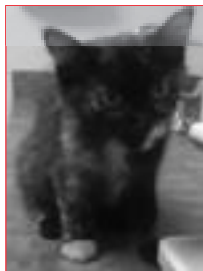


## West Suburban Humane Society

# STRAY THOUGHTS

HAPPY  
HOLIDAYS!  
FROM:  
WEST SUBURBAN  
HUMANE SOCIETY

## Saving The Sick & Injured



Starla

It began with a text message: "Rescued a 10 week old tortie. Can you take her?" We could make room for one kitten, we thought, and as long as they were coming here anyway with some dogs, we agreed.

We could hear **Starla** before we ever saw her. The sound of her labored breathing coming out of the carrier was alarming. Every breath was torn from her little body in a painful-sounding rasp. It only got worse when we opened the carrier. Starla's nose was crusted over, her eyes were brimming with tears and her emaciated body was covered in feces.

After a trip to the emergency vet, the shelter's foster network was activated and a home was found that could care for this critically ill patient. She couldn't walk, eat or use the litter box. Force feeding was necessary for almost a week until she began the long road to recovery.

Several vet visits later, Starla was dealt another blow. She was diagnosed with cerebellar hypoplasia, a neurological condition that affects motor control. While we thought she was weak from her illness, she actually had a virus in her brain before she was born that damaged her cerebellum, resulting in poor coordination of her back legs. A neurologist was called in to assess her condition and confirmed the diagnosis.



The good news for Starla is that she doesn't know any of this. Once she recovered from the devastating upper respiratory infection, she became an

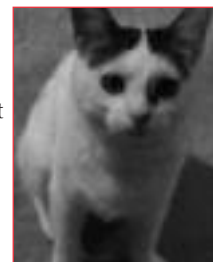
active, playful kitten. To her it is perfectly normal to fall over sometimes or to have your back end go a different way than your front. She does all the things a normal kitten does, just a little differently. Her condition won't ever change. She won't get better and she won't get worse. Her foster mom has this to say, "I am so thankful that Starla found her way to WSHS. This shelter goes above and beyond for the animals and there is never a question of whether to treat. I can't imagine Starla not growing up. She is the most affectionate, comical kitten who loves life. Whoever adopts her will be very lucky."

Starla's future was at risk for a time, but WSHS believes that every animal deserves a chance at life. Through the generous support of our donors, we are proud to be able to provide life-saving medical treatment to cats and dogs that need our help.

It was just another day at the shelter recently when a man burst through the door saying he needed help getting a cat out of his SUV. After extricating the six month old kitten from under the seat, we got the story. This businessman had gone to Chicago for a meeting and was on his way back to the office when a woman pulled up next to him on the expressway, frantically gesturing for him to pull over. When he could maneuver around the traffic to the shoulder, he stopped. The woman, who followed, told him there was a cat clinging to the undercarriage of his vehicle. It was a miracle the kitten survived and was able to hang on while the car was speeding along the tollway. The pair managed to get him safely into the back seat and then to WSHS.

**Preston** (named for his savior) was gravely injured and we were shocked at how calm he was. He allowed us to handle him and examine his wounds. He had a bone sticking out of his ankle and his tail had a compound fracture. There were various other abrasions that were

not as serious. Preston was rushed to the vet and stayed there until he could see the orthopedic surgeon. There were setbacks, multiple surgeries and an infection that threatened his life, but we never gave up on him. After surviving the unimaginable, how could we say he wasn't worth saving?



Preston

Preston's foster mom has witnessed this youngster's will to live and she is amazed at his recovery. Through all the pain, two tail amputations and that darn cone he had to endure on his head, Preston remains a happy, playful guy. He has



even made friends with the family dog.

Aside from adoptions, we feel this is our most

important work. With the support of so many caring individuals, we can help the most needy cats and dogs. These cases are not rare, and medical care for the sick and injured orphans can easily climb into the thousands. That's why we tell their stories. Starla and Preston would not have had a chance at a happy, forever home if we didn't make a commitment to helping them and we could not do that without our generous donors.

Thanks to our combined efforts, both of these kittens are up for adoption. They have a future now and they deserve it. The sick and injured cats and dogs will keep coming. We are committed to them. Their lives ARE worth saving. With your help, we can change the world for more helpless animals.

## 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

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paper Towels</li> <li>• Laundry Detergent</li> <li>• Bleach</li> <li>• Anti-bacterial Hand Soap</li> <li>• Dish Washing Liquid</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• KMR (kitten milk replacement), small baby</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bottles and nipples</li> <li>• Dog and cat toys (washable and indestructible!)</li> <li>• Cat litter</li> <li>• Stamps (to be used for postage)</li> <li>• Garbage bags (13 &amp; 30 gallon sizes)</li> <li>• Batteries – AA, 9 Volt and C</li> <li>• 6" paper plates</li> <li>• Lint Traps</li> <li>• Volunteers!</li> <li>• <b><i>Monetary donations are always appreciated!</i></b></li> </ul> |
|---|--|



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

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## 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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 E-mail Address: [Director@WSHS-DG.org](mailto:Director@WSHS-DG.org)  
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# Ready For a Home



## Lewis

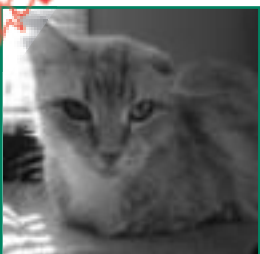
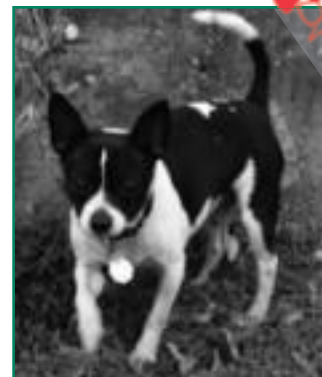
1 year old, Male, Lab Mix

Looking for an athletic, confident, companion? Then I'm the dog for you! Running, jumping, climbing . . . I can do it all! Because of my energy level, I would do best in a home with kids 12 years and older. I get excited around other dogs, so not all of them like me. But I sure like them! I'm not a big fan of cats, however. They look like giant squeak toys! If you are looking for a fun, happy dog, look no further. I'm the dog for you!

## Bandito

6 year old, Male, Chihuahua Mix

Hi, I'm Bandito. You'd better watch yourself around me. If you're not careful, I'll steal your heart! I'm a sweet little guy that loves people and want to be on a lap whenever possible. I am good with kids and am tolerant around other animals. I would really prefer to be the king of my castle. I'm an all around great guy that will do well in any family situation. Stop by and visit me today!



## Oriana

11-1/2 year old, Female, Orange DSH

Hi, I'm Oriana. When I was young, I was a helpless stray until one day when a very nice lady took me in. I wasn't the only one she helped. That was what she did, helped cats who were lost and scared. There were several of us, and we all lived together, healing from the trauma of outdoor life. We don't know what happened to my ear, but I like to think it gives me character :). We all thought we'd grow old together, but then tragedy struck and our beloved guardian died while waiting for an organ transplant. It was then up to kind friends and neighbors to find us a place to go. So here I am, 11 years old, hoping I don't have to live the rest of my life in a shelter. I was fortunate enough to be saved once, could I possibly be that lucky again? It takes a very special person to adopt a senior when there are so many younger, perfect kitties available. I'm just going to keep my declawed fingers crossed.

## Candi

7 year old, Female, Black DSH

Hi, I'm Candi! I was adopted from this shelter back in 2007 and returned recently. Everything was going fine until my family got a kitten, which I took exception to. When the kitten came, someone in the family had a major allergic reaction, so both of us got the boot. At the shelter, I get lots of attention and really like it when people talk sweetly to me. It has taken me a long time to want to venture out and explore the place, but I am gaining confidence every day. I don't ask for much, just a comfy, quiet home where I can be me. I have the best purr ever and love to be loved! Take a chance on my black beauty and I will be grateful forever.





# Ask The Trainer

***Do you know the only two creatures on the entire planet that have been proven to understand the gesture of pointing?***

The answer is humans and dogs. Growing up around dogs and working as a professional trainer and behaviorist, I have long known that most dogs understand the gesture, but I recently read an article in TIME magazine that really surprised me. It showed research that had proven that even chimpanzees with their incredibly advanced brain and almost human like behaviors didn't understand when humans pointed at something. This is pretty surprising considering one chimp has mastered 240 words with sign language. What explains this phenomenon? The answer is not that dogs are smarter, it lies in how they apply their brain. Dogs are naturally

social creatures that crave interaction with other dogs and especially with humans. As they evolved, the most social dog was the most likely to reproduce since he would get favorable treatment from humans. This has given us a species that from birth can understand human gestures that even other primates don't comprehend. I hope that this shows you the importance of using body language when training your dog. Weak body language shows the dog that he can push you around and strong body language shows the opposite. I also frequently see situations where a humans body language confuses a dog and makes the situation worse. One example is when someone tells a dog to come as they walk towards the dog. This is a clear indicator to the dog to

stay where he is (when the alpha approaches they typically stay in position or lower themselves to the ground). So the next time you are having issues with your dog ask yourself, is my body saying the same thing that my mouth is?

**Please address questions and suggestions for future training articles to:**

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



## Volunteer Spotlight – Wednesday AM Cattery



**Cheryl Wood, Pat Johnson, and Karen Hoffman** are the three Wednesday morning felinephiles who lovingly attend to the cats and kittens in the WSHS cattery. Pat and Cheryl began volunteering in 2006, and Karen joined them 2 years later. Their jobs include cleaning the cattery, and feeding and socializing the cats there. In addition, when new cats arrive in the cattery—from the front office, ISO, or as new residents—the team helps them settle into the routine of their new environment.

Having been at WSHS before the new cattery opened, they have memories of how life was for the cats—and themselves—when the cats lived in 3-story cages and the work was much more physical. Pat says the change has been remarkable. Everyone—cats and people—appreciate the new, open space that is the cattery. Karen says, “It makes it easier to leave at the end of the shift knowing that (the cats) are free to roam.”

Cheryl, Pat, and Karen all agree that the things they like most about volunteering at WSHS are socializing the cats, working with the other volunteers and staff, and being part

of a no-kill shelter that works tirelessly to take care of and protect the shelter animals. Each one also admits to “visiting” the kennel, and Karen says, “The Wednesday dog people are great and don’t get mad when we visit the kennels and start up a ‘barkfest.’”

The nearly endless list of the other volunteer work the women do is awe-inspiring! It seems that they all have more than 24 hours in their days!

Besides being a WSHS cattery volunteer, Pat also helps out with BarkaPALooza and with collections in front of Jewel stores. She volunteers at Brookfield Zoo as a guest guide and Morton Arboretum in the Children’s Garden. Pat’s also on two golf leagues, and bowling league, a book club and a member of the Y where she takes aerobics water classes. Whew!

Cheryl volunteers as collection manager at Operation Support Our Troops America, whose mission is to support the morale and well being of American forces by providing comfort, resources, and education to them and their families while they are deployed. Cheryl loves to read, knit, and crochet, and does service projects with her women’s group. She’s also quite proud of her son, a Marine, who adopted a dog, Red, after his second tour in Iran. (And we all thank him for his service!) Additionally, Cheryl works part time as a babysitter.

Karen is a retired social worker, which likely contributes to her being involved in volunteer activities. In addition to her work at WSHS, Karen volunteers at several social

service agencies, a natural extension of her life’s work. She brings that empathy to her work at WSHS.

Animals are an important part of each woman’s household. Eight years ago, Cheryl adopted a WSHS rescue cat, Warren, which is “definitely a mama’s cat.” She says she can’t understand why it took her so long to bring a cat into her home. Her husband often goes to their son’s condo to walk and play with his WSHS rescue dog. Karen’s two senior citizen cats “make (her) laugh and smile.” She fears being a foster mom, though, because she knows full well that she’ll be a “foster failure” and she’s certain her owns cats are pretty content with just the two of them. Pat has two rescue cats, Ruffles and Dusty. She’s been without a dog for about 5 years and although she “shops” at our kennels every Wednesday, she isn’t sure she’s ready for another dog yet.

Perhaps Pat Johnson sums up Wednesday mornings best:

*I think it's funny that we get kidded by the other volunteers (It's hard work, sitting on a couch with a bunch of cats in your lap), but of course, we didn't start out this way. It was definitely much more physical when each cat was in its own separate cage. We are living the good life now! No need for tranquilizers when you have a cat in your lap, one on each side, and one curled up on your neck! What a great place the cattery is!*





## HEARTY THANKS

**April Johnson** of Westmont collected food, paper towels and \$8 and donated it to the shelter.

**Ave, Mia, Anna and Gavin** of Naperville, sold lemonade and bracelets and donated the proceeds of \$110 to the shelter.

**Sophia Cole** of Downers Grove donated the \$13.52 she made playing the guitar to the animals at the shelter.

**Lauren and Peyton Nokus** of Downers Grove had a lemonade stand. With the money they earned, they purchased cat food and donated it to the shelter.

**Eva Pastore** of Bolingbrook turned 5 and asked for the donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She received and donated \$91.92.

**Ethan and Sophia Coronelli and Lily and Nickie Ambler** had a lemonade stand and donated the \$50.36 they raised to the shelter.

The **Day Camp Kids from Camp Kata Kani** made cat toys and donated them to the shelter.

**Anna Gallaway** of Lisle turned 9 and asked for donations for the shelter

instead of gifts for her. She received and donated dog food, toys and treats.

**Julia Albert** of Downers Grove donated money, toys and food to the shelter in honor of her birthday.

**Benedictine University Summer Fun Day campers** made dog and cat toys and donated them to the shelter.

**April Johnson** of Westmont had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$67.54 to the shelter.

**Chloe Slater** of Wheaton turned 10 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She received and donated toys, food and \$190.

**Kate Riley** of Downers Grove raised and donated \$11.00 to the animals at the shelter.

10 year old **Alex Boxell** of Chicago Heights donated the \$121 she had been saving to the shelter.

**Zyane Sherrod/Mevillans** donated the \$18 he received for his birthday to the shelter.

**Ella Dennis, of Girl Scout Troop 51237** decided to earn her Girl Scout Bronze



Award. To earn this award she had to coordinate a service project that would help the community. She held a lemonade stand that also sold orange juice, pot holders and friendship bracelets. The stand was a big success! Ella raised \$75.80 and donated the proceeds to the shelter.

**Middle West Distributors** in West Chicago ran a promotion through Doggie Depot and Wet Nose and they chose us to be the recipient of the proceeds received through the promotion.



## E-Mails and Letters From Adopters



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. It's 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! :)





# West Suburban Humane Society Launches Fundinco!



We've discovered a great way to raise funds – The Fundinco Solution. It's super-easy, and all you have to do is shop at Amazon.com after visiting the link below. For every dollar spent at Amazon.com, we will receive a commission on the purchase! There are no additional costs to you, no logins, and no strings attached. Simply visit:

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and off you go to Amazon.com where you can shop and raise funds! You can buy just about anything at Amazon and at great prices, including most things you already buy on a daily basis.

Make sure to add the Fundinco link above to your favorites (a.k.a. bookmark) so that you can come back anytime you shop online and raise money.

While you are shopping, be sure to click on the link below to see items on the shelter's wish list!

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/3BPCB0QKHJ68T>



**West Suburban Humane Society**

## 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**

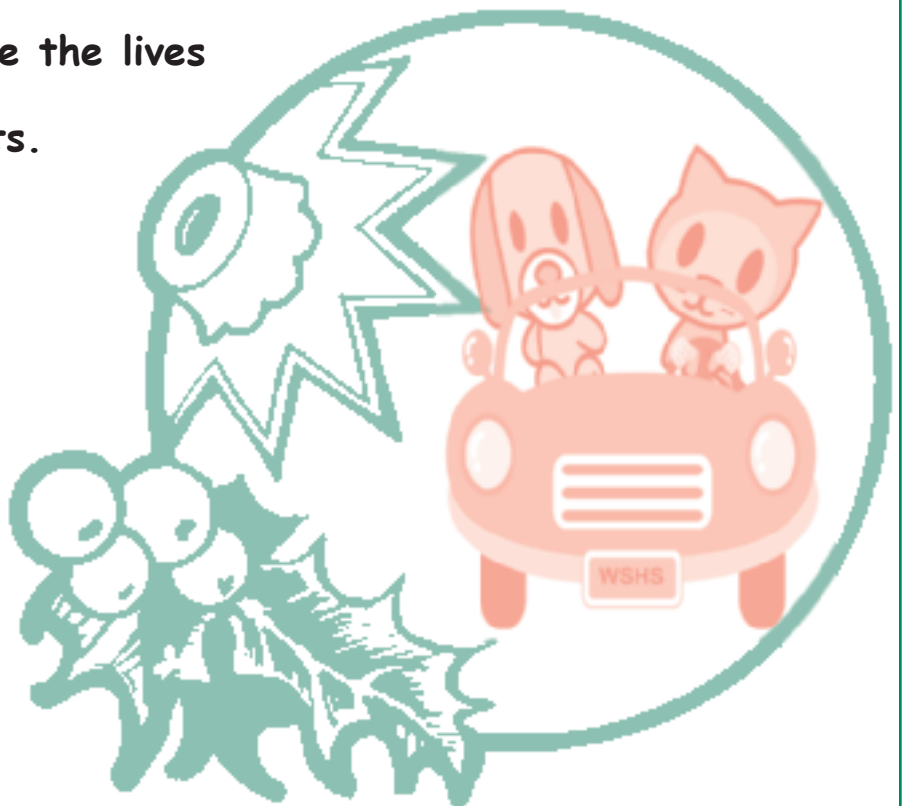
**1-877-CARS-4-US**

**(227-7487)**

**[www.donationline.com](http://www.donationline.com)**

**Or**

**[www.WSHS-DG.org](http://www.WSHS-DG.org)**



# **\*\* A BIG THANK YOU \*\***

## **To all of our Barkapalooza Sponsors**

### **Blue Ribbon Winners - \$2,500 Sponsors**



 Downers Grove Reporter

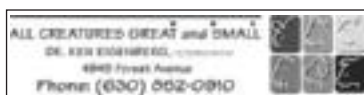


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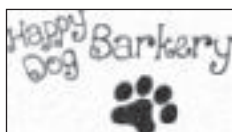
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## **This Year's Barkapalooza Walk-A-Thon and Pet Expo Top Pledge Contributors**

**1st Place** – Kurt Mohr of Downers Grove raised \$6,750 in pledges. Kurt is generously donating the \$500 he won as top pledge contributor back to the shelter.

**2nd Place** – Larry Sacks of Villa Park raised \$4,450 in pledges.

**3rd Place** – Ruth Cloonan of Lisle raised \$3,500 in pledges.

**4th Place** – Carol Mossberger of Lockport raised \$2,480 in pledges.

## **Congratulations to our 2013 Wags to Riches Raffle Winner!**

Patty Simpson of Oak Park was the winner of our \$1,000 raffle.



# Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

## Do older cats develop arthritis?

Arthritis which is sometimes called degenerative joint disease, affects many mostly older cats. Unfortunately, if untreated arthritis has been associated with long-term pain and poor quality of life.

Although there is no cure for degenerative joint disease (DJD), therapy is aimed at improving comfort. Treatment plans for arthritis patients must take into account that this is primarily an older population of cats. Aging pets often have more than one health problem co-existing. For example it would be likely for an older cat with arthritis to also have chronic kidney disease or hyperthyroidism. These comorbidities as they are called must be taken into account when selecting treatment options for the patient.

How might we identify arthritis in a cat? Chronic joint pain can affect mobility, especially jumping. Cats may appear stiff, sleep more, and not get to their normal resting places. Further, their muscle mass may be reduced; they may be less playful, more reclusive, and more unkept. Similar changes can occur with other diseases making a thorough diagnostic evaluation necessary. This evaluation should include blood work and urinalysis at a minimum.

Once a full understanding of the patient's medical status is established then treatment options can be

considered. In general treatment can be divided into pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical. Sometimes more than one therapy will have to be tried in order to find the best strategy.

First we will look at non-pharmaceutical options. This includes acupuncture and physical rehabilitation, and cold laser therapy. This category also includes the injectable polysulfated glycosaminoglycan known as Adequan. There are also diets that contain green-lipped mussel, cefiain fatty acids, and glucosamine-chondroitin. Further there are supplements that contain many of the same elements in a more concentrated form.

Beyond these ideas comes environmental modification. This includes making the litter box more accessible, giving better access to preferred perches, and encouraging exercise to maintain muscle mass. Other options include maintaining a healthy weight and stem cell therapy.

Now we will look at pharmaceutical options. Currently non-steroidal anti-inflammatories are the only drugs supported by evidence to alleviate pain and improve mobility in cats with DJD. There are mainly two drugs to consider and both need to be used with care.

The drugs are meloxicam (metacam) and robenacoxib (onsior). With these medications the clinical judgement of

a veterinarian is needed to insure proper use and safety. These drugs should be avoided in patients with heart disease; and monitoring blood values will be necessary.

Other medications, besides NSAIDS are directed more at pain than inflammation. These drugs include gabapentin treating neuropathic pain, amantidine, amitriptyline, tramadol, and opioids. With all of these medications we must keep in mind older cats metabolize drugs more slowly and will likely need a lower dose than a young adult cat.

Successful management of an older arthritic cat that has comorbidities can be complex and will require both a committed pet owner and veterinarian. The good news is that treatment options are available and that we as a profession are recognizing DJD in our feline patients more regularly.

**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

