

Firefighter gives breath of life to ailing dog

By MARILYN RILEY

Others might balk at the idea, but Troy firefighter Dick Lee says he didn't think twice before giving the "kiss of life" to revive a dog overcome by smoke in a Monday house fire.

"It was a life. It didn't matter if it was a dog or a human being," Lee explained. "You don't stop to think 'Do it, or don't it?' You just do it because that's what you're supposed to do."

Lee's quick action earned him the gratitude of the Rodney McMahan family and a nasty growl from a re-

vived Huey, the nine-year-old Dalmatian who just wanted to be left alone to recover from his ordeal.

Lee has had to take some ribbing from his colleagues, but it's nothing he can't handle. "Everybody's saying I kissed a dog. I said 'I've kissed a lot of dogs in my life. So what?'"

It's no laughing matter to the McMahan family members, who fear they would have lost Huey had it not been for Lee's quick action.

"The way he looked when he came out... he was all gray and dirty and he was so limp. I thought he was dead,"

said Rosie McMahan.

Mrs. McMahan dropped off some groceries and then she and her husband, Rodney, left the house again to pick up her son and daughter from Morse Elementary School Monday afternoon, reports say. She returned to find smoke billowing from her house at 1065 Birchwood.

THE FIRE apparently started when Mrs. McMahan put the groceries on the kitchen table and accidentally pushed down the handle that turned on the

toaster, said Deputy Chief Richard Elyson. The heat may have ignited the paper bag, he says.

When she returned, Mrs. McMahan says she ran to the back door to rescue Huey and Buck, the other family dog.

"I tried to go in, but the smoke was so dense, I could feel it. It was terrible." The heavy smoke at the front door, drove her back as well, she says.

Mrs. McMahan says Buck was conscious and her husband rescued him by pulling him through a bedroom window. But nobody saw Huey until firefighters found him in the bedroom and

carried him outside.

"He was already dead or well on his way," Lee says. "We couldn't feel any heartbeat or breathing."

He held Huey's muzzle, pressed his face into the dog's and started the breathing. Firefighter Keith Lenderman pushed on the dog's chest to expel air. After a few minutes, Huey started breathing on his own, and was on his feet, although wobbly, in about 20 minutes, Lee says.

THE fire demolished the McMahan kitchen and smoke damaged the rest of the house, reports say. Mrs. McMahan said the family probably will live with relatives for a couple months until the house is repaired.

"HE'S A VERY important part of



An early Christmas

Yule celebration came early for Rene Sturdavan, 11, who recently received a bicycle thanks to the efforts of Adults for Kids represented by Brian Sprague (left) and John Reed, co-owner of the Farmington Bike Shop. (Staff photo by Randy Borsit)

Avoiding trouble

Yuletide plants could mean danger

The time of year is approaching when many homes will be decorated with plants representative of the Christmas season.

Many of these plants have portions that are poisonous if eaten. Traditional holiday plants of this nature include holly, mistletoe, poinsettia and the Jerusalem or Christmas cherry.

Holly is an evergreen plant with leaves that are dark green with coarse spiny teeth. The small flowers of this plant are replaced by bright, red berries.

As the plant dries, the leaf and berry stalks become very brittle and shed freely. The toxic portions of the plant are the leaves and especially the berries. All species of this plant are poisonous.

The symptoms associated with this type of poisoning are nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and mental confusion. Ingest-

tion of the red berries will produce severe gastrointestinal distress while the leaves will cause neurological changes. Dehydration and electrolyte depletion can occur rapidly because of the intense vomiting experienced.

It is imperative the patient seek medical attention in the emergency room of the closest hospital.

THE MISTLETOE plant is a woody evergreen shrub with a bushy growth pattern. The flowers are small and inconspicuous. The fruit is a small white berry which covers a short spike at the base of the leaf.

The berries of the plant are highly toxic but other parts of the plant may be dangerous. The major symptoms exhibited include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and stomach and intestinal irritation. Other symptoms can be respiratory difficulties, bradycardia, convul-

sions, hallucinations, coma and possibly death.

The ingestion of one or two berries is sufficient to cause significant toxicity. Eating any portion of the mistletoe, especially the berries, requires immediate medical treatment and the person should be brought to the nearest emergency room.

The most common of all the Christmas plants and one with a poisonous reputation is the poinsettia plant.

This reputation is unjustified. The traditional house plant is hybrid and hasn't been associated with any reports of fatalities in this country.

However, symptoms which can occur from ingestion include abdominal pain, diarrhea and intense vomiting.

If a portion of the plant is chewed, irritation of the mucous membranes may lead to swelling of the mouth and throat. A generalized dermatitis can occur if the milky sap comes in contact with the skin.

Temporary blindness also can occur if the sap from the skin is rubbed into the eyes.

Treatment consists of washing the sap from the skin with soap and water.

The eyes should be flushed with cool water for 10-20 minutes.

The patient should be seen by a physician or ophthalmologist for further evaluation of any eye irritation.

The Jerusalem cherry (Christmas cherry) is a shrub or potted plant featuring bright scarlet or yellow round fruit. The hazardous portions of the plant include the leaves and possibly the fruit. The unripened berry has the highest concentration of a toxic substance which acts as a depressant to the heart.

Symptoms that can be seen include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, headache, blurred vision, dulling of the senses and paralysis of the hands and feet.

Skin irritation can occur with direct contact with the fruit of the plant. Treatment is basically the same as that described for the holly plant. Skin irritations can be handled by thoroughly washing the area with soap and water.

A physician should be contacted for further evaluation.

Farmington honored for youth advocacy

The National Council of Family and Juvenile Court Judges has honored the Farmington School District and Oakland University for a youth advocacy program that has been successful in curbing delinquent and disruptive behavior in the schools.

The plaque was accepted by Jacqueline Loughheed, OU professor of education and program director at the First National Symposium on youth violence held in late November in Reno, Nev.

The Oakland University-Farmington Schools Youth Advocacy Teacher Corps program has been operating since 1974 with funds from the U.S. Department of Education-Teacher Corps and the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice Delin-

quency Prevention.

The program was cited for establishing alternative educational programs for delinquent and predelinquent students in school and youth serving agencies.

Participants have been junior and senior high school students who have been cited as delinquent, predelinquent, disruptive, alienated and as having academic or adjustment problems.

Loughheed said the keynote of the program is working with parents and school officials in devising programs that get the students involved in special projects in school and in the communi-

French give award

(Continued from Page 1A)

STUDENTS WITH a lisp lost it in their concentration on new sounds and new words.

The experience has engendered an idea she wants to try after she retires from teaching.

She would like to teach French to patients in hospitals suffering from mental and physical disorders.

"I want to give them a goal away from their daily troubles and problems," she says.

At Webster, the language program included blind students and students with speech impediments.

The blind students turned out to be star pupils, she remembers, because they wanted to prove they could do it.

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