

## ADOPTION IS A BEGINNING, NOT A FINISH LINE

Every adoption begins with hope. There's the excitement of going home, the joy of meeting a new family, and the beautiful idea that this is the start of something good. And it is. But adoption is also a big change.

New people. New smells. New sounds. New routines. A new place to sleep, eat, explore, and figure out where they belong. Even when a home is loving and safe, it is still unfamiliar at first.

At FFRR, we do our very best to match the right animal with the right family. We spend time with the animals, watch for patterns in behavior, listen to our fosters, and share what we know. But animals are individuals, and adoption is not a perfect science. Just like people, animals are affected by their environment, routines, stress, past experiences, and the world around them.

That is why the adjustment period matters so much. During the first days and weeks, a newly adopted pet may not act exactly the way they did in foster care or at rescue. Some may be nervous. Some may be clingy. Some may hide. Some may test boundaries. Some may not eat normally right away. Some dogs may even take much longer than expected to go potty, which can feel alarming when you are standing outside trying to politely negotiate with a dog at 10 p.m.

Stress-related tummy troubles can happen, too. It is not glamorous, but it is also not unusual. These moments can be frustrating or concerning, and we understand that. But they are not always signs that an adoption is failing. Many times, they are simply signs that an animal is adjusting.

The best thing adopters can do is slow things down. Keep the home calm. Keep routines simple and consistent. Give them a safe place to rest. Try not to overwhelm them with too many visitors, outings, or expectations right away.

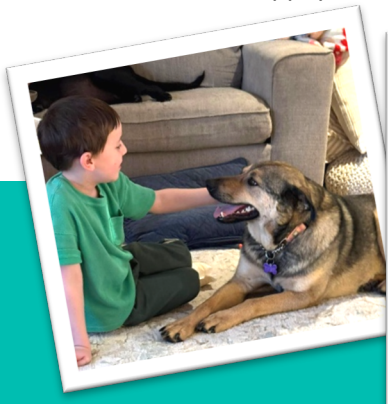
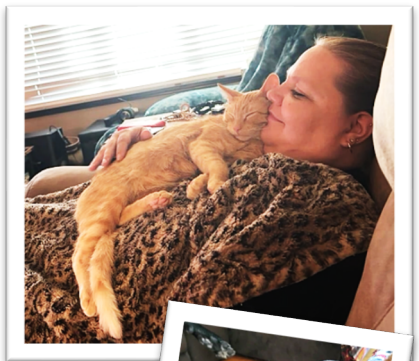
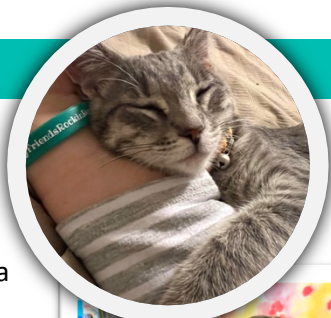
Love them. Guide them. Give them structure. Give them grace. And give them time. Rescue animals do not need perfection from their adopters. They need commitment. They need people who understand that settling in is a process, not an instant fairytale.

Sometimes the first chapter is easy. Sometimes it starts with a few bumps, a skipped meal, a nervous tummy, or a pet who looks at you like you personally rearranged the entire universe.

But with patience, consistency, and love, they begin to settle. They learn the rhythm of the home. They learn they are safe. They learn that food comes back, kind hands stay gentle, and this new place just might be where they belong.

A successful adoption isn't always instant. Sometimes it grows slowly.

And when an animal is given the time, patience, and support they need to feel safe, loved, and secure — that is when the real happily ever after begins.



*Happy Tails*

**433** Animals currently in our care

**52** Furry friends Adopted in April

**166** Animals brought in for care in April

**258** Furry friends Adopted in 2026

**LOVE FINDS A WAY** - Some friendships start with a **meet-and greet**. Some begin with a **foster home** and a comfy couch. Some take just one look that says, **"That's my dog."** However it starts, we're grateful it ends in **forever!**

## PHOENIX ROSE

Some rescue stories stay with you because the transformation is impossible to miss.

Phoenix's story is one of them. His "before" is heartbreaking. His "after" is beautiful. And together, they show exactly what rescue is about: stepping in when an animal has been failed, giving them the care they should have had all along, and watching them become who they were always meant to be.

Phoenix came to FFRR after law enforcement seized him and another severely emaciated dog from a home in Bismarck. They were found in conditions no animal should have to endure. They were not strays trying to survive on their own. They had been living with someone who was supposed to care for them.

Phoenix came to us starving, weak, and suffering. He was heartbreakingly thin, his skin was raw, and he had sores from living in his own urine. He had been neglected in ways that were impossible to miss.

And yet, somehow, **Phoenix still had the gentlest heart.** He did not come to us angry. He did not come to us unwilling to trust. He came to us as a dog who had been failed by people but yet, he had not given up on people. That part of rescue never stops humbling us. Again and again, animals come to us with every reason to shut down, and instead, they reach for kindness the moment it is offered.

His foster family saw something in him right away. **They named him Phoenix because they believed this sweet boy would rise from the ashes** of everything he had survived. And then they helped him do exactly that.

Phoenix's healing did not happen overnight. It came through many small meals, clean bedding, soft voices, gentle hands, patience, and more love than you can imagine. It came through people reminding him, in every way they could, that his life mattered.

Little by little, Phoenix began to change. His body grew stronger. His sores healed. His eyes brightened. He filled out — not just with weight, but with confidence. The sweet, trusting dog he had always been finally had the chance to shine.

By the time Phoenix was ready for adoption, he was almost hard to recognize from the dog who first came through our doors. But in the way that mattered most, he had never changed. That soft, loving heart had been there all along.

**Phoenix has now found an amazing family of his own.** And while his foster family's hearts were absolutely wrapped around him, they did what fosters do. They loved him fiercely, helped him heal, and then sent him forward into the life he deserved.

Was it hard to let him go? Of course it was. That is the beautiful, brutal, magical thing about fostering. You give them your love knowing they're meant to carry it with them. You help them become whole, and then you cheer through the tears when they find their forever home.

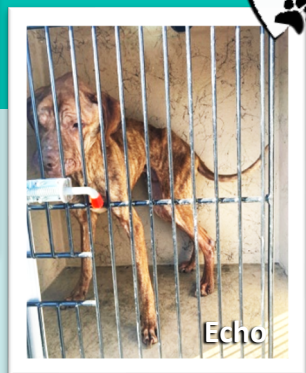
**Phoenix's foster family will always be part of his story.** Their love helped write the chapter where everything changed. And because foster families are somehow made of both marshmallow and steel, they will open their hearts again when the next animal needs them.



Phoenix went from starvation to strength. From neglect to safety. From being treated like nothing to being cherished like everything.

**Phoenix did not just survive. He rose.**

And we could not be prouder of this sweet boy, the foster family who helped him heal, and the forever family who gets to love him now.



## ECHO IS STILL WAITING

Phoenix's story has a beautiful ending - but he was not the only one rescued that day.

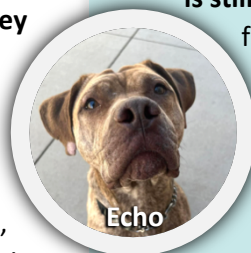
Echo, the pittie who came in with Phoenix, is every bit as sweet, lovable, and deserving of a fresh start.

Like Phoenix, Echo came from the same heartbreaking conditions. Like Phoenix, he has shown us that a gentle heart can survive hard things. And like Phoenix, **Echo deserves to know what it feels like to be safe, chosen, and loved by his forever family.**

The difference is that **Echo is still waiting.** Waiting for a foster home.

Waiting for a forever family.

Waiting for someone to look at him and say, "You belong here."



# ADOPTED

## Adopted Dogs

Buddy, Paige, Meadow, Denali, Zeek, Stormi, Izzy, Ace, Bay, Brownie, Asher, Link, Winne, Autumn, Lumi, Phoenix, Monroe

**Guinea Pigs:** Marvin, Marcus,

**Rabbits:** Jovi, Stanley



## Adopted Cats

George aka Peach, Lulu, Ripley, Milo aka Shoobacca, Zayd, Ravih, Hoku, Stevie, Ralph, Tito, Nibblem, Gracie, Avalanche, Ward, Harry, Solley, Trinket, Wanda, Gigi, Jetta, Pocus, Binx, Kennedy, Marble, Rebel, Mr. Chester, Moose, Jackie, Baxter, Rooney, Chestnut



## RESCUE MYTHS: BUSTED

Welcome back to Rescue Myths:Busted — our monthly series where we tackle some of the things people think they know about rescue. Sometimes the truth is a little more complicated, a little less glamorous, and involves significantly more laundry than expected. But it's always worth talking about.

### Myth #3: RESCUES ARE TOO PICKY. If you love animals, you should be able to adopt.

We understand this one can sting. People come to us excited, hopeful, and ready to love an animal. So when the answer is "not this one," "not right now," or "this may not be the best fit," it can feel personal.

But rescue is not about finding an animal *a* home. It is about helping them find the *right* home.

The right home is not about perfection. None of us are perfect. Most of us are just doing our best, drinking reheated coffee, managing questionable laundry piles, and hoping the dog does not roll in something mysterious five minutes before company arrives.

The right home is about fit.

Our standards are not about making adoption harder. They are about safety, stability, and setting both the animal and the adopter up for success.

Love matters deeply. It is where adoption begins.

But lasting adoption also takes honesty, patience, realistic expectations, and the right fit.



## THE TRUTH: Matching Matters

Every animal is different. Some need another 'sibling' to feel confident. Some need to be the only pet because sharing is, apparently, not their spiritual gift. Some need a quieter home, older children, a fenced yard, a patient adopter, or someone who understands that "housebroken" can briefly become a flexible concept during a major life change. Those needs are not judgments of the adopter.

They are information about the animal. FFRR is Made up of mostly volunteers, and our team works hard to get to know each animal in our care. We watch for behavior patterns. We listen to our fosters. We share what we know. We try to be honest, even when honest is not the easiest thing to say. Because we have seen what happens when the fit is not right: stressed animals, overwhelmed families, broken hearts, and pets returned confused and scared.

We don't say no because we don't want adoptions. We live for happy endings. We say "not this match" because we want those happy endings to last. When the match is right, everyone wins - the adopter, the rescue, and most importantly, the animal who get the safe, loving home they deserve.

## BIG DOGS. BIG HEARTS. BIG NEED.

Pancake & Waffle



These gentle giants need space, comfort, and people to love.

Life in the shop is no place for dogs this sweet!! They need foster homes or forever homes where they can stretch out, settle in, and finally be part of a family.



Shrimp & Mouse



# UPCOMING EVENTS

## 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



When local businesses and establishments choose to support rescue, they become part of every life saved. Please help us thank them by choosing the places that choose to stand with animals in need, Their support helps make our work possible - and ours can help keep that support growing.

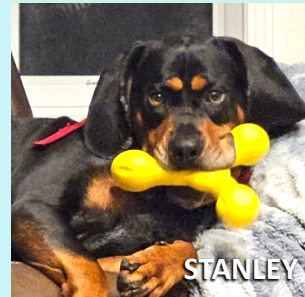
*These adorable faces are waiting for their forever families.*



CHARLOTTE



GINKY



STANLEY



Farah



INKY



LACEY



CHEEZY



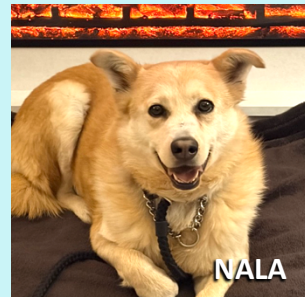
JOY



CISCO



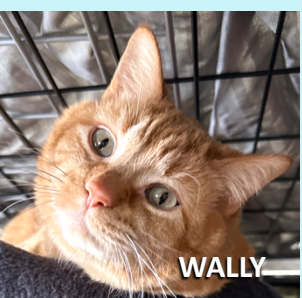
GILLEY



NALA



HARLEQUIN



WALLY



CHLOE



COOKIE



CHA CHA



Thank you for being part of this rescue family - for cheering on the happy ending, standing with us through the hard stories, and believing these animals are worth the work. Every adoption, foster home, donation, kind word, shared post, and moment of patience helps create the next 'after' photo, Together, we keep giving them the chance to rise.