



January 6, 2013

Breeders of the WHWTCA of Southeastern Michigan

Periodically we face a situation which impacts both Rescue and Breeders. This letter is intended as a "heads up" to provide you with information in an effort to avoid a problem that could become very serious to all of us. As background, Westie Rescue Michigan has signed the National Club (WHWTCA) Code of Conduct for Rescue. We are bound by the policies of the National Club as well as the Local Club. Our intention is to present the facts which will allow you to make future decisions with full knowledge.

Club member breeders need to be aware that the National Club has placed a requirement on their web site <http://www.westieclubamerica.com/rescue/mission.html>. Under the Rescue "Statement of Purpose, Policies, Guidelines and Definitions" it states:

- A Westie who faces destruction by its current owner may come into rescue. However, a Westie in need of a new home, who is owned by, bred by or sired by a dog owned by a member of the WHWTCA or one of the Regional Westie Clubs is the responsibility of the owner, breeder or owner of the sire. Any such member will be contacted, if possible, and asked to accept that responsibility. If such request is denied, the Westie will be rescued and **the club member denying responsibility shall be reported to the Board of the WHWTCA and/or Regional Club for appropriate action.** If necessary, WHWTCA rescue funds can be used to facilitate the rescue of this dog.

We receive calls from people wanting to put their dog in Rescue. In talking, occasionally we find that the dog in question was bred by a responsible breeder belonging to our Club. We always inform them that dogs from Club Breeders (responsible breeders) are the responsibility of the Breeder for the entire life of the dog. Rescue is a safety net for those dogs that do not have a responsible breeder to stand behind them. That is one of the reasons why a person should consider buying from a responsible breeder rather than from a puppy mill. We then refer them back to the breeder in question. Unfortunately, on occasion, they come back and tell us that the breeder has refused to take their dog back and can we please take the dog into Rescue. The reason for the refusal is not material for the purposes of this letter.

As you can see from the portion of the policy quoted above, this creates a problem of concern to all of us. If we don't report this situation, we are in violation and could, ourselves, be reported to the National Club Board. If we do report it, it would create an uncomfortable situation for the breeder involved. We are looking here for a level of response that will prevent us from being in a position that none of us wants to be in.

In 99% of all cases, we are sure you all stand behind your dogs and take them back even if it is not the outcome you feel is appropriate. However in that 1% of cases, you may have a situation that totally prevents you from doing what is necessary. In these cases, we would like to propose that instead of turning the dog away, you ask the person to give you 24 hours to find a resolution that will work for everyone. Then you give Rescue a call. We will look at our situation and help you to the best of our ability. We feel the statement in the National Club Mission Statement leaves room for you to essentially "subcontract" the foster care. Therefore, if we have open foster space, we can take the dog with a simple agreement that you will cover **all costs** while that dog is in foster care. Rescue will then take care of the medical situation as we would with any other foster dog and look for a permanent home for the dog. If there is a situation where we feel the dog needs to be put down, we will let you know so that you can agree or take the dog yourself. If we are unable to find foster space, we will still work with you by having you board the dog until we can foster the dog.

This has worked in another state. In Colorado, a dog was taken into foster care. It was discovered that the dog had come from a breeder in California. When notified, the breeder offered to take the dog back but an arrangement was agreed upon whereby the Colorado Club fostered and placed the dog while the breeder covered expenses. This saved the dog from unnecessary transport and the breeder was able to stand behind her dog to everyone's satisfaction.

We hope that we can go forward with an understanding of our respective responsibilities and handle these situations in a way that will reflect positively upon our Club as well as doing what is best for the dog in question. The section below outlines the care we require and provide to each foster dog and that you would be expected to cover. No estimated costs are included because the costs will vary depending on the foster home location, the vet they use, and whether medical papers that come with the dog show some of the items as having been completed.

We hope that this information will allow you to make appropriate decisions should the situation arise in the future.

Sincerely

(for) Westie Rescue Michigan, Inc.

President: Beth Widdows
Secretary: Maggie Murray
Treasurer: Jackie Curtis

Board: Chris Finkbeiner
Jean Story
Carole Beaudry
Martha Sayles

CARE GIVEN TO ALL FOSTER DOGS

This list is the required care given to all foster dogs and for which you would be responsible. **As we provide the care and pay the bill, we will forward it to you for reimbursement.**

- Fecal Check/worming if needed
- Heartworm Check
 - o Heartworm pills (1 immediately, 1 for new home plus 1 for each month the dog remains in care)
- Blood Panel
- Vaccinations if out of date or no record exists
 - o DHLPP type complex plus booster if there is no record of previous vaccinations
 - o Rabies
 - o Bordetella shot or nasal with booster
- Neuter/Spay if needed
- Microchip, if not present; Registration of chip upon placement
- Dental if needed (99% of dogs do need a dental)
- Examination and testing or treatment of any suspected medical conditions
 - o This includes any medications required
- Grooming at least one time, but more often if the dog is in foster care beyond a month.

We will supply food unless it is prescription food.

Dogs stay in foster care for a minimum of 2 weeks and most often for a month. If medical or behavior issues are found, this can be longer. Older dogs are often in foster care longer simply because it is harder to find homes for them. We will discuss the situation with you if we determine that euthanization is the best option for a particular dog.