



# West Suburban Humane Society

# STRAY THOUGHTS

Happy  
Valentines Day!  
From The Animals  
at WSHS

## Rootbeer – This Is My Year!



*Rootbeer*

"I'll take a large Rootbeer to go, please!" That's what one of my buddies says when he comes to take me on an outing. It cracks everyone up. Yep, I'm Rootbeer and this is my story: I arrived at WSHS on 1/23/10 as a nine month old, skinny adolescent. As time went on and no one adopted me, I grew into an adult and out of my kennel run. The staff and volunteers who love me decided I needed more space and more stimulation, so I moved to Bark Ave. Daycamp in July. I can't stay here forever. It's fun, but a family is what I'd give anything for.

Maybe you have met a dog like me before. I am a doberman mix and we like to work. I would do great as a search dog. I am super-smart. Puzzles or hide and seek games are like candy to me. This is part of the reason I didn't like living in a kennel: so boring! All my buddies have done their best to keep me occupied. They have lives and pets of their own who need them, though, so I understand I can't have them to myself.



"Rootbeer always made me feel special when I walked into the kennel. He bonds deeply with people who care about him and I think he will flourish in a home environment. He can walk for miles yet is quite content just spending time with you and being petted, brushed or massaged. On our

walks he was often complimented by people on the street on his good looks and great leash manners." That's from my friend Pam who spent lots of time with me at the shelter. Boy do I miss those massages! Even though I am away from the kennel right now, Pam never stops talking about me to visitors and posting my bio wherever she goes. She works hard at trying to find me the home she knows I want so badly.

My buddy Gary has been visiting me at Bark Ave. Daycamp: "Over time now I've seen him becoming more affectionate. He is becoming a lap dog. I think he would be a dog that would be happy to sit on a couch with his owner. {One would need a big couch.}



At times now I get a face full of Rootbeer dog slobber." Gary gets me. The key word he uses is "becoming". He knows that I am emerging into a wonderful pet. All I need now is a family to "become" part of.

I do require a certain type of home. Get ready for the fine print: I can be protective. I am working on this, though to really make progress in this area, I have to be in a home environment. I am fine with kids I know, but might get nervous if my family has other kids over. For now, I need an adult only home. I am good with other dogs and will always want to play rough with them, so it would need to be a pal with a similar style of play. I don't like cats; please don't fault me for that one! I have had lots of training and my adoption comes

with a free session to get us off on the right paw. Ideally, my owner would have experience with large, working breed dogs; someone who knows how to give me structure, discipline, stimulation and affection. I need kindness in my life and I need a leader who wants to involve me in all aspects of his or her life. That's not too much, is it? I have waited over a year for the right family to come along and hope they are out there waiting for me.



My pal Sandi has been trying to give me a taste of home life. She takes me places, including her daughter's house where I can hang out and play in the back yard. "Rootbeer is turning into a more trusting and loving dog. While driving he sticks his head between the seats and gives a kiss, but is more and more well mannered in the car. We have found that as a large dog he loves agility. The A-frame, beam and tunnels are like nothing to him. Not that he would necessarily be good in agility trials, but the challenge is there for him and he loves performing.

To be in his forever place and to know that someone is there for him on a constant basis would be the best life has to offer him. He is still like a punky teenager at times, but settles in quicker each time." I look so forward to outings with Sandi. She makes sure I have fun while practicing my manners. She has patience with me when I mess up and understands that at a year and a half, I am still a boy who never had a home to learn in.

Wanna meet me in person? Please call the adoption desk: 630-960-9600 x10 or email [adoptiondesk@wshs-dg.org](mailto:adoptiondesk@wshs-dg.org) to set up a visit. This is my year, I can feel it. 2011 will bring me my forever family!

## Upcoming Events

630-960-9600, ext. 25

### FEBRUARY

- 14th, Monday Happy Valentines Day from the homeless animals at the shelter!
- 22nd, Tuesday Spay Day USA. Stop by the shelter or check our web site at [www.WSHS-DG.org](http://www.WSHS-DG.org) for your Spay/Neuter Discount Coupon.

### APRIL

- 24th, April Easter – WSHS will be closed today.

### MAY

- 7th, Saturday – Petals for Pets Plant Sale  
8th, Sunday Look for more information on our Fifth Annual Plant Sale on page 4 of this edition of Stray Thoughts.

## 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!

## 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.



INTEGRATEDPRINTMANAGEMENT

1051 N Kirk Rd  
Batavia, IL 60510  
630.879.9240  
800.774.6840  
Fax 879.9260  
[www.bfcprint.com](http://www.bfcprint.com)



## Our Shelter Hours Are:

### Weekdays:

11 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

### Weekends:

11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Closed Wednesdays

## 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.

### BOARD MEMBERS:

Pat Rowland, President  
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### THE WSHS STAFF:

Executive Director: Carolyn Mossberger (Ext. 25)  
Animal Care Manager: Sarah Stromberg (Ext. 23)  
Night and Weekend Managers: Catherine Schmitt and Jen Laurinaitis  
Animal Care Assistants: Brigitte Black and Stephanie Grimes  
Adoption Desk Manager: Kristy Moran (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](mailto:Director@WSHS-DG.org)  
Phone: 630-960-9600 Fax: 630-960-9604

# The Cats and Dogs at WSHS Need YOU!



**Maizy**



**Rootbeer**



**Timmy**

West Suburban Humane  
Society  
1901 Ogden Ave  
Downers Grove, IL 60515

West Suburban Humane Society



It takes a village to save an animal. This couldn't be more true for West Suburban Humane Society. Its village of volunteers, supporters and adopters make it possible to save hundreds of cats and dogs every year.

Foster homes for cats and dogs are a major need. Foster families take care of the animals until they are adopted. All you need to do is fill out an application and be approved. See the "Top 10 List" for some reasons to foster.

## A Foster Parent's Story

Why become a foster parent? It is truly one of the most rewarding experiences I can imagine and it makes a huge difference in the life of that dog or cat. Animals at WSHS arrive in many conditions. They are usually scared, dirty and in need of tender loving care. They bond so quickly to their temporary families because often they have never had love or attention from people before and they soak it up by the gallon.

When it is time for a foster animal to get adopted, it barely resembles the animal who arrived on our doorstep. We are always sad to see them go, but giving another family the gift of a special pet outweighs the sadness of saying goodbye. I hope you give it a try. Please consider becoming a foster parent. There is a dog or cat waiting for you right now.

Another way to show your support is to spread the word about what WSHS does. Every volunteer, supporter and adopter makes a difference. In the lives of cats and dogs, no contribution is too small!

## Top Ten Reasons to Foster Cats and Dogs at WSHS

10. If you can't give an animal a permanent home, fostering is an excellent alternative.

9. Fostering is FREE! All of the animal's food, supplies and medical needs are paid for by WSHS.

8. Fostering increases the likelihood of a successful adoption.

7. It feels wonderful when the perfect forever home comes along.

6. Cat & dogs are much happier in homes than in cages and kennels.

5. You will be fulfilling a need. There is always a shortage of foster homes.

4. WSHS can only rescue as many animals as there is space for.

3. You will be providing a rescued animal with the love and comfort they deserve.

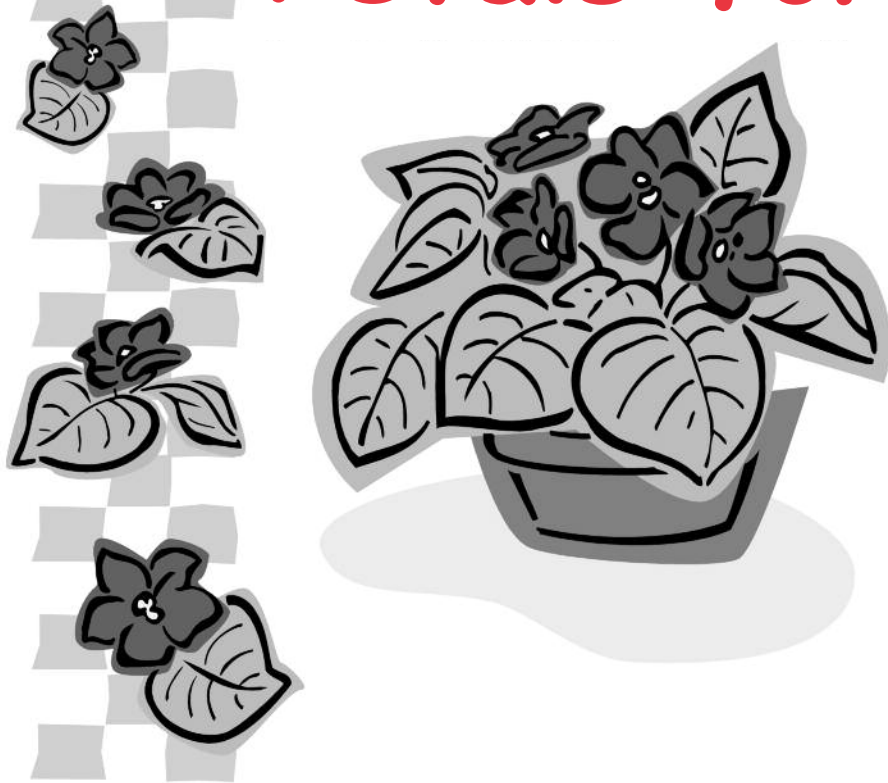
2. The dogs and cats will give you tons of love and memories to cherish forever.

And the #1 reason to foster for WSHS is...

1. You will be saving the life of an animal in need.



# 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 fifth annual plant sale on May 7th and 8th 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](http://www.WSHS-DG.org)

# Ready For a Home



## Sammi Sweetheart

**4 year old, Female, Foxhound Mix**

Hi, I'm Sammi. I am a sweet dog that needs to find her forever home. I am good with kids 5 years and older and other dogs. I don't mind cats but I am a little afraid of them. I walk great on leash and know all of my basic obedience commands. I even come with a free session with my own personal trainer. I will make a great dog for some lucky family. Could that family be yours?

## Mistletoe

**5 year old, Female, American Bulldog**

Hi, my name is Mistletoe. I was recently returned because my owners had a baby and could no longer take care of me. I am a super sweet girl. I was housebroken in my previous home. I am good with kids 8 years and older. I am not fond of other animals, so I need to be your one and only. I walk great on leash and know all of my basic obedience commands. If you are interested in adopting me, you need to have owned a dog as an adult. Stop by and visit me today!



## Anthony

**3 year old, Male, Black and White DSH**

When you meet me you will notice how handsome I am. I'm not bragging, just stating a fact. I am a clown too! I spent a while living in a cage here, but now I live in an office with three other cats. I am respectful of the old guys in here and I kind of fancy the little grey girl. I like to lounge upside down with my feet on the wall and I have fun climbing as high as I can to play king of the hill. If you come visit me, just give me a few minutes to get used to you. I like to be around people. It's just that I need a few minutes to size up new faces.

## Virgine

**2 year old, Female, White with Black Markings**

I was really down and out when I arrived here. I had a 12 week old kitten and I was 6 weeks along with my next litter. Now I am done raising babies forever. Finally, I can get on with my own life. I have lived in two temporary care homes and both of the families agreed about what a lovely personality I have. I am great with other cats but I also bond well with people. I have really unique markings. I'm a cute bundle of love, if I do say so myself.



# HEARTY THANKS



Diane Harke, a WSHS volunteer, hosted a birthday party for her two cats Scarlett and Miles. 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.

Jayden Rivera of Downers Grove turned 7 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food, supply, toy and monetary donations.

The employees at Toyota Financial Services in Downers Grove collected food and supply donations on behalf of the animals at the shelter.

Nick Konwerski, a WSHS volunteer, sold cookies to his band students and raised \$314 for the shelter.

The Lace School P.A.W.S. Club of Darien made cat toys and dog treat bags for the animals at the shelter.

Brooke Raleigh of Downers Grove turned 7 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food donations for the shelter.

The Downers Grove Chamber of Commerce Young Professionals Network hosted a Howl-O-Ween bash to benefit the shelter. They raised \$517.

The Lange family donated 5 bags of cat food and 5 bags of dog food to the shelter.

*Correction – In the last edition of Stray Thoughts, I incorrectly listed the online coupon blog deranged.me as deranged.me.com. Deranged.me has donated collars, bowls and several bags of dry cat food to the shelter. My apology for any confusion this may have caused.*

Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church in Winfield, IL for their generous food donations.

Kate Barker of Downers Grove turned 9 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food donations for the shelter.

The Club Care and Share students at Belle Aire School in Downers Grove collected numerous food and supply donations for the animals at the shelter.

The We Can Club from Manning School in Westmont collected supplies on behalf of the shelter.

Roberta Kleist, a WSHS adopter, and her coworkers at Dominick's donated dog food to the shelter.

Gabby Schelthoff from South East Alternative School keeps a donation box at school and collects food and supply donations for the shelter.

Kristin Skelton, owner of Floofins & Co. collected and donated food on behalf of the animals at the shelter.

Kathy Roberts, owner of Potted Petals, Inc. in Lombard, hosted a Ghouls Night Out fundraiser and collected food and supply donations on behalf of the shelter.

Bison Cares in St. Charles, IL chose WSHS as one of the three charities they donated money to this holiday season. They donated an amazing \$1,500.

Rho Pi Phi Fraternity at Midwestern University Chicago College of Pharmacy raised and donated \$75 to the shelter.

The Tenorio Family donated food and toys to the animals at the shelter in honor of their dog who passed away.

The fifth grade religious education students at St. Mary of Goslyn collected donations for the animals at the shelter.

Lana Razma turned 10 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for herself. She collected money and donated one of each of the items on our wish list.



# Ask The Trainer by Matt Covey, Suburban K9

I frequently receive calls about all types of issues that people are having with their dogs, and I have to make sure that I take each call with an open mind. Many times people will tell me that they have a very dominant dog that simply will not listen and is openly defiant. Sometimes that is true, and other times they are misreading the situation. I am a big believer that there is a different approach for different types of dogs. A dominant dog that doesn't respect his owner needs firm consistent training to teach him his place in the "pack". A stressed-out anxious dog needs an outlet, not a correction. This article is about dogs needing an outlet.

Try to picture the average day of many American dogs. They wake up and are let outside, and maybe go for a brief walk. They come inside and eat breakfast and probably lie down and wait while their owner showers, gets dressed, eats, and walks out the door. They then wait patiently all day while the owner goes through a typical busy day that leaves them drained and fulfilled by the time they come home. The dog is probably then fed and hopefully walked before the owner starts the process of cooking dinner and dealing with other household chores. The human has used a lot of mental and physical energy during the day and probably has the feeling of a job well done. Pretty soon it is time for bed and in the morning we start the whole process over. The obvious problem with this scenario is that the dog has no job, outlet, or purpose. Many dogs handle this fairly well and don't show outward signs of boredom, but

some dogs develop many types of issues from this lifestyle. The boredom can manifest itself as barking, stress whining, digging, separation anxiety, uncontrollable pulling on the leash, spinning in circles, chewing on their tail or paws, and countless other undesirable behaviors. Now of course many of these behaviors could have other causes, the chewing on their paws could be allergies and the barking could be guarding the house, but I cannot cover every possibility in this article. When I speak to someone over the phone and don't receive enough information to figure out the cause of the issue I will typically set up a consultation so that I can see the dog and then figure out a plan based on what I see.

When we have determined that the root cause of the issues is boredom it is now time to find the dog an appropriate job. The great thing is that there are many choices for the average household dog that can also be fun for the owner. The point of this is to make sure that we are challenging both the dog's brain and body on a daily basis so we will typically use a combination of the following activities. Long leash walks, obedience training, agility, teaching challenging tricks, treadmill training, and mental games just to name a few. Two of my favorite indoor mental games for a dog are hide and seek (I place him in a sit-stay while I hide and then release him to allow him to search for me), and find the toy (I slowly teach him to search out a specific toy on command and then steadily increase the difficulty of the hiding spot). Teaching tricks is another great

option for mental stimulation that can be fun for both owner and dog. I will soon be posting a video online that shows how to teach some of my favorite tricks. Agility can also be very fun and does not always require going to a class or spending much money. There is no reason that you can't create your own agility course using anything you like. Two wooden stakes with a string between them can be a jump or an obstacle to crawl under. A 2x6 on the ground can serve as a balance beam. I think competition agility can be great for a dog, but there is nothing wrong with homemade obstacles of your own invention (the dog won't care).

Every dog is different of course, so some dogs might need huge amounts of physical exercise and moderate amounts of mental stimulation while others will need the opposite. Hopefully this article gave you some ideas in how to give both you and your dog a better life, and I really hope it shows that corrections are not always the answer. Sometimes dogs are not "acting out", they are "crying out" for help.

Please address questions and suggestions for future training articles to:

**Matt Covey**  
West Suburban Humane Society  
1901 Ogden Avenue  
Downers Grove, IL 60515  
[director@wsha-dg.org](mailto:director@wsha-dg.org)





# Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

## Could my dog be leaking urine?

Urinary incontinence is a common problem in dogs and can be frustrating for owners and for veterinarians trying to treat the condition. Urinary incontinence is defined as the loss of voluntary control over the retention and expulsion of urine. Simply stated dogs leak urine when the pressure in the bladder exceeds the urethral pressure.

Incontinence is recognized most often in the middle aged, spayed female medium to large breed dogs. In fact 20% of female dogs will have some degree of urinary incontinence. Most of these affected dogs can urinate normally but tend to leak urine while sleeping or in a recumbent position. The majority of dogs that have incontinence have problems with the competence of the neck of the bladder and the tone in the urethra. This is not to be confused with young dogs that leak urine related to ectopic ureters. Interestingly dogs that are spayed before the first heat cycle have a much lower incidence of urinary incontinence.

The diagnosis of urinary incontinence, defined as a weakness in the bladder neck and urethra, is obtained by ruling out other possible causes. It is critical to evaluate a urine sample for urinary track infection, as an infection could easily mimic



incontinence. Also the lower urinary tract and reproductive system should be checked for bladder stones, polyps, tumors, and other anatomic abnormalities that might cause incontinence. This evaluation can usually be completed with a thorough physical exam, along with radiology, and or ultrasound of the areas. Definitive diagnosis can be made by a specialist by actually measuring specific pressures with in the urethra.

The treatment of urinary incontinence is always medical first. The most common therapy is oral medication that stimulates the urethra to have more tone. This increase in tone offers more resistance to the outward flow of urine. Drugs like phenylpropanolamine are 74% to 92% effective in controlling incontinence. Estrogen is the other medication that has shown to be effective for this condition. It works by increasing the receptors in the urethra so that the urethra is more responsive to signals that cause increased tone. In refractory cases these two drugs can be used in combination.

In cases that do not respond to medical therapy, there are a number of surgical options. Although these options can be effective, most are

very invasive. Recently a new technique has become available that is minimally invasive and approximately 70% effective with out medication.

This new technique reflects the ongoing advancement of veterinary medicine and surgery. In this technique medical grade collagen is injected endoscopically into the urethra to thicken it and give more control of the outward flow of urine. The collagen is injected in 3 sites to form a ring that narrows the inside of the urethra. The effects are immediate, and the collagen injections have been shown to last several years.

Urinary incontinence is a common problem; therefore it is nice to know that much research is focused on the subject. This research leads to a deeper understanding of the problem as well as new treatment options.

**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



## E-Mails and Letters From Adopters



Hello All,

We just wanted to send an update about Brad Pitt. He has been with us now for close to two years, and we can't believe how fast the time has flown! Thank you so much for all you do for your animals, Brad is grateful that your shelter takes each dog and figures out what type of home they would be best in, that's how we found each other! We continue to advocate for his breed and all of his cousins alongside fellow Pit Bull lovers! He is happy, healthy, spoiled with love, and given plenty of exercise. We are currently considering finding the correct forever dog sibling as he continues to enjoy being a social dog, so you may see us in the near future.

Hope you enjoy the photo of him with his two "dog cousins", they were acting like statues!

Thank you for all you do,

Haviva, Tobias, and Brad Pitt