

THE JOY WE WISH EVERYONE COULD FEEL

There are parts of rescue that are hard to explain. We can tell people about the laundry, the vet bills, the late-night messages, the full kennels, the emergency calls, and the never-ending need for fosters. We can explain the work. We can show the numbers. We can share the stories. But there is one part of rescue that is almost impossible to describe until you feel it for yourself. And that's the JOY.

Not the simple, easy joy of seeing a cute puppy or a playful kitten—although, let's be honest, we are not above squealing over a fluffy baby with big eyes and tiny feet. We are, after all, only human. This is a different kind of joy. It's the joy of watching an animal slowly come back to life.

It's the dog who wouldn't make eye contact at first, who pressed himself into the corner, unsure of voices, hands, leashes, doors, and all the things that should feel ordinary. And then, little by little, something changes. Maybe he looks at you or takes one step closer. Maybe he accepts a treat from your hand and then quickly backs away, as if he surprised himself. Maybe one day, after hours or days or weeks of patience, he leans into you.

That moment will just about break your heart open—in the best possible way. Because that lean says something words never could. It says, "I think I might be safe with you." And if you have ever felt a frightened animal choose you for the first time, you know there is nothing small about it. It is magic.

It's the terrified dog who rolls over for a belly rub after being too scared to be touched. It's the first tail wag from the dog who had forgotten he had one. It's the puppy who finally plays. It's the old soul who rests their head in your lap and lets out a sigh so deep you can almost feel the weight leaving their body.

It's the kitten who spent weeks hissing from the back of the kennel, fully convinced that humans were suspicious creatures with grabby hands and poor manners. And then one day, that same kitten lets you touch them. Maybe just for a second at first, then a little longer. Then comes the purr. One tiny motorboat purr from a former hiss machine and we are done for.

That is the joy we wish everyone could feel. Because when a scared animal comes to you for affection for the first time, it is not just cute or sweet. It is healing, happening right in front of you. You are watching fear loosen its grip and trust begin. You are watching an animal realize that hands can be gentle, voices can be kind, blankets can be soft, and people can mean safety instead of hurt.

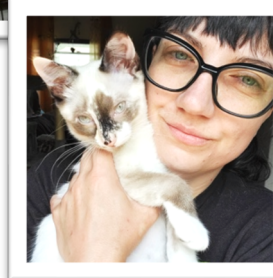
When you get to be part of that moment, your heart nearly bursts. The fulfillment is immeasurable. And to be perfectly honest, it is a little addictive. Once you've felt that kind of joy, you understand why people

foster and why volunteers keep showing up. It is not because the work is easy. It is because the moments are worth it.

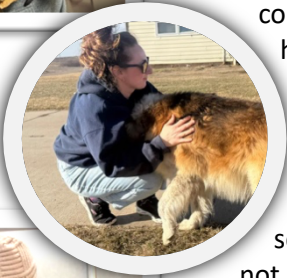
There is so much heartbreak and noise in the world. Rescue certainly has its share of hard days. But rescue also gives us front-row seats to hope. We get to see animals become brave. We get to see the light come back into their eyes. We get to see the first belly rub, the first purr, the first wag, the first playful bounce, the first peaceful nap in a safe place.

We want more people to know what that feels like. Not just to understand rescue from the outside, but to experience the joy of being part of an animal's healing. To feel that quiet, powerful moment when an animal who had every reason to be afraid chooses trust instead.

That is the gift of rescue. In a world that can feel heavy, these are moments of light. Beautiful, unforgettable, heart-bursting light.



*today
I CHOOSE
joy*





RESCUE MYTHS: BUSTED

Each month, we take on a common myth, misunderstanding, or assumption about rescue. Some make us laugh, some make us sigh, and some remind us that rescue is often bigger, harder, and more complicated than people realize.

Myth #5: Someone Else Will Help

We get it. Life is busy. Money is tight. Homes are full. Schedules are packed. Most people who love animals are not looking away because they don't care. They look away because the need feels too big, and it's hard to know what one person can possibly do.

It's easy to think someone else will foster, volunteer, or transport. Someone else will adopt the senior dog, the shy cat, the medical case, or the animal who has simply been waiting too long.

But rescue has never been powered by "someone else." It has always been powered by someone.

Someone says yes to fostering. Someone drops off food or supplies. Someone drives a transport leg after work. Someone shares a post. Someone cleans kennels, scoops litter, folds laundry, answers messages, works an event, buys a raffle ticket, or opens their home to an animal in need.

That is rescue. It is not one person doing everything. It is a lot of people each doing something.

No, not everyone can foster. Not everyone can adopt. Not everyone can donate a large amount or volunteer every weekend. But most of us can do one thing. A bag of food. A shared post. A short transport. A few hours at an event. A decision to spay or neuter our own pets. A choice not to assume someone else has it covered.

Because often, "someone else" is tired. Someone else has already taken the late-night call, stretched the budget, driven the miles, cleaned the mess, held the leash, paid the vet bill, and kept going because the animals still need help.

So this month, we invite you to ask one simple question: **What is one thing I can do?**

Rescue begins there — with one person, one yes, one small act of kindness. And when enough people each do one small thing, it becomes something very big.

For an animal in need, it can become everything.



TRUTH: YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO EVERYTHING TO DO SOMETHING

Rescue can feel overwhelming because the need is big. But helping doesn't have to be complicated or dramatic to matter.

You can foster, donate supplies, share social media posts, volunteer at the shop or events, spay and neuter your pets, or encourage someone else to get involved.

Every rescue story has more than one hero. It's the foster and the adopter. It's the person who bought the food, washed the blanket, paid the bill, or shared the post that reached the right family.

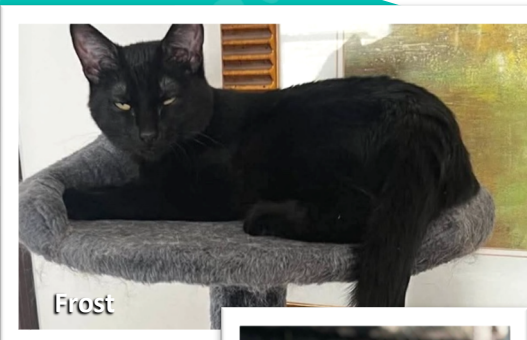
Helping doesn't have to be huge to matter.

It just has to happen.

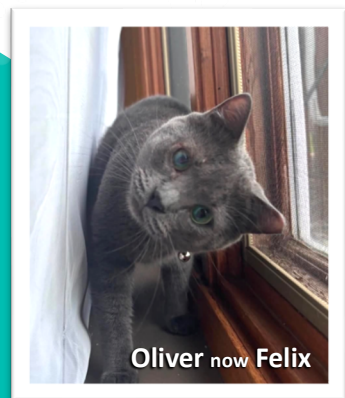
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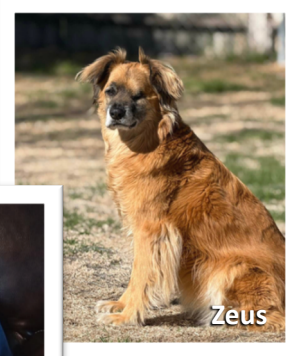
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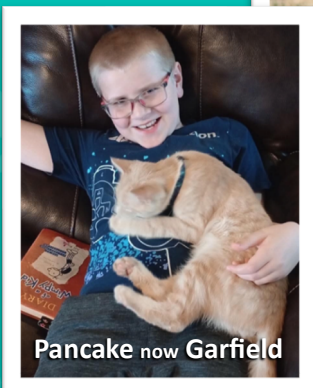
Frost



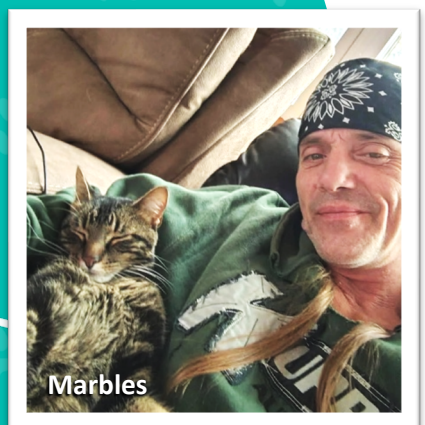
Oliver now Felix



Zeus



Pancake now Garfield



Marbles





Pancake & Waffle



Shrimp & Mouse



Big dogs don't ask for much. Just a little space, a sturdy leash, possibly your entire couch, and someone who understands that personal space is more of a suggestion.

STILL WAITING, STILL WORTH IT

BIG dogs, BIG love, BIG need. Last month, we asked for help for our big dogs.

Two mastiffs and two Great Pyrenees. Four beautiful, loving, and deserving dogs who need placement. A foster home. An adoptive home. A soft place to land. And they are still waiting.

Getting an animal safe matters. Food, medical care, clean kennels, and kind hands matter. But safe is not the same as home. The shop is a place of care, and it's full of love, but it was never meant to be forever. It is a bridge - and some animals end up waiting on that bridge far too long.

Often, it's because they are big. They take up space. They need structure, patience, and someone who understands that a wagging tail at coffee-table height is basically a household event. But big dogs also come with big love.

These dogs are not asking for perfect. They are asking for a chance - a chance to leave the noise of the shop, decompress in a home, nap on a rug, follow someone to the kitchen, lean into a kind hand, and really exhale.

We know not every home can take a mastiff or a Great Pyrenees. But somewhere out there are people who love the big ones - the gentle giants, the fluffy guardians, the dogs who take up room on the floor and somehow even more room in your heart.

Maybe that person is you. Maybe it's someone you know. Maybe it's someone who simply hasn't seen their post yet.

So we are asking again - please help us find placement for these four. Foster. Adopt. Share. Ask Around. Talk to the big-dog people in your life.

The ones who wait are not less deserving, less loveable or less important. They are simply still waiting. And we would really, really like to change that.

I like big bones and I cannot lie

ADOPTED DOGS

- Dubai aka Juniper, Abby, Nala, Briar, Carl, Aurora, Toby, Stanley, Billie, Bandit, Arya, Tiny, Fefe, Charlotte, Joy, Lacey, Walter, Otto

ADOPTED CATS

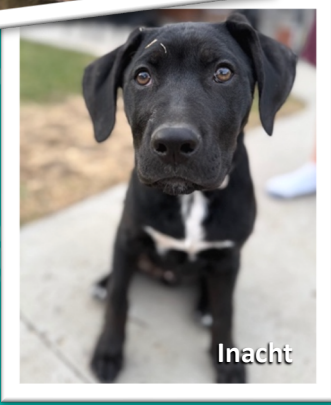
- Piper, Kona, Maple, Pancake, Peanut aka Mosley, Taco, Poncho, Charleigh, Bitsy, Ivan, Oliver aka Felix, Jaxson, Stella, Squeak, Frost, Poppy, Eden, Chinook, Peep, Butters, Cady, Sims



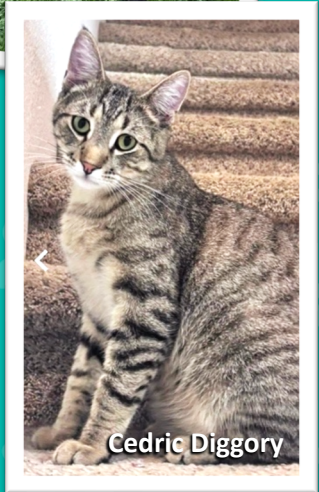
Aster



Cookie



Inacht



Cedric Diggory

ADopt Me

UPCOMING EVENTS

GRAND OPENING | MEET & GREET

The Rooftop at The Firepit
Friday, June 5th | 4-7 p.m.

B-I-N-G-O

Every Tuesday & Wednesday
DJ's Pizza & Lounge | 6 p.m.

WOOF WEDNESDAY

Meet & Greets | June 17th & 26th
Lark's Baseball Games
½ off Adoption Fees



B-I-N-G-O

Every Thursday, 6 p.m.
GIDEON'S BREWING COMPANY
Great Prizes | Cash Play only

BLACKJACK

Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays | 6 p.m.
DJ's Pizza & Lounge | 70 Santee Rd | Lincoln

PETSMART MEET & GREET

Every Saturday | 11am – 2pm

DOG TRAINING CLASSES

With Trainer Nancy Gerhardt
Basic | Intermediate | Advanced
Visit Eventbrite for details

GIDEON'S CHARITY GOLF SCRAMBLE

June 11 | Apple Creek Country Club
In memory of Mandy Metzger Kist



Saving one animal will not change the world, but for that one animal, the world changes forever.

These adorable faces are waiting for their forever families.



ROBBIE



COOKIE



WINTER



CHEEZY



DOBBY



ZEUS



BITSY



GEMMA



CHARLIE



MOMMATU



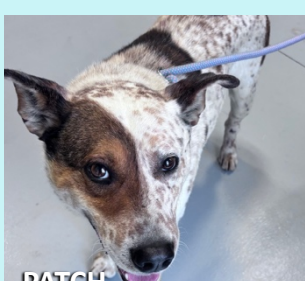
LUCY



GILLEY



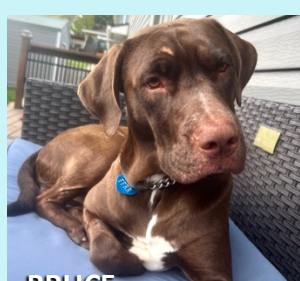
FUSCHIA



PATCH



WALLY



BRUCE

As always, thank you for being part of this wild, wonderful, fur-covered mission with us. Thank you for loving the easy ones, the messy ones, the shy ones, the big ones, the tiny ones, and the ones who need us most. We are grateful every day for the people who make this rescue family what it is.



Given In Love

With heartfelt gratitude, we acknowledge the gifts received in April. Each donation honors or memorializes a life remembered and directly supports the animals in our care.

In Honor of . . .



Christy Ames-Davis, given by the Bismarck-Mandan Garden Club

In Memory of . . .



Lester Brady, given by Iva Bates

Lester Brady, given by Mariah Green

Lester Brady, given by Ritchie & Kelly Houge

Lester Brady, given by Marlin Peterson

Lester Brady, given by Thomas Rowe

Lester Brady, given by Dennis Rowe

Steve Boe, given by Robert & Deborah Boe

Timothy Marman, given by Kristin Thompson

Shirley Evans, given by TOPS 319 Members

