

# Your favorite pet photo could win

Have a photo of your German shepherd cruising down Grand River? A cute cat curled up with a soccer ball in the '50s? Or a faithful mixed breed from long ago watching with you as they build Harrison High School? Then the Michigan Humane Society PETAthon and the Farmington Hills Pet Supplies "Plus" store would like to hear from you.

## FARMINGTON AREA PETS

The pet store is putting out a call for historic photos of Farmington pets. Anyone with an interesting photo of a dog, cat or other companion animal from the city's past is invited to bring a copy to the Pet Supplies "Plus" store on Orchard Lake Road. You'll receive a gift package when you drop off a copy of your photo. The pet owner who provides the most interesting photo will also be awarded a \$25 Pet Supplies "Plus" gift certificate.

Pet Supplies "Plus" will be turning the winning photo over to the Michigan Humane Society PETAthon. In recognition of the loyalty and devotion that companion animals have given us over the years, The Michigan Humane Society is creating a "Pets of the Country" photo collection. Samples from this collection will be shown during the Michigan Humane Society PETAthon, which airs from noon to 5 p.m. Sunday, March 7, on UPN Channel 50.

Pet Supplies "Plus" urges pet owners to submit a copy of their photos, since they can't be responsible for returning submissions. Photos can be submitted to the store by 5 p.m. Feb. 22. The photos do not necessarily have to include a notable historic event - anything that captures the flavor of pet life in the community years gone by will be appreciated.

To honor contemporary pets, the Michigan Humane Society is sponsoring a second contest as part of the PETAthon. Anyone whose four-footed friend is extremely kind or courageous is invited to enter the "My Pet Is a Hero" contest. Just drop off a 200-word (or less) description, explaining what makes your pet heroic (along with a photo), at Pet Supplies "Plus" before 5 p.m. Feb. 28. The top three winners of this contest will receive \$600, \$200, and \$100 Pet Supplies "Plus" gift certificates, and will be invited to appear on the Michigan Humane Society PETAthon airs every March on UPN 50. In the past two years, the program has raised more than \$625,000 to help the Michigan Humane Society care for the 60,000-plus homeless animals it takes in annually. Hosted by Channel 50 news anchors Amyre Makupson and David Scott, this year's PETAthon will feature a variety of special guests and special



Historic: This is an example of a photo that could be used in the pet contest. The deadline is 5 p.m. Feb. 28.

pet care educational segments. For more information, contact the Michigan Humane Society community relations department at (734) 721-2109.

# Berry designed concept for Pet Supplies 'Plus'

BY JOANNE MALISZEWSKI  
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When the first Pet Supplies "Plus" store opened on Telegraph in Redford, there had to be plenty of people saying it just makes sense.

"I took my supermarket background and designed what I thought was a retail concept," said founder and president Jack Berry, a longtime Farmington resident.

"I wanted a neat, organized store combined with premium foods with supermarket-type items," said Berry, whose headquarters are in Livonia.

Before his dive into the pet industry, Berry was a career man in supermarkets - of the human variety - including an egg distributor at one time. He also owned an advertising agency.

In his early 50s, Berry was getting ready for a change. An old friend, Harry Shalloo, who owned another company, was out-of-state and came across a large pet store - and an idea was born.

"I then went out and visited every pet store in Detroit. Most were small, smelly and dirty, and a little of this, a little of that," Berry said.

He wanted a supermarket for pet products that looked, smelled and acted like a supermarket. And just like a people supermarket, Berry decided that his clientele - pets - should be allowed to walk the aisles.

"The volume of business we obtained didn't come out of these little pet stores I looked at. Part of it was the supermarket segment

of business," Berry said, adding he wanted his stores not only to offer the supermarket brands of pet supplies, but the more expensive premium brands as well.

In fact, Berry said he is convinced that his large stores have forced pet supplies manufacturers to develop more products - and healthier products.

While location, location, location is important to any business, Berry has his own criteria:

■ Demographics. He's got to be in a location where people have pets and want to spend on their pets.

■ The need to be on a major road. The Farmington Hills store on Orchard Lake, for example, is on the side of the road that Berry considers people use to go home. And when they see they store on their way home they will remember to get the dog or cat food they need.

■ Point position or free-standing, which creates visibility for his stores.

Now Berry's chain of stores includes 144 in 17 states. Not all are owned by Berry, though.

"Friends of mine saw the success of what I was doing and wanted to open stores. His best friend opened one, his partner's ex-wife, a nephew all jumped on the bandwagon. Another friend, attorney Harvey Solway, became the franchise attorney. Thirty more stores will open this year."

"I think the interest in pets has always been there. People actually love their pets and treat them the same as they do their children," Berry added.

# Telethon from page A1

"Last year we raised \$351,000 for the humane society. But we were up against the J.P. McCarthy radio telethon and the NCAA tournament," Berry said. "My personal goal this year will be to achieve \$450,000."

## Local presence

And if you happen to watch the telethon on Channel 50 this year, you will indeed see Berry. Last year, he made 10 appearances on the show.

"He took his principles to the charity groups," said Joe Fucini of Pet Public Relations in West Bloomfield. "He's a

very creative marketer."

To be sure, Berry also knows how to hold others accountable. For example, he contacted by letter his largest vendors asking them to make a donation for the telethon. "Most of them will participate," Berry said.

He also offering a helping hand and wallet to the humane societies in Livingston, Washtenaw and Monroe counties, as well as the Michigan Animal Adoption Network. For the adoption network, Pet Supplies "Plus" annually have daylong adoptions on a rotating basis. People who bring the dogs and

cats for the adoption fair are actually the pets' foster parents so they are on hand to tell prospective owners all about the pets and their foibles.

"We've had more than 1,000 pets adopted," Berry added. "We keep the cages for the pets in our warehouses and when they are having the adoptions we send them out."

When Berry had only 20 stores in the early '90s, he worked with the Michigan Humane Society to develop the Animal Care Fairs at the Southfield Civic Center. Again, Berry tapped into his vendors. Another success. In the first year,

20,000-30,000 visitors came to the fair. About \$500,000 has been raised for the humane society, said Joanne Berry, Michigan Humane Society assistant to the director.

"Jack has been tremendous and he has helped so many homeless animals," Joanne Berry said.

And after some prodding, Jack Berry convinced the humane society, which had to change its bylaw, to include adoptions at the fairs. Since Berry began the fairs in 1992, 800 animals have been adopted.

The plaques from animal organiza-

tions offering their thanks are testament to Berry's participation in helping animals.

"He is very generous. We are tremendously grateful to him. He underwrites our expenses. He is great. Whatever we might need, he comes through," said Joanne Berry. "Jack really wants to make a difference for animals in our communities. He wants to pass his success along to the animals."

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