



Stray Thoughts

Fall 2025 News, Events & Adoption Information www.WSHS-DG.org

With the Generous Support of Our Donors, Kittens Like Sesame Get the Help They Need

Four-week-old Sesame was in rough shape when he arrived at WSHS on a transport from Franklin County Animal Control. He was hungry, dehydrated, and covered in fleas. Our team immediately jumped into action. We gave him a warm bath, treated the fleas, and got some much-needed food into his tiny belly. He was then placed in a loving foster home to rest and recover.

But later that night, Sesame took a turn for the worse.

He became lethargic and refused to eat. His foster family didn't hesitate; they rushed him to the emergency vet, where Sesame was admitted for two days. He was suffering from dangerously low blood sugar, severe dehydration, and a low body temperature. It was a critical situation for such a fragile little life.

Thanks to swift medical care – and the unwavering compassion and commitment of our team and the foster family – Sesame pulled through. He's now back in foster care, healing day by day and starting to show the spark of a playful kitten again.

Sesame's emergency care totaled \$2,500, but we never turn our backs on an animal in need. Every kitten, every life, matters.

Sesame is just one of hundreds of kittens that come through our doors during kitten season – many requiring urgent or intensive care. Our mission is simple: provide above-and-beyond rescue care to the most vulnerable. But we can't do it alone.



Will you help us continue to save lives like Sesame's?

Your donation today goes directly to medical care, emergency treatment, and life-saving resources for animals who have nowhere else to turn.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Because of you, kittens like Sesame get the second chance they deserve.

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A BIG THANKS to Our Barkapalooza Sponsors!



Artistic Dog and Cat Grooming	Lisle Savings Bank	Thrivent	VCA West Suburban Veterinary Hospital
The Happy Dog Barkery	Midwest Waste Consultants	VCA Arboretum View and VCA Aurora	

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
 - 13 gallon garbage bags
 - Ziplock bags – gallon and quart sizes
 - Laundry detergent
- **Monetary donations are always appreciated!**

West Suburban Humane Society

Board Members:

Mark Motuelle , President	Bob Koch , Director
David Welch , Vice President	Marci Levites , Director
Sarah Marshall , Recording Secretary	Susan Liddi , Director
Kerry Kopera , Controller/Treasurer	Scott McMillin , Director
	Kimberly Sennerikuppum , Director
	Maria Wrobel , Director

WSHS Staff:

Executive Director: Carolyn Mossberger

Director of Development: Zoe McGrath

Adoption Counselors: Carol Thygesen, Roberta Diehl, Sara Neiman, Shea Casey, Paula Rodriguez Paredes

Animal Care Team: Brittany Askeland, Jennifer Miller

Intake/Foster Coordinator: Lexi Vitale

Development Coordinator: Evin Hook

Volunteer Coordinator: Heidi Janss

Events Coordinator: Hailey Nicewanner

Humane Education Manager: Deanne Tomanovich

Humane Education Coordinator: Amy Ward

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

Murphy Male | 1.5 years old | American Bully

Hi, I'm Murphy and I'm a lovable lump of dog, with a body like a fire hydrant and the attitude of a star! I snort while I walk and you can only imagine what I sound like when I snore. I'm playful, outgoing and confident. My energy level is low/medium, and I tire out pretty fast. I need a home with no other pets and kids 12 years or older. If you've been looking for a short, squat little man who will keep you on your toes, I'm your guy!

My Requirements: Must be only pet. Kids 12 years and older.



Addie Female | 5 months old | Collie Mix

Hi, I am Addie! I'm a playful pup with lots of energy. I came to the shelter very shy and nervous but after 2 days in my foster home I've began to open up. I'm learning to play with my brother and foster sister, and I'm very curious and love exploring. At first being outside made me anxious but now I love sniffing around, but I'm still learning to walk on a leash. I've been working hard on my potty training and doing a great job. I LOVE being around people and will ask for lots of pets and like being held or sitting in a lap. I'm great with kids and other dogs.

My Requirements: Cannot be left alone for more than 3 hours at a time for socialization and housetraining purposes.



Blu Male | 11 years old | Brown Tabby with White

Hi, I'm Blu. My owner passed away, so I am looking for a new home. I'm a sweet older gentleman who would do best in a quiet home where I can spend lots of time relaxing and snuggling with my family. After being an only cat for my whole life, other animals stress me out a bit, so I'd do best as an only pet in my new home. If you are looking for a gentle, affectionate cat to be your one and only, apply to meet me today!

My Requirements: Must be the only pet.



Isabella Female | 10 years olds | Siamese

This sweet and affectionate girl is the perfect mix of playful and easygoing. She loves chasing the "red dot" and batting at anything that dangles, and when she's feeling silly, she'll flop onto her back for some belly rubs. She's not a snuggler, but she'll happily curl up at the foot of your bed and keep you company while you sleep. She especially loves being cozied up under blankets for long, lazy naps. Isabella is an independent kitty, but if you bring out the cream, she'll transform into your little shadow-following you around until she gets her treat. She's not the biggest fan of brushing, and she'll sometimes gently put her mouth on you to let you know when she's had enough petting. Because of this, a home without young children would be the best fit for her. Overall, Isabella is a lovely companion who will bring warmth, fun, and just the right amount of sass to her forever home. Could she be the one for you?



Emails from Adopters

Hi WSHS,

Flower is doing great! She's fully opened up and is very comfortable at my home. We're still working on getting her accustomed to my work from home schedule but she's getting used to it more and more every day. She's my favorite little coworker!



Hello,

Buddy (aka Franz) has settled in nicely! He had his first vet appointment with a clean bill of health (except for a few allergies) and was actually told he's two years younger than we thought. He loves strutting his handsomeness on neighborhood walks, chasing squirrels and rabbits, and playing tug of war (he loves his toys!).

Best of all is when he gets the wiggles after eating, followed by some deep snoring from a long day of doing nothing but being king of the house!

Please thank the foster family for taking good care of him and thank you for bringing him into my life.



Hello,

Thank you for reaching out. Ham, who we've renamed Murphy, is doing very well! He's super sweet and is learning our routines quickly.

The photo shows him pretty relaxed but he is very active before he passes out!



Hi there,

Honey (her new name) is a joy! My Rango passed last year and she had been the most snuggly cat until this one came home. She sleeps with me every night and just loves being held. She talks and purrs non stop. But it seems that she doesn't take to other cats. We took all the steps that we should but she still hisses and growls at them. They can be in the same room but still not playing or getting close. It has gotten better and I hope this is just a work in progress. I have to say she quickly became my little bff.

The whole process was good. I will do the survey and a review. I've already recommended WSHS!



Above & Beyond

Mike Murphy

Mike is a kennel volunteer who wanted hands-on experience with dogs in a shelter after fostering for mastiff rescue at home. His experience with rescue dog behavior, especially with large breeds and reactivity issues, made him an asset in the kennel and he quickly went from green volunteer to yellow to STAR.

Recently Mike offered to work with Midas after several incidents with other volunteers. Mike consulted with our animal care team and came in outside of his shift to work with Midas before he went to board and train. Mike was able to understand why Midas was exhibiting certain behaviors and was able to help him regulate those behaviors.

Mike also went to other kennel shifts to help those volunteers work with Midas. The Tuesday evening shift coordinator was extremely appreciative of Mike's efforts, not only with Midas but with giving her yellow dot volunteers handling help and building their confidence with Midas.



Sam Hronek

Sam is an 11-year-old volunteer who works on Friday evenings in the cattery with his mom, Heather. There are two other volunteers on the shift with Sam, Heather, and the shift coordinator. There are enough volunteers on this shift that someone can miss, and the cats will still receive all the care they need from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Two weeks ago, one volunteer was scheduled to be absent when another volunteer called off last minute. In addition, Sam's mom was not able to come so Sam was bringing his dad. As it turned out, Sam's dad wasn't planning on volunteering with the cats; he waited for Sam in the lobby during his shift.

That left Sam and his shift coordinator to clean six cat rooms, scoop 20+ litter boxes, and socialize and play with 35+ cats. Sam's shift coordinator was amazed at Sam's commitment and work ethic, especially for his age. That's why she would like to see him recognized for his hard work!



Meet Maple: Everyone's Favorite Leading Lady

If Maple had a résumé, it would be impressive. She's house-trained, leash-trained, treat-motivated, and knows all her commands. She's playful, has mastered the art of the cuddle, and perfected her signature head tilt, guaranteed to melt your heart.

She's also gathered quite the fan club. Volunteer Mandy visits several times a week for walks and playtime. Foster mom Cristina brings her home whenever she's not traveling. And Maple has plenty of staff and volunteer admirers cheering her on every day. The only

role Maple hasn't landed yet is Beloved Family Dog. But she's more than ready for it, with her tail wagging and her heart wide open.

If you've been thinking about adding a dog to your life, Maple would love to audition for the part. She's got the talent, the charm, and a whole lot of love to give.



Volunteer Spotlight

The volunteers on the Monday morning cattery shift have changed over the past year but the care and compassion has never wavered. The volunteers give their best to the cats and the Monday morning motto is "cleaning is love."

Greg Duchak is the seasoned volunteer on this shift, having been at WSHS for four years. Greg started volunteering when his sister-in-law, a kennel volunteer, recruited him to unload the truck for our plant sale. It wasn't long before Greg was looking for a weekly opportunity to give back. When you ask Greg why he volunteers, he smiles and says, "the kittens!" Every Monday, Greg is surrounded by kittens, making sure they are happy and healthy. Greg likes to play different music each week for them. Greg believes "kittens are like kids; they need to be exposed to and learn about different things."

Kristen Wiklund became the newest member of the team this past January. Kristen's children regularly participate in our humane education programs. Not only do they come to programs like Cat Tales, but they also invite their friends to join them. Kristen takes care of the cats in Intake and really enjoys the role because it gives her a chance to make the new cats feel safe. She also likes to spend time in the cattery, catching up with the cats that have moved on from Intake.

Pam Salotti joined a year ago, but she's not a newbie in our cattery. Pam previously volunteered with the WSHS cats for four years in the early 2000s. Pam remembers when we transitioned the cats from cages to our open cattery model. She loved that the cats were able to roam, play and socialize with each other. Pam stepped away from volunteering because of her career, but she knew she would be back when she retired. When Pam was in the workforce, Monday mornings weren't a favorite. Now, "Monday mornings are the best time!"

Greg has two Ragdolls at home, Gus and Moses. Greg jokes that his wife wouldn't have married him if cats couldn't join their family; they have had cats for 40 years. Kristen's family also has two cats, tabby Otis and Maine Coon Oliver, as well as pittie mix Frank. Pam shares her home with WSHS alums, Bobtail Lili and



black shorthair Riley. Pam has been cat sitting in Downers Grove for 15 years and has taken care of other WSHS kitty alumni.

The volunteers on Monday mornings not only share their love of cats but they also share an interest in traveling and keeping fit. Greg likes to walk in his neighborhood and has travelled to Asia, Africa, Europe, South America, and 49 states, only missing a visit to Idaho. Kristen loves working out, watching her kids participate in sports, and visiting Hawaii. Pam attends Pilates every week and loves to dance. She's currently vacationing in Italy and says the one thing that is hard about travelling is seeing cats on the streets.

Kristen works at home and Greg and Pam are retired so they really appreciate the opportunity to work as a team. They each specialize in individual rooms while cleaning, but they are available to help each other, and they spend time together after cleaning, going in each room to socialize with all the cats and kittens. Pam likes to tell the cats, "I hope I don't see you next week" when she leaves. Like all our volunteers, these three do all they can to help the animals get adopted.

Hearty Thanks

Kaelyn had a lemonade stand and donated the proceeds to WSHS.

Elsa Sheridan of Brookfield donated \$80 to WSHS.

Congregation Etz Chaim of DuPage County donated \$312.92 to the adoption center.



Kaelyn



Elsa Sheridan

Congratulations to Our Barkapalooza 2025 Pledge and Raffle Winners!

Top Pledge Contributors:

1st Place Heidi Janss of Wheaton raised \$5,509.28

2nd Place Mary Griffin of Woodridge raised \$5,000

3rd Place Carolyn Mossberger of Romeoville raised \$4,409.33

4th Place Kerry Kopera of Villa Park raised \$3,094.75

Wags to Riches Raffle Winner:

Wendy McInerney of LaGrange was the \$1,000 winner of our Wags to Riches Raffle!





West Suburban
Humane Society

1901 W. Ogden Avenue
Downers Grove, IL 60515

INSIDE:
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Pawction 2025

Winter Wonderland

Saturday, December 6th, 2025 | Time: 6:00-9:00pm
1901 Ogden Avenue, Downers Grove IL

Mark your calendars and bundle up for a blisteringly good time with warm food, cold beverages, Silent Auction, Lottery Tree Raffle, White Elephant, and MORE!



Thank you to our Sponsor:



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