



Bowed legs may be comical on a cartoon cowboy or Scooby Doo, but for Scotty, a young Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, bowed legs is a constant, painful condition that prevents him from doing all the normal puppy things he'd love to do. But that doesn't keep him from trying!

One snowy, windy day in March 2010, 2 volunteers with Greater Chicago Cavalier Rescue (GCCR) drove to St. Louis and picked up Scotty, then 5 months old, and 4 other female Cavaliers who were being released by local shelters. All had come from Missouri puppy mills.

The 5 Cavaliers were examined and treated by veterinarians experienced in Cavalier care at the Yorkville Animal Hospital. The older girls were treated for intestinal parasites and ear infections. Dentals done by the releasing shelters were redone, leaving a couple of the girls with few healthy teeth. Scotty's x-rays confirmed the obvious – he had classic bowed legs.

The 5 Cavaliers were placed in volunteer foster homes where their medical treatments continued and they began their education toward becoming loving family members. The 4 females are now in their adoptive homes; Scotty is still with experienced Cavalier owners and GCCR foster parents, Scott and Karla McKanna in Joliet.

Initially GCCR took a wait and see approach, hoping a high-protein diet with growth and bone strengthening supplements plus the natural puppy growth spurt would rev up the slower bones. He grew, as puppies do, but the deformities remained.

It was apparent that Scotty had significant pain; several medications were tried hoping to make him more comfortable. Teri Baughman, physical therapist at Ancare Veterinary Clinic in Spring Valley, ordered custom supports for his ankles with the dual goals of straightening the joints and lessening pain. However, Scotty would not abide the supports, and no

improvement was seen. Teri tried just one session on an underwater treadmill -- Scotty worked valiantly but the pressures only increased his pain. Dr Sara Ford at Ancare tried electro-acupuncture for several treatments, with no apparent changes.

Concerned that pain medication wasn't providing much relief for Scotty, Karla and Helen Cordell, GCCR President & Rescue Coordinator, took Scotty to the University of Wisconsin School Of Veterinary Medicine for further evaluation. Orthopedic specialists confirmed that Scotty's bowed legs were caused when the radius and ulna – the two bones in his front legs – grew at different rates. The unevenness of these 2 bones at his elbow and wrist joints was responsible for the deformity and resultant arthritis, a secondary source of pain.

The doctors described possible surgical procedures to partially straighten Scotty's front legs, and help minimize his pain and improve his quality of life by slowing the progression of arthritis and relieving some of the pressure at his elbow and wrist joints. That facility's estimate was \$3,000-4,000 per leg.

Scotty is now approaching his first birthday and his condition continues to worsen. He'd like nothing more than to be a normal dog who can go for walks and chase balls. GCCR would like to give Scotty a special birthday present by raising enough money for his surgical procedure.

Several fund-raising efforts are planned to celebrate GCCR's 5th anniversary and help raise money for veterinary care for needy Cavaliers including Scotty. Greater Chicago Cavalier Rescue is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation. Its mission is to help ensure the health and security of abused, abandoned, and otherwise endangered Cavalier King Charles Spaniels by rehabilitating and placing Cavaliers from shelters and similar situations. GCCR also assists owners in finding new homes for their Cavaliers, and provides educational materials regarding Cavalier health and care through its website and local events.

[www.gccavalierrescue.org](http://www.gccavalierrescue.org)

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