



# Stray Thoughts

Spring 2025      News, Events & Adoption Information      [www.WSHS-DG.org](http://www.WSHS-DG.org)

## Help Buddy & Charlie Find Their Second Chance. Two Dogs, One Heartbreaking Story.

**B**uddy and Charlie once had a home filled with love. They knew the comfort of warm beds, gentle hands, and the unwavering devotion of their owners. But in a heartbreaking twist of fate, both of their owners passed away within a short time, leaving these sweet dogs homeless and grieving. The loss was sudden and confusing, and the familiar world they knew was gone. Yet, despite their sadness, Buddy and Charlie continue to hold on to hope for a brighter tomorrow.

Buddy, a gentle 10-year-old pitbull mix, holds on to hope despite his challenges. His graying muzzle is a testament to the years of loyalty he gave to his family. He battles skin allergies that require a special diet and manages epilepsy with care, yet his spirit remains unbroken. Even on his toughest days, he greets the world with a wagging tail and kind eyes. Buddy still dreams of finding a family to cherish him through his golden years—a place where he can curl up by the fireplace and feel the warmth of love once more.

Charlie, a sensitive 3-year-old hound mix, struggled deeply with anxiety in the kennel. The noise and unfamiliar surroundings overwhelmed him, and each day felt longer than the last. Thankfully, he has found relief in a foster home where his loving nature shines. His foster family shares that he adores snuggling and melts into every affectionate touch. Charlie thrives on companionship and finds joy in the simplest things – a walk in the park, a soft bed, or a quiet evening cuddled next to someone who cares. Each day in his foster



*Buddy*



*Charlie*

home brings him closer to healing, but he still longs for a permanent place to call his own.

These two deserving dogs need your help. Your generosity provides the medical care, special diets, and behavioral support that give Buddy and Charlie a chance at a brighter future while they wait for their forever homes. Every contribution, no matter the size, helps to ease their burdens and bring them comfort. With your support, they receive the care and attention they need to thrive. Buddy and Charlie's journey to find a new family is not easy, but with your kindness, their path becomes a little smoother.

Please, open your heart to Buddy and Charlie today. Every dollar brings them closer to the loving families they long for and deserve. Your compassion can change their lives forever. Together, we can give Buddy and Charlie the happy ending they so desperately want, a place where they will never feel lost or alone again.

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# Foster Homes Needed!

Do you want to make a difference for animals in need? We are looking for compassionate volunteers to provide temporary care in their home for cats and dogs!

Whether it is a mother dog with her newborn litter of puppies, an older cat recovering from surgery, or an overstimulated pet who needs some one-on-one love and attention, there are so many animals that need a foster home.

**Learn more and get involved at:**  
[www.wshs-dg.org/get-involved/foster](http://www.wshs-dg.org/get-involved/foster)



## 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

**Bob Koch**, Director

**Marci Levites**, Director

**Susan Liddi**, Director

**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,  
Eric Van Clevon, Evin Hook, Shea Casey

**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

**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](http://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](mailto:Director@WSHS-DG.org)

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

# Ready for a Home

## Gordy Male | 5 years old | Pitbull Terrier Mix

Meet Gordy! This sweet 5-year-old pittie is ready to find his forever home, and he's sure to steal your heart with his bright, happy personality. Gordy is a loving, loyal companion who thrives on human attention and affection. He's got a medium energy level, so he's up for playtime, but also enjoys relaxing with his people after a fun day. Gordy is currently in foster care, and his foster has tons of good stuff to say about him! If you think Gordy would make the perfect addition to your household, apply to meet him today!



**My Requirements:** Must be only pet. Kids 8 years and older.

## Lupe Female | 3 years old | Pointer Mix

Hi, I'm Lupe! I'm a 3-year-old Pointer mix who is ready to find my forever home! My personality is sweet, playful, loyal, and friendly. I can be a little shy at first, but I like meeting new people who are going to pet me and give me a lot of attention! My favorite things to do are spending time with my favorite people, playing with my toys, laying in the sun, and exploring outside during a nice long walk. I love to follow my nose! I probably had babies in the past, and as a result, I don't really enjoy the company of other dogs, or even cats at this time. But being an only pet just means I will be able to bond even more with my new family. If you want a sweet new friend who will go with you on all your adventures, apply to meet me today!



**My Requirements:** Must be only pet.

## Bobbin Female | 1 year old | Calico

Hi, I'm Bobbin and I have tons of personality! I'm a beautiful calico who knows how pretty I am, so I hope you like a cat with a little attitude. My personality is curious, playful and affectionate. I like attention and getting pets, but I'll let you know when I'm done. I can live with other cats, but I'm going to need a slow introduction to them so we can become BFFs over time. If you've been looking for a fun new friend, you've found her!



## Zizzou Male | 2 years old | Brown Tabby

Hi, I'm Zizzou and I'm so happy to meet you! I'm an instant friend to other cats and people. With dogs I'll need a slow introduction but I just need time. My personality is sweet, affectionate and playful. My history is a mystery but at some point I was an outside guy and another cat got in a fight with me. They gave me FIV, which is an auto-immune disease that doesn't really change much about my day to day, it just means that I'm more susceptible to getting sick and my recovery will take a bit longer. Other than that, I'm a healthy boy with a good appetite who is just happy to be with you. I'm ready to live in a home, will it be yours? Send in an application to meet me today.





## Emails from Adopters

Hi WSHS,

Kenny's moved in! He's met most of the neighborhood, loves long walks, and feels right at home. Here's an update photo. We hope his brother Spenny found a new home too!



Hello,

Kier is doing well. His new name is Fiasco and as you can see, he is doing very well with my dog Gidget. He's got a pretty big personality and he's settling in very nicely!



Hi there!

Thanks so much for checking in. Damon, now named Waldo, is adjusting so well to life in our home. He's a silly, gentle guy and has been picking up commands very quickly. Even in the bitter cold, his favorite place to go was the dog park to make new friends. Thanks to the shelter's group play, Waldo is a super social guy and fits so well into our lives. Thanks so much for taking such good care of our boy!



Hello WSHS,

Pele is doing well in our household. It was a little difficult at first because of our cat Thea was a little insecure but there was never a physical altercation between them and now they seem to enjoy each other's company. Thea is now sharing her toys and windows. We changed Pele's name to Francesco aka Frankie. Frankie is so sweet and affectionate. We are letting him get used to us and his new home.



*plant sale fundraiser  
benefitting our cats and dogs*

# Petals for Pets

**FRIDAY, MAY 9TH  
NOON TO 7 PM**

**WEST SUBURBAN HUMANE SOCIETY  
1901 OGDEN AVENUE  
DOWNERS GROVE, IL**



**West Suburban  
Humane Society**

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# Above & Beyond: Ashley Swaiss, Tim Dempsey

**Ashley Swaiss is an incredible advocate for the animals in our care, dedicating her time and energy to both the kennel and the cattery.**

Her compassion and dedication are evident in everything she does. Whether she's ensuring the dogs receive the exercise and enrichment they need or providing the cats with socialization and comfort, Ashley goes above and beyond to make a difference.

From the moment she started volunteering, she has looked for opportunities to do more when she is with the animals. She knows how to feed and medicate in the kennel and cattery, she quickly became a STAR volunteer in the kennel so she could take care of all the dogs, and she has fostered for WSHS.

Ashley also serves as a buddy to the cats and dogs struggling with stress and needing extra attention by spending time with them outside of her regular shift. Ashley loves working with the animals that need a little extra time and socialization. Her calm and gentle nature allows them to relax and learn to trust.

Ashley's commitment, kindness, and unwavering passion make her truly deserving of this recognition. She is an invaluable part of our team, and we are so grateful for everything she does.

**Tim Dempsey has made the most of his volunteer service at WSHS in the past two years, going above and beyond in the care of our dogs.**

Ever since joining the Sunday morning kennel shift, Tim looks at each dog as an individual and adjusts his care based on their needs, so they get the best of his time. Tim appreciates that as a volunteer he can make a difference in the adoptability of the dogs. He knows that what they learn while they are here affects how they act when meeting potential adopters. Not only does Tim actively work with the dogs while he is here, but he also invested extra time by taking Petey to obedience training. Since Petey was adopted, Tim has been fostering puppies, giving them the best chance at adoption to new families. Tim's passion and understanding of dog behavior is an asset to our organization!





## Volunteer Spotlight

**A**ndi Wiklund, who just joined the Tuesday afternoon kennel shift last month, considers herself lucky to join a crew of volunteers who all have a deep love for our WSHS dogs. Michele Sevcik agrees wholeheartedly; she can leave her worries at home while spending the afternoon each week surrounded by dedicated volunteers with the same goal of care and compassion.

With more than 65 combined years of service, these volunteers have found many ways to enrich the lives of dogs waiting for their adoptive homes as well as our local community. Jan Montalbano leads the shift and delivers excess pet food donations from WSHS to the Lisle Township food pantry. Holly Sansone and Michele volunteer together with WSHS cats on Monday afternoons as well, spreading their love beyond the kennel, and have been dog handlers at local events.

Kathy Jones also volunteers on Saturday evenings in the kennel, doubling her impact on our dogs, and Lynn Zalon has been pulled to help the animal care team with intake of new animals. They never know the effect they will have. Michele fondly remembers bringing WSHS puppies to a Pilates Studio for class. The interaction between the clients and the puppies was priceless. Fran Stenberg and Jan had a surprising end to their shift years ago when a potential adopter arrived at the kennel two minutes before shift's end. Everyone was shocked when the woman announced that she was a mystery shopper for Petco and gave WSHS a \$250 donation for the excellent service she received.

All of these volunteers have dogs of their own at home, but they know that dogs in a shelter environment do not have the same sense of security. Lynn says, "Each dog has their own story, and you must work to gain their trust. Trust, calm and consistency increase a dog's chance of adoption." Kathy adds that it's rewarding to see the dogs blossom under the collective attention of the WSHS volunteer community and that adoption day is such a happy time.

Fran takes pride as a handler, knowing that she can bring out the best in each dog by observing their body language to know what they need. It's not surprising that all of these volunteers have earned the status of advanced handlers and newcomer Andi isn't far behind. Her hope is "to give back and help the animals that can't help themselves and that deserve love."

The Tuesday afternoon volunteers not only love the dogs they serve; they also have formed deep friendships with one another. Lynn didn't realize the strength of their connection until she had a family emergency that prevented her from volunteering for a couple of months. Lynn felt lost without coming each week, but her team stayed in touch, supporting Lynn regularly from out-of-state, and letting her know they would be here when she returned.

These ladies are a perfect example of how WSHS helps more than just the homeless dogs and cats that come our way!



# Hearty Thanks

WSHS received a grant for \$20,000 from the **Robinwood Legacy Fund, the Ronald R. Bork Fund, and the Companion's Fund**, all through the DuPage Foundation. This grant will further our mission of helping homeless animals. Our Board of Directors and staff appreciate the generosity of these funders.

**Student Council K2** at Stevenson Elementary School in Lombard brought paper towels and hand soap for the adoption center.

**Oscar and Greta Altman** donated \$198.78 to the animals at the adoption center. The money came from their "scrooge jar" and their aunt. The money was donated in honor of their foster dog, Rico.

**For her birthday, Katherine Hess** asked for donations for the adoption center instead of gifts for herself. She collected and donated \$40, a gift card, food and supplies.

**Valdes Architecture and Engineering** did an employee drive and collected food and supplies for the animals at the adoption center.

**Denise Walden**, owner of Walden Floral Design in Downers Grove, did a floral arrangement class and donated the proceeds to the adoption center. She donated in honor of the dog she adopted from us 11 years ago.

**Nora** asked for donations for WSHS for her 8th birthday instead of presents for herself. She donated food and supplies for the animals at the adoption center.

**Arya Komanduri and Chloe Inburiboon** raised \$100 by walking dogs. They donated the money to the animals at the adoption center.



Katherine Hess & friends



Valdes Architecture



Arya Komanduri

## Let's talk pet guardianship

Honor your furry friend's "Gotcha Day" by ensuring they always have the love and care they need.



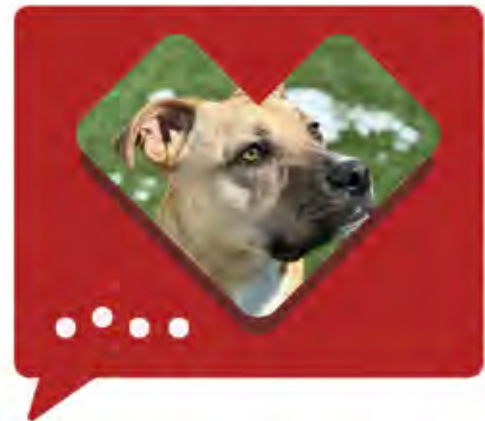
West Suburban  
Humane Society

FREEWILL



With our partner, FreeWill, you can create your will to:

- ✓ Designate a trusted guardian for your pet(s) so the animals in your life are always in good hands
- ✓ Describe how to best care for your furry friend(s), expressing any medical, dietary, or other specific needs
- ✓ Support the people and causes close to your heart for years to come



Visit [frwill.link/wshs\\_0524](http://frwill.link/wshs_0524) to get started on your will today!

If you have made your will and included a gift to West Suburban Humane Society in your will, please fill out the brief form at [FreeWill.com/Record/WSHS](http://FreeWill.com/Record/WSHS) so we can thank you for your lasting commitment to help homeless cats and dogs.

Questions? Reach out at [Development@wshs-dg.org](mailto:Development@wshs-dg.org)







**West Suburban**  
Humane Society

1901 W. Ogden Avenue  
Downers Grove, IL 60515

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## INSIDE: **Stray Thoughts** Spring 2025 Newsletter

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**JULY 28,  
2025**

**REGISTER NOW**  
Text WSHSGolf2025 to 76278



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West Suburban Humane Society  
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DINNER \* AWARDS**

[WSHSGolf2025.givesmart.com](http://WSHSGolf2025.givesmart.com)

### Upcoming Events:

#### **Plant Sale: May 9th**

West Suburban Humane Society  
Noon - 7pm

#### **Rock N' Roll Bingo: June 18th**

Bubblehouse Brewing Company  
7-9pm

#### **Barkapalooza: Sept. 28th**

Lisle Community Park  
RescueFest: 9am-1pm  
5K Run: 8am  
1 Mile Walk: 9:30am

#### **Pawction: Dec. 6th**

West Suburban Humane Society  
6-9pm

Questions? Contact [Events@wshs-dg.org](mailto:Events@wshs-dg.org)