

Halfway Home Pet Rescue
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County Cats Find “Forever” Homes Across the State of Maine

Caribou In recent weeks, Halfway Home Pet Rescue (HHPR) volunteers have received questions regarding the adoption process for cats and kittens in our care. We wanted to take a few moments to explain how we help animals in need and our process to find loving homes for all adoptable pets.

“This is the perfect time to talk about our amazing partnership with the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland (ARLGP),” said Christina Kane-Gibson, cat care volunteer and Media Agent for the organization. “This partnership allows us to focus our efforts on rescue and rehabilitation while letting the adoption experts ensure our animals find loving homes. We just do not have the manpower to do the vet calls, home visits and reference checks it takes to qualify adopters. Plus, Aroostook County does not have enough households looking to adopt for the number of cats we take in every year.”

For pet rescue organizations, facilitating proper adoptions takes time and training. By partnering with ARLGP, HHPR volunteers can concentrate on rescue and care. HHPR takes the time and funds to ensure an animal has been fully vetted, vaccinated, spayed or neutered, socialized and evaluated to see what type of home they will do best in. Our reports are reviewed and discussed with ARLGP and together we decide who is ready for transport. Then, with much love and a few tears, our cats and kittens are sent on a roadtrip where highly trained ARLGP adoption professionals take over.

Facility Manager, Stacey Dickinson added, “This does not mean that all of the cats in our care eventually end up in Portland. We have many longterm residents who are not ready for adoption, and may never be ready for adoption. They become our shelter cats and we couldn’t imagine the shelter without them. We also have relationships with local farmers to place ferals as working pets in barns. We bring the older feral cats back to HHPR when their working days are over and they remain in our comfortable care for the rest of their lives.”

Norma Milton, founder of HHPR said, “Our volunteers have the intense job of helping the most abused and neglected cats. Their hearts go out to each and every one. If their time is not spent on medical care, it is focused on giving genuine love, attention and human connection. It is a true blessing that we can then trust our partners to ensure their placement so we can continue the good work we do. We could definitely tell you

some crazy stories of our days in the adoption business... it just isn't worth our time and talents! With ARLGP's help, we've been able to eliminate our foster and adoption programs completely, at least for the time being."

Remember, when you are trying to adopt a shelter/rescue pet, these animals can come with colorful histories. Rescue professionals work hard to find pets kind, loving and healthy permanent homes to reduce further trauma. The adoption application process may seem daunting, but hang in there! Adoption professionals must ensure ALL parties are ready to take on a new pet - including households, landlords and veterinarians. You and your new friend will be better for it in the end.

Kane-Gibson explained, "We love our relationship with the Portland Team. We support each other in our promise to help pets. It truly is a win-win for our organizations and our animals. We often get updates, pictures, letters and donations from the families who take in our County cats, and our hearts are full."

If you have any questions, or would like to contact Half Way Home Pet Rescue, please call (207) 999-1075. We are also proud of our active Facebook page. Please find and follow us at facebook.com/halfwayhomepetrescue/.

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Goldie (21 years) and Sheldon (19 years) are two retired barn cats enjoying a life of leisure in an HHPR feral room.

Goldie and Sheldon enjoy special perks including access to an outside enclosure.

Karma, now Hazel, was rescued after having five litters of kittens within three years in a hoarded environment. Karma now has a loving home in Portland. HHPR volunteers enjoy regular updates and photos.

Karma's domesticated kittens have also found loving homes. The feral kittens went together (after being spayed and neutered) to a barn home.

