



# West Suburban Humane Society

# STRAY THOUGHTS

Happy  
Valentines Day!  
From The Animals  
at WSHS

## THE STORY OF CHRIS



This is the story of Chris. To some people, he was just another kitten in another litter born to another stray....not worthy of any particular notice. Lucky for Chris, he belongs to

WSHS, where he is treated as a cherished member of the family.

Most kittens grow up healthy and go on to find loving families, living happily ever after. We hope Chris will find his happy ending, too. It will be a longer road for him, though. When Chris was very young, he didn't thrive like his siblings did, had trouble gaining weight and then became very ill. His foster mom says: "Chris was smaller than our chihuahua when he first came to stay. He also had trouble keeping his head from falling to the side and would have hardly any muscle control. When picked up he would become limp like a rag doll. He was lethargic most of the time with some drooling and tremors. He was diagnosed with a liver shunt. Cats with liver shunts typically have less than a fifty percent chance of survival with surgery. Without surgery Chris would not survive his first year."

After exhaustive tests and long treks to specialists, Chris had the surgery that was his only chance to live. This would not have been possible without the generous donations of WSHS supporters. It is



through this support that we are fortunate enough to have top notch, cutting edge medical care for our animals. After a couple of hand-wringing days in the hospital waiting to see if Chris' liver could function normally, he went home to his anxious foster family: "He was alert and eating right away. This is great news considering his liver shunt was so big that the constrictor used in his surgery was the same size as one used for a lab sized dog! His liver had not been filtering much at all. To ensure full healing he had to be limited as far as his activity went. No jumping, rough housing, or running for the first month. This was difficult for him because he started feeling better than he ever had!"



"Once Chris got his stitches out, he was able to play. And play he did! Before surgery he was lethargic a lot of the time, and preferred to watch the others

play. Now he's so busy, they watch him! Everyday he can jump a little higher and run a little faster! For the first time he could eat as much as he wanted without feeling sick. He went from 4 lbs to 7 lbs in the first month after surgery. It wasn't long before he started to grow out of his pink bed that he loves so much!"

While Chris is doing better than any of us dared to hope, he will not be pronounced completely well until his liver is working well for a year post-surgery. He eats a special food for liver support and requires medications three times daily. There is a lot of support and vet visits required until then, but his foster mom says "Chris is doing so well I

am hopeful that he could be on a regular diet with no medicine required for life!"

Everyone who knows Chris is so thankful for the WSHS supporters who have made it possible for Chris to live, especially his foster family:

"Chris has brought much joy to our lives since he came to stay with us. He is playful, loving and purrs like



crazy! The dogs enjoy his company. The cats have come to life with Chris around bringing excitement and energy to the household. He even has a girlfriend. Dolce regularly chases and wrestles with him. She also likes to pin him down for a bath! It has been so amazing seeing him go from being a sickly kitten to a happy playful boy. He amazes me with his determination and fighting spirit. He is really enjoying being a kitten and he now has a chance to live a normal healthy life!"

The story of Chris isn't over yet, but it has a much better chance of a happy ending because he found his way to WSHS. It takes so many caring people coming together to make a difference in homeless animals' lives. If you support WSHS, be proud that your donations are making such a purposeful, personal impact.



## Upcoming Events

630-960-9600, ext. 25

### FEBRUARY

- 14th, Thursday Happy Valentines Day from the homeless animals at the shelter!
- 26th, Tuesday Spay Day USA – Stop by the shelter or check our website at [www.WSHS-DG.org](http://www.WSHS-DG.org) for your Spay/Neuter Discount Coupon.

### MARCH

- 31st, Sunday Easter – WSHS will be closed today.

### MAY

- 11th, Saturday – Petals for Pets Plant Sale
- 12th, Sunday Look for more information on page 6 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.



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:

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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, Jen Laurinaitis and Dana Sharrett  
Animal Care Assistants: Brigitte Black and Scott Dlh  
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



# Ready For a Home

## Brooks

1 year old, Male, Hound Mix



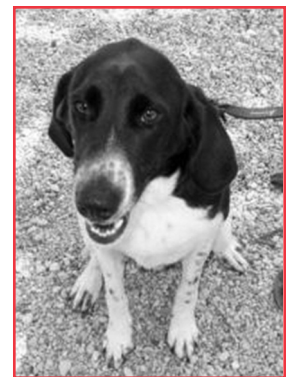
You can stop your quest for the perfect hound, because you have found him! I'm all hound. I bay, have lots of energy and let's just say I'm not a MENSA member! But I am also very friendly, love other dogs and am fine with cats. As a matter of fact, I love other dogs so much that I would like to live with one in my new home. I walk great on leash and know all of my obedience commands. I would do best in a home with kids 10 years and older. My only downfall is that because of my breed, I cannot live in an apartment, condo or townhouse. I also require a large fenced in backyard and my new owner should have previous dog experience as an adult. Do I sound perfect for your family?



## Spot

2-1/2 year old, Male, Hound Mix

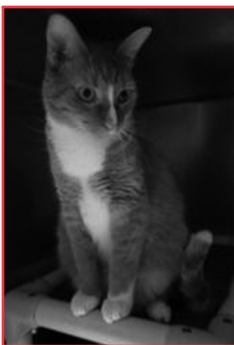
Hi, my name is Spot. I'm a sweet, friendly guy that is looking for his forever home. I walk great on leash and know all of my obedience commands. I am good with kids 12 years and older and just love other dogs. No cats for me, however. I'm not a big fan. If you are interested in adopting me, you should have previous dog experience as an adult. I even come with a free session with my own personal trainer! Stop by and visit me today!



## Muchacho

1-1/2 years old, Male, Orange and White DSH

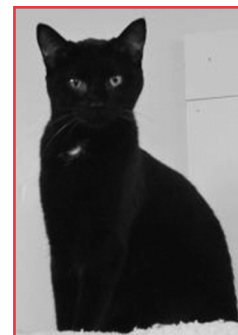
Hey, I'm Muchacho, and I am anything but mischievous! In fact, I am a big teddy bear. I like to be held and cuddled and I even give kisses! I'm not the kind of cat to run away when people come over. I like to be part of day-to-day activities. No dogs for me, though....I get all poofed up around them, trying to scare them away with my imitation of a Halloween cat. I would be fine around cats, though. I like to play with the kittens here. I like to "daddy" them. I hope my winning personality gets me adopted soon - I miss having a family of my own.



## Ocean

1-1/2 year old, Female, Black DSH

Once upon a time, there were 5 of us. Now it's just me and Osgood looking for homes. I am the shy, quiet one of the family. I am also the smallest. It takes time for me to trust, but once I do, I am very affectionate. It's worth the wait! I do fine with other cats and even dogs, and would prefer a home with at least one other cat. I will blossom in a quieter home where I can relax and be the best companion. I was super cuddly and playful in my temporary care home, so I know we will be great friends if you take me home.





# Ask The Trainer by Matt Covey, Suburban K9

The infamous “Small Dog Syndrome” comes up often in my line of work. I hear it from veterinarians, rescue groups, and countless clients. Everyone is pretty much in agreement that small dogs have a “Napoleon” complex. People often ask me if it is possible to prevent a small dog from yapping, jumping, peeing in the house, snapping at people etc. My answer is a resounding yes. “Small dog syndrome” doesn’t originate in dog genetics, it comes from the owners, not the dog. How is this possible you might ask? I answer this with a series of hypothetical situations.



What would you do if your German Shepherd growled when your neighbor comes over? You would correct him, put him away, call a trainer, or at least become very worried. This is a dominant guarding behavior that needs to be addressed and you would do something. What would you do if your cute little Teacup Yorkie growled at the same neighbor? You would probably ignore him, pick him up, or start to make excuses for him. He’s just scared, he thinks he’s a big dog, don’t worry about him he’s all bark no bite. Sound familiar? Ignoring him teaches that the behavior is acceptable, picking him up also shows that you approve and puts him in a more dominant position, and making excuses just convinces you that nothing can be done.

Jumping is a common behavior in dogs and it is one way that they dominate humans. Not every time a dog jumps is dominance but generally the higher a dog is, especially on a humans body, the more dominant they feel. What would you do if your Rottweiler consistently jumps on you? Knee him away?

Correct with your hand? Call a trainer? The point is that you would do something. What would you do if your Maltese consistently jumps on you? Pet him each time? Tell everyone “this is how he says hello”? Ignore him? Any of those choices runs the risk that the dog is becoming more dominant with every passing day.

Another question that I pose is “How important would you rate leash training your dog?” Owners of large dogs (German Shepherds, Rottweilers, Pitbulls, Mastiffs, etc.) generally say that leash training is very important to them. Owners of small breeds (Yorkies, Chihuahuas, Miniature Pinchers, etc.) generally don’t find proper leash training to be nearly as important for two main reasons. The reasons are typically that it doesn’t matter if they pull because they’re so small or they don’t get walked much because they don’t need much exercise. This is a huge issue in pet dogs since most time in new areas tends to be on leash. A proper walk with a dog is a time to establish dominance and control. When a pack of dogs travel, the leader is in front. Teaching a dog to “heel” is the process of teaching him to follow you. If your dog is following you mentally and physically on a walk, he is much less likely to bark or lunge at new people or animals. If your dog is leading you in an excited dominant state, he is much more likely to bark and lunge at new things. After a one hour walk a dog that walked in a submissive state will come home feeling submissive. A dog who spends an hour pulling his owner while feeling dominant and excited will probably return home still feeling dominant. Twenty minutes later when the neighbor dog



walks by your front window which of these dogs do you thinking will be barking his head off?

When we allow our dog to live in a very dominant state day after day it is only a matter of time before a new issue crops up. A calm, well socialized, submissive dog will go to the vet and probably be examined without issue. If something scares him or hurts him slightly he will usually ignore it, try to leave the situation, or softly growl to let you know he isn’t comfortable with what is happening. A very dominant dog that has been allowed to pull on leash, bark and lunge at people and dogs, and jump on everybody is much more likely to suddenly lash out. He is being bothered and is willing to bite to stop whatever it is he doesn’t like.

All of this is meant to show you that small dogs have nothing wrong with them.

Small dogs don’t know that they’re small. They have the same instincts as large dogs. We need to learn as humans that WE are both the cause and the solution to “Small Dog Syndrome.” When living with a small dog the best question you can ask yourself on a daily basis is “Would I let my Rottweiler do this?” If the answer is no, then you need to do something.

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



Dear Mission Headquarters (a.k.a. West Suburban Humane Society),

**Agent Sherbert** reporting on mission status. I have successfully infiltrated the home of the family you had me stow away within the crate. While my traveling conditions were not comfortable, I made due and accepted the mission.

I have successfully fooled the Massee family. They are no longer certain of my true identity as you will see from the enclosed photos. I have them confused and they no longer are certain I am truly a cat.

During the first week at their home I acted as though I am a prairie dog.

On several occasions I have allowed them to see me eating the family dog’s food. One humiliating evening I stole Lois’ bone and began to eat it. While the food and bone were disgusting to eat I successfully did it and made them think I may actually be a dog. I have

even begun sleeping with the dog and on a daily basis I chase my tail. Now they have no idea what sort of animal I am.

Further status reports to follow . . . .Agent Bruce

C/O The Massee Family – Ed, Judy, Jake & Josh



# 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.

**Steve Binek** donated 120 cans of dog food and 100 lbs of dog chow.

**Amanda Rosland** turned 11 and asked for donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She donated \$55, food, litter and toys.

The **servers at Zest Cafe in Lemon Tree Grocer** donate a portion of their tips to charity. We were the charity of the month and received a donation of \$146.50.

**Downers Grove North's Action Community** service club collected money during school lunch periods for 2 days and donated it to the shelter.

The **Glen Ellyn Junior Women's Club** donated \$65, dog and cat food, stamps, garbage bags and other supplies to the shelter.

**Walden Floral in Downers Grove** collected dog items from their customers and donated them to the shelter.

**Eva Dockeldorff** of Downers Grove had a car wash and donated the proceeds of approximately \$88 to the shelter.

The **volunteers from the Tuesday mid-day crew** donated a \$75 gift certificate to be used for the purchase of cat food and outdoor chairs for the dog play yards to be purchased in the spring.

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

The **Tillman family**, WSHS adopters and supporters, donated poop bags and dog food.

The **Hogan family**, WSHS adopters and supporters, donated canned dog food.

**Rachel Campbell** donated 2 cases of cat food.

**Happy Paws Pet Care** donated supplies and \$75.

The **Midwest Caribbean Association/Chicago Parrot Head Club** collected food and supply donations for the shelter.

**Kari Lindeman** donated \$50 toward the care of Cueball, a cat that is waiting for his forever home.

The **Marshall stores in Downers Grove, Bolingbrook, Naperville, Lombard and Countryside** collected and donated dish soap, towels, toys, food, treats, hand sanitizer and sheets.

**Mr. Vickers and the staff at Walgreens in Woodridge** at 75th and Janes Avenue donated dog and cat supplies.

**Floofins** collected and donated treats, bleach, dog food and towels.

The **Wilson's** donated \$214.22 for the animals at the shelter.

The **employees at LR International** donated food and animal supplies.

**Gabriella Frank** donated 99 bags and cans of food in honor of her 9th birthday.

This year for the holiday's **Joey and Rachel Kalwats' grandma** wrote them checks to donate anywhere they wanted. They decided to donate them to the animals at the shelter.

In the month of December, **Doggie Depot in Downers Grove** collected donations for the shelter. They collected, stamps, batteries, bleach,



laundry soap, dish soap, hand soap, paper towels, paper plates, ice melter, garbage bags and lots and lots of cat and dog food.



# 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

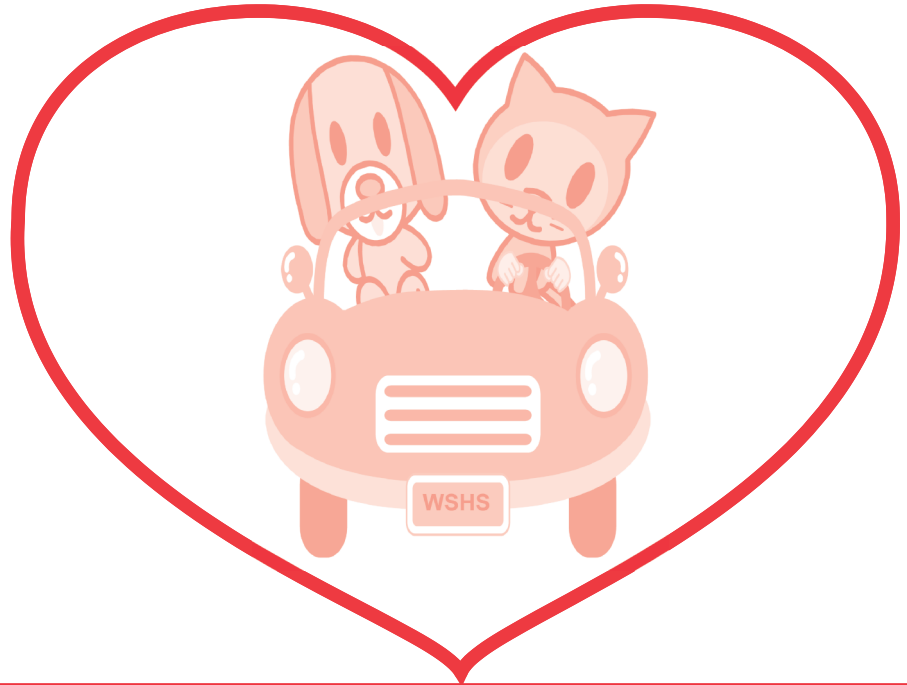
1-877-CARS-4-US

(227-7487)

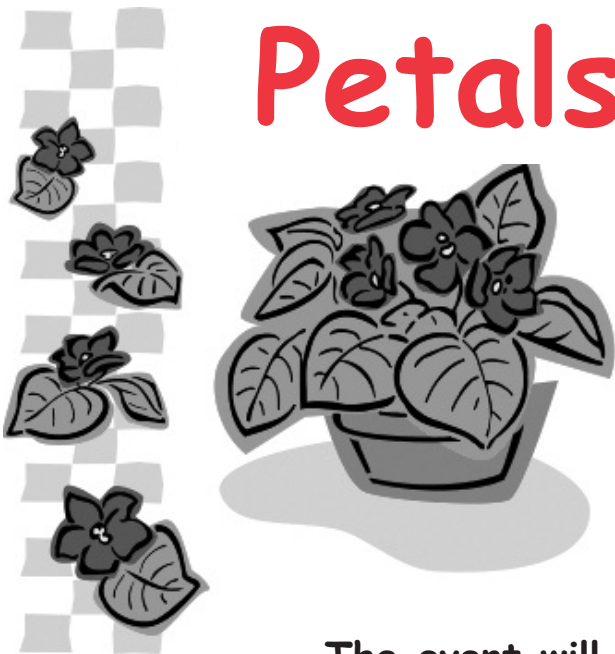
[www.donationline.com](http://www.donationline.com)

Or

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



# 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 annual plant sale on May 11th and 12th 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)

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Sunday Evening Kennel Shift (Rotation 2)



Coming together every other Sunday from 4:00 – 6:00 pm is a team of volunteers who are reliable, dedicated, and hardworking. **Tom Hill**, being the longest standing volunteer on this shift has seen many changes since he began volunteering about 13 years ago. When he first started volunteering in the kennel, Tom was often the only volunteer on this shift, so he appreciates having a consistent group of volunteers to work with. **Lisa Perez**, who is now the shift coordinator, started volunteering almost 10 years ago. **Sarah Brown** (the shift coordinator for the opposite Sunday) has volunteered for over 7 years. The newest addition, **Mike Tsao**, joined the team in 2008. **Jen Bohac**, who is currently away at college, also joins the shift whenever she is in town.

This shift regularly goes above and beyond the shelter's expectations. Though all that is required of the shift is to spot clean the kennel, these volunteers disinfect, scrub, and power wash each run every shift. "Teamwork and communication goes a long way" toward this team's success, according to Lisa. As Mike says, "...everyone pitches in, however needed, and every thing gets done and all the animals are taken care of". Sarah describes their team approach, "We have a system. Ironically, the guys usually chit chat while washing dishes and the ladies scrub and squeegee the runs". And they all seem to enjoy working together as a team.

Not only is the group first-rate at cleaning, they also are excellent with the dogs and great for the shelter. Lisa, Sarah, and Mike are all STAR (Special Training and Reinforcement) volunteers, trained to work with our dogs who have gone through obedience training. All of these volunteers are reliable and understand the importance of being here to care for the dogs. Several volunteers on the shift also help at WSHS fundraisers such as Mutts Need Moola and Barkapalooza. We are very fortunate to have such a dedicated group of volunteers.



## 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 logs, and no strings attached. Simply visit:

<http://www.fundinco.org/orghome.php?orgid=15>

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.



# Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

## Can dogs develop cataracts?

Indeed dogs can develop cataracts; in fact my own dog "Cowboy" had cataract surgery about 4 weeks ago. Cataracts develop in the lens of the eye.



The adult lens is transparent, biconvex, elastic organ that sits within the eye just behind the pupil. The purpose of the lens is to focus light on the retina. The lens is 9-12 mm in diameter and 6-8 mm in thickness. Its' composition is 65% water and 35% protein. The lens is suspended with in the eye by fibers on its' sides and firmly attached to the thick vitreous fluid behind it.

Then lens has very little blood supply. Consequently the lens receives most of it's nourishment through the absorption of glucose through the lens capsule from the aqueous fluid in the forward part of the eye. The lens has a nucleus in the center and then is layered like an onion out to the capsule. The layers are actually formed by elongated cells that are metabolically active.

These elongated cells form the fibers of the lens and contain most of the protein of the lens. It is changes to the protein that lead to cataract formation. These changes can be caused by metabolic influences, hereditary defects, intoxication, trauma, or irradiation.

When the lens proteins are damaged they are no longer transparent and hence the lens has an opacity. This opacity is called a cataract. By definition a cataract is a non-physiologic whitening or cloudiness of the lens fibers or lens capsule.

Cataracts can be classified in many ways; by their location, cause, stage, and type.

For example types of cataracts could include; congenital, juvenile, senile, radiation, intoxication, traumatic, and hereditary. The naming of cataracts can be complicated, so let's move onto treatment options for cataracts.

Cataracts are primarily a surgical disease. Not only can cataracts cause blindness, they can cause inflammation and damage to the rest of the eye. As the lens fibers get damaged proteins can leak through the lens capsule into the aqueous and cause significant inflammation. This inflammation can in turn damage the eye.



In general early intervention with cataract surgery is best. Early intervention often means the eye is still healthy and a good result can be achieved. One must consider several factors before making a decision about surgery for their dog.

These factors include the condition of the patient, as well as the condition of the eye. Further the behavior of the animal, the degree of visual handicap, and the motivation of the owner must be considered. For example the cataract patient may be highly functional and the owner may not have the time and resources to manage surgery for his pet.

With "Cowboy" my Maltese rescue dog the decision was clear. He was the perfect candidate. He developed juvenile mature cataracts in both eyes over a 6 month time period and had become blind. His overall health was good, his eyes were otherwise

healthy, and his owner was motivated and able to handle all the post-op care and trips to the eye specialist.

In fact "Cowboy" had both eyes operated on the same day. The lens capsule was preserved and the contents of the lens extracted through a small incision on the upper part of the eye. "Cowboy" then had a lens implant placed into the remaining lens capsule to restore the acuity of his vision. He was seeing 80% of normal immediately after surgery!

"Cowboy" is now over a month post-op and is doing extremely well. He is grateful to have his vision back and is generally more settled and content.

In summary cataracts are a common problem especially in diabetics and elder dogs. The disease is a surgical one with an approximate 90% success rate. Early intervention is important to prevent cataract induced damage to the rest of the eye. Patients should be selected carefully for surgery based on their over health and other factors previously mentioned. If conditions are right it can be a wonderful thing to do for your dog.

**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



## JOIN NOW

## for a Full Year of Giving in 2013!



**T**hank you to everyone who participated in WSHS's inaugural Annual Fund. With your help, we raised over \$42,000 in 3 months! With your continued support, we know we can keep this success going in 2013. Join WSHS's Annual Fund now to maximize your annual contribution through the monthly giving option. With monthly giving levels ranging from \$20/mo. to over \$400/mo., we're sure you can find a gift that is financially comfortable and personally meaningful. Please join online at <http://www.wshs-dg.org/get-involved/donate>, click the online donation form, and be sure to choose monthly under 'Recurring' for a full year of giving in 2013. As always, we thank you for your commitment to WSHS.