



24th Annual PAWS WALK Stride for Strays

Paws Walk & Family Fun Night 7-29-14

We're shaking things up in 2014! PAWS WALK (previously held in September) is moving to July! All proceeds from the event go directly towards benefitting the homeless cats & dogs of HFSM; providing them with food, shelter and veterinary care while they await their forever homes.

In an effort to take advantage of the warm summer sun, the **24th Annual PAWS WALK** will be held the **evening of Tuesday, July 29th** at Lindenwood Park and will include: music, games, **FREE** food/beverages...and of course, the PAWS WALK itself! Here at HFSM, we consider pets just another part of the family. For this year's walk, we want to emphasize family, both two-legged and four...one fun-filled night the **WHOLE** family can enjoy. All while supporting the shelter animals of HFSM who are patiently awaiting a family of their own.

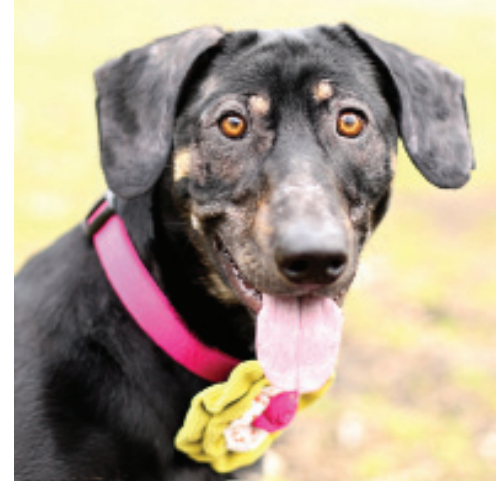
We are very happy and proud to announce our very special alum, Esperanza (whose name means Hope), will lead this year's walk as the Event Grand Marshal. As the Grand Marshal, Esperanza will not only proudly represent shelter animals everywhere but also, just as the meaning of her name, signify Hope. Hope to all our homeless pets that there is a special family out there for each of them and that they will be well taken care of until, they too, find their forever homes.

Esperanza's Story: Esperanza came into our care in November of 2012. Her owner had come to our shelter looking for free food from our community pantry, and when the staff saw what he had in his van, they couldn't say no. Esperanza and 3 of her siblings were in the van, and the gentleman said he had even more dogs at his home. What made Esperanza stand out from the others, though, was that when the gentleman let the dogs out of his van, Esperanza didn't walk out. She literally drug herself along with her front legs, her back legs tucked up under her and covered in open wounds, resembling bed sores. Apparently, she had been born paralyzed and had spent those first 5 months of her life dragging herself around. Her

owner did not even have enough money to feed her, let alone enough to have her paralysis evaluated. The staff opted to allow him to surrender her and her siblings at that time, and offered to help him with the rest of the dogs when space became available. Esperanza's siblings were quickly adopted, but "E" remained. Luckily, our shelter had several volunteers who fell in love with her. Between the six of them, they chipped in money to buy her a cart, and would come to the shelter every day to spend extra time with her. Two of those volunteers, Matt & Maria Amundson, ended up fostering E. They not only took E in, but worked with her to get her using her rear legs more, so much so, that she can now stand for a minute or so without assistance. Although she will likely never walk on her own, her progress with them has been outstanding. E became a part of their family, and they officially adopted her on March 15th, 2014. She was happiest there, and there she will remain for the rest of her life, one special dog becoming a permanent part of a family with two very special people.

Here are a few words from Esperanza's adopters, Matt & Maria Amundson, on how she has impacted their lives:

"Things are crazy and we love it. Certainly there are days that can be very challenging but at the



same time very rewarding. She has taught us to appreciate the little things, the small accomplishments. Watching her walk across the room or drink her water while standing on all four legs is so amazing. The everyday things we take for granted, she reminds us that you can't take those things for granted. She's an incredible dog."

"She has special needs and requirements. It takes a lot of work and commitment. But, at the same time, I can't imagine not seeing her happy face every day when I get home from work."

This happy story would not have been written without you. Hundreds of "Esperanza's" come through our doors each year and thanks to donors like you, they stay with us until they each find a loving family who is willing to give them a second chance at a home. It is our hope that you will "be there" for these animals and join us in raising much needed funds for the 24th Annual PAWS WALK - Stride for Strays!

The event will take place at Lindenwood Park's Main Shelter on Tuesday, July 29, 2014. Registration begins at 6pm, Walk begins at 7pm. Prizes will be awarded to the top 3 individuals who raise the most funds and the top 2 teams who raise the most funds. Hope to see you there!

Below: The Amundson family: (from left to right) Maria & Matt, Henry, Bentley, George and Esperanza or "Espy" as they like to call her.



Thank You PAWS WALK Corporate Sponsors!

Our generous Corporate Sponsors are matching all donations of \$75 or more, up to almost \$20,000!

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Meet Esperanza!...

A Little Q&A with Her Family

How would you describe Esperanza's personality?

Esperanza "Espy" is always excited. She's always happy and completely unaware of her disability. She is outgoing, fun and fearless. When we're on a walk she has to be first in line, ahead of the other dogs.

What is her favorite past time?

Eating popcorn, going for walks, playing fetch, wrestling with her brothers Bentley & George, and dismantling stuffed animals.

Why did you decide to adopt her?

We felt she deserved a fair chance like other dogs, and that she was unlikely to get adopted. Having fostered her for several months, we found that she was a wonderful fit to our other dogs; they get along great. We love her and can't imagine her anywhere else. When she was in the hospital for a few days, the other dogs seemed confused and less playful. This was proof that she means as much to them as she does to us. We're her family.

Any other information you would like to share or want people to know?

People shouldn't be scared of a dog with special needs. There are challenges, but the rewards outweigh those. Esperanza has come a long way since we first met her. She still needs assistance walking, but she often gets up on her own. She's able to get across our yard on her own without dragging herself. Inside the house, she often pushes herself to all four feet and makes it around the main parts of the house. She plays as much and as hard as any other dog. We just can't tell you enough how special Espy is.



**I cannot attend the
24th Annual Paws Walk
on July 29th but I want to help!**

I would like to make a Paws Walk donation of:

\$75 Matching Gift _____

Other _____

Please return this form and fill out your information in the enclosed self-addressed envelope to the Humane Society Fargo-Moorhead with your check or money order. If you wish to use your credit or debit card, please fill out the information on the envelope that is provided.

THANK YOU!

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For more information on this event or to print off additional Sponsor Sheets please visit our website: www.humanesocietyfargomoorhead.org.



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<https://www.facebook.com/fmhumanesociety>



EVERY DOLLAR COUNTS!

Because every dollar counts towards making a difference in the lives of our shelter animals, we encourage you to raise at least \$75 in pledges. Raising pledges is easy! Here are a few tips to help you get started.

- Set a goal and start fund raising today.
- Ask friends, neighbors, coworkers and relatives to sponsor you.
- Ask local businesses and restaurants that you frequent to sponsor you.
- Ask if your employer has a matching gift program.
- Designate a "sponsorship jar" that you, your family and friends can put spare change in.
- Send an email or letter to relatives and friends asking them to sponsor you.
- Leave a "sponsor me" message on your voice mail.
- Set up your own online fundraising page for this event at <http://www.razoo.com/story/Humane-Society-219>. Just click on the green GET STARTED! button and follow the steps to create your own fundraising page.

**Join me, Esperanza, at the
24th Annual PAWS WALK!**

For more information visit:
www.humanesocietyfargomoorhead.org