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while I was illustrating the book. Some people may think that Marty's feelings were a bit extreme. I think anyone who's had a pet has had feelings along these lines. The book basically is there to say it's all right, that if you've had these feelings, it's OK, that these are normal feelings."

Sharing memories

While Kosins concentrates on the aging process and Maya's last years, he also touches upon the joyful memories of her puppyhood and young adult life when they would creep like burglars to raid the cookie jar at midnight. There are also bitter-sweet memories of Maya lying for hours alongside the piano bench as he composed music.

"How selfish our own love is," he said. "They love unconditionally."

Illustrations in the book range from humorous scenes of Maya lurking at the cookie jar with only her ears showing above the counter, to heart-tugging portraits of her, final days. Fridson captures them all with love.

On the day Kosins realized that Maya could no longer run alongside the big shiny red three-wheeler as he rode through the neighborhood, he added yet another goal to his life: keeping Maya with him for as long as he could.

Caring

Eventually, Kosins gave up a music career to spend his time caring for the big dog with the gentle face. Tasks included giving Maya eye drops along with 30 pills.

"I tried tapioca pudding, peanut butter, every soft thing I could think of."

To get her to eat, he tempted her with pasta from Pasquale's, and burgers, and barbecued chicken.

"I wasn't going to let her lose interest."

As long as Maya wasn't in pain, Kosins would spend whatever it took to keep her alive. When her legs weakened he had ramps built leading to the house and back yard. When she could no longer walk, he became her legs by rigging a towel around her waist to carry her along.

"When Maya left, she took a large part of my heart along," he said in the book.

Feeling loss

The glass cookie jar they raided sits empty on the kitchen cupboard. Her leash hangs from the doorknob of the hall closet. Four years after Maya's death, his love for her lies all around the home they shared for many years.

"It's still painful to see someone walking a dog. It doesn't stop being difficult.

"It's a love. It stays with you." People who have lost a pet rarely admit to family and friends let alone fellow workers or acquaintances the depth of their loss, the hurt, loneliness and pain. They keep their feelings hidden inside for fear of ridicule, and therein lies the benefit of Kosins' book. It gives people permission to grieve.

"(It (the loss of a pet) causes a lot of friction with family and friends. They're afraid people will say snap out of it, it's only a dog."

Countless scientific studies have shown the importance of pets in our lives to increase physical and emotional well-being. A file of letters two inches thick from grieving pet owners adds further proof that "it's not just a dog."

Finding consolation

Weekly phone calls from around the country confirm Kosins' suspicions that the grieving owner's need to talk continues unmet. As he said in the book, "the price for love may well be loneliness," but now it doesn't have to be endured alone.

An afterword provides addresses and phone numbers for sources of consolation, including the Pet Loss Support Hotline at the University of California-Davis.

Kosins, who earned his master's of music degree from Wayne State University, began composing in 1971 at the encouragement of famed cellist Gregor Piatigorsky. His compositions have been recorded and performed by the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, Sir Neville Martinne, Laurindo Almeida and Bud Shank. Kosins, a recipient of the ASCAP Composer Award, has also written music for chamber groups and ballet.

Flower show takes 'Walk on Wild Side'

By MARTY FIDLEY
STAFF WRITER

"A Walk on the Wild Side" is the theme for the fourth annual Ann Arbor Flower and Garden Show 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday-Saturday, March 25-27, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday, March 28, at the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds, 6665 Ann Arbor and Salline Road, Ann Arbor.

Festivities begin with the Opening Night Gala, 7-9 p.m. Wednesday, March 24. Live music, hors d'oeuvres, beverages and the awards presentation are the highlights of this fun-filled evening. Ticket price for this affair is \$25.

Thursday, March 25, has been designated as Senior Day. Individuals age 60 and older are encouraged to enjoy the show then to avoid the crowds that are expected during the weekend. Gate admission for those eligible is \$6 on this day.

On the wing

A special feature of the show is the construction of a butterfly greenhouse where visitors can enjoy seeing these ephemeral creatures up close, and perhaps enjoy the experience of having one light on the hand or shoulder.

Growing in this quarter-acre exhibit, "Gardening for Wildlife," will be more than 50 species of plants that butterflies use as food, such as Sweet Alyssum, Heliotrope and Verbena. This exhibit is being produced by Matthaei Botanical Garden and Abbott's Landscape Nursery, Ann Arbor.

Plant life

The Wildflower Association of Michigan has chosen "Yes! - In My Back Yard" as its theme that demonstrates how native Michigan plants can be used there. The Southern Michigan Unit of the Herb Society of America Inc. has designed a traditional herbal knot garden with a capricious flair. Other plant societies exhibiting

include Michigan Orchid, which uses a natural setting to show how these plants grow in nature; American Gourd, showing how gourds can be used artistically; and American Genesier, which introduces the African Violet's extended family.

Look for Cranbrook Gardens Auxiliary's "Moonlight Garden," which features white plants; "Beginning Beginning" by Ikebana International, Ann Arbor Chapter 183, "Frog Heaven," the display by the Ann Arbor Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society; and unusual forms and colors of rare conifers presented by the American Conifer Society, Central Region.

Raising art

Interior design and florist teams have constructed breakfast vignettes with the theme, "Morning Glories."

More than 45 artistic design, horticulture and special entry classes will compete for trophies and blue ribbons.

Local professional nurseries have also adhered to the show's title with displays such as "A Child's Walk on the Wild Side," with color, water and shape, Eaton Nursery Ltd., West Bloomfield, and "Swelling Through a Green Menagerie," a serpentine path leading through a whimsical landscape to a Sussex Bower, Goldner Welsh Nursery Inc., Pontiac.

There are eight of these exhibits in all, where much can be learned about innovative home landscaping. Others are "Beauty and the Beast," "Northport Dreaming," "Urban Escape," "The Sorcerer's Spring," "Contemporary Zen Garden" and "Alien Invasion."

Ideas in bloom

A Standard Flower Show produced in cooperation with the Federated Garden Clubs of Michigan Inc. and adhering to the

guidelines of the National Council of State Garden Clubs Inc. is not to be missed.

A large selection of gift and garden items, plant material, tools, accessories, etc. will be offered in the Marketplace, always a popular area of the show. The Green Thumb Cafe will provide hot or cold food and beverages in a restful atmosphere.

In addition to all this, free lectures and demonstrations will be presented throughout the show by horticultural specialists.

Admission

Advance admission prices are adults \$6, children (12 and under) \$3. Tickets are available at all southeast Michigan Kroger Food

Stores, or at Matthaei Botanical Gardens, 1800 N. Dixboro Road, Ann Arbor, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., until March 24.

General gate admission is \$7 for adults, with children's prices remaining the same. The show is wheelchair accessible. For more information, call 998-7002.

Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds are south of I-94, west of Route 23 and north of U.S.-12 (Michigan Avenue). Parking for 2,000 cars is adjacent to the buildings. Walking shoes or boots (if it is rainy) are recommended. Parking is \$1 per car.

The Ann Arbor Flower and Garden Show is a fund-raiser of the University of Michigan Matthaei Botanical Gardens.

Talks, demonstrations slated

This is the schedule of lectures and demonstrations at the 1993 Ann Arbor Flower and Garden Show.

All sessions are free on the day of show admission. For more information and to order tickets, call 998-7002.

Thursday, March 25

Mud Pies: A Children's Hands-on Demonstration, 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Backyard Tree and Shrub Care, noon; Gifts From Your Garden: Seasonal Ideas for Decorations and Keepsakes, 1:30 p.m.; Native Plants for Wetlands, Ponds and Bog Gardens, 3 p.m.; The Best Sun Perennials for You, 4:30 p.m.; Wild and Free Flower Arranging, 6 p.m.; Master Planning Your Yard, 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 26

Mud Pies: A Children's Hands-on Demonstration, 9:30-11:30 a.m.; Peijing and Chinese Garden, noon; Basic Rock Garden

Plants, 1:30 p.m.; Exotic Flowering House Plants, 3 p.m.; Best Trees and Shrubs for the City Garden, 4:30 p.m.; Gardening with Michigan Wildflowers, 6 p.m.; Jerry Baker Presents, 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, March 27

Herbs: A Garden of Eating, 10:30 a.m.; Conifers in the Landscape, noon; The Art of Bonsai, 1:30 p.m.; Flower Gardening Made Easy by Mrs. Greenthumbs, 3 p.m.; Bonsai Demonstration, 4:30 p.m.; Designing the Natural Landscape, 6 p.m.; Ikebana: A Demonstration of Japanese Flower Arranging, 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, March 28

Attracting Wildlife to the Garden, 11 a.m.; Gardening With Native Grasses, 12:30 p.m.; Living With Shade and Loving It, 2 p.m.; Practical Uses and Benefits of Landscape Irrigation and Lighting, 3:30 p.m.

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