reduce stress, and provide security, it may also disturb the owner's sleep if the dog is restless. Furthermore, the owner's allergies may be worsened by the outside chemicals and parasites on the pet's coat.

A dog bed is a good alternative as long as it has some chew toys and a blanket for security. A dog crate is another choice. It should be large enough for a dog to stand, move around, and stretch. It can also be used for potty training, keeping the dog and house safe, and is great for travel. However, a dog may feel confined, and it does take up space.

The next decision depends upon family needs. Will the dog sleep in the bedroom, the living room, the basement? Ideally, the pet will sleep where the owner or a family member is visible.

Fun dog facts

Seventy percent of people sign their dog's name on their holiday cards! Ho, ho ho!

Hope, why do cats like small spaces?

All cat owners know that cats are determined to go into the smallest and tightest space and wonder if they have any bones at all! Cats can be found in shoe boxes, under beds, behind warm appliances such as refrigerators and washers, etc.

Cats can fit into anything as long as their head and shoulders can get through, using their whiskers, which are often as wide as their bodies, to check whether they'll fit. This is possible because they don't have rigid collarbones to block their way. After their head and shoulders get through, fitting the rest of their sleek and flexible bodies is easy.

There are many theories as to why cats exhibit this behavior. Cats are very cautious and also have a natural need for warmth, they seem to crave tight spaces. Small and tight spaces help them keep out of sight and hidden, which makes them feel comfortable and protected.

Sometimes cats crawl into spaces that are unsafe for them. There are many incidents where cats climb into car engines, behind drawers, under sinks, etc. Cat owners should check these and other unsafe areas before using them.

To make sure your cat is in a safe environment, have a couple of cozy places around the house for them to curl up in. Covered beds, blankets they can snuggle under or two tier cat towers in a corner of a room.

Fun cat facts

Cats spend 30% of their waking hours grooming themselves.

Catnip *a scratch-and-sniff*

Have you ever watched a cat play with a toy filled with catnip? If you have, you probably saw some really funny things! Cats, from our domestic companions to lions and tigers, are all susceptible to an oil found in the stems and leaves of the catnip plant.

Catnip is a plant that has a strong smell and belongs to the mint family.

It has a scientific name, *Nepeta cataria*, but people also call it "catmint" or "catswort." It's from Africa, Europe, and Asia, but now



it's also in North America. There are more than 250 types of catnip in the world. Catnip grows to be two to three feet tall and has strong stems and heart-shaped leaves. At the tips of the stems, it can grow flowers that are blue, white, pink, or purple. Most catnip toys contain dried and ground-up catnip, but it can also work if it's fresh.

Catnip has an oil in it called "nepetalactone." When cats smell it, special cells called receptors are activated which sense something called "pheromones." When cats smell catnip, they might paw at, rub, roll over, chew, and even lick a catnip toy. Some may also get really excited and get frisky, meow, growl, purr, drool and act silly for several minutes!

But after a little while, the effect goes away, and they will not pay attention to the toy anymore. It will take about two hours before they react to it again.

Not all cats will react to catnip, but about 50% to 75% of cats will feel something. Young kittens and old cats are less likely to be affected.

How to approach a dog you don't know

You wouldn't rush over to a stranger and ruffle their hair, so why would you run up to a strange dog and pat them on the head? We have guidelines for meeting new people and dogs have greeting rules too. A threatened or frightened dog might react with cowering, growling, or even biting. Here's how to greet strange dogs safely and politely.

Dogs rely on their owners to be their spokesperson and guardian so you should always ask permission from a dog's owner before greeting their dog. If the answer is no, respect that and let the dog be.

Once permission's been granted, it's time to ask for the dog's. Rather than sticking your hand in the dog's face, wait for the dog to come to you. If the dog approaches you, great. If he hangs back, respect he's not in the mood. Let the dog have the final word.

To make yourself appear friendly, turn your body slightly to the side and look at the dog with your peripheral vision. You can also kneel down to the dog's level so you aren't looming overhead. However, if you are in any way uncertain about the dog, stay standing.

Dogs use their nose to say hello. So, hold your hand in a fist so they can approach and sniff if they choose. Don't thrust your hand at the dog. They can smell you just fine from a distance. If the dog approaches, it's finally time to greet him. Restrict your pats to the dog's side, neck, back, or chest. Avoid reaching over the dog's head as that is frightening. And don't hug or restrain the dog in any way.

Go slowly and keep your movements calm and steady. You don't want to startle him. Check out his body language to see if he's had enough or if he's still interested. Hopefully, it will be clear you've made a new friend.

*Thank you for your continued support and
we wish you a healthy and prosperous 2024!*