

## Eagle Dog that escaped House Fire Recovering after successful Surgery at WestVet

Thanks to financial help from the Audrey Pet Foundation and after care from WestVet employees, the Rodriguez family is expecting Max to return home.

WestVet Animal Emergency and Specialty Center in Garden City is happy to report that “Max”, a dog hit by a car following his displacement from a house fire last week, is recovering well after surgery.

The Rodriguez family home burned last week. During the fire, their five-year-old black lab bolted from the backyard, away from neighbors trying to help, and directly into oncoming traffic. After Max was struck by a car, a passerby quickly scooped him up and brought him to WestVet. Our emergency doctors and team treated Max for multiple injuries. The most severe included a fractured pelvis, his spine separating from his pelvis and his tail. Overall, WestVet doctors felt he would not walk again without surgery and were concerned about nerve damage and restoring a good quality of life for Max.

Shortly after the incident, Carol spoke with WestVet doctors and learned about the extent of Max’s injuries. She said that while she knew surgery was imperative for Max, she had two concerns: the financial cost, and his post-surgery recovery. She and her son are displaced from their home—and they will be for several months—which means she has no place to provide care for Max, and no yard to guide him with the gentle walks that would be required to help him fully recover.

To help with the financial burden, Carol was directed to apply for funds from the Audrey Pet Foundation. This 501(c)3 non-profit organization provides financial support for specialty veterinary care at WestVet. A completed application for assistance is evaluated and approved by an independent board of directors. Upon approval, a family may receive funds to put toward emergency and specialty treatment. The funds are then combined with donated time by the WestVet hospital, doctors, and specialists, significantly reducing the expense of veterinary care.

Once the financial hurdle was cleared, and WestVet staff members realized the extent of the families’ predicament, two of WestVet’s Veterinary Technicians volunteered to



care for Max during his recovery time. Each will move Max into their home for a 3 to 4 week period. He will receive lots of TLC, the necessary physiotherapy, and close assessments to ensure his post-op recovery.

Carol said she was grateful for the help in such a difficult time and that the assistance was just what she needed to restore her son's dog to good health. Last Friday, Max underwent an 8 hour surgery with Dr. Sean Murphy. Today, Dr. Murphy reports that Max is doing really well and feels that while Max still has some challenges to overcome, he should make a full recovery

Even though Carol feels overwhelmed with all the recent challenges she and her son are currently facing, the generosity from people in the Treasure Valley has been inspiring. "The highlight of this whole ordeal is the amazing things that people have done," she said. "In the evening, we have returned to our hotel and have received anonymous gifts and cards. The community outreach has been wonderful." We have also had generous community members donate funds directly to the Rodriguez account.

Carol also expressed how happy important their pets were help her son through this ordeal. Remarkably, both of the Rodriguez family pets survived the fire. Their goldfish—a prize from the fair last fall—also survived, even after its bowl had shattered due to the heat.

The Rodriguez family are now in the painstaking process of working with their insurance company for their home and property. Even with such upheaval in their lives, they drop in to visit Max every day at WestVet. Carol tells us one thing she is a little worried about, that when Max does return home he is going to expect the constant attention and TLC he is currently getting here at the hospital. "He is certainly the center of attention at WestVet," she said. "He has enjoyed customized bandages, warm blankets, and toys to cuddle with. I just hope we'll be able to keep up the standard when he returns home."

