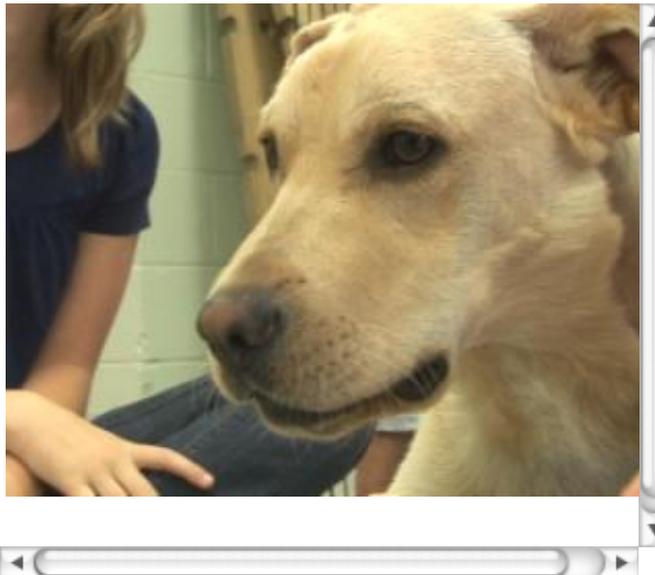


## Washington County dog finds support in Knoxville

Sean Dreher Updated: 5/26/2010 5:38:41 PM  
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A dog from Northeast Tennessee is winning the hearts of thousands as he recovers at the University of Tennessee Veterinary School.

Riley, a yellow lab pup, came to Knoxville in April after being run over by a in Washington county. As doctors worked to repair a broken leg, fractured spine, and open head wound, they discovered he had also been shot.

Despite the injuries, Riley is making a remarkable recovery.

"He underwent a lot of trauma and a lot of surgeries but has just really rallied and been a testament to how resilient and tough dogs can be," said Dr. Marti Drum who oversees Riley's therapy.

Deborah Yokely, a volunteer with the national group **Labs4Rescue**, brought Riley to UT from Washington County. She and her daughters visit the pup daily and now take him home on weekends to continue therapy.

"He loves everybody, there's not a stranger. He wants to be the center of attention. He's very

playful," Yokely said. "He's progressed every day."

Riley's daily routine includes ten minutes on an underwater . With a helping hand, he is re-learning how to walk. One of the hardest parts is holding him back to prevent further injury.

"Psychologically, he's totally recovered. He doesn't think there's anything wrong with him. He wants to go, he wants to play, he wants to do everything a lab puppy would do. But his body is not quite there yet," Drum said.

Riley has a tremendous support group monitoring his recovery. **More than 3,000 people have joined a support page on Facebook.**

"This little dog is a trooper. He's fought from day one," said Yokely. "It couldn't be possible without everybody's support. All of the community and everyone at UT."

Labs4Rescue is paying for Riley's medical bills. The group is accepting donations to help cover the remaining cost of surgery and rehabilitation.

Depending on his progress, Riley could be released in several weeks to a month. He still needs a permanent home. Interested parties can contact the rescue group.

The Washington County Animal Control office continues to investigate the case; however, several leads have resulted in dead ends. A witness told rescue workers the vehicle that hit Riley was a gray

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