



West Suburban
Humane Society



Stray Thoughts

Winter 2026

News, Events & Adoption Information

www.WSHS-DG.org

Because of You, Louisa Got a Second Chance

On Tuesday, December 9th, a young mom cat and her six kittens were on their way to safety. The Tails on the Go Rescue transport had been on the road all morning and into the afternoon, carrying this little family toward the adoption center and a brighter future.

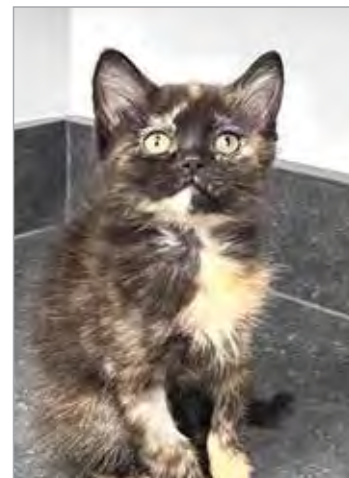
But when the transport reached its final stop in Joliet, something wasn't right.

One of the transporters noticed that Louisa, one of the tiny kittens, was struggling. She was lethargic, cold to the touch, and barely breathing. At just one year old herself, her mom couldn't help her – and time was running out.

Without hesitation, two of our experienced transport volunteers, Laurie and Leslie, sprang into action. They wrapped Louisa in a blanket to warm her fragile body, gave her fluids, and gently rubbed honey on her gums to raise her blood sugar. Once Louisa was stable enough to move, they rushed her straight to one of our trusted veterinary partners.

At the vet clinic, the team worked immediately to save her life. Louisa was placed in an incubator and started on fluids. The poor little peanut weighed less than one pound. The veterinarian warned us that she only had a 50% chance of making it through the night.

But Louisa wasn't ready to give up – and neither were we. Against the odds, she survived the night. As the hours turned into days, the vet grew cautiously optimistic. With each passing day, Louisa gained strength. Her breathing improved. Her tiny body warmed. And before long, her fun, feisty personality began to shine through.



Today, Louisa has made a full recovery. She has been reunited with her mom and her siblings, where she belongs. In just a few short months, this sweet little family will be ready for adoption – and for the loving homes they deserve.

Louisa's story is just one of many. Every single day, animals like her rely on us to step in when no one else can. We are only able to say "yes" because of the generosity of supporters like you.

Your donations make lifesaving transports possible. They provide emergency veterinary care when seconds matter. They give helpless animals the chance not just to survive – but to thrive.

From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for being part of these miracles. You are truly making a difference in the lives of homeless animals.

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Upcoming Events

Cabin Fever – Meeting Your Dog's Needs This Winter

Thursday, February 19th, 6:00 p.m.
at the WSHS Adoption Center

A practical in-person enrichment event

\$7.00 registration fee which includes a \$7.00

Two Bostons Enrichment Gift Certificate

To register visit: TwoBostons.com/events

Save the Date! Bingo Night at Two Brothers Tap House in Warrenville

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

7:00 p.m. – 9:00 pm



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

David Welch, Vice President

Sarah Marshall,
Recording Secretary

Kerry Kopera,
Controller/Treasurer

Tyler Born, Director

Mandy Kass, Director

Bob Koch, Director

Marci Levites, Director

Susan Liddi, Director

Kimberly Sennerikuppum,
Director

Maria Wrobel, Director

WSHS Staff:

Executive Director: Carolyn Mossberger

Director of Development: Zoe McGrath

Development Coordinator Evin Hook

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

Animal Care Team: Brittany Askeland, Jennifer Miller

Intake/Foster Coordinator: Lexi Vitale

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

Astrid Female | 2 years old | German Wire Hair Pointer Mix

Hi, I'm Astrid! I'm an athletic, energetic girl who would do best in an active household. I'd make a great running partner, and my intelligent, curious nature suggests I will learn my obedience skills quickly. My personality is friendly, playful, driven, and affectionate. I should be monitored around children because I'm not particularly careful when I get excited – I might accidentally knock somebody over! I can jump very high, so my new home should either have a secure, high fence, or my family should stick to walks or use long-leashes and always supervise me in the back yard. I'm friendly with other dogs, but I can be a little fearful at first, so I might do best as an only dog while I establish myself in my new home. I do well with dog savvy cats. Calmer animals, both dogs and cats, will have a better chance of earning my friendship, as I get intimidated easily right now. If you are looking for an active dog to take on all your adventures, apply to meet me today!



Special Requirements: Cannot be left unattended outside unless in a secure yard with a high fence, dog selective, dog-savvy cats only.

Fennick Male | 9 months old | Pomsky

Hi, I'm Fennick! I'm an adorable little husky-pomeranian mix who is fast like a fox and I look like one too. I have all the best parts of puppyhood: happy, zippy energy, a love for racing around the yard, and a talent for turning toys, other dogs and humans into my personal playmates. When zoomies are over, I'm an expert cuddler, perfectly sized to curl up in your lap and soak up the love. I'm not full size yet, so I will get a little bit bigger, but I will stay on the small side. I can live with people of all ages, other dogs and cats. I'm the whole package! Send in an application today!



Attila Male | 1.6 years old | White and Grey DSH

Hello there, I'm Attila! Don't let my fierce name fool you, I'm a total sweetheart. I'm such a staff favorite that they're taking bets on who's going to take me home first. Need a buddy with a hilarious, expressive face and a heart of gold? I'm your man. I'll charm you with my tongue bleps, win you over with snuggles and stare deep into your soul until you're smitten. I do well with other cats, but a cat in my new home should be confident, energetic, and playful in order to make a good match for me. Send in an application today!



Beasley Female | 2.5 years old | Brown Tabby

Hi, I'm Beasley! I'm a sassy Brown Tabby who is looking for my forever home. My personality is quiet, sweet, and a little bit introverted. I can be very affectionate with people of all ages. I do like attention, but I promise to let you know when I am ready to be left alone! I do well with other cats, but I would be happiest with other like-minded cats who are happy to have a friend in the house but don't require a lot of interaction. I would make a great companion for someone who wants a housemate with a mature, no-nonsense attitude. If you are looking for a low-maintenance, independent gal to join your household, apply to meet me today!



West Suburban Humane Society Receives \$20,000 Community Impact Grant from DuPage Foundation

This December, West Suburban Humane Society received a \$20,000 grant through DuPage Foundation's Community Impact grant program to help support on-site medical care for homeless cats and dogs to reduce off-site veterinary costs and prevent companion animal euthanasia. The Providing Quality Onsite Medical Care for Homeless Cats and Dogs at West Suburban Humane Society project makes a direct impact on rescue animals in need.

"We are deeply grateful to the DuPage Foundation for their generous \$20,000 grant supporting above-and-beyond medical care for the animals at our adoption center. Thanks to the support of The Mary L. Voigt Fund, the Phil and Judy Barnett Family Fund, and the Robinwood Legacy Fund, we are able to provide lifesaving treatments, specialized care, and comfort to animals who need it most. This generosity makes a profound difference in their recovery and their journey toward loving forever homes."



Said Carolyn Mossberger, Executive Director of the West Suburban Humane Society.

"It was such a joy to award these grants to so many amazing local nonprofits this season," said Betsy Goltermann, DuPage Foundation Trustee and Grant Committee Chair. She added, "These funds help them keep doing incredible work in our communities. Hearing about their plans and celebrating all the good happening in DuPage County is truly inspiring."

Thank You to Our Pawction Sponsors



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Emails from Adopters

Hi there,

Mabel (the puppy formerly known as Diedra) is the most wonderful dog, we could've ever hoped for. She loves cuddling up on the couch, going for walks, rides in the car, and has recovered great from her spay surgery.

Mabel is so smart and gentle! She has gotten along with friends and family visiting over the holidays, and is excited and playful with people she meets on walks and her dog friend across the street. She sleeps in her doggy bed by the window while I'm working from home. As I write you this email, she is fast asleep on a fluffy blanket.

Thank you so much for connecting us with our dream dog – she starts her puppy classes next week and we know she is going to do great!



Hello,

Mitzi (now Mabel) is adjusting very well so far! She wasn't eating so much at first but now she seems more comfortable and is cleaning her plates! She found the litterbox immediately and so far we haven't had any issues. Thank you to your entire team for helping me through the adoption process!



Hi WSHS,

Banksy (now Dexter) is adjusting very well! He is such a good dog and we are so thankful to have found him. He had a successful vet visit and we are working on increasing his calories to get some weight on him. He has found a best buddy in my fiances dog, and they get a lot of playtime when around each other. Dexter has quickly settled himself in as part of the family!



Hello,

Mavis, now known as Livia, is absolutely loving life in her new home! She loves her cat sisters and brother, and had no trouble making friends right away! We love her little personality – she is such a friendly and curious cat! She's not afraid of anything, and she has really taken to our four-year-old and loves playing with him! Thank you so much for matching us with a perfect cat!



Volunteer Spotlight

Carol Thygesen, Tim Dempsey, Erik Ozer, Abby Alkevicius, Margaret Sullivan, Raechel Boston, and Isaac Zacarias happily gather every other Sunday morning for their kennel shift. As Isaac simply puts it, they are there to give a helping hand, meet some cute dogs, and talk to some kind people. Their morning routine pulls from each of their strengths with everyone willing to step in at any time.

Beyond kennel cleaning and getting the dogs out for exercise, this team focuses on enrichment and the goal of adoption. They recognize that every dog has a unique personality and their own story and it's important to meet each dog where they are. Everyone likes to watch the dogs go from reserved to playful. Carol remembers a new dog that was so shut down she stayed in a crate in her run. When they couldn't coax her out, the volunteers brought her in the crate into the prep room along with a puppy. She immediately came out of her shell and showed her potential.

It's always a celebration when long-term residents or dogs who need a specialized home find the right family. Margaret says "the wait can feel long – but watching them grow, supporting them through their journey, and then finally see them thrive in a forever home is incredibly rewarding."

Some of the Sunday morning volunteers spend extra time with WSHS dogs through our fostering and buddy programs. Carol and Tim have fostered dogs that need a home to know they're safe, loved, and worthy of a soft place to land. Once Tim retired, he had time to devote 24/7 care to fosters, forming each one into a great family pet. Tim admits it's a big commitment but "the joy I get from helping a pup exceeds the work I put in." It's always hard to let go at adoption time, but there's always another dog in need.

Margaret buddies up with long-term kennel residents, taking them on field trips for extra enrichment and working with their behavior to increase their chances of

adoption. Margaret found great success when working with buddy Jasmine, an energetic Malamute that had her challenges, and ultimately helping her get adopted.

With this animal-loving crew, it's not surprising to find that they have their own dogs and cats at home. Carol recently adopted a 4-year-old Cavalier King Charles Spaniel named Rocky. Tim's family includes a 7-year-old rescued Catahoula mix and an orange kitten from WSHS that are a big help with his fosters. Raechel has two rescue pups, a chihuahua/boston terrier/pit mix named Tito and a mini goldendoodle named Crosby.



Isaac is always picking up after his 1-year-old gray shorthair cat Bob Dylan; she loves knocking things over. Abby also lives with a chaotic kitty, 8-year-old black domestic shorthair cat Dash, and Margaret's best friend is Olive, a sassy, spoiled maltipoo.

Spending Sunday mornings at WSHS has taught this team a lot: dog body language and behavior, breed differences, and patience and empathy. Carol recognizes "every new pup is an opportunity to learn." They also know that the need for help for all animals never ends.

So, every other weekend, you will find this compassionate group working one-on-one with the dogs and hosting playgroups and puppy parties, surrounded by kind conversation, laughter, and support.

Hearty Thanks

Oak Brook Kennel Club held their 5th Annual Toy & Treat Drive collecting toys, treats, enrichment goodies, and more for the rescue animals at WSHS.

Enjoy Your Dog in Downers Grove put up an Angel Tree in their lobby. During the holiday season, patrons took ornaments that featured a WSHS shelter pet's photo, name, age, and holiday wish list. Four carloads of food, toys, supplies, and gift cards were donated to the animals at the adoption center.

Madison is 6 years old, and all she wanted for Christmas was to make sure the rescue kittens at WSHS feel loved. Thank you for the donation, Madison!

Despir Logistics, LLC held a company raffle fundraiser and donated \$1,250.

The Petfinder Foundation awarded WSHS with the 2025 Dog Enrichment Grant, funding brand new dog beds for the kennel at the Adoption Center.

Next Phase Advisory Group deep cleaned the cat enclosures in the intake room, painted the foster supply cubby and donated \$800.

Holladay Properties helped to decorate the Adoption Center for the holidays and donated \$160.

Ben Patterson raised \$67 from a lemonade stand he hosted. He donated the money to the adoption center.

The student council at Thomas Jefferson Junior High sponsored a door decorating contest. Each door represented a local charity. The doors were judged by the school district board and administrators. West Suburban Humane Society won the contest and received \$100.

The Clarendon Hills Daisy Dash choose West Suburban Humane Society as their charity. They donated \$2,000 to the adoption center.

Noah turned 27, and his birthday wish was to go shopping with his brother and buy donations for the animals at the adoption center. He also did an online fundraiser and raised \$185 for the cats and dogs.

Ellie, an 8th grader at St. Mary of Gostyn School in Downers Grove, was given \$40 to spend on a charity as part of a pay-it-forward assignment. Ellie chose WSHS as her charity. She added \$20 of her own money and donated supply items as well.

The Downers Grove Junior Woman's Club donated \$1,000 to the adoption center.

Salt Club Creek in Hinsdale donated the proceeds from their annual Dog Swim and Pool Pawty to the adoption center. They donated \$1,400.

Grace, an 8th grader at St. Mary of Gostyn School in Downers Grove, was given \$40 to spend on a charity as part of a pay-it-forward assignment. She chose to donate the money to the animals at the adoption center.

Ruby Claxton made dog toys out of old t-shirts as part of her 8th grade service project for Saint Francis Xavier School in LaGrange. She donated the toys to the dogs at the adoption center.

*Enjoy Your Dog**Madison**Despir Logistics**Petfinder Foundation**Next Phase Advisory**Holladay Properties**Ben**Noah*



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Downers Grove, IL 60515

INSIDE:
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Winter 2026 Newsletter

Mark your calendars and grab your best pals for...

Pal-entine's Day PopUp!

Tuesday, February 10th, 2026 | Time: 6:00-9:00pm

Location: Clara's in Woodridge (6550 IL-53, Woodridge, IL)

Come for the heart-shaped pizzas & candy table!
Stay for the make-your-own dessert candle
workshop, Lottery Bouquet Raffle, & MORE!



Clara's
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EVENT

