

STRAY THOUGHTS

Pilgrim – A Happy Ending



Pilgrim

I don't even have my big boy teeth yet, but I have been through some hard times in my short life. I came to WSHS one Saturday in November from an animal control facility in central Illinois. Everyone noticed right away that I was dragging my left front paw. I went to see the doctor for some x-rays and it turned out that my elbow was pretty messed up. There was no way I could walk on that leg unless something was done to make it stronger.

I felt really content in my foster home and my temporary care family did all the exercises with me that the specialist advised, but after more x-rays, a plan was made for me to have surgery to correct the problems in my elbow. My surgeon said I could have one of three surgeries: plates and pins, fusion of the joint, or an amputation. Everyone agreed that the plates and pins option was the best, so I was looking forward to being the bionic puppy!

On the day of surgery, I was a brave boy. I had to stay overnight at the vet, but it wasn't all bad. They gave me lots of love and attention.

The procedure went smoothly and my foster mom came to take me home. It was after only a couple of days that I started to have problems. First there was some oozing at the incision site, so back we went to get it checked out. Next I began to experience lots of pain and I couldn't straighten my leg, so the surgeon called me back in to unbend it and apply a splint. Unfortunately, when the surgical team attempted to straighten my leg, they found that some of the plates and pins had already come loose and could not be repaired again.

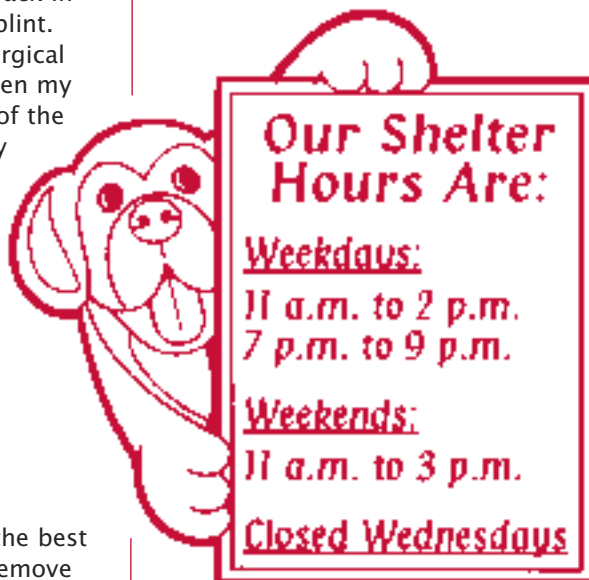


This time, my doctor said the best thing for me would be to remove my whole leg. Everyone felt that I had been through enough pain and, being so young, I would do just fine on three legs. I was a little disappointed I wouldn't be the bionic boy anymore, but I trusted my caregivers.



Now that it is all over, I do feel ever so much better; no more hurting, just getting used to balancing my growing body. I am a happy, playful fellow who is looking forward to growing up a big strong coonhound. Having three legs doesn't slow me down; it just makes me more special. Once I get my big boy teeth, there will be no stopping me!

At press time, Pilgrim has been adopted by one of the vet techs at Arboretum View Animal Hospital who treated him after both of his surgeries. He is now a happy, healthy boy enjoying his forever home!



Upcoming Events 630-960-9600, ext. 25

FEBRUARY

14th, Thursday Happy Valentine's Day from the homeless animals at the shelter!

26th, Tuesday Spay Day USA. Stop by the shelter or check our web site at www.WSHS-DG.org for your Spay/Neuter Discount Coupon.

MARCH

23rd, Sunday Easter - WSHS will be closed today.

West Suburban Humane Society

shelter services include:

- Pet Adoptions
- Free Pet I.D. Tags
- Community Education
- Humane Investigations
- Pet Behavior Counseling
- Spay/Neuter Referrals
- Lost & Found Hotline

WSHS Wish List

- † Paper Towels
- † Food (our animals are on a specific diet: so that we don't upset their digestive systems, we must be specific) Purina or IAMS (Dry) cat and dog, kitten and puppy formulas, light formula – cat and dog and senior formula – cat and dog. Any canned cat, dog, kitten or puppy food is fine.
- † KMR (kitten milk replacement), small baby bottles and nipples
- † Dog and cat toys (washable and indestructible!)
- † Cat litter (no scoopable)
- † Stamps (to be used for postage)
- † Garbage bags (13 & 30 gallon sizes)
- † 6" paper plates
- † Lint Traps
- † Volunteers!
- † **Monetary donations are always appreciated!**

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INTEGRATEDPRINTMANAGEMENT

1051 N Kirk Rd
Batavia, IL 60510

630.879.9240

800.774.6840

Fax 879.9260

www.bfcprint.com

WEST SUBURBAN HUMANE SOCIETY

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1901 W. Ogden Avenue,
Downers Grove, IL 60515
E-mail Address: Director@WSHS-DG.org
Phone: **630-960-9600**
Fax: **630-960-9604**

Ready For a Home



Bob

12-year-old, Male, Grey dsh

I admit it. I've been a little cranky since I was returned, but wouldn't you be if you were suddenly uprooted from the only home you've ever known only to find your new home very foreign? I have been given the largest cage they have here, but it's not like home. I am a big guy who likes to stretch out, and I am quite vocal. Sometimes I even talk with my mouth full! It would make me so happy if someone could see beyond my geriatric status and my grumpiness to take a chance on me. I would be forever grateful.

Valentina

9-year-old, Female, Brown tabby with white

Recently I found myself back here after being in a home for many years. My family developed allergies and I lost the only home I've ever known. I've been a really good girl since coming back. A petite girl, I don't ask for much. I am a senior who wants nothing more than to have a home where I can relax and warm myself in a sunny window. I lived with older kids and wouldn't mind sharing a home with them. Won't you give me a chance?



Garland

6-year-old, Male, 4 paw declaw, Grey and white

They tell me I am a real gem. I guess I'll take their word for it. I do like attention and I'm not shy about asking for it. I am an easy going cat who would probably fit right in at any home. Not much gets to me. I don't have any claws, front or back, and I could stand to put on some weight. You see, I was lost outside for a while and got pretty skinny. I have a good appetite, though, and will be back in peak form very soon. Won't you come visit with me? I give love unconditionally, and who couldn't use some of that?

Patsy

4-year-old, Female, Black and white dlh

Although I resemble Charlie Chaplin, my story isn't too funny. I came here because a family of good Samaritans rescued me from an awful end. It seems I was abandoned in a forest preserve. This particular place is known for pet dumping where the unfortunate animals soon fall prey to local wildlife. Because I took a chance and approached this family, I was saved before the worst fate could befall me. I am quite petite and have pretty markings. Won't you come be my happy ending?



Ready For a Home



Buster

3-year-old, Male, Terrier Mix

My name is Buster and I am a fun and lively guy! I was recently in a temporary care home because when I came to the shelter I was heartworm positive. All of my health issues have been treated and I am now doing great! I am completely housebroken and leash trained. I get along well with other dogs and the teenage boys that lived in my temporary home. I absolutely love going for walks but I am also a snuggler and enjoy quiet time on any available lap. Stop by and visit me today. You won't be disappointed!

Avalon

8-month-old, Female, Spitz Breed Mix

Are you looking for a new walking partner? When I first arrived at the shelter I was frustrated and had no manners. The staff at WSHS saw my potential and sent me to training at Alex Brook's Midwest Canine Behavioral and Socialization Center. While at training I learned "sit," "stay," "down," and coming when called. I also learned how to play nicely with other dogs in daycare. I show a natural herding instinct so that is why I need to go to a home with kids 16 years or older. If you have another dog, they better be prepared for a long game of tag every day because I have a lot of energy! I come with a free one-on-one session with my own personal trainer so if you're looking to have a lot of fun...pick me!



Tinsel

2-year-old, Male, Greater Swiss Mountain Dog Mix

Hi, my name is Tinsel. I am a little shy at first but if you take the time to get to know me, I warm up fairly quickly. Once I get to know you, I am a fun-loving, energetic boy. I am good with other dogs and cats. I would do best in a home with a large fenced-in backyard and children 8 years and older due to my energy level. I would also benefit from obedience training. Please stop by and visit me today. You won't be disappointed.

K.Z.

6-month-old, Female, Australian Shepherd Mix

Are you looking for a fun-loving energetic girl? Then I'm the dog for you! I would love a huge fenced yard to run around in and daily walks would be nice too. I am good with cats but can be picky about my dog friends. I know "sit" but could use some work on my other obedience commands. Because of my energy level, I am looking for a home with children 12 years and older. Stop by and visit me today.



Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

Dear Dr. Main:

Are cats susceptible to heartworm disease?

Most of us are aware of heartworm disease because our dog friends are tested for heartworm every year and take monthly medication to prevent the disease from ever developing. You may know that in dogs the disease is life-threatening and there are at least 6000 cases of heartworm diagnosed in dogs in Illinois each year.

Well, what about cats? Is heartworm a worry for our cat companions? For many years experts did not feel cats were at risk for heartworm disease. But that thinking has changed which is the reason for this article. Current research has revealed some very important information about heartworm disease in cats.

As it turns out, studies show that at least 28% of all cats including indoor cats are exposed to heartworm disease. This exposure is by way of a mosquito bite just as in dogs. However, in cats the disease develops very differently than in dogs.

When the mosquito bites the cat, very small heartworm larvae are injected under the skin of the cat. From there, over a period of a few months, these larvae begin to grow and migrate toward the heart, just like in the dog. Unlike the dog, in the cat these larvae rarely reach the heart. Instead what happens is the cat's body resists the larvae and kills most of the larvae as they are traveling toward the heart.

Unfortunately, many of these larvae die in the lung tissue of the cat. Although it is good the larvae are dead, the cat's body is so forceful in its reaction to the

larvae that much healthy lung tissue is damaged in the process. Recent studies completed at Auburn University were focused on understanding the actual amount of lung damage caused by heartworm larvae in cats.

The results of the study completely change the way we must view feline heartworm disease. When the cat goes to battle with heartworm larvae, not only do the larvae die, but there is extensive collateral damage to the lung. The lung often is severely damaged including obliteration of normal lung tissue. This lung damage can lead to chronic respiratory problems as well as death.

So with cats, feline heartworm disease is actually a respiratory or lung disease. Cats respond so violently to the heartworm larvae that they damage their own lungs. In fact, many cats with chronic respiratory problems or even acute death likely have feline heartworm.

Unfortunately, the disease is very difficult to definitively diagnose and further there is no treatment once the cat develops heartworm disease.

Veterinarians have always known that cats can be bitten by heartworm carrying mosquitoes and that in most cases the cat kills the larvae before it reaches the heart. But we did not know about the extreme reaction cats have to the larvae and the resulting damage that occurs in the lungs of many cats exposed to the disease.

Any individual cat's risk for developing feline heartworm is directly related to the mosquito exposure for that cat. Studies show that even household type mosquitoes can carry heartworm disease. Hence, indoor cats are

susceptible. Statistics show Dupage County is at a moderate risk for the disease. Southeastern United States is the worst area for the disease. Approximately 6-25 cases of feline heartworm are reported each year in the typical veterinary hospital in our area. Clearly this number may increase in light of the new information which will increase clinical awareness of the disease.

Dealing with heartworm disease in the cat is all about prevention since there is no treatment and definitive diagnosis is difficult. The disease is easily preventable with monthly heartworm prevention products just as in the dog.

Cats that spend time outdoors without question should be on heartworm prevention. Indoor cats have a lower risk but owners may want to consider prevention for them as well.

In conclusion feline heartworm disease is 1) a preventable disease, 2) a life threatening disease, and 3) a disease that will occur in our practice area every year.



Please address questions and suggestions for future animal health articles to:

Dr. Main
West Suburban Humane Society
1901 W. Ogden Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515
director@wshs-dg.org



Bungee Update



Some of you may remember Bungee, a beautiful Redbone Coonhound that was featured in several editions of Stray Thoughts. Bungee came to the shelter in January of 2007 from Hancock County Animal Control in central Illinois. Not long after he arrived he was diagnosed as being heartworm positive as well as having severe hip dysplasia. We knew that both procedures would be costly for the shelter, but Bungee was such a great dog, we knew he was worth it! That spring, we sent out a plea asking for help with Bungee's medical care. Our generous supporters answered the call and we raised the money to have Bungee treated.

While Bungee was recovering from each of his procedures, the Sousa family of Joliet was following his progress closely. They would call from time to time to see how he was doing and when he was well enough, we set up an appointment for them to meet him. It was love at first sight and on November 10th, Bungee went to his forever home. Recently, they sent us a note along with some pictures to let us know how he is adjusting to life in his new home.



"Bungee has just been amazing. He spends his days sleeping on his own couch and at night in our loft or his own spot on the couch

downstairs. He loves giving the baby kisses and even try's to steal his toys. He has started to live the life of a puppy, even acting mischievous being a garbage dog and drinking from the toilet when no one's looking. He is a great addition and we want to thank you for letting us find the perfect dog and a lifelong best friend. He is such a character and his personality shines. We give him so much love and affection and he has become such a snuggler. It is absolutely adorable when we play with him he'll just howl like a seal and hop around like a weasel. He's proven to be a great friend and protector of our house. He desperately wants to play with the geese, wild turkeys and pheasants in the cornfield behind the house. Thank you again for this amazing boy in our lives."

Thank you to all of our supporters who donated money to get Bungee healthy and make all of his dreams come true!

Help WSHS

CANTALUPO
Renee A. Cantalupo
Realtor®
Direct: 630.435.3540 • Cell: 630.205.1130
Office: 630.435.3500 • Fax: 630.435.3501
racmac4@aol.com

Renee Cantalupo, a WSHS volunteer and a realtor with Platinum Partners in Downers Grove will donate a large portion of every commission earned by business generated through humane society referrals. Please call Renee for all of your real estate needs and help the homeless animals at the shelter.

HEARTY THANKS

To all the volunteers who gave up time with their families to work at the shelter over the holidays. We couldn't do it without you. You are appreciated more than you know!

Diane Harke, a WSHS volunteer, hosted a birthday party for her two cats, Rhett and Scarlett. Diane asked that people purchase items for the shelter instead of gifts for her cats. From this party, the shelter received many wonderful food, supply, toy and monetary donations.

June Moss and Cindy Gundlach of Sunbeams and Rainbows Preschool in Elmhurst and all of their students for collecting money for the homeless animals at the shelter. They do this drive every year and we can't thank them enough for their generosity.

Every year, **Judy Kapicak** of Downers Grove has a brunch with her college friends. In lieu of hostess gifts, Judy asked that her friends make donations to

the shelter. She raised \$100 for the animals in our care.

Zachary Abrams donated 10% of the gifts that he received from his Bar Mitzvah to the shelter.

Amberly Petkus and Natalia Hank, two fifth graders from Avery Conley School in Downers Grove raised \$250 for the animals at the shelter.

JoAnn Adamski from Seaspar Action Club and her leader Susan Friend for their food donations.

Gloria Dei Church in Downers Grove for their numerous food and supply donations.

Gracie Holler of Downers Grove had a birthday party and asked that all of her guests bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food, supply and monetary donations.

Lombard Elementary School District 44 decided to include a raffle/fundraiser with their

holiday luncheon. The school decided to donate the proceeds to the shelter. They raised \$332 as well as numerous food and supply donations.

Mark Michniak had a New Year's Eve party and asked that his guest bring donations for the humane society. He collected \$50 and numerous food and supply donations.

Claire Rowley and Antonia Ioannou of Downers Grove had 8-year-old birthday parties and asked that their guests bring money for the shelter instead of gifts for them. The girls donated \$140 to the shelter.



E-Mail Notice

Would you like to receive shelter news on a timelier basis?
We are in the process of gathering e-mails to start a database.
The database will allow us to communicate with you updates on
important issues such as adoptions, special needs animals,
upcoming events and more.

Send us an e-mail today at director@wshs-dg.org and let us know that you want to be added to our list. You can also sign up on our web site at www.WSHS-DG.org.

E-Mails and Letters From Adopters



Dear WSHS,

Merry Christmas! I'm having a great holiday season now that I'm in my forever home. Thank you for helping me to find my new home.

My forever family decided to keep my name Tessa. For some reason, they also call me Dogbreath a lot. I answer to both with a smile and a tail wag – especially if hugs and treats are involved.

I love my new family and they always tell me that I'm da best doggie in da whole world. I live with a mom, a dad, a 16-year-old boy, a 13-year-old boy and a 12-year-old girl. The kids are so much fun. The kids spend lots of time playing with me and teaching me new tricks. Their friends come over to play with me too. I sleep with the 12-year-old girl. She had to push some of her stuffed animals off the bed to make room for me. She's happy to have a sister! The kids have been wanting a perfect doggie like me for a long time.

I already got my big Christmas present – my family fenced in my yard for me!!! I love to fetch tennis

balls, so now I can run free while I play. The kids taught me how to catch a ball on a fly (I used to just watch it go by, which made them laugh). They also used to trick me by pretending to throw the ball, by hiding it behind their back. Boy, I'm no dummy – I don't fall for that anymore! My family also bought me a special dog Frisbee. It's better than a tennis ball in the snow. The kids are so proud of all my tricks and talents. Oh, I have my own special spruce tree fort in the corner of the backyard, too. There's lots of doors in and out of my fort. I love to chase the bunnies out of there. I haven't caught any yet, but I have a fantastic time trying. The bunnies are nice enough to leave me presents all over the yard. The droppings make terrific snow cone flavorings.

I don't just play all day. My mom takes me to training at Narnia. It's very hard work for me to be around all the other dogs and not just play, but I have learned so much since I started there. Mom and the teachers are so impressed with my progress. Since I am doing so well with other dogs now, I get to have doggie play dates sometimes. It's a blast.

Well, that's about it for now. Thank you again for matching me up with a family that loves me so much and who I can love back. I'm very happy here. Keep finding other dogs and cats happy homes.

Much love,

Tessa aka Dogbreath and family – Mom, Dad, Billy, Mike & Cynsy

P.S. I love going for rides in the car too! I try to never get left behind!



2007 Adoption Figures

In 2007, West Suburban Humane Society adopted 566 animals; 341 dogs and 225 cats. Thanks to everyone who saved a life and adopted a stray. Let's work together in finding homes for even more animals in 2008!