



Don't Miss the  
Event of the Year!  
See Pages 7 & 8  
for Details.

## West Suburban Humane Society

# STRAY THOUGHTS

## Katrina – A Hurricane Survivor



Did you know that only a small percentage of cats have amber eyes? It's true; or at least that's what I've been told. Look into my amber eyes and they will tell you my story. I am the last cat at this shelter from Hurricane Katrina. All of the other cats who were rescued and brought here have homes, but I don't. Do the math: that means I have been in residence here for two and a half years. In fact, there may not be another cat who has lived here as long as I have. Gee, that's two distinctions for me: the last hurricane kitty and longest resident. Rather dubious honors if I may say so.

If I sound bitter, I certainly don't mean to. I am extremely grateful for my life. I definitely would not have survived left to my own devices in the wake of Katrina. I felt ultimately fortunate when I was rescued. I was just a young girl back then, barely a year old. I had little or no experience with life on my own. It's amazing I was in such good shape upon my arrival.

But then again, that's what you can call me: a survivor. I am no shrinking violet, that's for sure. I know what I want and when I want it. Maybe that's why it has been difficult for me to live in a cage. I sort of feel like my

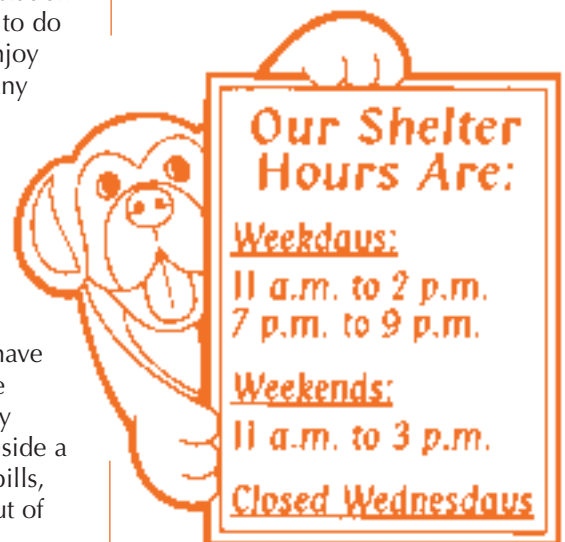
free will has been taken away. Again, don't think me ungrateful. I know they do their very best to keep all of the cats as comfortable as possible. That's why they moved me closer to the offices: so I can get out of my cage when the shelter is closed. I so look forward to those times. It lets me feel like a normal cat for a while. It's really hard to explain, but having the opportunity to get out and run around the place, doing whatever I want to do, is like getting sprung from prison for a cat like me.

There is so much to do when it is my turn out, which only happens about twice a week. I like to use the scratching post first. That feels really good. Then I just like to explore the basement for a while. After that, I might come around the staff to see if they'd like to play with me. I particularly like laser pointers and catnip. Once I trust someone, I will rub against their legs in appreciation of attention. My favorite thing to do is to find cozy spots to sit. I enjoy relaxing in baskets, boxes or any small space I can find.

One little quirk I have is that I play in my water. Strange behavior for cats in general and even stranger for a cat who came out of a hurricane, but I just can't get enough of pawing my water dish until I have soaked my cage. The staff here thought they outsmarted me by putting my small water dish inside a big dog bowl to contain the spills, but I foiled them: I splash it out of that bowl too!

Hey, a girl's got to amuse herself any way she can, right?

Seriously, I really need a home. I don't just want one, I actually need one. I am a cat who does not fare well in a cage and that's the reason I don't show well. Every time I get out, whether to play or to be shown, I am terrified I will be put back too soon. So whenever someone reaches for me, I run away or take a swipe at them. I can't help it. I promise I will be better in a home where I can run, run, and run some more. Once I know there are no more cages in my future, I will settle in and give as much or more than I take. Look beyond my exterior and into my weathered amber eyes. You will see a friendly, loving and misunderstood cat. No one has ever been willing to take a chance on me. Will you?



## Upcoming Events

630-960-9600, ext. 25

### MAY

- |                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| 3rd, Saturday                  | Mutts Need Moola<br>Look for WSHS at Local Jewel Stores.  |
| 9th, Friday - 10th, Saturday   | Petals for Pets Plant Sale<br>Look for more information on our Third Annual Plant Sale on page 4 of this edition of Stray Thoughts. |
| 12th, Monday - 14th, Wednesday | Jewel Shop & Share<br>Stop by the shelter to pick up your coupon.   |
| 26th, Monday                   | Memorial Day - WSHS will be closed today.   |

### JUNE - ADOPT A SHELTER CAT MONTH

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 18th, Wednesday             | WSHS General Meeting held at 7:30 pm at the Downers Grove Park District. For more information on our special guest speaker, see page 5. |
| 27th, Friday - 29th, Sunday | Downers Grove Heritage Festival<br>Stop by and visit the shelter's booth!   |

### JULY

- |             |  |
|-------------|--|
| 4th, Friday | 4th of July - WSHS will be closed today. |
|-------------|--|

## 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

- Paper Towels
- Dog and cat toys (washable and indestructible!)
- Food (our animals are on a specific diet: so that we don't upset their digestive systems, we must be specific) Purina or IAMS (Dry) cat and dog, kitten and puppy formulas, light formula – cat and dog and senior formula – cat and dog. Any canned cat, dog, kitten or puppy food is fine.
- Cat litter (no scoopable)
- Stamps (to be used for postage)
- Garbage bags (13 & 30 gallon sizes)
- 6" paper plates
- Lint Traps
- Volunteers!
- Monetary donations are always appreciated!
- KMR (kitten milk replacement), small baby bottles and nipples

BFC donated services to the production of "Stray Thoughts."

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



INTEGRATEDPRINTMANAGEMENT

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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.

### BOARD MEMBERS:

Guy Pinta, President  
Cindy Johnson, Recording Secretary  
Dawn Drella, Controller/Treasurer  
Jennifer Bahlmann, Director  
Pam Gambill, Director  
Pat Rowland, Director  
Tyson Grover, Director

### THE WSHS STAFF:

Executive Director: Carolyn Mossberger (Ext. 25)  
Animal Care Manager: Sarah Stromberg (Ext. 23)  
Night and Weekend Manager: Catherine Schmitt  
Animal Care Assts: Kendra Crawford & Brigitte Black  
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  
Phone: **630-960-9600**  
Fax: **630-960-9604**



# Ready For a Home



## Brennigan

**7-year-old, Female, Lab mix**

Are you looking for a quiet, older girl to be your companion? I am a slightly older gal who has not had the best life. I am a little shy when I first meet people but warm up quickly. I am looking for a patient family that will be willing to give me time to relax and be myself. I don't like being alone so I would prefer a home where someone is around most of the day. I am good with cats but would prefer to be the only dog. Won't you give me a second chance at living out the rest of my life in a happy home?

## Charity

**2-year-old, Female, Plott Hound mix**

Hi, my name is Charity. I am a high energy, fun loving girl that is looking for her forever home. I am playful and love other dogs. Oh yeah, did I mention that I don't like cats. Because of my energy level, I would do best in a home with kids 14 years or older. Also, because of my breed, I do tend to bay when I get excited so I should probably live in a house with a nice big fenced in backyard, not an apartment, condo or townhouse. I could also benefit from obedience training. I know how to sit but I could use some work on my other commands. If I sound like a good fit for you and your family, stop by and pay me a visit.



## Naiya

**7-year-old, Female, Siamese mix**

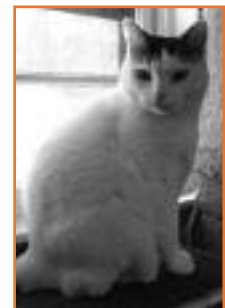
As a Siamese mix with pretty blue eyes. I am surprised I haven't been adopted yet. I have been at the shelter for a while, so I recently had the opportunity to spend a couple of months in a temporary care home. My foster mom says that I was just the most loving cat while in her care. I enjoyed attention and had great litter box habits. I just need a high-sided litter box because I don't squat down so much when I use it. She also said that I never bothered her early in the morning. I was very patient about waiting until she got up to get my food and love. I am back now and although I don't care much for caged living, in a home, I absolutely shine.



## Mini Cooper

**5-year-old, Male, White w/tabby markings**

Everyone always asks how I got my name. Well, I arrived at WSHS in a mini cooper, that's how. A man brought me here who found me wandering the highway. It appeared that I hadn't been outside long at all because I was very clean and plump. No one ever came to look for me, so now here I wait for my new life to begin. I am a very striking cat, almost all white except for some tabby markings and a tabby tail. I also have a unique spot on my left eye. You really just have to come see me to appreciate me in all my glory.





# Petals for Pets

Come for a blooming good time  
and purchase your spring flowers  
all while helping the animals  
at the  
West Suburban Humane Society.



West Suburban will host  
their third annual plant sale on  
May 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> from  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm daily



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)



Mother's Day is Sunday,  
May 11<sup>th</sup>  
Flowers make great gifts!

# HEARTY THANKS

To all the volunteers who gave up time with their families to work at the shelter over the holidays. We couldn't do it without you. You are appreciated more than you know!

**Amanda Miller and Nicole Ring**, Student Council Advisors and the Student Council of Indian Trail School for collecting food and supply donations for the humane society.

The honor students at **Downers Grove High School** stood outside of local Jewel stores and collected food, supplies on money on behalf of the shelter. They collected an enormous

amount of food and supplies as well as \$3,863.15. What an awesome job!

**Rachel Watson** recently celebrated her 11th birthday. Instead of gifts, she asked that people make donations to the shelter. She collected \$90 plus several bags of food, toys and paper products.



**Maggie Clink** of Elmhurst had a birthday party and asked that guests bring donations for the shelter instead of gifts for her. She collected numerous food, supply and monetary donations for the animals at the shelter.

3-Year-old **Caleb Bozue** of Lemont, donated the \$10 in his piggy bank to the animals at the shelter.

The **SASED Students** at Westmont High School held a fundraiser and collected \$75 for the animals at the shelter.

**Brian Freeman**, President of Authorized Exterior, Inc. donated his services and did some much needed gutter repairs to our building. Give them a call at 630-663-1434 or email them at AuthEx@aol.com for all of your home's exterior repair needs.



When my Sunday School class of 5th and 6th graders decided to do a social action project for the months of March and April, I suggested the West Suburban Humane Society. I know that all my kids love animals, and since I have volunteered at the shelter over a span of 30 years, it seemed like a perfect fit. So the kids designed and made posters and hung them all over the DuPage Unitarian Church in Naperville. Then they set up an area where people could drop off items that the shelter had on its wish list.

On Wednesday, April 16th, the kids and their parents dropped off over 200 pounds of food at the shelter. They also brought much-needed items like paper towels, animal toys, treats, a cat tower, and much more.

Kids and animals...it's a great combination!

Jeannine Fons  
Friday Night Volunteer



## General Meeting

On Wednesday, June 18th, WSHS is hosting their annual meeting at 7:30 pm at the Downers Grove Park District located at 4500 Belmont Avenue in Downers Grove. Learn more about the exciting things that are happening at the shelter, meet our great staff, board members and volunteers and enjoy refreshments.

We will be wrapping up the evening with a very special guest speaker, Alex Brooks, Dog Behavior Expert and Founder of the Midwest Canine Behavior and Socialization Center in Des Plaines, IL. Alex has been training dogs since the late 1970's. He and his wife Marcy now own their own kennel



for boarding, daycare, and training, located in Des Plaines, Illinois.

In Alex's extensive career, he has trained dogs for the canine unit of the local Police Departments. He has performed many evaluations for, and has been appointed as, an expert witness in court hearings for the Department of Animal Control of Cook County. Alex has also found time to volunteer at local shelters training dogs so they could be permanently placed in homes.

Alex's expertise has gained him the attention of many well known sports superstars such as Michael Jordan,

Scottie Pippen, Tony Kokoc, Cliff Levingston, Maurice Douglas, Jeremy Lincoln, Jalen Rose, Bobby Simmons, and many others in the sports industry.

Alex will talk about common behavior issues and how to deal with them. There will also be a question and answer session following his presentation.

For more information, please contact Carolyn Mossberger at 630-960-9600, ext. 25 or [director@wshs-dg.org](mailto:director@wshs-dg.org).

Hope to see you there!

# Pet Health Watch by Dr. Main, DVM

Dear Dr. Main:

## How does my pet perceive the world we share?

At a basic level people and pets are similar. However at the higher levels of the brain and in vision and in sensory perception there are considerable differences. Let's take a closer look.

From my own experience, while walking my dog "Jenna", there have been times when Jenna stops in her tracks and will not proceed and is barking. At the same time I am oblivious as to why she is barking and refusing to move forward. In this case she perceives the environment differently than me. She had spotted an artificial deer placed remotely in a yard and was alarmed by this new object. Indeed the dog and human mind process information differently. With Temple Grandin and her book "Animals in Translation" as reference; let's explore some of our differences.

The cortex of a dog brain is simply smaller than a human brain. The cortex is the outer portion of the brain including the frontal lobes. The cortex is the area of the brain where associations are made and where integration of information takes place. For people this is where we interpret sensory data, process information and make generalizations. Hence with a dog having a smaller brain cortex; most things, events, situations, remain separate and not integrated. Pets perceive the sensory data but interpret, process, and generalize the information to a much lesser extent than people. For example a dog may be well trained and socialized in a familiar setting and be unable to transfer this training and socialization to a new and unfamiliar setting. The human mind is able to take what it knows, generalize it and apply the knowledge to a new situation.

The human mind works with intention when it processes sensory information. For example, people see exactly what their mind is focused

on and would not consciously see any object unless they were paying direct attention to the object. So people tend to see what they expect to see. Animals on the other hand do not process or filter sensory information. So animals see raw data and they see it in great detail. They see what is there to be seen without intention or filtering. Animals cannot keep from seeing things that are new or different because they pop up unavoidably. Animals are experts at seeing detail and everything that is new. For example a human could look at a particular tree but not see the surrounding detail; the brain only processes the tree. In contrast, the dog would see the tree but could not help to see all the other surrounding detail. This is similar to Jenna seeing the deer in the yard and me being oblivious.

Indeed animals are very detailed orientated. They are more focused on details than whole objects. Their vision works differently than ours. Dogs have great night vision and less color vision and less visual acuity than people. Dogs see two primary colors and we see three primary colors, but dogs see many more shades of the colors they see. Because their night vision is strong they see contrast of light and dark very intensely. For a dog a shadow may appear as a deep area or a drop-off like a cliff. If a dog is reluctant to move in a direction it could easily be the dog's awareness of a distinct shadow. Because dogs see detail, a spot of shiny metal or a shimmering puddle could be a point of concern for the dog. They can't help themselves. Beyond vision and mental processing, the sensory organs of pets are different as well.

Animals have an astonishing ability to perceive the world. Their hearing range is broader, their smell is much better, and they do not block sensory information by mental filtering. People see schemes and pets perceive raw sensory data. Pets usually hear, smell, and sense things before people do. Some experts feel pets can smell emotion, cancer, or even sense an

oncoming heart attack. People really can't walk in their pet's shoes.

Other pet sensitivities include novelty, meaning the unfamiliar or unexpected. In addition, movement, height, light and dark contrast, and sound, especially high pitched intermittent sound. Again, they love familiarity, routine, and they have a great ability to tune into all that is familiar with their regular environment. Oppositely they cannot help their keen awareness of all that is new, different, out of sequence, and unfamiliar. And often they lack the ability to integrate, form connections and gain understanding.

When pets are acting strange about a situation, they are not making it up. To them it is real. If the stimulus is overwhelming to the pet, then it is best to remove the pet from the stimulus. On the other hand if the pet has a curiosity about the stimulus, and it appears safe, then it is best to allow a leisurely exploration of the situation and hopeful desensitization.

Fortunately, the bond we share with our pets and the familiarity they have with their home environment is always settling and comfortable. This information is general and not meant to be specific to any one pet. Our pets are fantastic creatures and companions; hopefully this information provides insight into their world.

## Please address questions and suggestions for future animal health articles to:

Dr. Main  
West Suburban  
Humane Society  
1901 W. Ogdan Avenue  
Downers Grove, IL 60515  
director@wshs-dg.org



## E-Mails and Letters From Adopters

Good Morning! I just wanted to drop you a note...

We spoke last week when I had called in and asked about Cristyl (I think that's how it's spelled!). You did a vet check for me, and called me the next day when she was adopted. It was meant to be, as we came in on Friday night and found 2 kitties that I am absolutely in love with!

Thank you, by the way, for your help with everything!



It ended up that I fell in love with Lavender - it was definitely love at first sight! She is such a sweetheart, and although a bit shy at the moment in a brand new house, she is coming around. She snuggles with me at night, and I just love her!

We also fell for little Miss Marcie (my mom refers to her as "Fancy Pants"!), who has definitely made herself at home over the past 2 days. She has already explored the entire house, and loves to sit on the kitchen counters - Mom is not too happy with that, but I let her do it anyway :-). She is a great kitty.



Both kitties are very loving thus far, and I look forward to having them as a part of my life forever! I am happy to have met everyone at WSHS this weekend, and I'll be sure to stop in sometime soon.

Take care, thank you again!!  
Stephanie Benedict

Love is a Pet Away



# West Suburban Humane Society

Presents:



15th Annual

## **BARKA**PALOOZA

WALKATHON & PET EXPO

**Sunday, September 28, 2008**

**10:00 am - 2:00 pm**

**Rain or Shine**

**Kids Walk Free!**

- 🐾 **Great prizes based on collected pledges - the more you collect the more you win!**
- 🐾 **Registration at 9:00am**
- 🐾 **Micro-chipping will be available for a small fee and "Vet Advice" for free.**
- 🐾 **A blessing for the animals will be given at 10:00 am**
- 🐾 **Don't want to walk - just come & shop with our many vendors.**
- 🐾 **Clowns, Face Painting, Balloon Sculptures**
- 🐾 **Breed Specific Rescue Groups**
- 🐾 **Kids and Kindness Zone**
- 🐾 **Give-aways—Crafts—Food—Special items for Children**
- 🐾 **For more information call: West Suburban Humane Society at (630) 960-9600, ext. 25; [www.WSHS-DG.org](http://www.WSHS-DG.org); Come with or without a dog, bring the family, **but no other pets please.****

Waiver: In consideration of my signing this agreement, I hereby for myself, my heirs and administrators assume any and all risks which might be associated with the walk. I waive and release any and all rights and claims for damages which I may have against the organizers and any others connected with this event, their representatives, successors, and assigns for any and all injuries or damages of any kind whatsoever suffered by me as a result of taking part in the walk and any related activities. I also give full permission for use of my name and photograph in connection with this event.

Love is a Pet Away



# West Suburban Humane Society

1901 W. Ogden Ave. • Downers Grove, IL 60515  
 630-960-9600 • www.WSHS-DG.org



## “BARKAPALOOZA”

Walkathon and Pet Expo  
 with a blessing for the animals



at Patriots Park - 55th Street (between Fairview & Main)

Sunday, September 28, 2008 - 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm (rain or shine)

DONATION SHEET			
SPONSOR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)	ADDRESS, CITY, ZIP	PHONE	PLEDGE
			TOTAL

- Donation fee is \$10.00 per adult - children 12 and under free.
- **Walkers with \$100 or more in collected pledges WALK FREE & receive an event shirt.**
- All pledges are due on or before event date.
- Bring this sheet and your collected pledges the morning of the walk. Your pledge dollars will help the animals in our shelter. Money collected before the event can be mailed to, or dropped off at, West Suburban Humane Society's Development Office. (630) 960-9600, ext. 25.
- Water, snacks, first-aid and dog curbing materials will be provided along the route for you and your leashed canine companion.
- Dogs under 4 months of age, vicious dogs, or female dogs in any stage of heat will not be allowed to participate. **Dogs only please.**
- Each canine participant will receive a Walkathon bandanna.
- ALL GUESTS WILL RECEIVE A “BARKAPALOOZA” registration gift.
- **I CANNOT WALK BUT WILL HELP SHELTER ANIMALS WITH A DONATION OF \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

**Checks preferred**

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_

WALKER'S SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_ WALKER'S NAME-PLEASE PRINT \_\_\_\_\_  
 PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DOG NAME \_\_\_\_\_ ALUMNI \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, ZIP) \_\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE	
<b>MONEY COLLECTED</b>	
Reg. Fee (\$10):	_____
Pledges:	_____
Total Collected:	_____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE (IF UNDER 18) \_\_\_\_\_ AGE (IF UNDER 18) \_\_\_\_\_ (See Waiver On Other Side)

**How did you hear of this event?** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please keep a duplicate set of receipts for your records — no copies available at event.