



## Fostering — A Gift From the Heart, Part I

Foster homes are vital to the mission of Westie Rescue Network (WRN) and we could not successfully place the dogs we do without them. When a dog enters our program they go straight to one of our veterinarians for evaluation. Then the foster homes get a phone call. "We have a new dog that needs a special foster home."

When 8 year old Rigby came into our program he was so sick with heartworm and hook worms that no one knew if he could survive. As if that was not enough, Rigby was also suffering from a condition called Elephant Skin. The medication to cure his heartworm disease also made him incredibly sick and he had no appetite.

Knowing that nourishment was necessary for this little guy to get well, his foster parents had to get on the floor and spoon feed him baby food. His elephant skin required daily baths with medicated shampoo.

His foster home gave him the love and care that he so needed and deserved! Rigby slowly healed and after several months of medicated baths the black skin started to slough off. Rigby came out of his shell once he

started feeling better and loved playing with his foster siblings and was introduced to walking on a leash. Rigby went back to the vet for one last round of tests to make sure that the worms were gone.

At the same time, WRN received a

couple dogs that had been living in deplorable conditions at a breeding facility and they happened to be at the same clinic with Rigby.

We knew that Rosie had recently given birth to puppies but had rejected them. She was terribly frightened and cowered in the back of her kennel not wanting anything to do with humans.

Meeting Rigby was without a doubt the best thing that ever happened to this scared little girl! These two dogs were introduced and Rigby seemed to know what this little girl needed and very quickly a special bond was formed. When the foster parents arrived to pick up Rigby they were told of this attachment that had developed. "Would they consider fostering Rigby AND Rosie?" The foster parents now opened their home to not one but TWO special Westies.

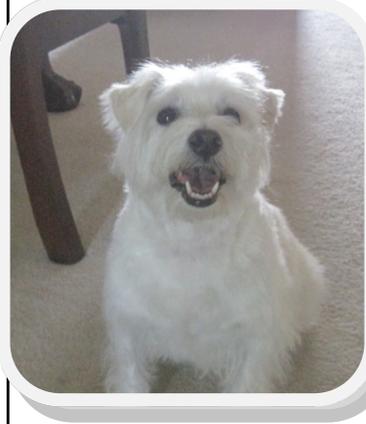
Foster homes not only provide a place for dogs to heal but also play many other

important roles. Many of the dogs relinquished to us are not house trained, may not have been properly socialized, or have behavior issues that require training. Like Rosie, some have never seen stairs or even touched grass let alone

learned to walk on a leash. The foster parent is on a quest to find out as much information as possible in order to help WRN find the perfect forever home. How does the dog react to men, women, children, the vacuum cleaner, walking on

***Fostering is a gift not  
only to the rescue dog  
but their future family  
and yourself.***

## Westie Mix Seeks Forever Home



Independent, friendly and playful, this 7 year old Westie mix is looking for his forever home. Husker's story is a very common one to all of us. His family had a baby and Husker was not at all happy with losing his status in the family. Husker needs a forever home without small children.

Husker is thoroughly enjoying his time with his foster family and resident Westie Abbey. Going for walks, lounging in the sun, playing tug of war, belly rubs and head scratches are tops on his list. He is very friendly with people and other dogs large and small and does not even mind cats. As you can see by the photos he is not 100% Westie but a Westie/Bichon Frise mix.

His previous owners had not invested much time in training Husker, so his foster family has been teaching him some manners and that will need to be continued in his new home. He has responded well to his training and learned that jumping on people is not allowed and barking at people while eating to try to get them to feed you is frowned upon.

Like many Westies, Husker has some minor food allergies that cause some sneezing and itching but is well managed with a grain free, chicken free diet.

If you have a place in your home for this cute little guy please contact Betsy Widner at 303-422-1620 or [betsywidner@yahoo.com](mailto:betsywidner@yahoo.com).



## Submit Your Photos Now for the 2104 Calendar



Photo by Wendy Pearce Nelson

We need your photos for the 2014 Westie Rescue calendar. As an incentive for you to submit your photos, Wendy Pearce Nelson of Blue Fox Photography and Jamie Howden of Jamison Gale Photography are each donating a free photo shoot with your dog\*. A drawing of all submitted photos will be held on June 25th. If drawn your free photo shoot will be scheduled immediately so we can use the photos in the calendar. To be eligible to win you must send us your photos by June 24th. The photos taken by Wendy and Jamie could possibly wind up on the cover or back of the calendar!

Photos should be of dogs only, good quality for publishing and taken within the last year. Please send the following with the photo: dog's name, and age, year adopted, your name and mailing address. We will be including a Rainbow Bridge page so if you have a photo of your dog that has crossed the Rainbow Bridge please send us their photo. Please email all photos to Allen Henson [noclark@comcast.net](mailto:noclark@comcast.net).

\*Photo shoot with Wendy in the Colorado Springs area, Jamie in the Denver area. Photo's will need to be taken in early July in order for the photos to be included in the 2014 Calendar. A signed model agreement is required. You may purchase additional photographs from each photographer.



Photo by Jamie Howden

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a leash, other dogs? Finding out as much as possible and creating a schedule for a foster dog also makes the transition to their forever home much less stressful for the dog.

Foster parents are also asked to transport their dogs to the vet or grooming appointments as needed and maintain the necessary paperwork that accompanies each dog. Through the years, WRN has developed certain protocols for handling foster dogs. One role of the foster parent is to make sure that the protocols are followed.

Those that foster know it can be time consuming and sometimes even frustrating but also incredibly rewarding. Often the most challenging and the most in need dogs also offer the biggest rewards. Many people suspect they could never foster because they would fall in love with each dog and want to adopt them all. The reality, however, is that the foster parent knows that they are preparing their foster for a forever home and they love their foster so much they are happy that the foster will be loved and cherished by the new family. Many foster families shed a tear or two as their fosters drive away with the new owners, but they are tears of joy.

In part 2 of this article we will share the very happy ending to the story of Rigby and Rosie and give anyone who has considered fostering a bit more information on becoming a foster family.

## Specialty Show in Longmont — May 31st, 2013

Thank you to all who volunteered to be part of the Specialty Show in Longmont on May 31st. The show is in conjunction with the Flatirons Kennel Club show at the Boulder County Fairgrounds and is organized by the local Westie Club. Westie Rescue provided the hospitality table at the annual show and showed off some of our dogs in the Rescue Parade. Thanks to John and Linda Mirro for being the emcee's of the parade and the official photographers for WRN. Thank you to Gary & Geri Christon, Chrye Hitt, Cindy & Michael Higginbotham for making sure we had plenty of hot coffee and goodies.



## WRN Facebook Page to get a Facelift

For all of you that are fans of Facebook you will be happy to know that our page will be getting a facelift. Two of our volunteers, Kristin Hernandez and Sarah Dowd, are going to help us keep the page updated.

What you will see on our page:

- WRN events such as the calendar, St. Patrick's Day parade
- Volunteer needs
- Adoptions
- Links to helpful websites
- Events in the dog community such as barn hunts, flyball, and agility

This is a great place for you to share your stories and photos of your adopted Westies.



## WRN Photo Album



Katie underwent surgery for a torn ligament in her knee and was not allowed to go for walks. We borrowed a stroller and she loved it! After the first day or so we did not even have to secure her—she was not about to get out of her stroller! It was too much fun parading around the neighborhood with her brother Shadow, and Bill. People would stop just to take pictures. We adopted both Katie and Shadow from Westie Rescue in July, 2002, when they were 6 and 5 years old. Katie became diabetic and died in 2009 and we lost Shadow in January of this year.

Carol and Bill Coriell.



Duffy and Merlot are true BFF's! It is hard to believe that this is the same dog that had such terrible mange, ear infections and toenails imbedded in his feet. He is such a happy boy!

Joan Schaefer



Check out the blog, Tails from the Pup Tent, written by Mick, a Colorado Springs Westie. Mick and his family adopted Lucy, aka Lu Lu Belle, from Westie Rescue last summer.



<http://tailsfromthepuptent.blogspot.com>

Do you have a great photo of your Westie – send it to [betsywidner@yahoo.com](mailto:betsywidner@yahoo.com) and it might appear in the next newsletter