



West Suburban Humane Society

STRAY THOUGHTS

**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!**
FROM:
WEST SUBURBAN
HUMANE SOCIETY

Takoda – A Christmas Miracle

Last year at this time I was just a puppy, left to fend for myself while tied to a tree. No one



Takoda Before

cared about me, but they kept me tied up until I was

too weak to stand. Eventually, I was found by a caring person while I lay in a mud puddle, barely able to lift my head.

I experienced a Christmas miracle last year. I was whisked to a vet where there was heated discussion about my future. Medical experts felt I was beyond help, but my savior pleaded for them to try and heal me. She did everything she could from raising money for treatment to finding a foster home for me. If it weren't for the kindness of all the people she rallied, I wouldn't be here to see this holiday season.

It was a long and difficult road to recovery. Not only was I emaciated, I had an ear infection, pneumonia, mange and ringworm. It took months of vet appointments and arduous treatments before I regained my health. When it finally seemed like I would live to see another Christmas, the search began for a shelter that would agree to take me in and find me a permanent home with a family of my very own. That is how I found myself here at West Suburban. The

shelter staff thought I deserved a chance at a happy life, so they took me in.

It was a crisp February day when I arrived at the shelter. It quickly became apparent that although my body had healed, my heart and mind had not. Before I was rescued, a lot of damage had been done to my ability to trust people. I was left with an overwhelming fear of new people. I was sent to Bark Ave. Day Camp where I spent over a month in behavioral training. I loved it there; playing with other dogs and learning that meeting new people isn't so bad. I came back to the shelter where I practiced and practiced meeting new people until I had the hang of it. West Suburban put a lot of resources into making me a balanced dog. Most shelters would have given up on me.

I did such a good job with my training, that it only took a month before a family chose me. We played fetch and they thought I was great. The feeling was mutual and I was sure I had found my happy ending. I went home on a bright June day with high hopes for the future.

Now my happy ending is on hold, and I'm worried I will spend the holidays homeless again. You see my family did not turn out to be forever. They didn't understand they had to

keep working with me and take me to classes so that I would continue to grow into a well-adjusted adult. They didn't follow through and I started a slow slide downhill. I started testing the limits, and when no one challenged me, I became the boss. I began to act out because I had no boundaries, so I was returned.

I am now living in a temporary care home where the boundaries are clear and I get a lot of chances to work on my behavior. I'm still looking for my forever home. I'd do great living with another dog or two, and I guess cats are okay. I am housebroken and don't even really need to be crated. I know all of my obedience commands, too. I need a home with only adults and owners who have experience with dogs. I will need to continue classes to reinforce our bond. I am a work in progress, but I give my loyalty whole-heartedly and completely.

I need a leader. Will you be the one to lead me down the path to happily-ever-after or is it too much to wish for another miracle this year? If you can't adopt me, would you consider a monetary donation to the shelter so that they can save other good dogs like me from destruction? That would be the silver lining to my ordeal.

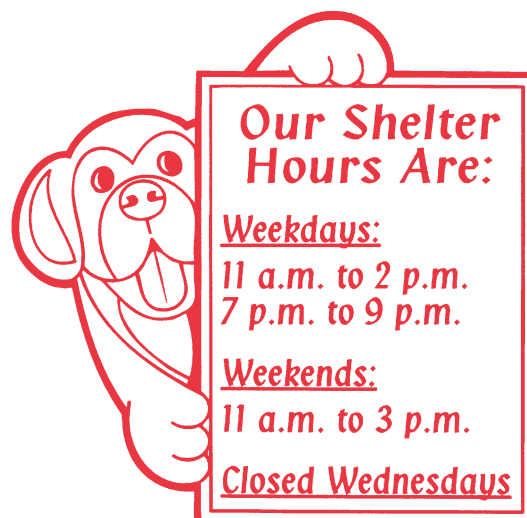


Takoda After

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 system, 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 and 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!**



INTEGRATED PRINT MANAGEMENT

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The design and printing of the newsletter were provided below cost.

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Batavia, IL 60510

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Fax 879.9260

www.bfcprint.com

WEST SUBURBAN HUMANE SOCIETY

STRAY THOUGHTS is an official publication of the West Suburban Humane Society, a not-for-profit, volunteer-based animal shelter. No city, state, or federal funds support WSHS. Donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law. Please call 630-960-9600, ext. 25 to submit articles or receive donation information.

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Night and Weekend Manager: Catherine Schmitt and Jen Laurinaitis
Animal Care Assts: Kelly Bailey and Brigitte Black
Adoption Desk Manager: Kristy Moran (Ext. 10)
Volunteer Coordinator: Patti Miller (Ext. 45)

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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**

Items Needed for Second Annual Barkaritaville

In the spirit of the holidays we hope you will again generously give. All items donated will be accumulated and used for our Second Annual Barkaritaville scheduled for Saturday, June 12th, 2010. Many items will be needed to make this event a real success. Do you have a talent, work for a company that can help or have a connection for tickets or events?

We have created a list of needed items. If you can contribute, please call Carolyn Mossberger at 630-960-9600, ext. 25 or email her at director@wshs-dg.org. The list will be posted on the web so you can see what has been donated and what items are still needed.

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- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------|
| • Golf outing | • Sports tickets | • Smithsonian Museum weekend |
| • Art work | • Concert tickets | • Homemade dinners delivered |
| • Facial | • Disney events | • Dog walking services |
| • Handmade items
(like sweaters, pottery) | • Spa packages | • Cat sitting services |
| • Case of fine wine | • Small appliances | • Grooming packages |
| • Car wash | • Massages | • Vet visits |
| • Car detailing package | • Manicure/pedicure | • Tickets to Indianapolis 500 |
| • Movie tickets | • Airline tickets | • Dinner and a movie |
| • Hotel overnights | • Vacation home | • Dinner and a play |
| • Restaurant certificates | • Jewelry | • Boat trip |
| • Zoo events | • Children's classes | • Tickets to Great America |
| • Museum memberships | • Car driving classes
(like the Autobahn) | • Wisconsin Dells weekend |
| • Garden items | • Limo services | • Lake Geneva weekend |
| • Chicago tours | • Furniture | |
| • Theater tickets | • 2010 air show
hotel reservations | |

On behalf of the animals,
Thank You!

E-Mails and Letters From Adopters



Dear WSHS,

It has been a whole year since we adopted our black cat, Pepper (or Peppermint as you called him)!! He is hilarious, sweet, caring, a "guard dog" and a best friend. I remember I would go to WSHS almost every day and visit Pepper in the "Sick Cat Room". He was perfectly healthy, just needed a big cage (at 16 lbs)! For those of you who are adopting, don't be afraid of the cats in the "sick room." Go meet them! They are probably the sweetest cats because they need our help. And they pay us back with genuine thanks and love. And finally, don't be afraid of black cats! Sailors used to have them on ships as a token of good luck on the seas! I'd say I'm pretty darn lucky for finding Pepper. Thanks so much!

Kate Davis



Ready For a Home



Comet

7 years old, Female, Collie/Shepherd Mix

I was adopted from WSHS in 2002. Unfortunately my owners had to return me. They had two small children and just didn't have the time to take care of me. This is what they have to say about me:

Likes: Cuddling on the couch (yes, she is allowed on the furniture but not the beds), playing tug of war or catch, getting petted, hard bones or kongs with treats inside, going on walks & running, chicken and jelly beans.

Dislikes: The mail person, umbrellas, the wind (scares her), the rain (doesn't like getting her fur wet), baths, getting her nails cut, squirrels and other small animals.

Personality: For those of you who know Comet, she can be very feisty. She is a very social dog and loves company. She gets overly excited when new people come over, but settles down quickly. When alone with just the family she is very calm. She is very loving, cuddly, and sweet, but also has a mean bark which scares strangers or people approaching the house. We describe Comet as an 80 lb lap dog. She is very energetic, loves to play and run, but more so she enjoys snuggling and getting her belly rubbed.

Training: She has been trained and knows all the basic commands (sit, lay, stay, etc), however she still pulls when walked on the leash and doesn't completely respect the boundaries when there is food on the table or counters. She will also run away if given the chance so a secured fenced yard is needed. She is housebroken and can hold it for a full work day without eliminating in the house.

Family: Comet is great with children. Our 1-yr-old has pulled ears and whiskers, climbed on her and squeezed her and Comet just takes it. Comet is not an aggressive but she has a jumping problem and gets excited around younger children that run and yell. So, it is recommended that she not go to a family with very young children. She would be a great pet for older children who could play and walk her (10 +), a couple or single person who could give her the attention she needs and deserves.

Comet is great with other dogs but cannot live with them. She is not good with cats.

Trapper

8 years old, Male, Shepherd/Rottweiler Mix

Hi, my name is Trapper. I recently arrived here from the Illinois Valley Animal Rescue where I've lived the last 6 years of my life in a cage. Can you believe it? I am a great dog that just loves people. I am even somewhat of an ambassador. When I lived at IVAR, I went on many school visits and taught kids the proper way to act around dogs. I am crate trained and good with kids and other dogs. No cats however. I would just chase them all day long. Because I have lived so long in a shelter, I may need a little work on housebreaking. If you have a little patience and a lot of love to give, would you consider giving me a chance?



Mister

12 years old, Male, 2 paw declaw, White w/Tabby markings

Have you ever lived in a car? I have. It wasn't very fun, but at least me and my person were together. It was much harder on her once she lost her job and home, and she didn't think it was right for me to have to live in a car, especially on hot days, so she did the only thing she could think of and brought me back here. She adopted me from WSHS when I was nine years old. Before that I lived in the same home my whole life until my person became too ill to care for me. So, here I am, 12 years old and twice in my life I have lost the person I was closest to. I have also lived in a shelter twice, and am hoping to make this my last time here. Will my third home be the charm that lasts the rest of my life? Update: Since my return, I have been experiencing some medical problems. It turns out that I have chronic renal disease. This means that my kidneys will eventually give out. I am being kept as healthy as possible through the use of a special diet made to help reduce the stress on my kidneys. I also get subcutaneous fluids two times a

week. I am an excellent patient and never give anyone a problem. I can live a few more years with good care, but the staff here would like to see me live out my life in the comfort of a home instead of a cage. They think it's the least I deserve. For this reason, the shelter is looking for someone to do hospice care for me. What that means is that someone would agree to give me a home, but the shelter remains responsible for all of my care including food and any medications. It takes a special commitment to be a hospice home....are you up for it?



Roxy

7 years old, Female, 2 paw declaw, Brown Tabby

I hate allergies. Allergies is a four letter word if you ask me. They are the reason I am here. I came before the children in my home and one of the kids grew to be allergic to me. Maybe she should have been given up instead of me. No, really, I get it: people come before cats. In my home I was good with kids, cats and dogs, but being closed up in a cage makes me feel defenseless, so it's been hard to show my sweet side. I do enjoy getting out and having the run of the place. It reminds me of home, which I miss very much.



Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

My dog is itching could it be fleas?

Late August through November is the most prevalent time of the year for fleas in our area. Fleas are shiny and dark brown, quite small, and wingless. Fleas can be tough customers and induce intense itching with their bites. Let me give you the whole flea story.

Flea bite allergy dermatitis or flea bite hypersensitivity is the most common small animal dermatological condition. There are some parts of the world where it is the most common canine disease. In other areas, such as elevations above 1500 feet or arid climates, the disease does not exist.

There are many species of fleas, but it is the cat flea that is most common in our pets. The flea life cycle can range from 12 days to 6 months. Like all insects, fleas have a 4 stage life cycle including the egg, larvae, pupae, and the adult. Fleas can remain dormant in the pupal stage for up to 6 months.

The adult flea usually bites for its first blood meal within minutes. This stimulates egg laying which occurs within 24 hours. A single female flea can lay 1000 eggs in 30 days. These eggs mostly fall to the floor and within a few days a larvae hatches. The larvae tend to move downward away from the light and form a pupae or cocoon. The adult fleas emerge from the cocoon on an average in 8-9

days. Adult fleas then begin to search for a host.

When the flea bites the host the saliva contains histamine like compounds along with other enzymes. These compounds provoke an allergic response in many pets. It is this response that leads to itching, redness, and irritation on the skin. Often signs include hair loss, trauma to the skin, crusting and papules. Most commonly this occurs around the rump, tail base, and groin area in dogs. Occasionally pets can exhibit anemia from severe flea infestation, as adult fleas can consume 15 times their body weight in blood each day.

Additionally when cats and dogs groom themselves, they ingest adult fleas that carry tape worm and in turn may have tape worm segments in their stools. In cases where there is fastidious grooming, the lack of flea dirt or fleas does not rule out flea allergy dermatitis.

When treating flea bite dermatitis, all dog and cat pets in the home should be treated. Pets with associated skin disease will probably require antibiotics and steroids to quiet the skin. As for the fleas, usually a topical flea adulticide that contains an insect growth regulator will be effective. It is important to use a monthly product for 3-4 consecutive months to control the flea infestation completely.

In cases of heavy infestations thorough vacuuming and use of environmental sprays, especially on carpeted areas, could be helpful. Additionally, all blankets, bedding, and rugs that are favored by the affected pet should be laundered. After vacuuming the bag should be disposed of immediately. Try to keep household pets away from flea dense areas like porches, garages, feral cats, wildlife and the like.

Finally, flea bite dermatitis is most common in the fall of the year. It tends to be the most itchy skin disease a pet will ever experience.

Early intervention and persistent treatment over 3-6 months are the keys to successful treatment. Many pet owners use flea products during this time of the year on a preventative basis, which is highly recommended. Using a flea prevention product recommended by your veterinarian is the best way to prevent flea infestation.



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



SHOP AND SHARE

**Don't forget this upcoming Jewel Shop and Share date:
Help the animals and get your holiday grocery shopping done at the same time!**

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<small>PLEASE SIGN THIS SLIP AND TURN IT IN TO YOUR CHECKER WHEN YOU SHOP. PARTICIPANTS CAN MAKE PURCHASES AT ANY JEWEL-OSCO ON THE DATE ABOVE. IDENTIFICATION SLIPS ARE NOT TO BE DISTRIBUTED IN FRONT OF ANY JEWEL-OSCO.</small>															
															

HEARTY THANKS



The employees of Viant, located in Naperville, IL, donated numerous food and supply donations to the shelter.

Members of the American Saddlebred Horse Association Youth Group collected dog and cat food for the animals at the shelter.

Angela Monaco had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$34.55 to the shelter.

Lucy McConnell of Elmhurst had an 8th birthday party and asked her guests to bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected \$60 as well as numerous food and supply donations.

Mira Marchioretto of Downers Grove had a 13th birthday party and asked her guests to bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected money as well as numerous food and supply donations.

Liz Spurlock of Wheaton donated \$34 from her piggy bank to the animals at the shelter.

The Student Council of Park View Elementary School in Lombard hosted a fundraiser and donated the proceeds to the shelter.

Emma, Samantha and Kaysie Stuba of LaGrange had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$45 to the shelter.

Jerry Tavolino of Wheaton had a 7th birthday party and asked his guests to bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for him. He collected numerous food and supply donations.

Emma Friedberg of Glen Ellyn had a 12th birthday party and asked her guests to bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected \$75 as well as numerous food and supply donations.



Samantha Yeager of Downers Grove turned 16 and asked her guests to make donations to the shelter instead of giving her gifts. She raised \$560 for the animals at the shelter.

Lester School Girl Scout Troop 477 collected and donated over \$750 worth of food and supplies to the shelter.

The Lisle Senior High School Student Council held a volleyball tournament and donated the proceeds of \$1,000 to the shelter.

Van Kampen Investments in Oak Brook Terrace contributed \$690 that was raised from a fundraising event that they held on behalf of the shelter.

Jackson Miles of Downers Grove had a 10th birthday party and asked his guests to bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for him. He collected \$20 as well as numerous food and supply donations.

Maddie's Fund and Petfinder.com Foundation Award WSHS with a \$2,000 Prize

During the week of September 7 – 11, 2009, West Suburban Humane Society was the winner of the Put Your Best Face Forward competition sponsored by Maddie's Fund and Petfinder.com Foundation. A secret shopper came into the shelter and asked to view our dogs. From her initial contact with our adoption desk manager to the volunteers who showed her around the kennel the shelter provided great customer service. Maddie's Fund and Petfinder.com believe that good customer services saves lives. The first step in good customer service is to capitalize on the public's enthusiasm for adopting by responding right away when initial contact is made. The second step is to make a potential adopter's experience positive and helpful. West Suburban Humane Society did both of these things and for our efforts we were given a check for \$2,000 for the great customer service we provided.

A BIG THANK YOU

To all of our Barkapalooza Sponsors Grand Champion - \$2,000 Sponsor

Hinsdale Animal
Cemetery and Crematory
Established 1926



Blue Ribbon Winners - \$1,000 Sponsors

 Downers Grove Reporter



Republic Bank

Dog's Best Friend - \$500 Sponsors

Paws in Paradise Pet Hotel & Doggie Daycare
Allegiance Underwriting
Community Bank of Downers Grove
Robert Bair Services - Plumbing, Heating and Air

Cat's Meow - \$250 Sponsors

American Chartered Bank of Downers Grove
American Family Insurance – Local Agent Diane Harke
Chicks 'n Salsa

This Year's Barkapalooza Walk-A-Thon and Pet Expo Pledge Contributors

- 1st Place** – Larry Sacks of Villa Park, IL raised \$5,120 in pledges. Larry is generously donating the \$500 he won as top pledge contributor back to the shelter.
- 2nd Place** – Luanne Patno of Downers Grove, IL raised \$2,300 in pledges.
- 3rd Place** – Michelle Cohen of Lombard, IL raised \$2,070 in pledges.
- 4th Place** – Cindy Johnson of Downers Grove, IL raised \$1,700 in pledges.

Congratulations to our 2009 Wags to Riches Raffle Winner!

Sylvia McIvor of Darien, IL was the winner of the 50/50 Split the Pot raffle.
Sylvia won \$1,797!

Rescue Rainbow Bridge

Unlike most days at RainBow Bridge, this day dawned cold and gray, damp as a swamp and as dismal as could be imagined. All the recent arrivals were confused and concerned. They had no idea what to think for they had never experienced a day like this before. But the animals who had spent some time waiting for their beloved people knew exactly what was happening and began to gather at the pathway leading to the Bridge to watch. They knew this was something special.

It wasn't too long before an elderly animal came into view, head hung heavy and low with tail dragging along the ground. The other animals on the pathway...the ones who had been at RainBow Bridge for a while...knew the story of this sad creature immediately. They had seen it happen far too many times.

Although it was obvious the animal's heart was leaden and he was totally overcome with emotional pain and hurt, there was no sign of injury or any illness. Unlike the pets waiting at the Bridge, this dog had not been restored to his prime. He was full of neither health nor vigor. He approached slowly and painfully, watching all the pets who were by now watching him. He knew he was out of place here. This was no resting place for him. He felt instinctively that the sooner he could cross over, the happier he would be. But alas, as he came closer to the Bridge, his way was barred by the appearance of an Angel who spoke softly to the old dog and apologized sorrowfully, telling him that he would not be able to pass. Only those animals who were with their special people could pass over the RainBow Bridge. And he had no special beloved people...not here at the Bridge nor on Earth below.

With no place else to turn, the poor elderly dog looked toward the fields before the Bridge. There, in a separate area nearby, he spotted a group of other sad-eyed animals like himself...elderly and infirm. Unlike the pets waiting for their special people, these animals weren't playing, but simply lying on the green grass, forlornly and miserably staring out at the pathway leading to the Bridge. The recent arrival knew he had no choice but to join them. And so, he took his place among them, just watching the pathway and waiting.

One of the newest arrivals at the Bridge, who was waiting for his special people, could not understand what he had just witnessed and asked one of the pets who had been there for some time to explain it to him.

"That poor dog was a rescue, sent to the pound when his owner grew tired of him. The way you see him now, with graying fur and sad, cloudy eyes, was exactly the way he was when he was put into the kennels. He never, ever made it out and passed on only with the love and comfort that the kennel workers could give him as he left his miserable and unloved existence on Earth for good. Because he had no family or special person to give him love, he has nobody to escort him across the Bridge."

The first animal thought about this for a minute and then asked, "So what will happen now?"

As he was about to receive his answer, the clouds suddenly parted and the all-invasive gloom lifted. Coming toward the Bridge could be seen a single figure...a person who, on Earth, had seemed quite ordinary...a person who, just like the elderly dog, had just left Earth forever. This figure turned toward a group of the sad animals and extended

outstretched palms. The sweetest sounds they had ever heard echoed gently above them and all were bathed in a pure and golden light. Instantly, each was young and healthy again, just as they had been in the prime of life.

From within the gathering of pets waiting for their special people, a group of animals emerged and moved toward the pathway. As they came close to the passing figure, each bowed low and each received a tender pat on the head or a scratch behind the ears. Their eyes grew even brighter as the figure softly murmured each name. Then, the newly-restored pets fell into line behind the figure and quietly followed this person to the Bridge, where they all crossed together.

The recent arrival who had been watching, was amazed. "What happened?"

"That was a rescuer," came the answer. "That person spent a lifetime trying to help pets of all kinds. The ones you saw bowing in respect were those who found new homes because of such unselfish work. They will cross when their families arrive. Those you saw restored were ones who never found homes. When a rescuer arrives, they are permitted to perform one, final act of rescue. They are allowed to escort those poor pets that couldn't place on Earth across the Rainbow Bridge. You see, all animals are special to them...just as they are special to all animals."

"I think I like rescuers," said the recent arrival.

"So does God," was the reply.

--Author Unknown--