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Photos by Tommy Felts/The Ottawa Herald

Kent Lash, acting animal control officer for the Ottawa Police Department, recounts the Friday rescue of Rocky, a 10-month-old sheltie, shortly after the incident. The dog wandered into the Skunk Run drainage ditch between Oak and Poplar streets in Ottawa and was unable to get out. Lash and Alex Jones, a maintenance worker at the police department, used a ladder to gain access in and out of the 10-foot deep ditch and were able to retrieve the lost dog.

Lost dog rescued, reunited with owner in strange twist

By TOMMY FELTS
Herald Day News Editor

Kent Lash hoped the owner of a dog he rescued Friday from Skunk Run would come forward quickly.

But a reunion came sooner than he imagined.

Lash, acting animal control officer for the Ottawa Police Department, got a surprise when he delivered the lost pooch to the Bea Martin Peck Animal Shelter: the dog's owner — a shelter employee — was there waiting for him.

The dog tale began, owner Chasity Finch said, when her son went out to start her car Friday morning. Rocky, a 10-month-old sheltie that Finch adopted from the shelter, followed her son outside, as he often does, but didn't come back afterward.

"We started looking and hollering for him," Finch said. "But we couldn't find him."

After about an hour of searching, Finch said she had to go to work.

"I didn't know what was going to happen to him," she said. "But I figured that where I work, at the shelter, I'd find him."

Rocky wandered a few blocks from home before finding his way into Skunk Run, a concrete drainage ditch that runs through City Park, past the Don Woodward Community Center on Third Street and continues to the Marais des Cygnes River on the east side of Ottawa.

Lash said he got a call about the dog at about 12:15 p.m. from someone at the East Central Kansas Economic Opportunity Corp. facility at



Chasity Finch holds her dog, Rocky, a 10-month-old sheltie, Friday outside the Bea Martin Peck Animal Shelter, 230 W. 19th St., Ottawa. Rocky wandered away from home Friday morning without his tags, and an animal control officer later rescued him from a nearby drainage ditch. Finch, an employee at the shelter, and the dog were reunited when Rocky was brought to the shelter because of his missing tags.

Fifth and Poplar streets. "The kids there had been talking to [the dog] all morning," he said. Rocky was stuck in a portion of

Skunk Run that Lash said was about 10 feet deep.

"The walls were just steep enough that he couldn't climb out," he said.

Lash called Alex Jones, a maintenance worker at the police department, to get a ladder and help him rescue the dog.

"I didn't want to get down in there and not have any way to get back out," Lash said.

With Jones' help, Lash was able to retrieve Rocky from the soggy, leaf-littered ditch.

"He's happy to be out of there, I'll tell you that," Lash said at the scene.

With the rescue complete, Lash faced another challenge — the dog had a collar, but no tags.

"I'll just have to take him to the shelter and hope somebody's looking for him," he said.

That, of course, is where he found a relieved Finch, reuniting owner and pet.

Lash said Rocky's story ended happily but should serve as a reminder to Ottawa pet owners.

"It's a good chance to encourage people to put tags on their dogs and make sure they're registered with the city," he said.

To register a pet with the City of Ottawa, owners must go to City Hall, 101 S. Hickory St. There, they will be required to present vaccination papers from a veterinarian for pets 6 months and older. Registration costs \$10 or \$5 for dogs that are spayed or neutered. For more information, call the city at (785) 229-3600.

News briefs

Ottawan hit with firearms charges

An Ottawa man could face up to 10 years in prison for unlawful possession of a firearm.

A Federal Grand Jury alleges that Ryan J. Mendoza, 31, Ottawa, unlawfully possessed a firearm after a felony conviction Sept. 24 in Ottawa, a news release from the Office of the United States Attorney District of Kansas said.

In addition, Mendoza is charged with unlawful possession of an unregistered rifle with a sawed off barrel, the news release said.

President orders flags half-staff

President Obama has issued a proclamation directing the flag of the United States to be flown at half-staff in honor of the victims of Thursday's deadly shootings at Fort Hood, Texas. Kansas Gov. Mark Parkinson has ordered Kansas flags to follow suit.

"As the tragic and shocking details continue to unravel in Texas, we are keeping everyone at Fort Hood and their families in our prayers," Parkinson said. "As Kansans well know, a fort isn't just a facility, it's a community."

"I have directed the Kansas Adjutant General's Department to make available any and every resource to Fort Hood that they may need," he said. "This is a striking reminder of the bravery and courage military men and women demonstrate on our behalf each and every day."

The flags are to remain at half-staff, by order of the president's and governor's proclamations, until sunset Tuesday. In Kansas, however, flags will remain at half-staff past the Tuesday mark because Parkinson previously ordered them lowered until Nov. 14, upon the death of former Kansas Gov. William H. Avery.

Kansas Gas Service sends workers to Ottawa area to replace meters

Customers of Kansas Gas Service company soon may get an unexpected knock at the door.

Subcontractors hired by the company are in Ottawa and the surrounding area replacing local residents' gas meters with new meters that can be read digitally from the road.

Workers already have begun visiting residences where they find people at home. The homeowner or tenant is required to be home because the workers must shut off the natural gas to make the 45-minute change and then go into the home to relight the pilot light after the gas is turned back on. The process became more complicated Monday because of a cold weather rule that prohibits the gas company from shutting off customers' gas without their knowledge or permission.

Residents reportedly have not been contacted by the gas company prior to the arrival of the workers, and some have expressed concern to law enforcement that the work actually is part of a scam to criminally gain entry into local homes. Kansas Gas Service, however, has confirmed to The Herald that workers are in the area for legitimate work and will be replacing the gas meters for the next month or more.

Residents who are approached by individuals asking for entry to do gas service work should request proper identification and call Kansas Gas Service at (800) 794-4780 with any further questions or concerns.

Harold Simmons, President of National Baptist Laymen's Movement, will be the keynote speaker at the Deacon Ordination Ceremony for Brother Harvey Tyson & Brother Wendel Lewis.

3 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 8
Bethany Chapel Baptist Church,
Second and Poplar streets.

Reception will follow program.

PUBLIC IS INVITED

Holiday craft show set for return

By SHARON STAUFFER
Herald Staff

Holiday shoppers looking for gifts with character may find them at the 11th annual Homemade Holidays Craft Show next weekend.

"You name it, we've got it," Kathy Turner, organizer of the event, said.

Turner is referring to handmade goods rang-

ing from dip mixes, fudge, wreaths, stained glass and quilts to a variety of other items.

More than 125 booths will be at the juried craft show from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Nov. 14 at Ottawa Middle School, 13th and Ash streets, Ottawa.

The vendors have to send in pictures of their work to be approved to appear at the

show, which Turner said ensures variety and quality.

"It's a good place to start your Christmas shopping," she said.

All the booths have been booked since Labor Day and consist of vendors from Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma, Turner said.

No admission is necessary to attend the event.

Local farm to supply suburb mayor's Christmas tree

By SHARON STAUFFER
Herald Staff

A local Christmas tree farm has been selected to supply the mayor's Christmas tree for the City of Overland Park.

Memory Lane Christmas Tree Farm, Rantoul,

will provide a 12-foot tall scotch pine, the largest it grows, to a city crew between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. Monday at the farm, 2710 Vermont Road, owner Harry Peckham said.

Peckham has been the Christmas tree business for

18 years, 11 of which he's spent selling and seven planting. He said Memory Lane provided the governor's mansion Christmas tree four years ago.

Peckham said the 7-acre tree farm sells about 270 trees every Christmas.

"I Can't Praise Them Enough"

Praise and gratitude are not the typical responses of a person who has just suffered a stroke. But when you talk with Jean Stinson, you will hear the sincerity in her voice when she speaks about how grateful she is of the care and service she has received at Ottawa Retirement Village. Jean suffered a stroke in late summer 2009, endured intensive medical care in the hospital and then received short-term rehabilitation therapy at Village Manor shortly thereafter. Once Jean was stabilized, she was referred to Ottawa Retirement Village for short-term care. "I am so impressed by the staff at ORV. I feel like therapy is doing what I need done. They know what I need. They are so qualified." Jean says as she speaks of the services at Village Manor. "I'm looking forward to getting back to where my husband and I can start waiting on each other again." And



Jean Stinson sits with Physical Therapist at Village Manor

she soon got her wish. Jean was discharged home just a few weeks later and is recovering very well.

Village Manor is here to meet your short-term and long-term needs and we are proud that nearly 30% of people we serve discharge right back home!

Ottawa Retirement Village, 1100 W. 15th St., Ottawa, Kansas, (785) 242-5399.

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