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Published 1/1/2021
by Marlene Armfield

westie rescue network



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A letter from our President ~Gene Bourque



Dear Friends of Westie Rescue Network (WRN),

Happy New Year from the WRN Board and volunteers and our family during these tumultuous times.

As with almost every organization in the world WRN has felt the adverse effects of COVID. We have received 7 dogs this year, our lowest number in decades. We find people holding on to their dogs no matter what the financial impacts of COVID might be having on them. We receive more than one inquiry a week from people seeking a Westie. While we can still conduct phone interviews and check references from those who formally apply we are not making home visits. At the moment we have more than 20 approved applicants and more than 60 inquiries that need a home visit. Because there is a global shortage of Westies we are telling new applicants the wait for one of our dogs could easily be 2+ years. The last family who adopted from us had waited 4 years.

On a brighter note we do not know of any COVID related health issues for any of our volunteers. And, in spite of the financial concerns many people are facing, WRN is blessed to continue to receive generous donations. Finally, we are very encouraged that COVID related vaccines are being distributed. We believe better times are ahead for all us.

From our family to yours, blessings for good health and THANK YOU for your continued support of WRN.

Sincerely,

Gene and Minnie Bourque and our 3 Amigos...Clancy, Quinn and Murphy



Westie love stories

You're Special



Crash & Gene
Pure love!



Emmie came into my life three years ago and she has turned it upside down. There is never a dull moment at our house. She is so full of personality and enjoys bossing me and my husband around, but we couldn't imagine our life without her in it. She has been by my side through a lot in her short life so it was only fitting that she was included in our big day. She was the flower girl. Not only did I gain an amazing husband but Emmie gained a wonderful "dog dad".

~Lindsey Fournet Atherton



Dirty Dawgs



From the Editor

Send your Dirty Dawg photos, and any other pictures, stories, and ideas to

marmfield@aol.com



Rogue's story

A lesson in breeding, Behavior Modification and Aggression drug rehabilitation

as told by Rogue's foster/ adoptive mother

Chapter 1: Terrible Breeding. Rogue came to WRN at 9 months old! For someone to give up a puppy that young it usually means there is something VERY wrong. In my experience it is usually the people in the dog's life who don't know what they are doing. When Rogue showed up at my house she was 11 lbs (see attached pic next to 23 lb Duke); that is a small Westie! I got Rogue home and do what I normally do, physical exercise. Later that evening I discovered this was not my normal case. She was in pain somewhere on her back end as showcased by the aggression the previous owners experienced. After an immediate visit to the vet, we discovered that Rogue's patellas had completely fallen out of her grooves in her back legs. We immediately scheduled surgery and started recovery. She was 11lbs because she didn't eat anything as she was in severe pain! Most likely cause of this issue; Backyard Breeding! Now we at WRN want you to rescue, but understand there may not be a dog available on your schedule so if you are going to go to a breeder here are a few things you need to verify:

(please share with anyone who is looking for a dog too)

- 1. Meet the parent dogs where they live: See the conditions puppies are brought up. If a breeder refuses to show you this then do not buy the dog. Yes, this includes puppy stores. The area should be spacious and focused on the dog's comfort.
- 2. See the AKC registration for mom and dad: AKC requires eye, knee, back and other testing for breeds to ensure a healthy happy dog. Referrals from other happy long-term owners also helps their reputation
- 3. The mom is only bred 2-3 times in her lifetime.
- 4. DO NOT pick up the dog before 8-10 weeks: puppy socialization is important, if a breeder is offering a dog at 6 weeks it is because of the extra cost of shots and food so they make more money
- 5. Responsible breeders sell their puppies for thousands of dollars and they don't make money. They do it for the love of the breed. They screen the people they adopt to and do not offer a dog to the first person with cash on hand. Responsible breeders do everything they can to create healthy dogs and relationships with those they adopt to. They have you sign a contract and will always take the puppy back. Ask questions and be informed before taking a dog home.



Chapter 2: Behavioral Issues. After 6 months, Rogue's medical issues including: two patella anchors, staph infection and severe allergies were under control. We were finally allowed to touch her underside after about 3 months, but only on her terms. By this time we knew she couldn't be adopted out as we still hadn't earned her trust so giving her to another home would be detrimental for her. She was still fearful of everything; other dogs, humans, loud noises and especially being startled. Now we had to undergo behavior modification training. I have fostered and re-trained well over 20 dogs, but for this case I needed help. We hired a trainer to come help us get Rogue used to the crate, and less possessive of food, and the couch. We trained hard. Structure started to get us some more results. Rogue started eating more and got up to 14lbs! After 3 years she will play with the neighborhood dogs instead of running away and will gladly greet new humans. However, there were still issues with being startled and possessiveness.

Chapter 3: Human Based Aggression. Rogue made leaps and strides but she still had moments of fear aggression, that no one but those she lived with saw. Basically, she has the worst case of PTSD of any dog I have ever seen, and it was all based on a few months of painful encounters with humans and other dogs. Her coping skills for these rare moments are inappropriate tail-chasing, excessive licking and aggression. After many hours of research we discovered that Rogue has canine OCD and human based aggression (look it up - VERY interesting). We sought the help of our vet and Rogue is currently taking fluoxetine, a psychotropic drug to try and relieve her anxiety that leads to the OCD coping skills. While on this drug she will continue with behavior modification training to learn that the worst-case scenario is not going to happen while she is with us. Hopefully, after a while on this drug coupled with training and positive reinforcements, we will be able to take her off and she can be the dog she wants to be.

Rogue is an amazingly sweet dog who only wants to please. She feels horrible about any aggression the moment that she snaps. From the day we brought her home, she has improved. She is a tough dog with an amazing personality. Our family is committed to her recovery. Rogue is lucky. Many dogs with her issues might not have the same opportunity. I write this article to educate people and I implore you to do the same, so that other dogs do not have to endure the same issues, or worse. Picture of Rogue and us after a great steep hike to a waterfall.

~from Sarah Doud

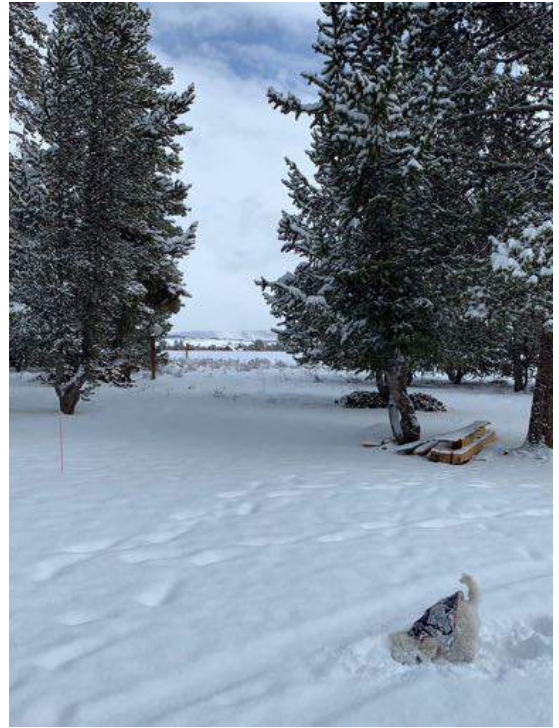




Spot the Westie



from Susan Pyle
Roxie is hidden somewhere out there.
Have fun looking!



from Hope Rapp
Yoshi enjoying the snow



from Julie DeWitt



From the Editor

Send your Spot the Westie photos, and
any other pictures, stories, and ideas to

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Happy Tales

Recent Adoptions



Dwight

Our quest to bring a new Westie into our home and family began in the spring of 2016. A few months earlier we had lost our 7-year-old Westie, Colby, to cancer and we knew we wanted another Westie. After all, with our daughter off to college and no little white dog around the house, who would keep us on our toes?! We applied to the Westie Rescue Network and waited patiently, confident that the right Westie would come along at the right time.



After waiting 4-plus years, we were delighted and excited in September when we received a call from the WRN letting us know that a 7-year-old male named Dwight was available. After visiting with his foster mom Julie, he sounded like a wonderful dog that would be a good fit for our household. We picked Dwight up in early October and brought him home to Cheyenne. He has been a wonderful addition to our lives and definitely relishes being the center of attention. Dwight officially greets everyone by softly putting his paws on their thighs in such a careful and soft manner that no one considers him to be jumping on them. He keeps us busy playing ball, taking daily walks in search of bunnies, and playing in the snow. At the end of the day, he's equally happy to sit and watch TV snuggled up next to us.

Dwight has been a welcome and happy addition to our lives. We are extremely grateful to the WRN for matching us with this spunky little guy; he was definitely worth the wait!

~Jan and Bob Spires





'Twas The Year Our Pets Saved Us

A Chewy Original Poem

'Twas the year full of questions COVID, and doubt.
For months we wore masks, indoors and out.
Social distancing made us feel safe, but alone.
Even our weddings were remote or postponed.
While our kids went to school in ways unfamiliar,
our own days and nights fel strained and peculiar.
We binge-watched TV- the good, bad and terrible.
In short: this past year was barely bearable.

Yet each time we felt at the end of our ropes-
Lo and behold!- our pets raised our hopes.
They offered relief for our cares and our worry,
relief that was feathered, or scaly, or furry,
or swam 'round and 'round in a tank without sinking,
or sat by a heat lamp, unmoving, unblinking.



So yes, while we must also sadly attest
that at times, this year, we were not at our best
acting crabby and sullen and often cantankerous
(Pets: You have the pandemic to thank for this!)
again and again for reasons inscrutable
we got back to booping those dog snoots so
boopable.
We treated our cats to special cat treats.
We taught new limericks to our old parakeets.
Even our fishes' tails started waggin'

Some of these critters are new family members.
Some have been with us for days without number.
Some were adopted as pandemic puppies.
Some are ball pythons, or bunnies, or guppies.
Honestly, though, species don't matter-
the point is that pets make everything better.

We care for our pets- they need us, it's true.
But deep down we know that we need our pets, too.
Their antics make us laugh when we're tearful.
They comfort the anxious, lonesome, and fearful.
We need the sense that their presence provides us:
The feeling that loved ones are always beside us.

2020 tested us in myriad ways.
Weeks felt like months, and hours felt like days.
A new year approaches. Who knows what's in store?
Who knows what fresh weirdness will barge through
the door?
But whatever may come, let's all take a minute
to celebrate our world and the animals in it.
A world without pets would be a cold, dreary place
like the ocean's dark floor, or the far depths of space.
We have it iin ourselves to shift our attitude
and close out the year with a sense of gratitude.

So in that spirit, friends, let's raise our voices, all:
"Happiest of holidays- to creatures great and small!"



~ By Chewy (Reprinted with permission)

The Back Page



JANUARY

Walk Your Pet Month

Dogs get both physical and mental stimulation from walks, while you get a dependable walking buddy to help with your New Year's get-healthy resolution.

Get your 2021 calendars and see a new Westie featured every month!



Get your 2021 Calendars!



Kenzie is the cover girl!

Her mom says, "Kenzie is such a joy. She is spirited and funny especially when she plays with 2 toys at once. Kenzie loves her walks and is sweet and cuddly on her own terms. She has been a wonderful addition to our pack."

To purchase Click the link or QR code below.

<https://westierescuenetwork.org/help-wrn/cool-stuff-to-buy/calendars-stickers>

THANK YOU from the Editor

As we begin a New Year I would like to thank each of you that has contributed to this newsletter, from Spot the Westie photos, to stories about your pups, and sadly to report when they cross the Rainbow Bridge. My first issue was mid 2017. Time flies! When I started we were showcasing certain dogs to adopt. Now we have lots of folks requesting Westies, and none available. Maybe things are going to change for the better as we head into 2021. Keep your contributions coming!

~Marlene Armfield



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Step 1: Go to smile.amazon.com,

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Step 3: Amazon remembers your selection, and every eligible purchase you make at smile.amazon.com will result in a donation.

