



The "Mews" letter

of the Flin Flon / Creighton
& Area SPCA

Fall, 2004

Wheels Offer New Hope by Linda Lowe

Families come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. Ours comes with my husband and I and two sets of four legs. Let me introduce my family. My husband Wayde, myself Linda and our "Girls" Lea and Darby.

Lea is our oldest at thirteen and Darby is seven. We adopted Lea from the Winnipeg Humane Society when she was eleven weeks old. Her parents were a black lab and German shepherd. She was the runt of eleven in her litter.

When we moved back to Denare Beach, Lea loved it a lot more than the city. She was always active, walking, running and swimming. Then Darby came along. A family member found Darby in a cardboard box in the middle of a dirt road on a -30 January day. They already had pets so tried to find a home for her with no success. When we found out that she was planning on putting her to sleep we said we would take her and



She's off and running.

find her a home. Lea was not pleased to see this new "furball" in our home. But after a couple of weeks Lea strolled through the living room with the "furball" hanging from her collar and that's when we decided to name her. They have been inseparable since and have always played hard. We love to have these two around to entertain and love. They come to work with me every day and love to greet our customers.

Unfortunately this summer our Lea began

to have trouble getting up and going for walks.

We saw our vet and he said to watch it closely as it might only be arthritis. If it worsens and a swagger starts that it would then be "hip dysplasia" (common among large breed dogs). In the case of hip dysplasia there is nothing they can do for her. Near the end of summer it became quite bad. This is when we were faced with the "decision". Did we wait it out or put our beloved Lea to sleep?

Lea's mind, sight, hearing and general liveliness were still very good and she was still her old normal playful self, her rear end just couldn't keep up. Putting her to sleep would be very hard. She was in no pain but it was so sad watching her try to play with Darby. So we made the

"appointment" and spent a few days before in turmoil and tears preparing. The night before, Wayde stumbled upon this website that provides a type of wheel chair for dogs and cats. We decided to try it out. The company custom makes the "wheels" to fit each dog personally. Basically it works like this. There is a rear and front harness you place on the dog. The "wheels" clip into these harnesses and now she's off and running.

The "wheels" allow the weight off her hind legs

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New Hope cont'd
so that as she walks the front legs and "wheels" assist the rear along as she goes.

They also come with leg straps for pets that have lost all use of their hind legs. The straps comfortably hold their legs up and then the front legs and the wheels do all the work. The "wheels" are easy to put on and off. While wearing the "wheels" the dog can urinate and excrete without any trouble.

I am very happy to tell you that Lea is now thriving in her "wheels". Although we get many strange looks and questions, it's all worth it. She plays with Darby and motors around like there is no tomorrow. It only took Lea three days to adjust to wearing them. We use them for going for walks, playing in the yard or family room and yes for swimming. We have no idea how much longer our Lea will be with us, but it's going to be a lot longer with

the assistance of her "wheels".

As long as she is happy and healthy the extra cost and effort we put out is of no concern to us.

We are very happy to pass on any of the information we can to other pet owners in the same situation. Thank you to the SPCA for inviting us to share our story with its members and readers.

If you have questions please e-mail Linda at christiesflowers@mts.net

These are the websites that helped us:
www.doggon.com
www.neopaws.com

It is important that people know that there are options available.

A SAD FOOTNOTE

Sunday, November 21st, 2004, Lea was lovingly sent to rest with Linda and Wayde at her side. At their request, this article is being published as written over a month ago. Linda and Wayde feel it is important that people know the options that are available should the same medical problem affect their pet. Since Lea's death,

family and friends have sent cards of condolence as well as donations which are being forwarded to the SPCA.

We wish to thank Linda and Wayde for their heartwarming story and their generous support through their memorial donations.

My Christmas wish would be that everyone cared for their pet as well as Linda and Wayde cared for Lea.

Debbie Hiebert

JUNIOR SPCA

The Junior SPCA is again going strong at Ecole McIsaac School under Jan Pazdzierski. The kids are busy making cards to help find homes for animals.

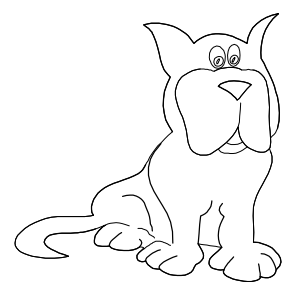
About 20 students go out to Stillwater Kennels on a rotating basis on Saturdays to help walk the dogs.

Other students attend meetings twice a month.

The students are collecting Pennies for Pets so save those pennies for them.

Parent Volunteers to stay at the kennels on Saturdays and help supervise the children

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THANK YOU STEPHANIE
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A special thank you goes out to Stephanie Rhude.
Stephanie has been helping to try to find a forever home for Fairbanks.
She made up an adoption poster and has distributed it all over town.
Stephanie is to be commended for taking the initiative and doing this on her own.
She is a junior high student who visits sometimes and helps walk the SPCA dogs.
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Needed:

The Companion Animal-Human Bond by Debbie Hiebert

It's always so satisfying – even exciting – to finalize an adoption on one of our cats or dogs that has been waiting perhaps months for the right person to come along. I always think how nice it will be for the animal to finally have a home of its own and people to love it. But the door swings both ways. As needy as that cat or dog may have been, the owner taking him home probably needed him as much as he needed them. It's amazing how strong the bonds can become between people and their pets.

Our cover story is such a good example of the animal-human bond. Linda and Wayne don't consider it a bother to hook Lea up to her wheels and help her every day. They want their little girl to stay with them as long as possible and will do whatever it takes.

Every day I see examples of the deep bond people have with their pets. Just leaving a pet at my kennel is often more traumatic for the owner than it is for the pet. I realize how hard it is for people to leave their pets because I've been in the same boat. Years ago when we

traveled we took our two Cocker Spaniels with us everywhere.

We were in Winnipeg and booked into a hotel which we thought didn't accept pets, so I reluctantly took my precious dogs to board with a vet who I was actually working for at the time (he came up to Flin Flon and The Pas). They were at his boarding kennel for all of one hour. I quickly went back and got them when I found out the hotel allowed dogs.

The next time Dr. Brandt came to Flin Flon he told me his

staff referred to me as "the crazy lady" who only boarded her dogs for one hour. He told them not to worry about it, that I was from Flin Flon – as if that explained it.

On the more serious side is the time that every pet owner dreads – the final goodbye. This is such a tough decision for so many people which is only made slightly easier by the fact that their dear pet is too sick or simply too old to go through another day. So many people have told me

that having their pet put to sleep was the hardest thing they have ever done. Some people find losing their pet so difficult they simply never get another one.

As pet owners we all have a serious responsibility to care for the animals in our lives as best we can. Keep your dog in your home as much as possible. That's where he wants and needs to be. The more he is with you, the more

"tuned in" you will be with each other and the stronger

the bond will be. And that is what getting a companion animal is all about, isn't it?

The SPCA always has some very nice adult cats and dogs looking for a new life. If you're thinking of adding a four-legged member to your family, please consider one of them. I know each and every one of them and know they have a lot to offer. They're here at my kennel waiting for you.

*Debbie Hiebert,
President
Flin Flon / Creighton*



& Area SPCA

Xmas Wish List

- Clay cat litter (Sorry – cannot use clumping litter)
- Pine Sol
- Javex
- Paper towels
- Friskies canned cat food
- Iams or Purina dog

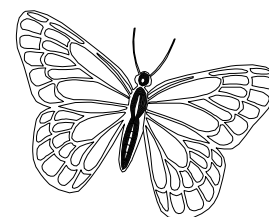


- food
- Rawhide chewies
- Dog biscuits



Wanted: Volunteer drivers for transporting cats and dogs to vet clinic in The Pas.

Wanted: Cleaning out



your freezer? Every day in the winter I