



Alfie romping with his pal, Meg's dog Dewey

## Alfie: Little Fellow...

Last March, when the staff at Dakin heard that a man had arrived with a tiny kitten found abandoned and injured in a parking lot, they were in for a surprise when they met the patient. Turns out it wasn't a kitten at all, but a tiny three-week old puppy!

Alfie was so unusual looking that his Good Samaritan was sure he was saving a kitten. His tiny, feline-like features (a rounded face and small ears) caused understandable confusion, but he was later confirmed to be a Chihuahua/Havanese mix.

Barely able to move, further examination revealed that Alfie had medial patella

Big Heart 

luxation (MPL), a condition in which the knee caps are not stable and can shift out of their normal positions. MPL is a common condition in small and toy breed dogs.

The teeny puppy with the large, warm eyes was too young and unstable to be left at Dakin overnight, so Veterinary Technician Meg Delaney took him home for foster care, returning to work with him during the day so he could be treated around-the-clock.

see **ALFIE** on back

## A Story of Help & Hope for Vermont Hounds

Last February, the Windham County Humane Society (WCHS) in Vermont needed help. They had taken in 21 dogs, most of them Coonhounds, who required immediate attention. They had been tied up outside in frigid weather with inadequate shelter, little to no food, and water bowls that had frozen over. The WCHS couldn't help so many dogs, many of whom were in poor condition, in addition to the animals already in their care.

The call went out to Dakin and other organizations. Could we take care of some

of these dogs and help our shelter partner? Thanks to you, we could. Shortly afterward, the WCHS brought us:

- Sophie, a friendly 7-year-old female
- Murphy, a sweet 2-year-old male
- Oliver, a shy 3-year-old male
- Maggie, a gentle 10-year-old female

All of them, with their low body weight and other issues, needed a considerable amount of loving care and attention. A team of Dakin

see **HOUNDS** inside



**INSIDE:** Read a Q&A with Kasia, a volunteer who worked with Oliver!

# Reunited by Microchip

Miguel's kids were heartbroken. Cookie, their 4-year-old indoor cat, had slipped outside and gotten lost. The family searched diligently for her, but five months later, they had given up hope.

Then Miguel got a call from Dakin. A newly-arrived cat named Bones had a microchip with Miguel's phone number as a contact, although the address was listed as being in the Bronx. Miguel explained that he had adopted Bones (now Cookie) as a kitten from a New York City shelter, later moved to western Massachusetts, but kept the same phone number. He jumped in his car and drove to Dakin immediately.

Animal Resource Counselor Madeline recalled, "When Miguel arrived, he took a photo of Cookie and texted it to his wife. She wrote back, 'Yes! That's HER!' Cookie

is very distinctive, and while they had gotten a lot of leads, none paid off until now."

"They were all so happy," said Madeline. "It must have been very hard for his kids to not know where their kitty was."

A microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and is implanted between the shoulder blades of a dog or cat. When a lost pet is found and brought to a shelter or veterinarian, the pet is scanned with a device that detects the microchip. An identification number is revealed, and a database search provides the address and phone number of the person who adopted the animal when it was microchipped.



Miguel holds Cookie, together at last

That's why, if your pet is microchipped, it's critical that you update the microchip company with changes of address or phone number. Not sure what company has your info? Check out [www.aaha.org/petmicrochiplookup](http://www.aaha.org/petmicrochiplookup) for help.

Pets can become separated from their people in a second. Microchipping your pet provides a safety net for being reunited.

## A note from the Kitten Street Team

### Thanks for the support that warmed our hearts and their homes!

*We are so grateful to all that donated insulation, coolers, and tape (super big thank you for that, we go through so much of it) from Dakin's Amazon Wishlist so that the Kitten Street Team (KST) could make shelters for the outdoor/feral kitties last winter. It was so exciting to see all the donations piled up in the KST room...Yay!*

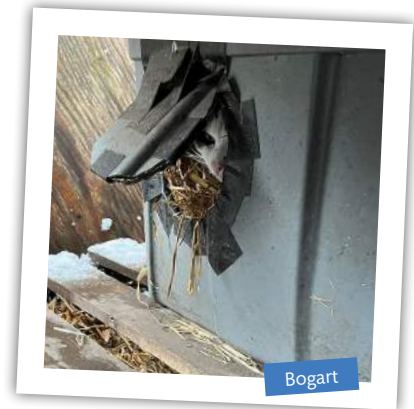
*Earlier this year, Zoly and I set up shelters for feral cats living in the middle of a woody field with zero protection from the elements. There was a huge, hollow tree with an opening that cats were coming in and out of. We filled it up with straw so they could burrow themselves to keep warm and dry. Between that tree and the 10 shelters we put out, more than 15 cats now have options!*

Thanks to YOU!

**Anna Marie**

Kitten Street Team

*P.S. My heart melted when I saw feral cats using the cat shelters made by KST volunteers. Here's sweet, feral boy, Bogart staying warm on a cold, blustery day. He gave me a big hiss after taking this pic. I just love him so much.*



KST Stats from 2021

### DEDICATION, PATIENCE & SUCCESS

**666** feral cats spayed/  
neutered at Dakin

**139** calls from public  
fielded by KST team

**33%** of our kitten intake came from TNR work, or were found at TNR sites and brought in by the public

**422** adult cats reported  
by the public

**285** kittens reported  
by the public



Sophie



Murphy



Maggie



Oliver

### **HOUNDS** *continued from front*

staff and volunteers began the task of earning their trust and returning these hounds to good health. Sophie, the most confident of the four, enjoyed her walks and interactions with other Dakin dogs, but decided she was the queen in any encounters. Murphy was food-obsessed, and would sniff around the office he shared with a staff member, landing on spots where - even hours earlier - there had been food. Oliver was quite fearful of noises and strangers, and it took a dedicated behavior plan to acclimate him to taking outside walks. The minute he could return to his kennel, however, he scrambled for the door. Maggie was described by one caregiver as "social, but not needy or clingy." She loved being petted, but was too shy to solicit attention.

Before long, each of the dogs put on much-needed weight, and their eyes, dulled from neglect, began to shine. They were around people who showed them kindness and care by speaking softly, offering affection and adapting their approach to each dog to build their confidence.

Sophie was the first to go home. In March she was adopted by a

family in Maine where she would be able to enjoy some wide-open spaces and plenty of exploring.

After a couple of false starts, Murphy finally found an ideal home in early April. He has a new bestie, a female Husky, who is very excited to have a friend.

10-year-old Maggie was welcomed into a loving foster home with young children. During her stay, a biopsy revealed that Maggie has cancer, and her lifespan is uncertain. Her foster mother has graciously offered to keep Maggie in her care until her adoptive family can be found, which hopefully will be soon.

Oliver's journey has taken the longest, as he has needed a longer period of medical care and observation. He has attracted the attention of a prospective adopter, but in the meantime he formed a deep bond with Kasia, a volunteer who signed up to work on his socialization skills.

Not long ago these dogs must surely have felt forgotten about and knew a tough and lonely existence. You helped restore their trust in people, which grows more and more every day. Thank you for giving them the lives they deserve!

## Q&A WITH KASIA

**Q: What was Oliver like in the beginning?**

**A:** *In his first kennel he'd usually stand by the wall, and I'd sit at the other end. One day he sat next to me on his dog bed. He put his face really close to mine. He was extremely skinny and had a very sad look in his eyes.*

**Q: What "worked" best with Oliver?**

**A:** *Sitting quietly by his side and playing instrumental music for him, petting him, walking him around Dakin so he can sniff around and say hello to everyone. I used to give him snuffle mats and dog puzzles filled with treats in the "quiet time" room. There was a couch in there, so he'd jump up right next to me, lay across my lap and snuggle or nap.*

**Q: When was the first time you noticed him making progress?**

**A:** *The first time he laid down on his dog bed, belly up, while I petted him and scratched his ears, he put his head down on my lap and looked back up at me. I cried that night. Since then, I vowed to be there for Oliver and help him go through his extended stay to see him get the happy ending he so deserves.*

## GIVE MONTHLY!

When you join the Dakin Guardian Society, your love is felt by animals every day of the week, month and year. Your ongoing support allows us to weather animal emergencies and meet the needs of pets throughout our community without delay. Put your compassion in action, and you can be part of a team that makes a difference year-round. **Visit [dakinhumane.org](http://dakinhumane.org) and click on "Donate."**





Alfie

*continued from front*

"When I first got him, I tried to feed him formula with a bottle, but he wasn't having it," recalled Meg. "We moved on to a formula/canned food mix and he loved it! Soon he was eating on his own."

Alfie battled a number of setbacks including kennel cough and a lung infection, but nothing could keep the tiny warrior down. Our Program for Animal Wellness (PAWS), which offers care for Dakin animals with intricate needs through patient-specific treatment, provided Alfie's antibiotics, anti-nausea injections, subcutaneous fluids, and daily medications.

Because of people like you who love animals, Alfie got the help he needed. Any animal in need deserves every option possible to be healed, to be loved, and to have a family that adores them. Every step of his recovery became a source of joy for everyone around him. The Dakin staff had a special place in their hearts for the plucky survivor with the "big boy" attitude who would require careful handling. And the treatment wasn't just medical.

According to Meg, "He was also receiving extra behavior enrichment. Being a single puppy can bring major behavior issues; he needed as much canine influence as possible. I set up a lot of play dates with dogs belonging to Dakin staff and volunteers, and this helped him understand how to have better manners."

After three months of treatment, at last he was cleared for adoption, Alfie didn't have to wait long for his next chapter. His loveable face won over his smitten family who brought him home in May.

SAVE THE DATE



**Sunday, September 18**

Fort Hill Brewery, Easthampton

Dakin's 7th annual dog party, Barks & Brews, at Fort Hill Brewery in Easthampton is an outdoor, dog-friendly party for humans and canines!

No dog? No problem! Enjoy vendors, beer, food trucks, canine activities, treats, and more beer! Tickets available at [dakinhumane.org/barksandbrews.html](http://dakinhumane.org/barksandbrews.html)

whisker  
WONDERLAND

**Saturday, November 12**

Cedars Banquet Facility, Springfield

Come take a walk in a *Whisker Wonderland* with 35 local vendors and their cat-centric crafts at The Cedars. Pet lovers will find unique gifts inspired by our feline friends. For more information, visit [www.dakinhumane.org](http://www.dakinhumane.org)



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