

STRAY THOUGHTS

Black Is Beautiful



Cinco

Did you know that shelters across the nation are full of black cats and dogs? It's true. Black animals are chosen last out of superstition or because they are too plain. At WSHS there are currently 16 black cats, more than any other color. Each year, black littermates are left behind in shelter cages as their siblings get adopted one by one. It is not uncommon for a black kitten to grow up in the shelter. The only kittens still at our shelter from last summer are black. All the rest have been chosen.

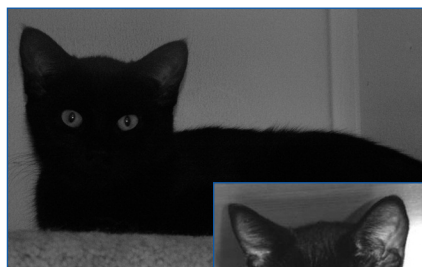
Meet **Cinco**. He came to WSHS as a very young kitten on May 5, 2009. As a black kitten, he was constantly overlooked for "prettier" ones. Once he grew into an adult, he just hasn't stood out because of his color. If someone looked deeper and spent a few minutes with Cinco, they'd see what a charmer he is, giving head butts and chatting up a storm. Cinco has spent the first two years of his life in a shelter simply because black cats get a bad rap.

Cats aren't the only targets of being left behind at shelters....black dogs are often not selected either. This problem is so common with dogs that it now has a name: Black Dog Syndrome. There are a few rescue groups in the U.S. that work specifically for black animals. The Black Dog Rescue Project says "In Hollywood white has always depicted the hero in the story and black denotes the villain. Black dogs that do appear in movies or on television are used to portray the aggressive

and dangerous characters. Because they are more difficult to photograph, they are not used in commercials and advertising campaigns. These factors all combine to leave the public with a false stereotype that black dogs are more intimidating than dogs of other colors."

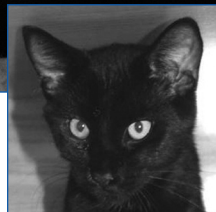
Maybe it's all about how a society views these animals. According to Wikipedia, in Great Britain black cats are a symbol of good luck. The Scottish believe that a strange black cat's arrival to the home signifies prosperity. Furthermore, it is believed that a lady who owns a black cat will have many suitors. Historically, the supernatural powers ascribed to black cats were sometimes viewed positively, for example by sailors considering a ship's cat in general and a black one in particular as good luck for their ship.

Beth & Becker were born in April 2010. They, along with three siblings were found



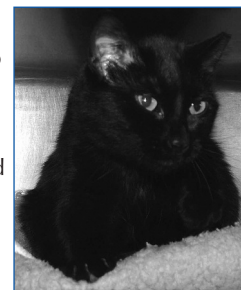
Beth

in someone's yard in July, born to a feral mother. All five kittens were rescued and placed in a temporary care home until they were well socialized and ready for adoption. Beth and Becker are the only two left from this litter. They were also the only black ones. They are at the shelter right now, waiting for someone to see past their superstitions or prejudices into what could be the pet they've been longing for.



Becker

Marie Gorski adopted her two cats from WSHS back in 1997: "When we adopted "Billy Ross" from your shelter in 1997, he was in the sick bay and technically not up for adoption. He was a 6mo black kitten with flu. He and I made eye contact and he put his paw out of the cage as we walked by...it was love at first sight; we were adopting "Smitty" who was 2 1/2 years old and had lived there for more than six months and wanted to adopt two cats. We loved both of them every day of their lives and they enriched ours. The point that I am trying to make to anyone who may read this is that your shelter does wonderful things and that older or black cats can fill your hearts with as much if not more joy than any other. They all deserve families!!!!"



ChaCha

ChaCha has been a shelter resident for several months now. She is friendly with people, cats & dogs... a perfect cat! She greets every visitor with gusto and has a dog-like approach. She will start by rubbing up against people to get their attention and if that doesn't work, she stands with her back legs on the floor and reaches her front paws up on visitors legs as if to say, "Hey, I'm down here! Let's play!" She practically stands on her head to impress people who are looking to adopt. They get such a kick out of her personality. She is one of the first cats people see in the shelter and then they go back to the cattery and choose a different, more colorful cat. If ChaCha were any color other than black, she would have been adopted her first week here.

You can help educate the public by adopting black animals yourself. Stop by the shelter today. There are plenty to choose from!

Upcoming Events

630-960-9600, ext. 25

MAY

7th, Saturday - 8th, Sunday

Petals for Pets Plant Sale
Look for more information on our Fifth Annual Plant Sale on page 3 of this edition of Stray Thoughts.

14th, Saturday

Mutts Need Moola
Look for WSHS at Local Jewel Stores.

30th, Monday

Memorial Day - WSHS will be closed today.

JUNE - ADOPT A SHELTER CAT MONTH

15th, Wednesday

WSHS General Meeting held at 7:00 pm at the Downers Grove Park District. Hear what's new at the shelter, partake of refreshments and enjoy a great guest speaker.

JULY

4th, Monday

4th of July - 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

BFC donated services to the production of "Stray Thoughts."

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

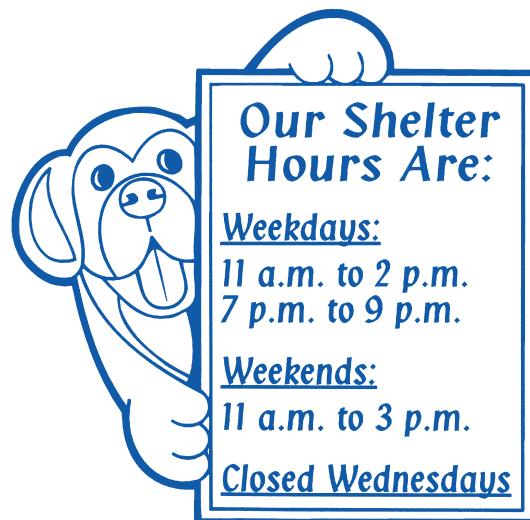


INTEGRATED PRINT MANAGEMENT

1051 N Kirk Rd
Batavia, IL 60510
630.879.9240
800.774.6840
Fax 879.9260
www.bfcprint.com

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

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
Kurt Mohr, Vice President
Michele Whitney, Recording Secretary
Lana Powers, Controller/Treasurer

Tyson Grover, Director
Renee Cantalupo, Director
Brian Ledebuhr, Director
Christina Morrison, Director
Ken Eisenberg, Director

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)
Development Manager: Sarah Leahy (Ext. 24)

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

Petals for Pets



Come for a blooming good time and purchase your spring flowers all while helping the animals at 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

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 and cats.

Call or Visit

Call 1-877-CARS-4-
US (227-7487)

www.donationline.com

Or

www.WSHS-DG.org



Ready For a Home



Eva

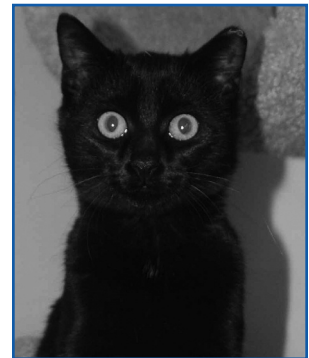
5-year-old, Female, Black dhs

Hi, I'm Eva. I am a sweet, loving cat but I don't show well here at the shelter. I was in a temporary care home for awhile and my real personality came out. I was so happy! I would do best in a quiet home with no other pets and older children. If you are willing to take a chance on me, I promise I won't disappoint you. Stop by and visit me today!

Taffeta

11 months old, Female, Black dhs

I started my life as an outdoor kitten, relying on the goodness of people to survive. My brother and I made it and were found to be tame, despite our beginning. He has been adopted and now I wait for my turn. I am lovable and quiet, sweet-tempered and silky soft. I would love to live with at least one more kitty in my forever home, and I wouldn't mind a dog, really. Don't dismiss me because of my color and you'll be pleasantly surprised.



Scout

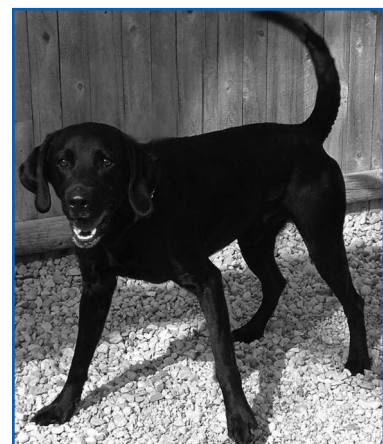
7 month old, Male, Lab/American Staffordshire Terrier Mix

Don't let my breed fool you. I'm a real sweetie. I am a gentle guy that just loves people! I am good with kids, cats and other dogs. As with any young dog my age, I would benefit from crate training and obedience training. I will make a great dog for some lucky family. Could that family be yours?

Houston

1-year-old, Male, Lab Mix

Hi, I'm Houston. I am just a big puppy! I have tons of energy and need an owner who matches my energy level. Not cats or dogs for me - I just get too excited. I would do best in a home with kids 16 years and older. With some training, I will make a great companion for an active family. Stop by and visit me today!



HEARTY THANKS

The employees at Rexnord had a food drive and collected numerous food and supply donations as well as \$290.

Andrew and Amanda Micus of Downers Grove turned 12 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for themselves. They collected \$170 for the animals at the shelter.

Simone Schuller and Charlotte Klasing raised \$32 and donated it to the animals at the shelter.

Hanna McKeever of Lombard turned 9 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected food, supplies and \$55.

The Student Council at Henry Puffer School in Downers Grove hosted a Penny War and donated the proceeds of \$591.05 to the shelter.

Girl Scout Troop 50417 collected and donated items from our wish list.

Sarah Barber of Woodridge donated \$250 of the money she received for her birthday to the animals at the shelter.

Jennifer Carver of LaGrange Highlands donated food and \$5 in honor of her birthday.

Barbara Collins of Downers Grove turned 11 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food and supply donations.



Autumn English of Elmhurst turned 11 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food and supply donations.

Hollis and Nathan Kerr and Ellie and James Krick of Downers Grove had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$36 to the shelter.

Cole Campbell turned 7 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for him. He donated food, supplies and \$135.

Target in Woodridge donated over \$100 of food and supplies to the shelter.

The SASD group of Westmont sold dog treats and donated the \$234 they raised to the shelter.

Ella Dennis of Downers Grove turned 9 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food and supply donations.

The employees at Jewel Osco in Downers Grove took up a collection and donated the money to the shelter.

Ryan Vezza turned 8 and his brother Josh turned 4. They asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for themselves. They donated food, supplies and \$202.25.

Zoey Etheridge collected numerous food and supply donations for the animals at the shelter.

The employees at LaForce Inc. in Willowbrook decided that in lieu of exchanging Christmas gifts they would make a donation to the shelter.

The students at Hadley Jr. High in Glen Ellyn held a supply drive. They collected numerous food and supply donations for the shelter.



Ask The Trainer

When looking to buy or adopt a dog it is very important to research the breed and evaluate the specific dog that you are looking at. Many times people become focused on a breed because they like the typical qualities of the breed but the specific dog they find might be a little different than the breed standard.

The first thing to figure out is what type of dog you want. Not what breed, what type. Do you want a high energy, confident, guarding type dog or a calm, relaxed, couch potato? Guarding breed dogs are great if that meshes with your personality and lifestyle. German Shepherds, Dobermans, Rottweilers, American Bulldogs, and Akitas are all guarding breeds that can be great in the right home. In the wrong home with owners that don't provide strong leadership from day one they can be extremely dangerous. Border Collies, Australian Shepherds, and Jack Russells are also great breeds but are extremely high energy and need huge amounts of physical and mental stimulation each day. In the right home they can be great, but in a home that doesn't give them a job on a



daily basis they can quickly start to develop anxiety, phobias, or aggression.

Dog breeds have been bred for a purpose and usually their behavior reflects that purpose. Usually Rottweilers are great guard dogs but that isn't always the case. Once you have decided on what type of dog you want (guarding, high energy, calm) it is time to evaluate specific dogs to see if they are what you are looking for. When evaluating guarding breed dogs it is very important to look for a confident dog that likes new people. Good guarding behavior comes from confidence, a puppy that seems withdrawn or stand-offish with new people should be a big red flag. If you want a high energy dog make sure that you pick a dog that seems to like doing the things that you want to do on a daily basis. Throw a ball, run around, or bring a dog for him to play with to make sure that it is the right fit for you. If you are purchasing a puppy make sure to evaluate the parents to see if you like their temperament.

If you are looking for the perfect family dog that is friendly, calm, and eager to



please I would suggest a Golden Retriever, Newfoundland, or Labrador Retriever. There are many great breeds out there, but these three are known to be great with dogs and children and are not typically prone to behavioral issues. The average Golden Retriever will be much more submissive than the average Akita but do not assume that will always be the case. With any breed make sure to evaluate the particular dog to make sure it is a good fit for your family. Good luck with your dog search and enjoy the results of picking the dog that is right for you.

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



Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

Dear Dr. Main:

What could cause my cat to be itchy and scabby?

In life, cats are independent and tend not follow anyone's rules. The same is true with skin disease in cats; it does not follow the rules. In our dog patients, different types of skin disease fall into certain patterns on the skin. In dogs the skin reacts in a predictable way. In cats there are no typical patterns and many skin diseases can look similar to each other.

Now that we know skin disease in cats has no typical or predictable appearance, let's look at some of the more common causes of itchy skin in cats. These would include fleas, mites, insect bites, food allergy, environmental allergy, yeast, and ring worm. All of these different causes of skin disease in cats could look very similar to each other in the way they present on the skin.

Skin disease in the cat can appear in several ways. It can appear as small pin point scabs over the body called miliary dermatitis, itchy areas of hair loss called allergic atopy, crusts and eruptions called eosinophilic granuloma complex, or head and neck itching. Any of the above skin diseases could present with any of these reactions on the skin.

Once skin disease is recognized then sorting through the possible causes to reach a diagnosis and treatment plan is the next step. First simple tests are performed in your veterinarian's office which include; skin scraping for mites,

exam for fleas, tape cytology for yeast, and fungal culture for ring worm. If any of these tests are positive then treatment is directed at the positive result. For example oral medication can be given for ring worm.

If the tests are negative which often can be the case, then treating the percentages is the way to go. Interestingly, 70-80% of these cats will have flea bite dermatitis even though fleas can not be found. Therefore a one month treatment period for fleas with a product called Capstar is completed and 70-80% of the cases will clear up. This is followed by a complete treatment of the house and other pets for the next several months.

Certain mites like *Demodex gatoi* can be very itchy to the cat and difficult to find on a skin scraping. Hence therapeutic trials with weekly lyme sulfur dips can be completed for 6 or more weeks to rule in or out this condition.

Next approximately 17% of these cats will have food allergies. These cats can be diagnosed and treated with a limited ingredient 10 week food trial. This is usually a veterinary prescription diet such as rabbit and potato.

Approximately 13% of the cases will have environmental allergies called atopy. Once fleas, mites, ring worm, and yeast are ruled out then both food allergies and environmental allergies can be treated with oral medication.

In the past allergies were often treated with steroids of various types. Steroids tended to be very effective in controlling

the reaction on the skin and clearing things up. In the last couple years a new non-steroidal medication has emerged as a viable and safer treatment option for allergies in both cats and dogs. This new medication called Atopica is approximately 80% effective in managing allergies for both dogs and cats. Other than a very small chance for stomach or intestinal upset, this is a safe drug.

In a simplified view of the drug, it works by slowly shifting the body's response from an allergic response (on an immunologic level) to a non allergic response. Patients usually respond within 3-4 weeks and stay on the medication long term.

As a side note, feline patients that develop skin problems later in life for example at greater than 10 years of age, should be checked for underlying internal neoplasia or cancer.

With patience and persistence most of the feline patients with skin problems can be diagnosed and treated.

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



Dear WSHS,

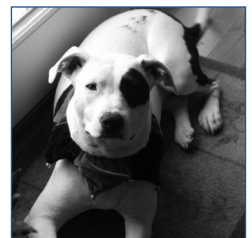
You had contacted us a while ago regarding our dog, Skylar, whom we adopted last year. I am sorry I did not reply to your letter, but I have been meaning to send you a couple of photos of our wonderful dog. We love her so much. Her name has been changed to Roxy. It suits her well. She is kind of wacky and lovable and even finds rocks good to chew on. Per your suggestion, we enrolled her in puppy classes at Bark Avenue. That was a great experience. Roxy and our family learned some valuable lessons. We would recommend Bark Avenue to all new pet owners. She loved it and so did we.

We were all a little apprehensive about raising a dog who is part pit bull. But she is so lovable and sweet! Thank you for our wonderful Roxy. And thank you to Matt at Bark Avenue for the expert advice. It is great that WSHS takes the time to match each dog with the right family, and for providing resources such as Bark Avenue to help in the transition.

Hope you enjoy the photos. One of the photos is Roxy, (Skylar), as a puppy. And the other photo is how Roxy looks now.

Best regards,

Donna & Ken Frick & family





West Suburban Humane Society

Presents:

**GREAT NEW
LOCATION!**

**LISLE COMMUNITY PARK
1825 SHORT ST.
LISLE, IL**



18th Annual

BARKAPALOOZA

WALKATHON & PET EXPO

Sunday, September 25, 2011

10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Rain or Shine

Kids Walk Free!

- 🐾 **Great prizes based on collected pledges - the more you collect the more you win!**
- 🐾 **Registration at 9:00am**
- 🐾 **Micro-chipping will be available for a small fee and "Vet Advice" for free.**
- 🐾 **A blessing for the animals will be given at 10:00 am**
- 🐾 **Don't want to walk - just come & shop with our many vendors.**
- 🐾 **Clowns, Face Painting, Balloon Sculptures**
- 🐾 **Breed Specific Rescue Groups**
- 🐾 **Kids and Kindness Zone**
- 🐾 **Give-aways—Crafts—Food—Special items for Children**
- 🐾 **For more information call: West Suburban Humane Society at (630) 960-9600, ext. 25; www.WSHS-DG.org; Come with or without a dog, bring the family, **but no other pets please.****

Waiver: In consideration of my signing this agreement, I hereby for myself, my heirs and administrators assume any and all risks which might be associated with the walk. I waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages which I may have against the organizers and any others connected with this event, their representatives, successors, and assigns for any and all injuries or damages of any kind whatsoever suffered by me as a result of taking part in the walk and any related activities. I also give full permission for use of my name and photograph in connection with this event.

