



SOUTHWEST COLLIE RESCUE

Serving New Mexico, West Texas and Arizona

Spring 2017 newsletter

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A collie grows up, transforms, becomes mom to baby turtles.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Website

nmcollierescue.com

Email address

arlenestarkey@q.com

Mailing address

Southwest Collie Rescue
52 Estrada Calabasa E.
Santa Fe, NM 87506

Rescue Coordinators

New Mexico

Santa Fe, Lee More
(505) 989-3530
leemore@mac.com

Albuquerque, Arlene Starkey
(505) 892-8538
arlenestarkey@q.com

Alamogordo, Las Cruces
Kathy Wallis
(575) 430-2361
katwallis1@msn.com

West Texas

For now, please contact Kathy Wallis (see above).

Arizona

Phoenix area, Bill Ferrell
(480) 507-7996
bkferrell@cox.net

Phoenix, Cindy Reel
(602) 570-2951
REELRACER@aol.com

Tucson, Peg Cass
(520) 904-5733
sneekypie@msn.com

Board of Directors

Kathy Wallis, President
Lee More, Vice president and newsletter editor
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Arlene Starkey, Secretary
Lisa Boegl
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Bill Ferrell
Cindy Reel

Just when you think you've seen everything...

When we rescued Chloe last year she had heartworms. After many months of treatment, she finally was worm-free. But in April her left eye became red and swollen, with a nodule bulging under the eyelid.

Our wonderful eye specialist in Albuquerque, Dr. Gavin Kennard, first treated her for episcleritis, an inflammation of the lining of the white of the eye. When she didn't respond, he recommended surgery.

Turned out Chloe had something very different: worms in her eye! Specifically, the worm *Onchocerca lupi*, which causes an eye disease in animals called ocular onchocerciasis. Black flies are thought to be the vector for the disease.

(Another *Onchocerca* species causes the same disease in humans, known as "river blindness," which is widespread in parts of Africa.)

The disease caused by *Onchocerca lupi* is zoonotic: It can jump from animals to humans. In 2015, six cases of human infection were reported in the U.S., 3 in Arizona, 2 in New Mexico and 1 in Texas.

2016: Where our money came from and where it went

Thanks to record-high vet bills, SWCR ended last year \$721 in the red. This was not an emergency: We had begun 2016 with a surplus, thanks to the wonderful generosity of so many of the people who read this newsletter. Still, several costly surgeries and a cancer treatment blew big holes in our balance sheet.

Last spring we noticed that the collies and shelties we



No, this is not Chloe's eye. It's an online photo that shows the size of an adult eye worm. Chloe, at right, will be completely free of these parasites soon.



After her surgery, Chloe began a three-month course of medication and eye drops (corresponding to three eye worm life cycles) to be completely sure they're gone.

Still, it's good news that she had the worms and not the episcleritis. Once the worms are gone, they're gone for good — but episcleritis can require costly maintenance for the rest of a dog's life.

More good news: Chloe will be adopted by her foster parents soon, and she has a great life ahead of her.

Almost certainly Chloe came to us with eye worms, most of which probably were killed by the doxycycline and immiticide used in her heartworm treatment. The worms in her eye nodule were dead, too.

It was a first for SWCR. We'd never heard of eye worms in dogs.

But Dr. Kennard knew this was a possibility for Chloe. He'd encountered the worms before in dogs from Farmington, NM — and had co-authored a 2015 article on the subject for the journal *Emerging Infectious Diseases*, published by the Centers for Disease Control.

SWCR Revenues, 2016		
Donations	\$39,667	(82%)
Adoption fees	4,672	(10%)
Fundraising events	3,480	(7%)
Custom Collie Store	729	(2%)
Total	\$48,548	

were rescuing tended to be older and sicker than usual. This trend continued, culminating in the rescue in October of the Phoenix 7 collies, most of whom were geriatric. In all, we're now taking care of 11 very old and/or sick dogs.

So far in 2017, however, our rescued dogs have been much younger. We don't know why, or what the rest of this year will bring.

SWCR Expenses, 2016	
Direct dog expenses	
Vet fees and meds	\$44,443 (88%)
Groom, board, chip, shelter & license fees	2,026 (4%)
Dog food, fosters; gas dog transporters	1,218 (2%)
Business costs	
Insurance, website fees, printing, postage	2,403 (5%)
Miscellaneous	165
Total	\$50,257

As always, SWCR paid no salaries. We're all volunteers; we spend virtually every penny on the dogs we rescue. Last year the cost of running SWCR was just 5 percent of expenses. We intend to keep it that way.