

Magazine turns into Harrison grad's pet project

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

While shopping with his expectant wife, Eric Reed gave birth to an idea — why not start a magazine for pet owners?

Pet Lover magazine made its debut this month. The publication is available at Farmer Jack stores and Borders Books and Music outlets, and by subscription for \$14.99 annually.

"We were going out all the time and buying things for our baby and I seen all these publications for people who are having babies," said Reed, 29, who is a 1985 Harrison High graduate. "You aren't bombarded like that in the pet industry... This has given me a chance to do a publication I've always been interested in."

The first edition features articles describing the heartache involved with losing a pet, how to select the proper pet, and what career opportunities exist in veterinarian medicine. Veterinarians also supply care tips for pets and owners themselves provide snapshots of their favorite animal for a photo gallery.

Pet Lover is intended to be a resource guide for pet owners and suppliers alike. The magazine is not intended to be solely an advertising vehicle, but also a literary one.

"What we're trying to address is people who buy a dog because it's cute, but who is not sure what steps you take to take care of it," Reed said.

An audience is there.

Pet owners are the third largest consumer group in the world, Reed said. At least 75 percent of households have some type of pet, Reed said.

Eric and wife Amy have two cocker spaniels, Boomer and Madde; and a calico cat Dedo. Amy is also a dog obedience trainer.

Novi-based Reed Publishing also prints for the medical industry, including one for occupational and physical therapists. Eric's younger brother, Aaron, is executive editor of "Pet Lover."

"I thought it was a pretty good



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Animal attraction: Eric Reed, left, and brother Aaron have their hands full with calico cat Dedo and cocker spaniels Madde and Boomer as well as starting a new magazine Pet Lover.

effort for the first edition," said Michele Mitchell, director of community relations for the Michigan Humane Society.

A dollar from each subscription is donated to MHS in the

subscriber's name. Humane Society animals are featured on the cover of "Pet Lover."

"Certainly, we would be happy to see one more vehicle to promote our animals."

"I would be hopeful it would work. I've seen similar publications start up where they had real potential, but unfortunately, they weren't able to continue."

The magazine's content and

distribution will be the key to success, Mitchell said.

"As much stuff as there is out there, as we see at our three shelters, there is still a lot of ignorance about how to care for

animals," she said.

With complimentary copies, Reed hopes to build a subscription base.



STAFF PHOTO BY SHARON LEMIEUX

Sharp stuff: Dinghy Sharp told kindergartners about the mystery artist and other stories during her visit to Eagle Elementary. She paid tribute to former PTA President Ruby Martin.

Storyteller spins tribute for special Eagle parent

BY LARRY O'CONNOR
STAFF WRITER

Dinghy Sharp provided a group of Eagle Elementary kindergartners a tale about the old lady who consumed everything from a dog to a horse.

"She died of course," said Sharp, bringing the rhyme to a close.

Children laughed and so did Sharp, who's spun the story many times before. Afterward, Sharp undid the visual prop with the vast stomach that brings the yarn about the ravenous woman to life in children's minds.

Coincidentally, the puppet inspired the storyteller to recall a vignette about a departed friend Ruby Martin, who died Sept. 7. Martin, 70, was a long serving volunteer and former PTA president at Eagle Elementary.

Sharp's presentation Monday was a tribute to Martin.

"Ruby and I took (the prop) every where with us," said Sharp, who retired as an Eagle learning specialist in 1989. "She wore it and I did the story and she did the action."

Sharp, who lives in Commerce Township, spends winter months teaching native American children in Arizona. She's a member of the Detroit Story League and has spun tales in Ireland as well as Windsor and other schools in the area.

Sharp's tribute to the 20-year school volunteer coincided with a donation of 12 children's books to the Eagle media center. All were Martin's favorites, including "The Fall of Freddie Leaf: A Story of Life for All Ages" by Leo Buscaglia.

Martin used Buscaglia's bereavement book in classroom to help get children through loss of a loved one, Sharp said. Comforting children was typical, said daughter Susan Fischer.

"I think it was the personal satisfaction and being with children that she enjoyed the most," said Fischer, whose daughter and Ruby Martin's granddaughter Wendy went to Eagle, "and seeing a child, who was having difficulty with math or another, improve and become more confident."

"As a PTA volunteer, Martin started hot dog day and pancake day, which raised money for school supplies and equipment. She was also one of the founders of the international program, 'Bucket Brigade.'"

Sharp, like other school employees, appreciated Martin's volunteer efforts. That's why the former educator was more than happy to pay homage to her friend by reading to children.

"She was a fixture here," Sharp said. "Some kids thought she crawled into a desk and slept there at night."



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