



# BEAGLE RESCUE TO HOLD MEET AND GREET

**The Midwest BREW beagle rescue nonprofit will soon hold an event where people can meet volunteers and their friendly dogs from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 20 at Val's Pet Supplies, 4 S. Rochester Road in Clawson.**

Photo by Liz Carnegie

**EVENT 1-3 P.M. JUNE 20 AT VAL'S PET SUPPLIES IN CLAWSON**

**BY ANDY KOZLOWSKI**  
 akozlowski@candgnews.com

METRO DETROIT — With their big floppy ears and soulful eyes, beagles have captured the hearts of many. Even so, there are still many in need of forever homes. One group trying to rectify this is Midwest BREW, a foster home-based rescue network. The nonprofit will soon hold an event where people can meet volunteers and their friendly dogs

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## Beagles

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from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, June 20 at Val's Pet Supplies, 4 S. Rochester Road in Clawson. Guests will be able to play with the beagles, learn about the adoption process and even win prizes.

BREW stands for Beagle Rescue and Education Welfare. In 2011, Midwest BREW split off a larger organization, BREW Inc., when the latter decided to focus on the East Coast.

Midwest BREW, as its name suggests, focuses on the Midwest — specifically, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin. It also reaches into western Pennsylvania.

The group comprises a network of foster homes supported by volunteers who help in all sorts of ways. Sometimes, it's about fundraising to cover supplies and medical expenses such as spaying, neutering, vaccinations and emergency surgeries. Other times, it's about hitting the road to pull at-risk animals from shelters, or to visit prospective adopters and make sure their homes are suitable for beagles.

Midwest BREW is also about educat-

ing the public about the unique qualities of beagles — a hunting breed that is people-friendly and capable of living peacefully with other animals, but that also has a keen sense of smell and a hard-wired instinct to track and search for anything it sniffs.

"They can be very stubborn," said Linda Carpenter, the vice president of Midwest BREW. "When their nose catches a scent, they can become absolutely fixated on following it. You must be thoughtful when sitting outside with a beagle, and you can't necessarily run or jog with one, because they're so curious about everything.

"But they're typically very good dogs since they're very friendly. They just love people; they love other dogs," she said. "They're not good guard dogs because they would probably sniff and then lick (a burglar). They can also get in trouble in the home if they want to chew on things, but that's like most dogs. They're lively when they're younger but typically get calmer with age. There are some people who specifically adopt senior beagles."

Carpenter said her group has had great success finding homes for those older dogs, something she doesn't take for granted, since older dogs are sometimes overlooked at rescues.

"We have a lot of alumni who adopted (senior beagles) from us in the past who come back when they want another dog," she said. "We have a lot of adopters who come back when their current dog passes. We're very fortunate with that."

Her group is very attentive to instructing foster homes and interested adopters in only using positive reinforcement. This means no choke collars or anything that could cause a dog distress. Rather, one should use a harness that safely and comfortably distributes the force of a leash.

Carpenter also noted some unfortunate trends leading to an uptick in homeless animals.

"Some folks lose their jobs and move out of their homes and move in with someone where they can't take their pets," she said. "One beagle we fostered and ultimately adopted was in the program years ago and then his owner was in hospice. He stated to his family and neighbors that when he passes, his dog should come back to the program, and they honored his wish. If more people made plans for their pets, putting them in their will, it would make a real difference."

One volunteer at Midwest BREW is Amber Robbins, the daughter of Jack Robbins at Val's Pet Supplies and step-grand-

daughter of its eponymous founder. While Amber no longer works at the family business, she remains passionate about helping animals.

"I grew up with beagles and have two myself right now. They're my favorite breed — they're so sweet, so very affectionate. They have lots of personality, for sure. They love almost everyone they meet," Amber said.

She noted her beagles get along well with her cat, although it was an acclimation process, keeping them on separate sides of a baby gate until they were comfortable with each other.

"Now they're best friends and cuddle together," Amber laughed.

She said the monthly meet-and-greet events that Midwest BREW holds all over the area have been a great way to recruit volunteers, potential foster families and even adopters. She gave credit to fellow volunteer Kelly Spanke, who takes the lead on running many of the events.

"We're just a bunch of beagle lovers," Amber said. "We all come together to help the dogs."

For more information, call Val's Pet Supplies at (248) 588-2177.

Call Staff Writer Andy Kozlowski at (586) 498-1046.

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