

Dear Friends:

Home For Life® often wins praise for its many innovative programs. Our programs promote empathy and reverence for all life. But more importantly, they actually put these ideals into practice.

One of Home For Life®'s very first programs was the Emergency Medical Fund. The EMF helps animals whose health and medical problems cannot be resolved by shelters and rescues. HFL's EMF cares for abandoned and stray animals admitted to the sanctuary with a serious of life threatening injury or illness. These shelters and rescues face a dilemma when they get an animal with costly or severe health problems: Do they dedicate limited resources to an animal that may never be attractive to adopters? Or do they accept, with grim practicality, that the animal may never be adoptable and instead invest their limited resources in other animals? Home For Life®'s EMF program gives shelters and rescues a way out of this dilemma.

Each year Home For Life® takes in animals from shelters and rescues around the U.S. and Canada whose medical problems have brought their lives to the point of crisis. Here are the stories of two animals that joined our sanctuary just this year...

vision

HOME FOR LIFE® IS AN EXPRESSION OF A NEW KIND OF ANIMAL SHELTER—THE LONG-TERM ANIMAL SANCTUARY. WE PROVIDE ANIMALS WITH LOVING CARE, A NURTURING ENVIRONMENT THAT IS SAFE AND STABLE, A PLACE TO BELONG... A HOME FOR LIFE.

WE PROVIDE LIFETIME CARE FOR CATS AND DOGS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS WHO CANNOT FIND A HOME, BUT WHO CAN STILL LEAD A QUALITY LIFE.

the story of anook



[ABOVE] AFTER HIS SURGERY AND COMPLETELY HEALED, ANOOK PLAYS IN THE SNOW WITH JANELLE DOWNEY, HFL ANIMAL CARE SPECIALIST [RIGHT] WHEN ANOOK FIRST ARRIVED AT HFL, HE COULD BARELY OPEN HIS EYES



Anook is a small, elderly Chow Chow from a reservation in northern Minnesota near the town of Bemidji. For years Anook lived with a painful condition known as entropion - the upper and lower eyelids of both eyes had rolled inward towards the eyeball so that the hair on his eyelids rubbed and irritated his eyes. After years of enduring the painful condition, Anook was almost totally blind.

In spite of this constant misery, Anook remained affectionate and loyal. But one day his owners simply picked up and moved, abandoning the faithful dog. Blind, Anook was left to fend for himself. True to his steadfast and courageous nature, Anook remained at his old home, outside on the porch, waiting for his owners who never came back. It was early fall.

After several days, neighbors realized that Anook was not being looked after. They began to leave water and food daily for him. If not for their kindness during this time, Anook would surely have starved to death, as he was unable to find food on his own.

As the days turned to weeks, the neighbors realized Anook's family wasn't coming back and they would have to find him shelter. He could never survive the harsh northern Minnesota winter that was fast approaching. They took him to the Beltrami County Humane Society in Bemidji. Although his prospects for adoption were slim to none, at least he would not die of exposure, dehydration or starvation.

At the shelter, the staff assessed Anook's condition. His thick fur was covered with burrs and was matted to the skin. His eyes were painful and oozing. He was obviously a senior dog. His breed was also against him - Chows have a reputation of being protective and aloof. Although this characterization did not fit Anook, it was unlikely adopters would give him the chance to prove himself. More than likely, adopters would reject Anook outright simply because of his age and health issues. He needed expensive medical treatment just to reach the point where he could live comfortably.

Despite his long hardship and neglect, Anook had a friendly nature and took everything in stride. His ability to hope for better days ahead touched the shelter staff and made them want to do whatever they could for him.

A New Look at Life...

The shelter staff knew Anook would never be adopted but they could not bear to put him down without trying to find another alternative. Their small shelter was full to the brim and they did not have long to find him help. More and more dogs needed to come into the shelter, and they could not hold a dog that would never find a home. Through contacts in the rescue community they heard about Home for Life®, and their director called one of our volunteers to ask for help.

When we heard about all that Anook had been through we knew we had to help him. Late last fall, HFL volunteers put together a transport team and made a round trip of several hundred miles to bring Anook home to the sanctuary.

Poor Anook was a true canine train wreck! Not only was he suffering from the double entropion, but he also tested positive for Lyme's disease and heartworm. He had to undergo several weeks of dangerous treatment for both diseases before we could even attempt to do surgery on his eyes. Without clearing up the heartworm, anesthesia would stress his heart too much. Anook's matted coat was also clipped, and he received several medicated baths to clear up a long-standing skin infection that had developed under the tangled, dirty fur.

Finally, after completing two rounds of heartworm treatments, Anook underwent surgery in late December of 2006 to correct the entropion that had tormented him for so many years.

Anook is now free of pain and forever safe at Home For Life®. He has plenty of food, a warm townhouse, and many dog and people friends, whose love and affection he will enjoy for the rest of his life.

With Spring around the corner, shelters and rescues will soon be flooded with animals. Many cats and dogs with life threatening injuries or illnesses will have no hope without Home for Life®'s help. Our goal is to raise \$25,000 for the EMF so that we can reach out to these desperate animals whose only chance is with Home for Life®. Please help us give these special animals hope and a home for life!

Sincerely,
Lisa R. LaVerdiere, Executive Director

Stormy and Anook found their way past a seeming dead end. Their medical issues might have disqualified them from rescue. But because of your generous support, their rescuers had somewhere to turn: Home For Life®'s Emergency Medical Care Fund made it possible for us to intercept these animals and turn their lives around.

stormy's story

In the summer of 2006, a rescue group was carrying out a trap/neuter/return operation at a mobile home park. As they were corralling stray cats, they noticed one cat, Stormy, behaving oddly. Stormy kept banging into parked cars and houses in his frantic attempt get away from them. They quickly recognized that the ragged, frightened cat was blind and starving. The rescue workers lured him with food and successfully trapped him. They talked with people in the mobile home park to find out if Stormy belonged to anyone. He did not, and in any case, he appeared to be feral. They considered their options.

They couldn't trap, neuter, and return Stormy to the park. He wouldn't survive on his own as a blind cat, especially with winter coming. He would suffer and starve to death in a matter of weeks. But because he was almost wild, Stormy didn't stand a chance of being adopted. Fortunately, the rescue group knew about Home For Life®.

Home For Life® brought Stormy to a veterinary ophthalmologist. This eye specialist examined Stormy and concluded that his blindness resulted from trauma to the head. He suspected that Stormy had been hit by a car or suffered abuse. The impact caused both retinas to detach and caused bleeding in both eyes. Cataracts had formed and inflammation in his eyes caused them to shrink. The vet also said that the trauma put Stormy at high risk for tumors in his eyes. To prevent this, he recommended removing Stormy's left eye, which had suffered most of the impact. Stormy also needed surgery in his right eye to reshape the eyelid, which the accident had caused to fold in against the eye.

Stormy's health improved with regular meals and the security of a warm home and loving care. He quickly learned that the staff at Home For Life® would always provide for him in a gentle, comforting way. Within a few short months, the once timid, feral cat has become tame and even affectionate.



HFL ANIMAL CARE SPECIALIST BRIDGET
KESSEY CUDDLES WITH STORMY



Home for Life EMERGENCY MEDICAL FUND

