

Holiday open house for Muskegon Heritage Museum

(Submitted by the Muskegon Heritage Museum)

The Muskegon Heritage Museum, 561 W. Western Avenue in Muskegon, in collaboration with the Muskegon Railroad Historical Society, is holding a holiday open house on Saturdays, December 12 and 19 and Sundays, December 13 and 20. The event is open to the public from noon to 4 p.m. each day with free admission.

At the museum, you can see the Corliss Valve Steam Engine in operation, see a 1900s vintage print shop, and learn about Muskegon's industrial homes and the Muskegon Heritage homes.

The Muskegon Railroad Historical Society's displays include four operating model train layouts including the famous Polar Express. Your visit will also include a pictorial display of the history of Muskegon railroads. In addition, visit the railroad library and archives.

For more information, visit the website at: www.muskegonheritage.org.

Therapy dogs' 15 minutes of fame benefit Pound Buddies

(Submitted by Jessica Shirley)

Bringing smiles to faces is something the therapy dogs are used to at the rehabilitation and nursing care community of Sanctuary at McAuley in Muskegon. But this summer, the typical therapy visit turned into something that gave these precious pooches their 15 minutes of fame: The first annual McAuley Dog Show to benefit the Pound Buddies Rescue Group.



"We wanted to say thanks to the dogs that come to visit our residents as well as find a way to help other animals in the area," said Melisa Toppen, director of hospitality at the Sanctuary. "That's when we decided a dog show would be the perfect opportunity to do both."

The dog show featured therapy dogs, adoptable dogs from Pound Buddies, as well as staff and residents' dogs. In total, 26 dogs paraded throughout the community to tunes such as "You Ain't Nothin' But a Hound Dog" and "How Much is that Doggie in the Window?"

Judges for the competition were all residents of the community. Prizes were awarded such as Best Dressed, Best Trick, Best in Show, and even The Naughtiest. The Naughtiest prize went to the loudest and most frequent barker in the bunch, according to Toppen.

All of the fun, however, was also an opportunity to raise awareness for the work of the Muskegon Pound Buddies Rescue Group. The week leading up to the event was set to collect everything from food, toys, and monetary donations. "Over 200 pounds of food was collected from the event," Toppen noted. "The residents are already looking forward to it next year." •

Scholarship opportunities for high school students to study abroad

(Submitted by ASSE International student exchange programs)

Qualified high school students are offered a unique opportunity to spend an academic year, three-month program, or summer holiday in Europe, Asia, North and South America, New Zealand, Australia or South Africa as part of the ASSE International Student Exchange Program.

"Until a few years ago, only a fortunate few could afford to spend a school year or summer abroad. ASSE has changed all that," commented Chantel Bartlett, Eastern Director of ASSE.

Students ages 15 to 18 qualify on the basis of academic performance, character references and a genuine desire to experience abroad with a volunteer host family in one of the many ASSE host countries.

"ASSE host families are carefully screened to provide a caring environment in which students can learn the language and culture of their host country," explained Ms. Bartlett.

Students need not have learned a foreign language prior to program participation, as they receive language and cultural instruction as part of the ASSE program. ASSE students attend regular high school classes along with their new teenage friends.

ASSE International Student Exchange Programs was founded by the Swedish National Department of Education, and cooperates with the Canadian Provincial Ministries of Education and the New Zealand Ministry of Education.

ASSE also provides international opportunities for American families to host students for a semester or for an academic year.

Students and families interested in receiving more information about the ASSE programs should call 1-800-677-2773 or visit ASSE's website, www.asse.com.

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