

STRAY THOUGHTS

Happy
Valentines Day!
From The Animals
at WSHS

Our Shining STARS

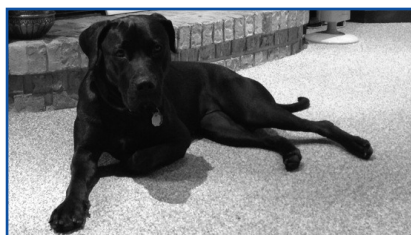
In 2007, West Suburban Humane Society founded one of our most important programs, the STAR (Special Training and Reinforcement) program. The STAR program sends dogs with behavioral problems to camp! The problems can range from difficult-to-handle to aggressive behavior. Many animals have been neglected and abused, and have developed negative behaviors to help them cope. The program allows dogs a smoother transition to successful adoption placement. In addition the quick transition helps to free up available space for other animals needing to be placed up for adoption.

West Suburban is a no kill shelter. Only extreme cases of aggression or poor health call for euthanasia. Because of this longstanding, forty year old policy, many animals with issues may stay at the shelter a very long time while waiting for that perfect family to come in and adopt them. This not only causes more stress to the animal, often making their issues worse, but it is very costly to the shelter when money is spent on maintaining the animal instead of adopting more animals. This is why the STAR program is so important.

When the dogs return from training, they need this training reinforced to ensure that they retain what they've learned. It is very important that the STAR dogs are handled in a consistent manner, so select volunteers are trained on the methods used by the trainer. Once the dog is adopted, the owners receive a free one on one session with the trainer. Their adoption fee also includes a Premium Extended Training Plan where they can choose from 5 one hour classroom training sessions or one private in-home training session.

Since 2007, we have sent over 200 dogs through the program with a high rate of success.

One such story is Halle, a 2 year old, black lab mix that came to us as a stray from Melrose Park Animal Hospital. Halle was a high energy dog that volunteers found difficult to handle. She was mouthy and exhibited leash aggression around other dogs. We sent her to two weeks of training and she came back a different dog. Halle not only learned all of her basic obedience commands but she was no longer mouthy and her leash aggression around other dogs had improved considerably.



Halle

In August, Halle was adopted into her forever home and is doing great. Her owners recently sent us the following update:

"Just wanted to send you and WSHS a quick update on Halle! She is doing REALLY well, and we LOVE her. She is such a great dog. We are keeping up with her distraction training and setting up daycare times for her to continue to socialize with other dogs. We notice that she loves to run around and play with dogs more her size. I get nervous about her with smaller dogs, though. And we are working on her leash anxiousness, too, around other dogs. Its hard work, but we will definitely keep working on it. She

just wants to meet everyone — and is a little vocal letting people know that! :)

That's what we are working on, and I have Mike, who was working with her at Bark Avenue, coming over tomorrow to do some additional one-on-one training.

Thank you for your help, and attached are a few pictures of Halle. We will send more soon! :)"

Currently, we have 5 STAR dogs at the shelter that are waiting to find their forever homes. Our longest resident is Bieber, a 7 year old Pit Bull Mix. Bieber was returned to us in April of 2012 because his owner became ill and could no longer take care of him. Bieber has social anxiety and needs to be introduced to new people slowly. He is housebroken, crate trained and knows all of his obedience commands. He is a playful, fun-loving dog and a staff and volunteer favorite! Our wish for the New Year is that someone will fall in love with Bieber like we have and give him a forever home.



Bieber

The training investment of these dogs is costly, but the results have been many. West Suburban feels the training costs will save the shelter money in the long run and better yet, it saves lives!



Upcoming Events

630-960-9600, ext. 25

FEBRUARY

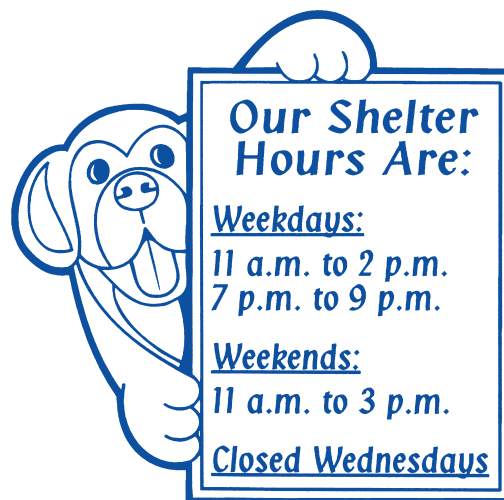
- 14th, Friday Happy Valentine's Day from the homeless animals at the shelter!
- 25th, Tuesday Spay Day USA – Stop by the shelter or check out our website at www.WSHS-DG.org for your Spay/Neuter discount coupon.

APRIL

- 20th, Sunday Easter – WSHS will be closed today.

MAY

- 10th, Saturday – Petals for Pets Plant Sale
11th, Sunday Look for more information on page 5 of this edition of Stray Thoughts.



WSHS Wish List

- Paper Towels
- Laundry Detergent
- Bleach
- Anti-bacterial Hand Soap
- Dish Washing Liquid
- 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. 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
- Stamps (to be used for postage)
- Garbage bags (13 & 30 gallon sizes)
- Batteries – AA, 9 Volt and C
- 6" paper plates
- Lint Traps
- Volunteers!
- **Monetary donations are always appreciated!**

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



BFC donated services to the production of "Stray Thoughts." The design and printing of the newsletter were provided below cost.

1051 N Kirk Rd, Batavia, IL 60510
800.774.6840 | 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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Animal Care Assistants: Brigitte Black and Dana Bartunek
Adoption Desk Manager: Mary Edwards (Ext. 10)
Volunteer Coordinator: Patti Miller (Ext. 45)

ADOPTION CENTER:

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

Callie

9 month old, Female, Whippet Mix

Hi, I'm Callie! I am staying with a shelter volunteer and this is what she says about me: "Callie is the princess of puppy kisses! She will cover you with them morning, noon and night. Callie is in a foster home with mature dogs, but that doesn't stop her from having the time of her life. Callie has taught our awkwardly social pup that wrestling is the best game in town. They will tussle with each other for hours. And, it's a great day when Callie has convinced all the dogs to play Chase Me, which means everyone has to bark and run after Callie as she dashes around the house. With all this fun going on, you would never know that Callie is on medication for seizures. She takes her medicine with breakfast and dinner and, since being on the medication, her seizures are under control. Her medication costs about \$30 a month. Callie is crate-trained and house-trained. You do need to let her outside regularly. And, just in case no one is in the mood to play, Callie has learned to occupy herself with her antler chews and Nylabones." For more information on how to set up a time to meet me in person, please contact the shelter. You won't be disappointed!



Smokey Joe

1½ year old, Male, Catahoula Leopard Dog Mix



Hi, I'm Smokey Joe! I used to stay with a volunteer family and this is what they had to say about me: "Loves water, ice cubes and really loves to run. He is crate trained, will only do his business in the grass, not on driveway, patio or sidewalk. He loves to play fetch." I need a yard that is fenced in because I like to run so much, but I can jump a low fence, so at least 5 feet is needed for me. I like to chase things, including cats (none for me in my new home, please). I am good with other dogs and if they like to run, too, that's even better! I know all my basic obedience commands and I know how to use a treadmill. I'm a bit fearful of new people, but if given a few minutes to warm up on my terms, we'll be friends for life. If you have an adult home (I can be too friendly with kids), a secure fence, can get me the exercise I need on a daily basis and have had a dog before, come see me. We are a match!

Mitzie

5 year old, Female, Calico DLH

Hi, I'm Mitzie! Here's my story: my owner was one of the founders of this shelter, many years ago. She lived with her sister, me and another cat who came a few years before me (Duckie, also here at WSHS). Every day, the ladies would sing to us and brush us. We even got to eat special greens grown just for us. We were spoiled and pampered and it was a fantastic life. We are here at the shelter now because our owner died and her sister was moving to assisted living. This is a far cry from the life I lived before coming here, but I am trying to make the best of it. I live with a bunch of other cats, which is not my favorite set-up, but it beats living in a cage. Duckie is also here, and we can go to our forever home together or individually. We will be fine either way, as long as we are loved and adored like we have grown accustomed to :)



Riven

2 year old, Female, Tortie

I'm Riven. I am hoping someone will appreciate that I am a quiet girl, less demanding than many of my counterparts here. I guess you could say I am an observer. I was friendly and affectionate in my former home, and described as a "really sweet" cat. I was returned after my owners split up and each moved away. Neither could take me along, so now I'm starting over. I'd be fine in a home with cats and/or dogs. I am a little timid, so maybe older kids would be best. Come meet me and see my beautiful markings...we could be great together!

Ask the Trainer

Why does my dog lick his paw?

Many dogs lick their paws and they do it for a variety of reasons. Before you start correcting your dog for the constant licking, it is important to figure out the cause. One very common cause of dogs licking their paws is allergies. Allergies can be environmental or caused by their diet. Pay attention and see if the licking corresponds to a certain time of year. That will typically tell us that the reason is an environmental allergy. If the licking is year round it is worth seeing if your dog might have a food allergy. The most economical way to do this is to put your dog on a new diet (duck and potato foods are a popular choice for this) and see if the licking stops. The next stop to ruling out allergies is to talk with your vet and see what they recommend.

Another common reason that dogs will constantly lick a paw is when they have

pain either in the paw or elsewhere in the body. Many dogs that are having pain anywhere in their body will lick a front paw continuously as a way to deal with the pain. This can be tough to identify since dogs are so good at hiding their pain, but it does happen and is something you might want to discuss with your veterinarian.

The third reason that many dogs lick their paws is when the lick is a behavioral issue rather than a health issue. Dogs that lick their paws for behavioral reasons are typically bored and frustrated and licking the paw is how the boredom manifests itself. If this is the case it is extremely important to start giving the dog more exercise and mental stimulation during the day in order to calm the brain. Not all dogs that suffer from boredom and frustration are high energy dogs, so I wouldn't rule this possibility out just because your dog looks calm on the

outside. I have seen dogs that have licked their paws until the fur is gone and hotspots have developed with no medical cause for it. We created training plans for the dogs that focused on giving them a job that would give them a sense of purpose each day, so when they lay down at night their brains were calm enough that licking wasn't needed. If you catch this problem early it is much easier to address than after it has been occurring for years and turns into a serious issue.

Please address questions and suggestions for future Ask the Trainer articles to:

Matt Covey
West Suburban
Humane Society
1901 Ogden Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515
director@wshs-dg.org



E-Mails and Letters From Adopters

Good Morning,

I received the follow up letter from you guys, inquiring about Gouda and Wendy. I thought I'd send an e-mail rather than the letter, as there isn't enough room to tell you how happy and thankful we are for these 2 goofballs!

Gouda's new name is now Chip, and Wendy's new name is now Boots. These two are certainly characters! Although they were in separate rooms when we adopted them, it's almost like they came from the same litter! They both get along so well and love to play and chase each other throughout the house. Chip is more playful than Boots, and loves to jump on her. As I type this e-mail to you, Chip is batting the computer screen! They love to jump on my kitchen table (a work in progress to teach them NO!) and love to be held like babies.

No behavior problems to note. When we took both of them to our vet for a follow up, we found Chip has a virus (nothing serious), just sneezing and eye goops. Boots is currently on a diet, as the vet says she's developing "a fat underbelly"...must be taking after me! :)

When we came in to adopt these two, it was the day before your Halloween hold. Needless to say, we didn't know about this, and didn't know the adoption process took 2 days. I want to thank you for making an exception for us, and allowing us to

take them home on the first day of the hold. I can't imagine having to wait a whole week before enjoying these two. They have definitely made our lives brighter, and more amusing. We've had to make some minor adjustments, like not keeping bags on the floor (as the both of them will try to climb in), and pushing in all our chairs (as those lead to climbing on tables, and counters), but they are fantastic and we love them to pieces!

I've attached a bunch of pictures, a few of the hundreds from my phone. It's safe to say we're obsessed! Thank you for bringing joy into our lives, and being so kind. I will definitely be telling my friends who need to adopt, to go to WSHS!

Take Care,

Sara Foss



Gouda and Wendy



HEARTY THANKS



The Edgewood Elementary School Student Council in Woodridge collected food, litter, supplies and \$13 and donated it to the shelter.

Ryan Kohlsaas made dog biscuits, sold them, and donated the proceeds of \$50 to the shelter.

The 6th grade class at **Pierce Downers School** in Downers Grove donated dog toys to the shelter.

St. Joan of Arc, Girl Scout Troop 101, collected and donated \$79.58 to the shelter.

Quinn Beck asked for gifts for the shelter instead of gifts for him on his birthday. He received and donated \$35, a PetSmart gift card, food and supplies.

Charlotte Orr and Cate Gihooley had a 4 year old dog themed birthday party. Instead of gifts they asked for donations for the shelter. They received numerous food and supply donations.

Sophia Ponakala of Hinsdale turned 8 and asked for gifts for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She received toys and money and donated them to the shelter.

Sara Severin turned 9 and asked for gifts for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She received and donated \$60.

Amanda Rosland of Westmont turned 12 and asked for gifts for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She received and donated, supplies, toys and \$150.

Jessica Kreiman donated \$100 to the shelter in honor of her birthday.

Lauren Phillipe, Tara and Addy Liska, Summer Phillipe, Will Phillipe and Ellen Finley held a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$25 to the shelter.

The St. Andrews Episcopal Church Youth Group donated food and supplies to the shelter.

Connor Hickey donated \$1.25 to shelter to help us take care of the homeless animals.

Fairmount School Girl Scout Troop #51825 donated \$23 to the shelter.

Maria Vela of Downers Grove turned 16 and asked for gifts for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She received and donated food, money and supplies.

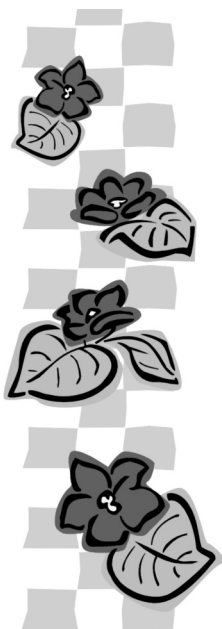
In the month of December, **Doggie Depot** in Downers Grove collected donations for the shelter. They received numerous food, supply and toy donations.

The students at **Lisle Senior High School** collected and donated dog and cat food.

The employees at **Neiman Marcus** in Oak Brook collected and donated 5 large boxes of food and supplies for the shelter.



Petals for Pets



Come for a blooming good time and purchase your spring flowers all while helping the animals at the West Suburban Humane Society.

West Suburban will host their annual plant sale on May 10th and 11th from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm

**The event will be held at the shelter
1901 Ogden Avenue Downers Grove**

630-960-9600 x 25 ~ www.WSHS-DG.org

Volunteer Spotlight

Karen Berger and Diane Harke

When you enter the doors of WSHS's office on Thursday evenings, you will be greeted by two seasoned office volunteers, Karen Berger and Diane Harke. With about 20 years of combined experience at West Suburban, Karen and Diane are more than "greeters;" they also serve as ambassadors, representing WSHS and our animals to potential adopters, and fielding questions from adopters, owners, visitors and volunteers at the same time. They're also responsible for screening applicants, completing adoptions, and answering the phones. Whew!

Both Karen and Diane bring their own experiences and know-how to the volunteer job. Karen says, "Between Diane and me, she is definitely the cat person and I am definitely the dog person." Diane agrees, saying, "Karen is very well versed on dogs and crate training. My expertise is more on cat issues" adding, "between the two of us, I feel we have a lot of knowledge."

While their animal expertise is invaluable, their excellent people skills and attention to details are also called upon regularly. As Karen says, "Communication is the key." In the screening process, Diane and Karen need to be able to gather information from the potential adopters in order to match them with the right animals. They also need to explain our policies, including requirements for renters, the need to have the whole family on board, why we ask for veterinarian information, and so on; and to tell potential adopters about any restrictions, such as whether the adoptive animal needs to be the only animal in the house; the need for a fenced yard for certain dogs; the age restrictions for children in the adoptive family.

When not volunteering, both Diane and Karen are very active. Karen enjoys skiing and doing things with her grown daughters, and she has recently returned to school. Diane fills her time with golf, gardening, working out, and SCUBA diving.

Not satisfied with merely working with animals at the shelter, each woman has a furry pal at home. Diane has a 9 year old Scottish fold cat named Miles that she adopted from a Pittsburg shelter when Miles was five. And though not exactly "furry," Diane also is home to a 50 year old red-eared slider turtle named Happy that she has had for its entire life! Karen has a senior citizen dog, now 15, which she adopted from an Indiana shelter just 3 years ago.



Karen shared this great story about working the front desk:

"One night, a couple came in with a dog food donation. They were very pleasant, and we chatted for a minute before they left. Two minutes later, they came back in with a donation check for a large amount — \$1000! I was speechless!"

Clearly, her people skills left a mark on the hearts of those donors. It's that kind of dedication that Karen and Diane each bring to the job. We are grateful for their commitment.



WSHS Included in Generous Donors' Estate Plans

Today, it is more common for people to create estate plans. WSHS will miss Irene Halicka and has been fortunate to have received a gift from the estate of Irene Halicka this year. Additionally, we have been informed by Janice Mack and by Mrs. Ute O'Malley of their decisions to include WSHS in their estate plans.

Irene Halicka, a generous and dedicated volunteer of 15 years at WSHS, continued her philanthropic interests toward the cats, dogs and families we serve by including WSHS in her estate. Irene volunteered in the cattery and isolation area. She also helped out at various fundraising events throughout the years. When she passed away, she was fostering Griffin, a 14 year old cat with hyperthyroidism, renal disease and a heart condition. Irene knew he wasn't adoptable, but took him home to make sure he spent the last years of his life in a loving home. Griffin is still with us and is now living with her nephew.

Prior to Griffin, Irene fostered Bon Jour until he was healthy enough to be adopted by a permanent family. In addition to her willingness to foster animals, Irene adopted three cats (Tiger, Snickers and Shadow) from WSHS during her years of volunteer work.

Her family has said she had a great love of animals and truly enjoyed her volunteer work at WSHS. She was especially pleased with the renovation of the Cattery and wanted to help WSHS expand its capacity to serve.

After Ms. Halicka passed away in 2013, we learned about the generous bequest she had made to WSHS. She was a huge supporter of "no-kill" shelters and hoped her bequest would encourage others to include WSHS in their estate planning. She believed this would ensure the continuation and expansion of the great service and care WSHS provides for animals and families.

WSHS, the hundreds of cats and dogs we place into adoption each year, and the families that adopt the companion pets express their gratitude to Irene and her family.

Janice Mack first heard about West Suburban Humane Society when she found stray kittens that were born at a nursing home. The nursing home was going to dispose of the kittens, which were six days old. But when Janice got wind of it, she intervened.

Mrs. Mack, a resident of Westmont, searched for a humane society and found WSHS. She brought the kittens as well as the stray mother to WSHS. The mother was found to be unadoptable and had apparently been a stray for the majority, if not all, of her lifetime. So, she was spayed and returned to Mrs. Mack, who diligently fed her daily from her garage. After considerable time, the mother developed a sense of trust in Janice, enabling Janice to take her inside her home on occasion. Eventually, the cat became Janice's house cat.

After her initial experience with WSHS, Janice became a volunteer. Janice initially helped keep the cats clean and transferred them to other locations at WSHS while she cleaned their cages. With the new Cattery, there weren't many cages to clean anymore. Now she volunteers to help the cats become socialized and ready for adoption.

Mrs. Mack said that WSHS is her favorite not-for-profit, although she has also included the Field Museum and the Morton Arboretum in her estate plans. But first she wanted to make sure that there was enough for her family. After that, she and her husband Bernard determined a percentage of their estate to be given to WSHS.



"If you think about all the good work that WSHS does...spaying and neutering cats and dogs and providing an alternative to puppy mills that sell their dogs to pet stores...WSHS is a wonderful cause...Pets are cast out. They are the fault of people...We are responsible...You can just never give up."

Mrs. Mack, the dogs and cats, and the families that adopt them, thank you for helping to assure WSHS's ability to help others in the future — and WSHS thanks you, too, for being a member of our Legacy Society.

Mrs. Ute O'Malley, a volunteer since the 1980s, informed WSHS that she included us in her estate plans. As an animal lover and a strong believer in rescued pets, she wanted to help ensure WSHS's financial future and include WSHS as a part of her legacy. "Everyone at WSHS is so devoted... And any charity is only as good as its leadership," she said.

As a volunteer, Ute spent most of her time treating sick animals, including providing them with medication. Mrs. O'Malley has, since her initial familiarity with WSHS, adopted seven cats.

Her children are grown and adequately provided for financially so she wanted to further the mission and capabilities of WSHS.

It was important to her that WSHS have funds available for future use. Her gift is stated as a percentage of the value of her estate.

The idea for including WSHS in her estate plans came from her husband Reed. He encouraged the idea since he knew how much caring for abandoned pets meant to Ute.

If you have, or are considering adding WSHS to your estate plans, please contact **Brad Carlson, Development Director**, at development@wshs-dg.org or call him at (708) 488-9775. He may help provide you with ideas to think about to help you best fulfill your wishes — and we would be happy to add you as our newest member to the Legacy Society.

Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

Dear Dr. Main:

What happens when my dog develops a mass?

Cancer is a major cause of disease in veterinary patients, and surgical removal of tumors is one of the most common procedures performed by veterinarians. In human cancer patients approximately sixty percent are cured with surgery alone.

The detection of solid tumor masses often occurs at the time of the pet's annual physical examination. At this time the location, size, and general appearance of the mass is recorded; as well as the condition of the regional lymph nodes. The next step involves sampling the tumor. This can be accomplished by fine needle aspirate, needle core biopsy, incisional, or excisional biopsy. The purpose of the biopsy is to determine the tumor type and behavior. Based on this information planning can begin for the surgical removal of the mass.

In general the more aggressive the tumor mass the more aggressive the surgical procedure for removal. Clearly tumor characteristics and location will affect the surgical plan. If the tumor is believed to

be malignant then tumor staging establishes to what extent the tumor has invaded local, regional, or distant tissues. The staging usually includes taking three X-rays of the chest, feeling and or needle aspirating near by lymph nodes, and in some cases ultrasound, CT scan, or MRI. Of course localized disease is much better than cancer that is present in more than one location in the body.

There are several levels of surgical aggressiveness or surgical dose shall we say. Interestingly the most common surgical mistake is that the surgical dose is too low. It is important to consider the tumor type, prognosis, ability to achieve margins, and concurrent disease when planning for surgery. The first surgery is often the best chance for positive outcome.

Surgical dosing could range from intralesional, that is, debulking the mass; to radical resection with removal of an entire tissue compartment. In general it is important for the surgeon to remove all the unhealthy tissue with a border of healthy tissue around the mass. The tumor type, grade, behavior, and location will determine the aggressiveness of the surgery.

During the surgical procedure it is important for the surgeon to handle the cancerous tissue as little as possible and to change out the surgical instruments just prior to closing the surgical wound.

Once the mass is removed, the edges of the tissue are marked with black ink or suture, such that the pathologist can determine the extent of the margins of healthy tissue around the tumor.

In the event the margins are not clean, known as a dirty margin, additional surgery will be needed to remove surgical scar and attain the margin needed.

In summary surgery is often the best option to treat a solid tumor mass. With careful planning and attention to detail often outcomes can be excellent and surgery can be curative.

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



Vehicle Donation Program

In addition to receiving a tax deduction, you will know that your donation was used to save the lives of homeless dogs & cats.

**Call or Visit
1-877-CARS-4-US
(227-7487)**

**www.donationline.com
Or
www.WSHS-DG.org**

