



And Denny Makes Three

Denny came to MHHS as a stray in April of 2018. His adoption was finalized in January of 2021, 1,016 days later. That is an unusually long time for an animal to be in our care, but Denny was special. He needed a home where he would be the only dog and he was wary of new people, especially men. He also weighed 109 pounds!

Denny quickly became a staff and volunteer favorite, but time and again, people walked past his room without a second glance ... until a special couple came to visit.

Serena and Jeremy had seen multiple posts about Denny on our Facebook page and followed him on our website. On Thanksgiving Day 2020, Serena inquired about Denny and they set up a time to meet him. That was the first of half a dozen meetings with him, each one making them more certain that Denny was the dog for them.



Denny made Jeremy and Serena's family portrait complete.

Denny was part of our Foster-to-Adopt (FTA) program, a three-week period that allows adopters to live with a pet to ensure it will be a good match. MHHS created this program to provide extra support for adopters. Not every animal at MHHS is classified as an FTA animal; it is reserved for those with special behavior needs. Many of the animals in our care have been neglected or abused. They carry those scars with them, both physically and emotionally. Whether or not an adopter has experience with animals, it can take a lot of time and patience to gain an animal's trust.

Our Behavior and Enrichment Team works closely with each FTA family. Calls and texts with questions for staff who know them best are always welcome. "We don't want any adopter to feel isolated or alone. Our goal is to build strong relationships," said MHHS Director of Behavior and Enrichment Nancy Haynes.

After one week with Denny, Serena and Jeremy knew he was the missing piece of their family. He made himself right at home and quickly took up his share of the bed. They eventually bought a king size bed to make room for him!

Serena and Jeremy married in October 2021 and rearranged their honeymoon so Denny could join them. They went to the Outer Banks in North Carolina and report that Denny *loved* the beach. It took some time, but this wonderful match was worth the wait.



A Message from CEO Ashley Jeffrey Bouck



Ashley and Schnitzel during our virtual Oktopurrfest event.

Let's talk about fostering. This beautiful word holds so much meaning for our work, both as it pertains to our animals and also to our community.

1. *To bring up; nurture*
2. *To promote the growth and development of; cultivate*

To foster generally means taking an animal out of the shelter and into a home for some extra TLC. Orphaned kittens, those with medical or behavioral challenges, and those animals that have come

from cruel or traumatic pasts are all candidates for foster care.

This year, nearly 500 animals have benefited from this program, thanks to the kindness, patience and skill of our foster volunteers and staff.

But fostering doesn't only happen outside of the shelter. We also have "shelter buddies," the pairing of a staff member and an animal that needs extra one-on-one time and a special friend. Some volunteers take dogs on offsite field trips and can then report back with so much wonderful information that could not have been gained in the shelter, such as, "He loves car rides!"

Many of us also take on "office fosters." As if we ever needed reminders of why we do what we do, there's nothing like a nudge of a wet nose or demand of an ear scratch to bring us face-to-face with our mission. Manhattan, a 9-year-old chow mix, was my lovable officemate for several weeks as she

recovered from surgery. When it was time for her to go home, I was able to share what I had learned about her during our time together with her new family. It's as bittersweet as it is wonderful, as it doesn't take long for them to grab your heart.



Ashley's office foster, Manhattan.

The second definition is fitting for our work as it relates to our community. We are here to foster relationships with you, our dedicated supporters who make our work possible, and with those who need our services to help keep them and their companions together.

These include low-cost spay/neuter and wellness services, our pet food pantry, dog obedience classes and more. Partnerships with law enforcement and human service agencies allow us to bring our knowledge and expertise to segments of our community where our work overlaps, so we can develop a wider safety net for both pets and their people.

And on that note, we always encourage you to reach out to us with any questions you may have about our programs and services. If you'd like to get involved as a foster parent or other type of volunteer, please visit us online to learn more. You may also donate to support our foster program at mohawkhumane.org/donate.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Ashley".



Give a Gift of Love this Holiday Season



Make a donation to MHHS in their honor and send them a personalized ecard. It's quick, easy, and the perfect fit for all.

Scan the QR code with your camera app or visit mohawkhumane.org/holidaygift.

Meet a Few of our Foster Heroes



Foster volunteer Lorraine Ferguson with the one kitty she kept, Maestro.

Lorraine Ferguson is serious about being a foster mom. She even has a special room dedicated to the job. Over the past 12 years, she has fostered nearly 250 kitties with all types of needs.

Some were orphaned, others sick and some just very shy. One kitty was dangerously overweight at 30 pounds and needed more space to move as well as supervision of his diet. His family last reported he was down to 23 pounds and doing great.

Another was surrendered for peeing all over the house. Our vet team removed a kidney stone, but later found more. He was actually screaming in the shelter, but we couldn't tell if it was due to pain or stress. Turns out, he just didn't like the shelter; he was a total love once in Lorraine's "foster palace." After about two months on a special diet to dissolve the stones, he found a wonderful family.

People often tell Lorraine they could never foster because they would want to keep them all. But she doesn't have this concern because she knows firsthand, as a cat adoption counselor, that they are adopted to good homes!



Lorraine has a special room in her home devoted to foster care.

Goose came in as a stray weighing barely one pound. She had been left in the cold overnight and needed emergency foster placement stat. She was also wobbly,



Goose and her foster mom, MHHS staff member Bree Seltzer.

a tell-tale sign of cerebellar hypoplasia, a congenital neurological condition also known as CH. Luckily for Goose, MHHS staff member Bree Seltzer has experience with and a soft spot for CH cats. Bree has fostered four others with this condition, and she adopted her first CH foster.

When Goose went home with Bree, she needed to be syringe-fed and held up

to drink. At first, Bree supervised Goose's every movement to ensure her safety as she gained strength and stability.

Goose was in foster care for about 10 weeks before being adopted. Our thanks to Bree for giving her all the love and special care she needed to go on to her new home.

Ashley Pastor and Cassidy Scalzo from Animal Farm Foundation have been spending time with our dogs in play groups and on sleepovers. There is so much

information to be gained by getting dogs out of their kennels, even for a night. These visits help us get a truer read on dogs, as kennel behavior doesn't necessarily



Ashley Pastor and Cassidy Scalzo of Animal Farm Foundation watch over a play group.

predict how they'll act in a more home-like setting.

In dog play groups we're also learning about their interest in other dogs, helping us to know if they could live in harmony with a canine friend.

It's sheer joy to watch two dogs eager to get acquainted and have a good romp! The exercise makes them feel and sleep so much better, too.

Ashley and Cassidy's time and expertise are a true gift to our animals and our staff.

Happy Tails

Send to: happytails@mohawkhumane.org



Smudge
She loves bird watching, her sister Miso and is the purrfect addition to our family.
- *Becky C.*



Lucy
We have had Lucy for 11 years and our lives are forever changed because of this sweet little beagle.
- *Julia B.*



Lizzie
She leaves a wake of devoted fans everywhere she goes.
- *Kevin D.*



Louis
Louis loves my other cat and he's a huge snuggle bug! Thank you, MHHS!
- *Jordan O.*



Kiwi
Thank you for helping me to find my fur daughter!
- *Kelly G.*



Hazel
She is a sweetheart.
- *Denise M.*



Percy
Her favorite things are food, countertops and snuggling in the crook of my arm.
- *Taylor P.*



Maggie
She's so sweet and loving, but loves to bark!
- *Linda*



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Chair
Sarah Lewis
Vice Chair
Thomas Mackey
Treasurer
Shannon Forkin
Secretary
Vincent Miles
Member at Large
Sandra Mardigian

Beth Beshaw
Karen Carpenter Palumbo
Gabrielle DeMarco
E. C. Stumpf
Susan Vernooy
John Wisniewski

Honorary Board Member
Jeffrey Bulger

Animal Care Center

3 Oakland Avenue • Menands, NY 12204
mohawkhumane.org
518.434.8128

Let's be social! Here's where to find us.

