



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

A lifetime of loving dogs

When I was three years old I lived in foster homes for a year and a half. The first foster family's dog was a liver spotted Springer Spaniel, named Penny. I was small and thin and Penny was taller, overweight, and with one joyful enthusiastic wag of her tailless hind end, she would send me flying to the floor.

My foster parents were wild about Penny, but my mind only saw an elephant who was about to "floor" me.

When my foster mother, Mrs. M, took me to visit her parents, I fell in love. It was first with her cranky father, Mr. B, that everyone thought would scare me, but who within minutes of us meeting, I had him wrapped around my little finger. I loved him. He was gentle and patient with me and it was easy to make him smile. His laps were a safe place of comfort and kindness, as I blew out his pipe's matches, and he barked at adults.

Mr. B's house held magic because he had the first cat I ever met. It was thrilling to learn that we on planet earth were blessed to share our time with these beautiful soft animals! There is a photo of Mrs. M coaxing me to stand by her beloved Penny, but that day I realized I was a cat person and hid behind Mr. B's grey Persian, Smokey, patting him in the photo.

My gentle foster mother had a thing for dogs.

She was never without one. When Mrs. M was 96-years-old she was still at home with her daughter and their dog, Bayley. Bayley spent the entire eight years of his life on the couch cuddled up with the woman we all loved.

Three days prior to Mrs. M's peaceful death, as the paramedics were lifting her in the ambulance, she patted Bayley on the head and said ... "You be a good boy".

After her death, we were all in grief, even Bayley. Her daughter acknowledged the dog's grief by going to her mother's bedroom, taking the pillow with Mrs. M's scent still on it and placing it on the couch. Bayley wrapped his arms around the pillow, looked up at the daughter, and happily wagged his tail as if to say, "Thank you for understanding."

"Over the years, I have placed all sorts of towels on the couch," said her daughter, "but he never responded like he did with Mum's pillow."

Animals have feelings that cannot be overlooked. They love deeply, care deeply, grieve deeply, and feel responsible for their people. These are some of the many blessings of surrounding yourself with pets.

Then the oddest thing began happening! My computer has a BING screen saver, it randomly gives you a daily choice of four photos to choose

from. The day after Mrs. M's passing, for the first time in years of screen choices, it displayed a liver colored Springer Spaniel like Penny! Then at coffee the next day, the same colored dog walked by me, then at the dog park for the next three days, the same breed and color of spaniel was paraded by. I asked each owner their pet's name, all were different, and all the owners, once told of the spaniel synchronicities said, "That is so odd, as these dogs are rare. We don't see many ourselves."

All the sightings felt like hugs from Heaven. Keep believing, keep shining your love, it makes a difference in this world.

TIPS

"Animals sixth sense is amazing," said Brenda in Kentucky. "I've learned from watching the retired race horses in the pasture at my parents' ranch that when a storm is forecast and the horses are calm I do not worry, but when they run to the barn I pay attention. Horses do not mind getting wet so it is not 'just' rain that is coming. Also,



Belle, a Great Pyrenees was sleeping with me when one morning when I had night terrors. She woke me up by gathering me up in her giant paws, holding me tight, and waking me. I was grateful. Animals are in touch with nature. They have their own "language" and if people would learn it they would be amazed at this deep puss-onal communication."

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N. Douglas patients welcome at SLMH

Umpqua Health Alliance, South Lane Mental Health form partnership

Roseburg, Oregon — North Douglas County residents on the Oregon Health Plan can now access a broad array of mental health services under a new partnership between Cottage Grove based-South Lane Mental Health and Umpqua Health Alliance.

"We're excited to partner with South Lane Mental Health to provide Umpqua Health Alliance members in north Douglas County greater access to a comprehensive collection of behavioral health services," said Sue Goldberg, vice president of network and business development at Umpqua Health. "This partnership expands behavioral health services in the rural areas of Douglas County and gives Umpqua Health an opportunity to align with an organization

that's been successfully serving rural communities for close to 30 years."

Umpqua Health has focused on building its behavioral health services footprint for the past two years, during which time it has increased its number of contracted behavioral health providers by 38 percent in an effort to ensure services are available to all Umpqua Health Alliance members who require them, including those living in underserved rural areas of Douglas County.

In South Lane Mental Health, Umpqua Health is collaborating with an organization that offers comprehensive services that include:

- Substance use recovery services
- Referrals

"We have long considered north Douglas County part of our community but haven't always been able to offer services for folks in that area," said Tom Wheeler, South Lane Mental Health's executive director. "So we are really pleased to join with Umpqua Health. Our partnership makes it possible for residents of rural towns like Drain and Yoncalla to access services without having to travel all the way to Roseburg."

- Individual, family and child counseling
- Medication assessment, management and monitoring

DRAIN

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spend the week learning about community service and doing crafts and other traditional camp activities through the Impact Youth Ministry.

"This camp started 55 years ago," Ford said. "There have been thousands of kids that have come through and some, like me, come back when they grow up to help."

Both Ford and her husband Chris opt to help by taking on the role of camp directors and this year, Ford is going further. She's attempting to bring an extra component to the camp's end of the week celebration—horses.

"We have a theme every year and this year it's a western theme. We'd like to have horse or pony rides and we've reached out to some people but either they're busy or can't bring the horses here," Ford said.

According to Ford, she'd like to have horse rides available to the campers on July 26, August 3 and August 10.

"We do have some funds but not a lot," she said. The group mans a firework booth in Cottage Grove each year to raise funds for the camp.

"It's not about money for us," Ford said. "It's about giving these kids a positive place to make a difference."

Camp Corley is open for registration through the first week in August. For more information or to register a child, please contact Ford at (541) 836-2603.

See this week's B section for BMD stories and photos!

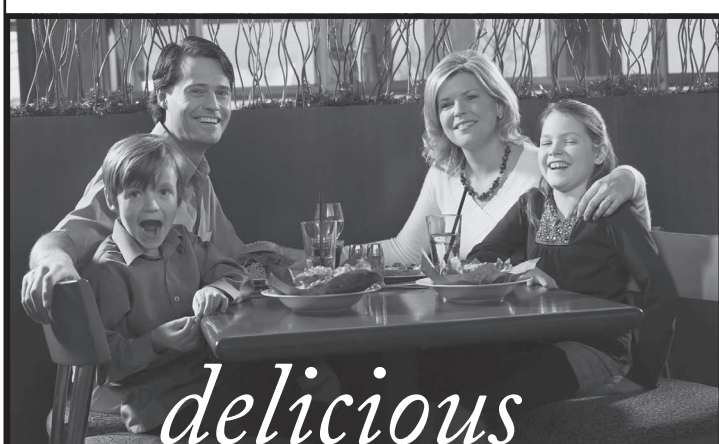
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