



Iowa County Humane Society (ICHS) Newsletter

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A Letter From The Editor... Spring has finally ‘sprung’ and it’s about time! In preparing for my 12th and LAST plant sale, I was starting to wonder if I would have anything to offer other than annuals (under lights in the basement). But the perennials are now making their appearance and it is almost as if they are growing right in front of my eyes but, of course, the weeds are doing likewise. Spring is my favorite time of the year but it is so fleeting – it’s over before you know it. The other season that coincides with spring is ‘kitten season’ which doesn’t abruptly end but continues throughout the summer and into the fall...**As you read this letter it is important to remember that I am a volunteer and these are MY thoughts.**

CGC Class

Canine Good Citizen classes are offered at the shelter twice a year in April and October. So, John M and I volunteered to take Tiny and Ty (see picture) to the class if the class wasn’t full. There was room – so the fun began! Both of these dogs simply are the BEST! Tiny is one of those little dogs whose behavior is somewhere between that of a cat and of a large dog – such a fun little guy! Tiny did not finish the class as he was adopted before the end of the class. Ty has been at ICHS over a year (no fault of his own) but is now available for adoption and he is such a ‘goofy’ guy! The standards for passing the class are HIGH and all ten items have to be passed in order to gain certification. Ty managed to pass 8 of the 10 items. Ty is very ‘treat motivated’ and since treats are NOT allowed during the testing phase, he wasn’t as cooperative as he was during practices when treats were offered. I think it is safe to say that all 4 of us came away with new skills.



Adopting a pet?

The following comes from a website featuring Dr. Karen Becker. This is a daily newsletter which features a variety of topics (the newsletter’s disclaimer states that these are Dr. Becker’s opinions based on her research and experience). The following excerpt came from last week’s website:

“Adopting a pet is one of the most significant commitments you will make in your lifetime. Accepting the responsibility of caring for another life — a creature that will be totally dependent on you — isn’t something to take lightly.

Sadly, too many pets are acquired on a whim, without thought or preparation. A person’s heart may be in the right place, but unless he or she is prepared to invest the time, effort and money necessary to properly care for the pet for its lifetime, things can quickly sour. In those cases, and there are far too many of them, the animal is the inevitable loser. Shelters are full of pets that were the result of an impulse purchase or adoption.

According to a recent report by the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) titled “Goodbye to a Good Friend: An Exploration of the Re-Homing of Cats and Dogs in the U.S.,” over a million households in the U.S. re-home a cat or dog every year. I can’t emphasize enough the need to carefully evaluate your readiness and ability to care for a pet.”

Although there is more to this article, my focus is to remind potential adopters that making impulse decisions is not always in the best interest of the family or of the animal. After the novelty of the animal wears off, too often the pet is either neglected, returned or worse yet, the animal ends up as a stray. Granted, “life happens” and sometimes good intentions go awry through no fault of one’s own...but nevertheless, pets are for life! So... **choose well and commit for life!**

12th Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser

This will be the last plant sale that I do for ICHS. It has been fun and I have learned so much over the years, but it’s time to give it up. For the past couple of years many plant sales have been discontinued because of the invasive jumping worm. When I found out that the *Uplands Garden Club* had decided not to have their sale this year, I had already ordered my seeds and had seedlings started in the basement. So, I felt committed to continue with the sale but decided this would be the last year. Besides all of the time and work that goes into growing/caring for the plants, my biggest concern is that I don’t get to tend to my own flower beds and lawn until June and by that time my property looks like a ‘war zone’.

In future years I may continue to sell some perennials throughout the growing season. As you know, if some perennials aren’t lifted and divided periodically, they tend to die out. I envision a situation where I would determine which plants to divide and then would mark them with a flag or something. People could come to my home, look around, tell me what they wanted and I would dig the plant(s) at that time. It would be a win-win situation for all concerned. ICHS would get the money collected; the buyer sees and buys reasonably-priced plants and I get to maintain my flower beds without having to toss the extras in the compost pile. This, of course, depends on the jumping worm NOT making an appearance! **If you have any suggestions or ideas about the content of ICHS PAWPRINTS, please contact me, Terri Davis, at roadhogbiker@gmail.com**

Upcoming Fundraising Events and Volunteer Needs

Just a reminder that ICHS is always looking for volunteers to help with the planning and implementation of our fundraisers. Our goal is to have enough volunteers so that each individual would only have to help plan and/or work at one event per year. So...if you would like to get involved with the planning and organizing of 2018’s fundraisers, please contact the shelter for more details. We hope to hear from you!!!

ICHS Annual Plant Sale Fundraiser: May 19 and 26 from 8:30am – 12:00pm on both days. The plant sale will feature a variety of both annuals and perennials.

Manners to Mayhem Tricks Class 1 Fundraiser: This is a 5 class session (**May 22nd, 29th, June 5th, 12th, and 19th**) and will be hosted at ICHS. The tricks 1 class starts with teaching the basics on gaining focus through lure and reward. The session fee is \$100 and all proceeds go to the shelter! For more information visit www.ichs.net.

March & April Adoptions

March				April			
Cats		Dogs		Cats		Dogs	
Onion	Parker	Raven +	Juno	Estella	Kirk	Wilder	Klein
Lefty	Esther 😊	Pinot+	Calvin	Willa	Ella	Tanya 😊	Aster
Lola	Grackle +	Mischa +		Regis 😊	Declan		Cam
Vixen 😊	Crow +	Lucy					
* = kitten + = transferred to Angel's Wish 😊 = denotes animal has been at ICHS for over a year/has special needs/or is elderly							

Special Pets

We all know that all animals are 'special' but the animals featured in this section are indeed special. These are 'special needs' animals. The special person/family who adopts one of these animals knows that this may/may not be the long-term relationship which we hope for when we open our hearts and homes to a new family member. These animals 'forever homes' with us may be just for a short time before they move on...But, nevertheless, these animals need a home and a loving family just as we all do. Are you possibly the family that could provide a home for one of these animals? If not, do you know of a family who could provide a loving home for these animals? If so, please come out to ICHS and find out more about these animals from the ICHS staff.

FIV Kitty – Chiclet



Chiclet is a young kitty – about 5 years old. She is a petite torti with a stubby tail and is front declawed. She is a sweetie! I haven't had the pleasure to spend much time with her, but I have been told that she loves to play – not so much with a person but that she plays by herself and is very entertaining to watch. She is a bit shy so once she settles into a home setting, it is fairly certain that her true personality will reveal itself and that YOU will find her to be a little "love bug".

Although we call FIV cats "special", there really are no special considerations when adopting FIV kitties. If it wasn't for the FIV+ sign on their cages, you wouldn't have a clue that they have FIV! They must be kept indoors. They may live with other indoor cats since FIV is not easily passed between cats (it would be best if your other cat(s) are good-natured and amicable to a new pal). FIV is primarily spread by serious bite wounds so if you have other cats, it is important to properly introduce FIV cats to the others (but you would do that with any cat that you bring home). It is also important to keep them free from stress so a quiet home would be best. So...Chiclet needs a home.

FeLV Kitty - Teriyaki



Teriyaki is a new kitty. He is an older cat – about 10 years old and he is front declawed. He apparently does not get along with other cats so he would have to be YOUR only cat. I don't know too much about this big guy but will write more when I get to know him.

Similar to FIV cats, FeLV cats also must be kept indoors and a quiet home is best. FeLV cats do need to be only cats (may live with other FeLV cats). FeLV kitties may live for years having a "normal" life span, but once/if the later stage of the infection occurs, the cat's health may deteriorate rapidly. That, of course, is one reason FeLV cats are not readily adopted – no one wants to lose their pets to illness. But...Teriyaki needs a home.

Success Stories

As you read Zephyr's story, keep in mind that miracles do occur. Yes, I consider the "Teddy to Zephyr makeover" a miracle – OK – maybe not a miracle but an extraordinary feat of determination and perseverance. Most people would not have gone to the lengths that Summer did – but she believed in this little dog. Reading Summer's story brought back memories. I remember Teddy when he came to the shelter. Other than being cute, Teddy didn't have much going for him. His behavior was 'horrible'. Summer took a chance by taking Teddy home and let's just say that it was probably Teddy's one and only chance of having a family. Summer has stopped by ICHS occasionally with Zephyr and he is a completely different dog – friendly and well-mannered. As you read Summer's story, just imagine the time, energy and patience that went into this "labor of love". Thank you, Summer, for the update and believing in this little dog!

THE ADOPTION OF TEDDY/ZEPHYR



You wouldn't recognize this energetic Pomeranian now if you knew him before he was adopted on April 1, 2013, by Summer Hamille of Mineral Point. He was quick to bite, piddle on everything, and ferocious about being crated. You couldn't trust him around people because you didn't know when he would lash out and bite. He was definitely not a family dog and would be a challenge for anyone. "Now," says Hamille, "he's the most affectionate and loyal companion you could want."

Zephyr went to the Hamille household at age 9 years with major behavioral issues. His aggressive attitude made him a questionable pet, but Hamille was willing to give him a chance. "There was something in his eyes that lead me to believe that he didn't mean to be that way; he just didn't know anything different," she said, "When I watched him I got a sense that he had no purpose or direction so I decided to see what I could do." Although it was a turbulent beginning it has since settled into a mutually beneficial relationship.

Zephyr – formerly Teddy – was surrendered to the Iowa County Humane Society (ICHS) in February of 2013 by a Dodgeville elderly woman. He was posted to the Pet Finder website where Hamille found him and applied for adoption. She went to the ICHS for a "meet-and-greet" visitation with the dog and agreed to a "foster- to-adopt" period to allow a greater opportunity to get to know one another.

Right away after taking him home, Zephyr began peeing in the house. Exclaimed Hamille, "First thing he did was to pee on my coat! I knew right then we had some work to do." Periodic trips outside and rewards with treats and praise when he pottied helped to correct that behavior. Occasionally he would pee on the kitchen floor, but within a few months Zephyr had learned to control his bladder and wait until he was let outside.

The adage "Don't bite the hand that feeds you," was clearly not known to Zephyr. The first night he demonstrated aggressive possessive behavior towards his food when she tried to put tidbits in his bowl. Hamille immediately researched the proper approach to changing the behavior and implemented the practice the next day. While it took nearly eight weeks, Zephyr is no longer aggressively possessive of his food. He still has some tendencies to be possessive of "special" treats, but he can be persuaded to relinquish them if necessary.

Next came establishing the *alpha* dog and who was truly in control. "That part was relatively easy," said Hamille, "but I always felt bad that I had to *strong arm* my dog." Whenever Zephyr exhibited aggressive tendencies by growling and biting, Hamille quickly corrected the behavior by employing dog tactics. "I had two Finnish spitz sisters that would get into an argument from time to time. I observed how the *alpha* dog would assert her position by standing over her sister after getting her on her back. I used the same body language on Zephyr in asserting my dominance over him. I would never let him up until he submitted by looking away. It took several months, but he has finally accepted his *position in the pack*."

"I recognized that I needed to earn his trust," said Hamille. "Knowing a bit of his background made me believe that he felt a need to protect his own self interests." To achieve this goal, Hamille established a "family" routine that involved walks, play time and snuggle sessions.

Further development of trust – and emphasizing dominance – was getting Zephyr to lie on his back. "He loves having his belly scratched, like the majority of dogs, but he wouldn't bare his belly. You had to scratch it while he stood. It took a while, but now I can get him to lie back in my arm so I can freely scratch his belly. He really loves it."

At first getting – and keeping -- Zephyr in the car was a challenge. “He’d turn right around and jump back out,” said Hamille. She began taking him everywhere possible with her and letting him get out to sniff around. “After a while he started jumping into the car in order to go with me to the new smells. It is stimulating for him now to ride in the car.”

Zephyr had an extreme aversion to being crated. He became ferocious when put in a crate, spinning around to snap at your hand and barking furiously. Surprisingly, getting him over the distrust of the crate was comparatively easy, according to Hamille. “All I did was set the crate in the living room with towels cushioning the bottom and left the door open. I left it there for a week or two. Then, occasionally, I’d throw a treat in it for him, but would never close the door when he’d go in to get it. One day, on a whim, I just tapped the top of the crate and he went in!! I was dumbfounded. Soon after I would do that and close the door behind him for a brief period. Eventually I worked up to ten or fifteen minutes of him being crated. That’s all I did.”

It became apparent early on that Zephyr enjoyed a lot of attention and affection. Hamille used that desire to encourage the behavior she wanted. “I would let him sit with me on the couch, but if he growled or became aggressive in any way I shoved him onto the floor. It took him awhile, but he got the idea and started behaving correctly,” she said. “And he’s so devoted, he’s underfoot all the time. He’s always right by me.”

“Zephyr is an intelligent dog,” said Hamille. “He has learned a few commands and tricks, although he’s smart enough to know which is which.” To reward Zephyr for good behavior Hamille spent extra time playing with him. She discovered that he really enjoyed playing tug o’war, so when he was especially good and displayed the desired behavior, she would play with him more. She also took him for walks and found that was another one of his favorite activities.

Anything unknown or unusual to Zephyr caused him to be defensive. He’d growl and bite to show his distrust. One such unusual undertaking was brushing of fur. “I don’t think he’d been brushed before,” said Hamille, “and he certainly wasn’t open to me starting now. But I kept trying and rewarding him with treats when he would let me. He still doesn’t like it, but he’ll tolerate it for a short time now.”

According to Hamille, Zephyr has metamorphosed into a wonderful pet and a great companion. She always gets compliments on Zephyr. He loves hugging his owner and smothering her with kisses. She’s thankful now that she took a chance on this ICHS dog. “Animals are like kids,” she said. “They’re a product of their environment. Zephyr just needed the right environment in which to become his lovable self.”

