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# CAPTAIN SPARROW WILL STEAL YOUR HEART



by Celeste Huttes



It was just days before Christmas, but comfort and joy had never been part of Captain Sparrow's world.

The six-year-old pit bull lived a miserable life chained up in the yard of a Decatur, Illinois, residence, never knowing a warm home or tender touch.

Unable to escape his harsh environment, the dog struggled to survive during frigid Illinois winters. On December 22, 2022, a passerby spotted him suffering outside in windchill temperatures well below zero degrees Fahrenheit. The concerned citizen confronted an unconcerned owner and called the Macon County Sheriff's Department to report the situation.

***"If you're looking for a true companion, he is the one for you."***



### A Long Road Ahead

Deputies from the Macon County Sheriff's office arrived on the scene to provide aid to the suffering dog. The owner was arrested on charges of aggravated animal cruelty.

Captain Sparrow was taken to the Macon County Animal Control & Care Center. There, he was cared for awaiting the outcome of his owner's trial, which would determine his fate.

After the owner was convicted of aggravated animal cruelty in July 2024, caretakers and the community breathed a sigh of relief knowing Captain Sparrow would never have to return to his former home.

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### First Steps: A Foster Home

After 18 months at the shelter, Captain Sparrow celebrated his own personal "Independence Day" on July 3, 2024, as he finally became available for adoption.

Bobbi Donath, a dog lover and board member at Happy Acres Pet Rescue in Decatur, Illinois, stepped forward to provide a foster home for Captain Sparrow.

"At first, he was pretty tentative and unsure about his environment. It was clear right away that he did not want to be alone," says Donath. "But before long, his personality began to show, and I could see that he is playful, fun and super curious. He always wants to see what you're doing."

Affectionately dubbed "Cap" by Donath and her husband Ed, the dog proved to be full of surprises. For example, unlike his boisterous namesake, this canine Captain Sparrow is relaxed and extremely quiet — and somehow mastered potty training immediately.







"He probably lived outside his whole life, but he has never once had an accident in my house," reports Donath. "He is very mellow and great on walks – he sees and hears other dogs and doesn't react."

A classic "Velcro dog," Captain Sparrow simply wants to be by your side.

"Wherever you are, he is right there beside you," says Donath. "He doesn't care what you do, or if you do anything at all. He doesn't need a lot—he just wants to be with you."

Highly treat-oriented (but not food aggressive), Cap is learning basic commands and kitchen manners. He does well on a leash and enjoys meeting people at pet-friendly places like Farm & Fleet.

Once, he had to fight simply to survive. These days, Cap takes great joy in playing with toys. (The Kong with spray treat is his favorite. Fluffy toys, however, quickly turn to confetti in Cap's care.)

The quirky canine also likes to carry his food bowl around with him. Known for his goofy grin, Captain Sparrow is generous with his kisses.

"Before we head out for a walk, he sits by the door and I kiss his head as I buckle him into his harness. He always tries to give me a kiss back," says Donath.



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***“It’s amazing how he can be so sweet when his start in life was so rough.”***

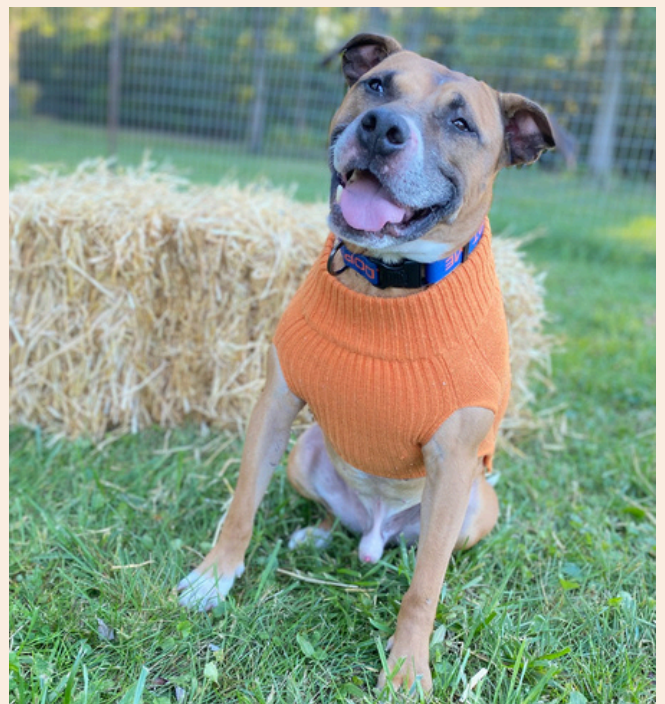
### **Home for the Holidays?**

Nearly two years after a good Samaritan and Sheriff's Deputies saved his life, Captain Sparrow is available for adoption through the Macon County Animal Control & Care Center in Decatur, Illinois. As a precaution, the shelter requires that Captain Sparrow be the only pet in the home.

Approximately 40 pounds and six years old, Captain Sparrow is quiet, easy to handle, affectionate and potty trained. Those who have grown to know and love him, like the Donaths, hope he will be home for the holidays with his forever family.

“I think he would do well in any home. If you’re looking for a true companion, he is the one for you,” says Donath.

“Cap is a very good dog – almost too good to be true. It’s amazing how he can be so sweet when his start in life was so rough.”



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**Visit  
[HappyAcresPetRescue.org/](http://HappyAcresPetRescue.org/)  
Application-Form or  
[DMCASF.org](http://DMCASF.org) to apply to  
adopt Captain Sparrow.**