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Fostering pets ~ surprise!

by Tina L. Noll

When I first took on the responsibility of taking care of three puppy mill dogs, I evidently wasn't as ready as I thought I was. I bought food, bowls, towels, toys, etc. Wow, I had no clue! I only had two of them for one week and still have George, the 12-year old. They are wonderful, but have a lot to learn.

As I found out, they do not know what stairs are, and two of them didn't even know how to walk on the ground. They first came out of their kennels and kept touching the ground like it was a giant marshmallow. Once they learned that they were on stable ground, they started coming out of their shells.

First was Chewbacca, then Pippy. These two, after a couple days, learned to go potty on the puppy pads. They both adapted very well, despite the conditions they came from and how scared they were of everything.

Then there was George, who is a 12 year old Shih Tzu. George had such an eye infection when we got him that



he kept running into walls and could barely stand up. We put him on antibiotics and eye medicine, and the first two days he just laid around, wouldn't eat or drink, and we didn't know if he would make it. Then day three came. Wow, what a difference! He got up, grunted at my son, and has been a peppy "happy go lucky" dog ever since. George is a sweetheart

and follows us everywhere. He loves to ride in the car. Now that his eyes have cleared up, he can actually see, although you can tell that his vision is a bit hindered.

If you are a patient, loving person and can offer a loving temporary home for a pet, please help foster a pet. Here are a few tips I learned when fostering dogs that may help you, also.

1. Know that puppy mill dogs are not like other dogs.

- A. Afraid of leashes and collars
- B. Afraid of loud noises
- C. Most lived in cages
- D. Can get motion sick easily
- E. Cannot walk up/ down stairs

(safety issue)

F. They do not know the word "no"

G. Some do not know how to drink out of bowls.

(They are used to water bottles.)

2. Set up an area so that if they are not potty trained (most are not) you can make clean-ups easier. I bought a piece of linoleum and gated around it. Bed and food at one end, potty area at the other.

3. Keep diapers handy if they lift their leg. If they are not lifting their legs yet, they are easier to train to the puppy pads.



4. Get puppy pads that have "attractant."

As I mentioned, after three days, they were going on the pads. Then it became habit.

5. Keep a crate or kennel in their area, but leave the door open so they can go in and out freely. This will also help teach them to sleep in their beds but not to potty there.

6. The more you hold, talk, play with them, the better they adapt.

7. Know that they are worth it and it is definitely a great feeling to help a pet in need.

Call Critter Café Rescue at 865-6021 or email Christinelea1@yahoo.com. You can see more adoptable pets at www.CCCandR.petfinder.com. or www.myspace.com/Critter Café and rescue. •

Grand Rapids Children's Museum welcomes Blue Man Group

(Submitted by the Grand Rapids Children's Museum)

The Grand Rapids Children's Museum, 22 Sheldon Avenue NE, welcomes the Blue Man Group's traveling exhibit, *Blue Man Group ~ Making Waves* through May 31, 2009. The exhibit unites science and art, offering a playful innovative approach to science and sound with a multi-sensory presentation.

Throughout the exhibit, participants can see, feel, hear, and create sound in the fun-filled signature Blue Man Group style. The exhibit includes a number of Blue Man Group musical instruments where kids can discover how sound is made; construct dynamic instruments with PVC piping; and learn about musical pitch, rhythm, and melody.

Entrance to the exhibit is included with regular paid admission. The museum is open Tuesday through Saturday from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Adults and children are admitted to the museum for \$6.50.

For more information, call the museum at (616) 235-4726. •



Fruitport Lions Club Old Fashioned Days

May 19-25, 2009

INFORMATION

www.fruitportlions.com



Curves at the Pointes Plaza supports local food banks

(Submitted by Curves at the Pointes)

During the month of March, Curves at the Pointes in Norton Shores will participate in the 11th Annual Curves Food Drive to benefit local food banks. Collectively, over the past five years, nearly 50 million pounds of food were distributed to local communities all over the world through the Curves Food Drive.

Curves at the Pointes is also giving back to the community by waiving its normal service fee for any new member who brings in a bag of non-perishable groceries and joins by March 28. This promotion will help women in the area manage their weight and their wallets by joining Curves for free, while also helping to feed hungry people in the community.

Other individual may also donate food items at the Curves location, 1038 E. Sternberg Road, Monday through Friday during business hours through the month of March.

For more information, please call Susan Kesteloot at (231) 798-9811. •



Pastor Joshua Rager and Pastor Jonathan Rager

from Cloverville Baptist Church presented a check for \$2,000 to the students of Beach Elementary School, On Friday, March 13, 2009. In an effort to demonstrate their love and support of children in the community, the deaconate board of Cloverville Baptist Church voted to donate money for the express purpose of enriching the students' school experience. This money will be used for "alternate recess" games, activities, and equipment. During the winter months, the students have an opportunity to stay inside the breezeway and play with Legos®, table games, or to draw. The students also have the opportunity to go onto the soccer field to play organized games. Students will be surveyed to determine how best to spend the money. During these economic times, a gift of this magnitude will make a significant difference in the students' lives.

Gardening classes to be offered

(Submitted by Michigan State University Extension)

The Michigan State University Master Gardener Program in Ottawa County will be offering a series of gardening classes on a variety of topics. Pre-registration is required. All classes will be held at the Ottawa County Fillmore Complex, Conference Room E, in West Olive. Each class is offered twice, one afternoon session and one evening session.

Speakers are Kathie Spitzley, Advanced Master Gardener, speaking on volunteering; Shane VanOosterhout, Master Gardener Coordinator, speaking on perennials and small trees.

Classes are \$6 each and are scheduled as follows:

The Joy of Volunteering	April 15	2 to 4 p.m.
	April 29	6 to 8 p.m.
Playing with Perennials	May 13	2 to 4 p.m.
	May 27	6 to 8 p.m.
A Few of My Favorite Small Trees	June 10	2 to 4 p.m.
	June 24	6 to 8 p.m.

Payment must be made in advance during business hours (8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday) or by mail. Checks payable to Ottawa County MSU Extension should be sent to Master Gardener Programs 2009; Ottawa County Fillmore Complex; 12220 Fillmore Street, Suite 122; West Olive, MI 49460.

For more information: visit the website at www.msu.edu/ottawa; call (616) 994-4548 or email hansonjudy50@gmail.com. •

'In Memoriam' recital

(Submitted by American Guild of Organists)

The Muskegon-Lakeshore Chapter of the American Guild of Organists will present a members' recital, "In Memoriam" for long time members, Martha Choquette and Donna Renkenberger. The concert will be held at Central United Methodist Church, located at 1011 Second Street, in downtown Muskegon on Sunday, March 29 at 4 p.m. A reception will follow the concert.

Featured organists on the program will include Caron Farmer, Eileen Hoogterp, Peter Kurdziel and John Mattson. The program will also feature organ music for brass quartet and voice.

There is no admission charge and all are welcome. A freewill offering will be taken to benefit the Irene Kolkema Organ Scholarship Fund. •