



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

Fur Therapy

Pet Tips 'n' Tales was ahead of the media curve featuring Moorea, the therapy cat, in May 2013. Moorea was recently featured on "The Doctors" TV show, so here is her article to enjoy again: View her two segments on THE DOCTORS: www.thedoctors.com/videos/healing-power-of-pets

Not everyone has their own business card, and even fewer pets do! When I met Nancy, at Woodburn, Washington's Wooden Shoe Tulip Farm, she handed me a brightly colored business card with her beautiful, rescued, 15-year-old calico cat Moorea's photo and a synopsis of her successful career.

Nancy and Mike take Moorea to nursing homes, hospice facilities, senior centers, Alzheimer's facilities, veterans' apartments, and service clubs. Which explains their matching "Team Calico Love on a Leash" T-shirts!

"Pet therapy stimulates patients' brains as it relaxes their bodies," says Nancy. "Moorea purr-forms a critical task that humans can't provide for patients with Traumatic Brain Injuries. Our goal is that each patient receive as much of a blessing from seeing Moorea as we feel bringing her to them. She is a rescued cat who knows that she has an important mission to bring smiles to the sick and dying. Like any cat, she is open for a good nap and lies beside patients so they can pet her as she comforts them."

When Moorea visits a hospice patient, the blessings are tenfold. On our first hospice visit, I placed Moorea on the patient's bed. She snuggled between the patient's right arm and side, where she stayed for three hours. During this time, hospital staff came in and checked the patients' vital signs. They had to drape the tubing across Moorea's back and she



Courtesy Photo

When Nancy and Mike enrolled, Moorea, as a San Diego therapy cat, they had no idea she would become a TV star!

never budged. Moorea's "soul" PURR-puss was geared to comforting the patient.

Then the cleaning staff came in for the trash and swept the floor. Again, Moorea never budged. It was as if she KNEW she had an important job to do as a Soul Sitter. The woman passed a few hours after we left.

A month later, a 92-year old man's dying wish was to pet a cat. How could we say no?! When we arrived, he was too weak to speak so he nodded his head "yes" when I asked if he would like Moorea on his bed.

A tiny, frail smile appeared on his gaunt face and his arm lifted a few inches so he could reach his hand to her back and pet her soft fur. Moorea and the gentleman bonded as she snuggled against his chest. In our next visits, he gained the strength to sit up in a wheelchair, sit on the couch, and have Moorea drape across his lap. This stoic gentleman always had lots of baby talk to whisper into his cat-therapist's ear. A year later,

we were present to celebrate his 93rd birthday with him!

We've had some unresponsive patients who only stare and look down. Their tightly curled hands unfold after petting Moorea.

One person we visited was almost in a coma but when she saw Moorea, the woman tried to sit up, vocalize and started petting the cat. I thought the hospice nurse was going to faint. She exclaimed, "I've never seen my patient respond that much! It was just miraculous," remembers Nancy.

Moorea's dedication to volunteering earned her the 2010 California Veterinarian Medical Association's Animal Hall of Fame award.

"We were concerned when flying from San Diego to San Francisco with Moorea for her to receive the award," said Nancy. "Would the jet engines bother her? But she was totally unfazed! When she spotted the other passengers, her expression was, 'Hey, look at all the new people who are going to love

me!"

"Our pool is ready for some kitty-paddling. Come on down!" invites cordial Moorea to Mary Ellen Angel Scribe's famous swimming cats.

"Our cats would love to join their new Celebra-Cat friend for a swim," said Mary Ellen, "but they has a "bone" of contention with me because they do not have their own business cards or return address labels like Moorea does. So they chose to stay home and stage a sleep-in!"

TIPS

"As Moorea and I age, carrying her in my arms has become difficult," said Nancy, "so I bought a Pet Gear stroller. When a patient isn't up for a visit, Moorea still earns a big smile because patients are expecting to see a baby! Moorea looks so darn cute sitting at the front of her blue stroller as patients exclaim, "It's a cat!"

At Halloween, I went to a Build-A-Bear shop and purchased a purr-fect costume for her - green surgical scrubs. I pushed her in the stroller, in costume, down the hospital corridors calling out, "Dr. Katz! Paging Dr. Katz to surgery!" Even the most stoic doctors cracked a smile."

"People with pets need to PROVIDE FOR THEM after their death," says Janet Overholser, President of the Humane Society of Cottage Grove. "Mention your pets in your will and who they go to. If you don't, your beloved pet(s) end up at a shelter. This tragic situation happens ALL the time. Last week, we "inherited" two cats and yesterday two Dachshunds with this sad tale."

Humane Society for Neuter/Spay Assistance Program. (541) 942-2789

Tell me your pet's story!
angelscribe@msn.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Open House

Fern Hill Nursery announced a special workshop entitled "Ten Essential Medicinals for your Northwest Garden" on Sunday, May 31 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

During this workshop, Brian Basor, co-owner and manager of Fern Hill Nursery and Botanical Sanctuary, will share his expertise and experience with at least 10 plants that he believes are essential for a local medicinal garden. The cost for the workshop is \$40 per person or \$75 per couple.

Pre-registration is required with a \$25 deposit and those interested are asked to contact Devon at 541-942-3118 or info@fernhillnursery.com. The nursery is located at 78703 Echo Hollow Lane.

Students graduate from George Fox

More than 800 students earned a GPA of 3.5 or higher to earn dean's list honors at George Fox University, a Christian college in Oregon.

Among those earning the recognition were the following local students:

Lauren Haga of Creswell, a senior majoring in engineering
Mason Mueller of Cottage Grove, a sophomore majoring in management

Summer Reading Kick-Off coming

The Summer Reading Kickoff event at the Cottage Grove Public Library is Wednesday, June 17 from 2-4 p.m. Kids can join in for free books and free ice cream.

Water Safety Play Day

The Warren H. Daugherty Aquatic Center in Cottage Grove will host the fourth-annual Water Safety Play Day Saturday, May 30 from 10 a.m. to

12:30 p.m. Children of all ages and their parents can learn about swimming and boating safety through a variety of fun activities at this free event.

The Lane County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue Team will host a life jacket exchange during the event. Children can exchange old life jackets for better-fitting ones. The rescue team will also have their patrol boat on site and will share tips on how to stay safe while boating.

Children will also have the opportunity to meet the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers mascot, Bobber the Water Safety Dog. Through free printed materials and online cartoons (www.Bobber.info), Bobber teaches children how to stay safe while visiting Corps reservoirs, such as nearby Cottage Grove and Dorena lakes.

During the event, families will visit several interactive stations to learn about life jackets, boating safety, water rescue and hypothermia. All registered participants will receive a goody bag and the opportunity to win a raffle for a Summer Pool Pass.

The pool will offer a free swim following the water safety stations. Participants should bring suits and towels.

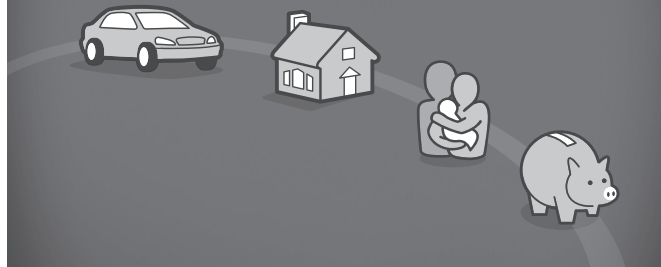
This Cottage Grove Water Safety Play Day is being organized by "Friends of the Pool" in partnership with the South Lane School District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Lane County Sheriff's Office, South Lane County Fire and Rescue, Make A Splash Foundation and the City of Cottage Grove. For more information, contact Carrie McCasline at 541-942-5533.

Bluegrass in Drain

The North Douglas Performing Arts Council presents an evening of art and music featuring Artist Jerry Ross and Umpqua Valley Bluegrass on Friday, June 19. The art show will be from 5:30-6:30 p.m. with the concert to follow at 7 p.m. at the Drain Civic Center, 205 West A Street in Drain.

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