



# WestieMed News

Spring 2014

## WHY DO WE DO WHAT WE DO?

*Some may wonder why WestieMed exists and why this assistance is needed. Here is just one example of WestieMed's mission...*

### Barney

Barney came into rescue with the San Francisco Bay West Highland White Terrier Club in 2011. His owner was ill and his wife was suffering from Alzheimer's, so they needed a home for Barney, a five-year-old male with Addison's Disease. They weren't ready to surrender Barney, but wanted a place for him when the time came. When the owner's health worsened, the search began for a home.

He was placed with a woman who had lost her Max and wanted a playmate for her nine-year-old Westie, Meghan. She knew nothing about Addison's so the rescue sent information and care instructions from Barney's owner. After a short time she noticed Barney was limping and soon he was diagnosed with a torn ACL. She was concerned about the cost of surgery so an application was filed with WestieMed. Funding was approved and Barney had his surgery.

#### Update January, 2013

Barney is doing well! He and his new sister Meghan were in our club's Parade of Rescues in November. His mom reports: *I walk proudly with my wonderful boy Barney. My Westie girl Meghan and I lost my Max at 17 years old. Our lives felt empty and lonely. Then Barney came into our lives last Christmas -- I rediscovered what real love is! Here is his story: his owner was 87 years old and went to a nursing home. Barney was not allowed to accompany him, and their hearts were broken. Mary called me and said his Dad wants him to have a home for Christmas. That was a yes from me! When I arrived home on December 2, I saw Mary walking three Westies with their wagging tails -- one was Barney! He came home*

*for the holidays to a family of love. I immediately had him pose with Meghan in Santa and reindeer outfits for my annual Christmas card! We played and hugged each other for hours! Since that day, his Addison's has stayed under control and he had ACL surgery. Barney is back to catching toys in midair and doing all his tricks again. We share a bond of love! He has been a perfect gift since I first saw his caring eyes and felt his wonderful heart. He and Meghan are the loves of my life. Barney -- I love you so much! Love, MOM"*

#### Update June 11, 2013:

Barney is doing well after ACL surgery with no evidence of lasting effects, and his mom was very diligent with his rehab. Mom writes: *Barney and Meghan - my Westies! What can I say that explains how I love them and just how wonderful they are? We have visited Barney's previous dad at the nursing home. They have been such wonderful visits for Gene and Barney. Barney catches his toy in midair 10-15 times and everyone applauds him! His Addison's shots continue to keep him healthy. We love him, and he says he loves us!*

Read Barney's full story on the WestieMed website:  
<http://www.westiemed.org/stories/2012/barney/>



#### INSIDE:

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## Fiona

### From Fiona's family:

After losing our 17-year old Cairn terrier Tesla, we thought our 14-year old Westie Sully would be okay being an only dog. After two weeks we knew we needed to get another terrier. We went to Petfinder.com looking for an older Westie, Cairn or Scottie. There we found 'Snowball', now Fiona...a 10 to 12-year-old female Westie from a kill shelter in western Kentucky, described as active in the yard, chasing anything that was in her territory, okay with the foster Westies and loving with people.

We filled out an application and Fiona came for a visit. She and Sully got along well. We were told she was healthy, and she seemed to be other than a skin fold at the base of her tail, and her tail which curled under her body. Despite being told we'd need to clean the pouch once a week, the two dogs got along well and Fiona liked us so she stayed for the week and she stole our hearts! Sully started eating, playing and sleeping through the night again. She gave us all the love we could take and after three days we decided to adopt her.

We scheduled a vet visit, and knew going in about the skin fold, curled tail and that Fiona was very itchy. We were not prepared for what the vet would tell us.

Our veterinarian met Fiona and immediately knew that Fiona previously had a broken back by determining that she had no feeling in her tail then confirmed on x-ray. Dr. Harris said this injury is most common when a cat or dog has been swung by its tail or run over by a car. Fiona was also diagnosed with a severe case of demodectic mites. She had probably never had a dental cleaning.

We were advised to eradicate the mites and ear infections and then address the tail and skin fold removal. The tail removal was essential to Fiona's future health, Because of



the way the tail is curled under her body, fecal matter gets on the tail and then right into her urethra. We spent three months killing the mites with dips, pills and baths -- all of which Fiona took in stride! She is such a sweetie and during bath times we really bonded.

We found WestieMed out of pure luck or karma. A link to a dog magazine on Facebook led us to RedRover.org, where we found a listing of breed-specific medical help organizations. We couldn't believe our eyes when we saw WestieMed on the list. We read everything then applied for assistance following Wendy's lifelong motto of "I'll ask -- the worst someone can say to me is no."

Surgery will be scheduled soon and we cannot wait for her to be fully healthy! Although we miss a wagging Westie tail on her, we know she is happy in our home as she shows us continuously, coming more and more out her shell every day, especially while protecting her yard from birds, squirrels and even the local woodchuck!

A sincere thank you to all those at WestieMed and its supporters, Wendy, Lonnie, Sully & Fiona Eubank

Read Fiona's full story on our website:  
<http://westiemed.org/stories/2014/fiona/>

**How can you  
help WestieMed?**

**Visit our Website for information on how you can  
volunteer to help WestieMed...and tell your friends!**

<http://www.westiemed.org/volunteer/>



### **Benet**

A volunteer with The Blue Bonnet Yorkshire Terrier Club Rescue was picking up a Yorkie at the Dallas Animal Services Shelter around Christmas, 2013. She noticed a happy Westie carrot tail frantically trying to get her attention.

This poor 10-pound Westie had no chance of adoption and had used up most of her 72 hour hold because she had an enormous tumor that from the back of her neck and hanging over one shoulder. With a tail that worked so well and happy eyes, the volunteer took "Benet" to the Yorkie Rescue.

The first tumor removed from her neck weighed 2 pounds. Once that was removed,



they discovered two more large tumors that had been obscured by the first one. These large tumors were sent to a pathologist and found to be a very rare type called a *Trichoepithelioma*.

Released of the burden of wearing large tumors around, little Benet has blossomed into a fun-loving, tennis ball-chasing girl. The rescue first thought she would remain at the rescue in hospice care. Now they consider it ridiculous to think of her as a sick dog.

She is deserving of a new family and will bring a great deal of joy and kisses to the mix.

You can read Benet's full story on our website:  
<http://westiemed.org/stories/2014/benet/>

**In 2013, WestieMed helped 13  
Westies by providing \$20,687.35 in  
financial assistance for medical care.**

**Read their stories on the  
WestieMed website:**

**<http://www.westiemed.org/stories/2013/>**



## Valentine

Valentine was rescued in February from an animal shelter. Three months old, she and her sister were abandoned in a backyard, most likely because Valentine is missing one eye and her sister only has 3 legs.

Dogs are required to be spayed before leaving the shelter, but they asked the adopter to pick her up early because they detected a heart murmur which had to be monitored during surgery and they didn't have the equipment. At the new mom's vet, it was found that the murmur was extremely high grade (6/6) and odds weren't great. Blood work and an ultrasound had to be done to determine what was wrong and what she needed.

Those are expensive tests. The adopter spoke with the shelter and was told she could return Valentine. The pup's fate wasn't mentioned and the adopter feared what might happen to her in the shelter. It had only been a day, but she was in love and couldn't let Valentine go.

The vet recommended waiting a month to see if she grew out of the murmur, then doing the tests if she still needed them. The month passed and the murmur was still there. Tests revealed PDA (patent ductus arteriosus). In utero, there is a valve that bypasses the lungs because the pup gets oxygen from the mother. It closes at birth, but Valentine's didn't so her



heart was working extra hard to pump blood through her body causing an enlarged heart. With surgery, she should be a happy, healthy puppy like her sister.

Valentine's mom says "she is the most amazing dog, with a great personality! Even though I want to smother her with kisses she loves her 'space' under the bed. She thinks she's a big dog (and struts around like one too), and is good with animals and humans alike. She loves to give kisses and play!"

With WestieMed's help, Valentine will have the surgery she needs and the fabulous life she deserves.

You can read Valentine's story on our website: <http://westiemed.org/stories/2014/valentine/>

## The Paws and Remember Program

Please take a moment to *Paws and Remember* your special friends.

Make a donation to light an "ever-burning" Virtual Candle from WestieMed's *Paws and Remember* program. This is a wonderful way to show your admiration, love and devotion for those you hold closest to your heart.

- Honor your own special family members,
- Celebrate a living friend, pet or person, with a Tribute Virtual Candle, or
- Remember those you have loved and lost with a Memorial Virtual Candle.

When you make a donation for either a Tribute Virtual Candle or a Memorial Virtual Candle, WestieMed will send a lovely



personalized card to the designated recipient acknowledging your thoughtful gift.

Our acknowledgment card features the *Paws and Remember* logo — Toto — The Rescue Angel designed and donated exclusively to WestieMed by artist Suzanne Renaud.

<http://www.westiemed.org/pawsandremember/>

*Health News from Westie Wellness Newsletter  
Courtesy of the Westie Foundation Of America, Inc.*

## **Cranio-mandibular Osteopathy (CMO) and a DNA-Based Test for the Recently Identified CMO Mutation**

*By Patrick Venta, PhD*

Cranio-mandibular osteopathy, or CMO, is generally known to most breeders of West Highland White Terriers, Scottish Terriers, and Cairn Terriers. It is an inherited condition that affects the formation of bones in young dogs, most notably those of the jaw. Clinically affected dogs can have periodic jaw pain and very often they also have a noticeable lump of extra bone on the mandible. X-rays are often used by veterinarians to confirm a diagnosis. The condition is first noticed in the first month or two after birth and generally spontaneously disappears after about a year's time.

The laboratories of Dr. Hannes Lohi (Finland) and Dr. Cord Drogemüller (Switzerland) recently identified the causative gene and mutation, thus permitting the development of a DNA-based test to determine carrier status of terriers for this mutation. A manuscript is being prepared by the members of these labs for publication in a scientific journal.

An early report by Drs. George Padgett and Ulreh Mostosky suggested that CMO is inherited as a simple recessive gene (American Journal of Medical Genetics, volume 25, pages 9-13, 1986). However, the data produced by the European labs suggest that the mode of inheritance may be slightly more complicated. A few Westies that were reported by their owners to be affected have turned out to have only one copy of the mutant gene, with the other copy not having the discovered mutation. The meaning of this result is still under investigation. Breeders should be aware that there may be some possibility that dogs that are heterozygotes for this mutation have some chance of showing CMO signs (perhaps ~15%, based upon the European sample – see the web link

below for details). Results for Westies, Cairns Terriers, and Scottish Terriers can also be found on Dr. Drogemüller's website:

[http://www.vetsuisse.unibe.ch/unibe/vetmed/genetic/content/e2885/e3121/e186705/files186706/Interpretation\\_CMO\\_Gentest\\_e\\_eng.pdf](http://www.vetsuisse.unibe.ch/unibe/vetmed/genetic/content/e2885/e3121/e186705/files186706/Interpretation_CMO_Gentest_e_eng.pdf)

On the other hand, some dogs that are homozygous for the mutation did not appear to show clinical signs of CMO. This result has been predominantly seen in West Highland White Terriers, for which nearly as many homozygotes have been reported to be clinically normal as those that are clinically affected. It is possible that some of the clinically unaffected dogs actually had very mild cases of CMO that were unnoticed by the owners. Alternatively, it is also possible that the gene truly did not express itself. Either way, the result would indicate that the mutant gene has a characteristic called "incomplete penetrance."

Penetrance is a term used by geneticists to describe the non-expression of some condition in individuals that have the genetic constitution that should cause the expression of the condition. For example, if, among 100 dogs that were homozygous for the mutation (that is, that have two copies of the mutant gene) and only 57 showed the clinical signs of expected for homozygotes, the condition would be said to be only 57% penetrant rather than 100% (complete penetrance). Incomplete penetrance in the case of CMO might be caused by the nature of the mutation (some normal function might still be produced from the mutant gene) and/or the effect of other variable genes that influence the function of the CMO gene might cause CMO not be expressed in some dogs.

*Continued on page 6*

The frequency of the mutant gene may be higher than has been predicted from health surveys. For example, a recent health survey for West Highland White Terriers (Westie) in the United States ([http://www.offa.org/surveys/survey\\_westie.html](http://www.offa.org/surveys/survey_westie.html)) suggests that only about 1% of Westies were CMO-affected, which would indicate that the frequency of carriers among all Westies should be about 10%. The data from Dr. Drogemüller's website (given at the end of the third paragraph above) indicates that the carrier frequency is about 36%. The disparity might be explained by real frequency differences in the European vs. North American Westie populations, by the reduced penetrance mentioned above, by some unknown bias in the health surveys, or by some combination of these things. A relatively small sample (36 Westies) from early testing in the United States testing lab

(see below) suggests that frequency of the mutant gene may be significantly higher than the recent health surveys would otherwise indicate.

The test is available in Europe through the two labs that discovered the mutation. The test is available in North America through a lab at Michigan State University. The cost of the test was set by the European labs at \$110 (85 Euros) per test, and the same price will be used in the United States. Those breeders who would like to have a dog or dogs tested should contact Dr. Patrick Venta by e-mail. He will send cheek-swab collection kits, instructions on how to perform the collections, and reporting forms. Dr. Venta's e-mail address is [venta@cvm.msu.edu](mailto:venta@cvm.msu.edu)

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## Check out some of the new items in the WestieMed Gift Shop!



Wine Glasses



Keyrings

*This is just a sample!*  
<http://www.westiemed.org/shop/dandylines/>



Tumblers

Bumper Stickers



# How Can YOU Help WestieMed?

WestieMed, Inc.  
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There are a number of ways and opportunities you can help WestieMed raise the quality of life and adoptability of rescued Westies in need of medical attention. We appreciate your support!

## **MAKE A DONATION**

- Mail a check or money order donation to:  
WestieMed, Inc.  
2108 Fulton Avenue, Unit #3  
Cincinnati, OH 45206
- Make a secure online credit card donation.  
<http://www.westiemed.org/donate/>
- Make an automatic monthly subscription donation.
- Donate Westie treasures for WestieMed's online auctions.
- Make a *Planned Gift* consisting of such items as stocks, bonds, cash, personal property, bequests, trusts, life insurance and IRAs.
- Make a donation with your company's *Matching Gift Program*.
- Donate your artistic Westie designs for fundraising purposes through our *Artists to the Rescue* program.  
<http://www.westiemed.org/artists/>

## **MAKE A PURCHASE**

- Obtain "ever-burning" online Tribute and Memorial Virtual Candles from the *Paws and Remember* program on the WestieMed website.  
<http://www.westiemed.org/pawsandremember/>
- Shop in the online WestieMed Gift Shop for unique Westie items.  
<http://www.westiemed.org/shop/>



- Shop with WestieMed's *Affiliate Companies* and a donation will be made to help us help rescued Westies.  
<http://www.westiemed.org/affiliates/>
- Shop in WestieMed's online auctions.
- Shop at our Cafe Press Store, the WestieMed Cafe featuring Westie designs by many talented artists.  
<http://www.cafepress.com/westiemed>

## **VOLUNTEER**

- Help organize a Fundraising event or a Westie Walk for the benefit of WestieMed.  
<http://www.westiemed.org/westiewalk/>
- Offer your talents and time for a WestieMed project.
- Get WestieMed news and updates through our email list.
- Join the WestieMed group on Facebook.  
<https://www.facebook.com/WestieMed>
- Talk to your local rescue group about WestieMed
- Help spread the word about WestieMed.

*The Mission of Westie Med, Inc. is to help raise the quality of life and adoptability of rescued West Highland White Terriers (Westies). WestieMed provides these Westies with a second chance at adoption and the opportunity to lead happy, healthy lives in stable, loving, forever homes. In addition, through its efforts and the example it sets, WestieMed aims to stimulate a dialogue, which will educate the general public about rescue animals and rescue organizations.*