



Stray Thoughts

Fall 2023 News, Events & Adoption Information www.WSHS-DG.org

Your Generous Support Gives Animals Like Beans the Care They Deserve

In early September, we received a call from one of our rescue partners. The rescue was full and they would have to start euthanizing animals if they couldn't find placement for some with other rescues. Of course, West Suburban Humane Society agreed to help and were able to take three dogs. One of the dogs we helped was Beans.

Beans is an eight to ten-year-old hound mix. When he arrived, we noticed that he had several large tumors and had a stiff gait. He would sometimes lose his footing and fall. We immediately made a vet appointment to get him checked out.

The vet examined Beans and did blood work. The blood work came back good, so surgery was scheduled to remove his tumors. During surgery, the vet noticed that Beans also needed a full dental cleaning and exam. The vet removed all the tumors and, unfortunately, Beans lost several of his teeth during the dental procedure. While he was sedated, the vet also took X-rays of Bean's hips and back. The X-rays showed that Beans has severe arthritis in his spine. He must be on a joint supplement and pain medication for the rest of his life. Good news, his tumors were sent out for biopsy and all came back benign.

After everything he has been through, Beans is the happiest dog. He is always wagging his tail and looking for attention. He will be a wonderful companion for a family who wants to give an older dog a chance to live the rest of his life in a loving home.



At West Suburban Humane Society, we never turn away a needy animal. We go above and beyond for every animal in our care, regardless of age or health. We believe every animal deserves the chance to live their best life. We are so grateful to our volunteers and supporters who enable us to make this kind of commitment to every animal that finds its way to our doors. Your donation makes all the difference in the life of a homeless animal. From Beans and all of us at West Suburban Humane Society, thank you for your support!

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A BIG THANKS to Our Barkapalooza Sponsors!



Artistic Grooming
Beata and Sara Kolpek
Platinum Partners Realtors

Companion Animal Rehab and Athletics
Happy Dog Barkery
Insperity

Lisle Savings Bank
Midwest Waste Consultants
Republic Bank

WSHS Wish List

- Paper Towels
 - Anti-bacterial hand soap
 - Dog Leashes (no retractable leashes)
 - 6 foot and 30 foot
 - Food!
 - Any **canned** cat, dog, kitten, and puppy food
 - For dry food, we use only Purina One dog and puppy formula and Purina One cat and kitten formula
 - Kitten milk replacement
 - Pet safe ice melt/salt
 - Dog and cat toys (we especially like Kong and Nylabone brands!)
 - Cat litter – unscented, clumping and/or clay
 - Postage stamps
 - Hand sanitizer
 - Six inch paper plates
 - Disinfecting wipes
 - Ziplock bags – gallon and quart sizes
 - Laundry detergent
- Monetary donations are always appreciated!**

West Suburban Humane Society

Board Members:

Scott McMillin, President

Mark Motuelle
Vice President

Sarah Marshall,
Recording Secretary

Kerry Kopera,
Controller/Treasurer

Christian Ambler, Director

Colleen Attwell, Director

Dr. Lyn Edmonson, Director

Bob Koch, Director

Marci Levites, Director

Brian Wasielewski, Director

David Welch, Director

Maria Wrobel, Director

WSHS Staff:

Executive Director: Carolyn Mossberger

Director of Development: Heather Kash

Adoption Counselors: Carol Thygesen, Eric Van Clevon, Roberta Diehl, Nanette Delaney, Cassidy Santen

Animal Care Team: Brittany Askeland, Jennifer Nathan Miller

Intake/Foster Coordinator: Lexi Vitale

Volunteer Coordinator: Heidi Janss

Events Coordinator: Chas Kennedy

Humane Education Manager: Deanne Tomanovich

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 630-960-9601 to submit articles or receive donation information.

Our adoption center is open for visitors but adoptions are being handled by appointment only. Check our website wshs-dg.org for up-to-date information.

Adoption Center:

1901 W. Ogden Avenue, Downers Grove, IL 60515

E-mail Address: Director@WSHS-DG.org

Phone: (630) 960-9600 • Fax: (630) 960-9604

Ready for a Home

Prezzy Male | 5.7 years old | Shepherd Mix

Hi, I'm Prezzy! I'm a tall drink of water who absolutely adores people! I had the pleasure of staying in a foster home, and here's what they had to say about me:

"Prezzy stayed close to me throughout the day. He absolutely loved my boyfriend and whined when he left, so he doesn't appear to be intimidated by tall men. He doesn't like sudden sounds (hello UPS truck) and will pull for home if on a walk when he hears one. He doesn't bark much (if at all, maybe a little grunt or two) at dogs or people walking by in front and loves sitting by the front window watching the world go by! He loves to give kisses too. His family will need to give him time so he is reassured they will always come back."

Sounds like I'm a fantastic companion! My only requirement is that I be your only pet. I prefer to have my castle all to myself and be the center of attention. If you think we'd be a great match, why not send in an application today?



Matilda Female | 1.6 years old | Lab Mix

Hi, I'm Matilda and I love people! I'm a lovebug who is affectionate, playful and smart. My manners are perfect and I'll do anything for a treat. I've already been through a training program, so I know all my obedience commands. My personality is sweet and I'm eager to please. My new home should have lots of places for us to cuddle, but it can't have other dogs. I can live with cats and kids of all ages. I'm already housebroken! My energy is medium to high, so let's play or go for a long hike. If I sound like the dog for you, submit an application now!



Parsnip Male | 4 years old | Buff and White DLH

Hi, I'm Parsnip and I'm the softest, fluffiest cat ever. I've got killer good looks and a personality to match. I'm sweet, cuddly and playful. Can you imagine me, sashaying through your home- because I can! I'm pretty easy going and will fit in to a new home with ease. Send an application to meet me today!



Smokey Male | 8.6 years old | Grey DSH

Hi, I'm Smokey! I'm a big boy who likes people and other cats. I enjoy getting attention and I'll tell you exactly where to pet me. My new home should have lots of places for me to hang out, and once I'm comfortable, the stoic look on my face will melt. Ideally, I would prefer a quieter home where not much is expected of me – I don't like to be the center of attention. If you're quiet, I will seek you out. I do not appreciate children, or the noise they make, so I must live in an adult only home. If you've been looking for a handsome new friend, you've found me!



Emails from Adopters

Thank you for reaching out!

Heathcliff is doing wonderful, and in our house he is now known as Faramir! We are huge Lord of the Rings fans and we quickly discovered how intelligent and playful he is, so Faramir became a perfect name. He even responds when it's said.

In the last week or so he really came out of his shell and is finally feeling at home and comfortable. He loves to play! We play all the time and he sprints all around the house chasing the laser pointer (his fave!), little mice, little rat wand toy, the bird, and a yellow ball wand toy. He finally found comfort in his heated beds and has claimed our blankets and our bed is now also his! He's eating, drinking and using the litter box all perfectly and just fine.

He's a loving boy and every day we love him more and more; and he trusts us more and more. He's made such huge progress in a few weeks, and he only took three days since adoption to start getting more confident. We've even been shown his belly a couple times; and he is more open to pets.

He's the silliest little boy and we love him so much!



Above & Beyond

The Board of Directors recently rolled out a new recognition program for all WSHS volunteers, foster families, staff and support personnel. This program coincides with the roll out of our new slogan and motto, **"Above and Beyond Rescue Care."** We believe the essence of what makes WSHS different from other rescue facilities is that we truly go "above and beyond" in our support of the dogs and cats we bring into our care.

The program was launched in mid-August and received more than a dozen nominations! Meet two of the inaugural recipients of this award:

"Diane Lyons is a Sunday morning cattery volunteer. Diane arrives at her cattery shifts much earlier than needed. Not only does she take care of the cats in the cattery, but she takes care of the building. She is the only one on our shift who goes out of her way to mop the majority of the



shelter. She is all about cleanliness. She does this all willingly, and without asking for help. She goes above and beyond by ensuring WSHS is presentable and cared for."

"Ann Miller is a Thursday midday kennel volunteer. This long-time kennel volunteer is a shift coordinator and star volunteer who serves as an excellent mentor for new volunteers. She generously gives her time on the weekend to volunteer at the adoption desk and also helps out with events. She is a member of the VAC committee and the Long-Term Lovables committee, which enables her to serve as an advocate both for volunteer concerns and for those animals who have proven to be more challenging to adopt out. Finally, she is always supportive of staff, ready to offer help wherever she can. Ann adds so much to WSHS and we are lucky to have her!"



Volunteer Spotlight

WSHS offers many educational opportunities to our community. These programs include summer camp, scout activities, birthday parties, holiday events, and other happenings where children and adults can have fun while learning about dogs and cats and their care. Of course, with so much being offered, our humane education volunteers are indispensable.

WSHS has more than 20 volunteers that contribute to our humane education program. Some of these volunteers participate in one type of activity while other volunteers come in when needed no matter what the program. All the volunteers work closely with Humane Education Manager Deanne Tomanovich who sets an enthusiastic tone.

Jennifer Bahlman conducts school and scout tours and facilities birthday parties. She enjoys educating adults and kids about our facility as well as the responsibilities of pet ownership. Deb McGuffey responded to a request for birthday party volunteers so she could show our dogs to the party goers. Now Deb also coordinates tours, Cat Tales, and summer camp. Celeste Burke also responded to the plea to help with birthday parties. She didn't want WSHS to have to limit the parties due to lack of volunteers. Celeste now also conducts facility tour groups. After talking to Deanne, Sheila, Hope wanted to share the selfless companionship she has experienced with her pets with others through our education programs. Sheila loves the enriching environment and volunteers as much as she can.

All our educational activities allow participants to spend time with our dogs and cats. Most of our humane education volunteers also volunteer in our kennel or cattery so it's no surprise that the interaction with the animals is the best part for them. Celeste recognizes that our animals behave differently here than they would in a home. She enjoys being able to teach the community how to interact with them. Jennifer enjoys seeing the enthusiasm for learning about cats and dogs from the children. She is amazed at how many kids have adopted pets and what they know about their pets. Sheila believes the core of each program is introducing an animal in a comfortable, safe environment that allows the kids to feel secure around them. Recently, a child who was unsure sat



quietly and then had a kitten climb on her lap. Deb agrees that it makes her day when a child who fears dogs when they first arrive can pet a puppy while smiling before they leave.

Because of our volunteers, WSHS can offer hands-on learning experiences to all our participants. Attendees never know what they may encounter during their visit, but they can be assured that they will have fun and learn a lot. For one summer camp, Sheila brought her box turtle as a "guest speaker." The kids learned about turtle and tortoises that day. Fellow volunteer Deb was also surprised to see the turtle eat a cicada! Because each program is interactive and different, participants often come back month after month, year after year. Jennifer loves when one child attends a birthday party and then she sees them again at their own WSHS party. Our humane education volunteers give time, heart, patience, and shared curiosity to our community programs. Because of their dedication, we often see families coming back to WSHS to volunteer and adopt.

Ask the Trainer

How to Teach a Dog the Place Command

Training your dog is a valuable investment in their long term well-being and your sanity around the house. To this end, there are a ton of great reasons to teach your dog a Place command. Let's cover the reasons we teach place.

Promotes Good Obedience: Using the Place command properly establishes a clear set of boundaries for your dog. Your pup will learn to stay in a location until given permission to leave. Your dog showing this type of controlled discipline is a fundamental building block of dog obedience training.

Reduces Anxiety: A designated place that your dog knows as their own can help them relax by providing a sense of security. Dogs tend to thrive on routine and predictability. This safe place for your dog can be particularly helpful at times they feel overwhelmed, such as visits from guests or during thunderstorms.

Improves Communication: Teaching the Place command involves creating a clear line of communication between you and your dog. During the process your dog learns to respond to your commands, which in turn strengthens your bond.

The Convenience Factor: Place is a command that can make a huge difference in your everyday life. Simply using the Place command can keep your dog from begging for food during dinner or jumping on guests at the door.

Now that you are convinced that you need the Place command, let's get to teaching!

How Do I Teach My Dog the Place Command?

Place is a very easy command to teach to a dog that is already well trained. But these tips will help you even if your dog is new to training.

We recommend teaching your basic obedience commands first, before the place command. Those commands are heel, sit, stay, down, and come. Getting this foundation of basic obedience makes teaching the Place command a breeze. It will also help make your dog calmer and listen to you better, which in turn will make the Place command easier for your dog to hold.

Now that you have basic obedience down we can get to teaching place. We recommend you use a cot or a blanket as a clearly defined spot for your dog. This will

help them recognize where they should stay.

Start your training session with your dog on a leash. You can utilize the heel command to walk them around their spot. Next, slowly approach the cot or blanket. If using a cot it might take some encouragement to get them to climb up. We generally use verbal and physical praise to encourage, but you could certainly use treats here as well.

As they climb into their place, introduce the word "Place." This way they will start to understand when you say "Place" they should walk to this spot and climb in. The first couple of times you don't need to keep them there long. I'd then use the same word that you use to release them from a stay to release them from their place. We tend to use "Free." Say "Free" and then guide them out of their spot using your leash.

Slowly build on the amount of time that you leave your dog in their place as you continue to progress. If your dog gets up from their place, simply say no and take them back to it. You want to make sure they stay there until hearing their release word.

Advancing the Place Command

The most common way to advance the Place command is introducing distractions, increasing distance, and increasing duration. Utilizing the Place around distractions such as the front door or dinner time can be very helpful.

Make sure you set up these situations the first time you are working on them with the Place command. Basically don't be expecting to actually eat your dinner or spend time with your guest. Ensure that it is a training session with your dog. Having this expectation going in should keep you from getting upset if your dog makes a mistake.

Looking for More Help with the Place Command?

If you are looking for more help with the Place command or want to watch our video detailing the process, check out our detailed article [How to Teach Place Command on Suburban-K9.com](#).



suburban-k9.com

Hearty Thanks

Emma and Sophia from Glen Ellyn had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$90 to the adoption center.

Each year, the tenth-grade students from Congregation Etz Chaim are taught a subject called "Tikkun Olam" which translates from Hebrew to "repair of the world." Each of the students presented a different charitable organization that in one manner or another, is repairing our world. One of the students, Jack, selected WSHS to present to the class and after all of the presentations were given, the class selected WSHS to receive half of the fundraising proceeds, \$400, of their Congregation-side pancake breakfast.

The fifth-grade class at Congregation Etz Chaim gave us a donation of Tzedakah in the amount of \$103.12. They chose our organization for their Tzedakah project this year. In Judaism, Tzedakah is the concept of making the world a just and right place. They believe that the work of WSHS helps to fulfill this mission.

The kindergarten class at Congregation Etz Chaim gave us a donation of Tzedakah in the amount of

\$73.11. They chose our organization for their Tzedakah project this year. In Judaism, Tzedakah is the concept of making the world a just and right place. They believe that the work of WSHS helps to fulfill this mission.

The Dandy Crown in Chicago donated the proceeds of \$150.00 from their August cocktail fundraiser.

Ava from Downers Grove had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$30 to the adoption center.

Brynn and John had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds of \$32 to the adoption center.

The Heiwig family sold tomatoes throughout the summer and donated the proceeds of \$300 to the adoption center.

Girl Scout Troop 56445 from Glen Ellyn voted to donate 10% of their cookie sales to WSHS. They donated \$150.

The Salt Creek Club in Hinsdale hosted their Annual Dog Swim Pool Pawty and Fundraiser. They donated the proceeds of \$2,500 to the adoption center.

Congratulations to Our Barkapalooza 2023 Pledge and Raffle Winners!

Top Pledge Contributors:

- 1st Place** Heidi Janss of Wheaton raised \$7,198.88
- 2nd Place** Kerry Kopera of Villa Park raised \$5,232.11
- 3rd Place** Carolyn Mossberger of Romeoville raised \$3,783.71
- 4th Place** Cindy Johnson of Downers Grove raised \$3,530.98

Wags to Riches Raffle Winner:

Isabella Cabrera of Plainfield was the \$1,000 winner of our Wags to Riches Raffle!





West Suburban
Humane Society

1901 W. Ogden Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

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