

The Very Thankful Widow

Dear W.C.,

I have a senior citizen living in the apartment complex I manage. She is having a hard time. She barely make ends meet each month on her social security. The senior widow took in her recently deceased daughters small dog. It is a well-behaved dog but is not up to date on its shots and will need to be spayed in order to remain in our complex. I know she is extremely distraught over losing her daughter and this little dog is her only living companion left. She has told me she has no other family. I had to tell her the dog cannot stay if the spay and shots are not done. She broke down in tears and it broke my heart. She told me first her husband's funeral, and now her daughters had taken all her remaining savings. She confessed she was behind in her utilities and did not have the money to have these procedures done. I had heard that you sometimes provide help with pets, along with possibly helping her with her utilities, but I do not want to ask for too much. I know this little dog means everything to her and we would both be so grateful if you could just help her with the dog. I think if you come meet her you will see for yourself the needs she may have.

Caring Apartment Manager

Dear Readers,

As most our readers know I hold a special spot in my heart for our senior citizens and our animal friends. I called the apartment manager to set up a time so she could let the senior woman know I was coming for a visit as she did not have a telephone.

The next day I was greeted at the entrance to the apartment complex by the wonderful apartment manager who had written the letter of request. Standing next to her was a thin elderly woman with a small Jack Russell Terrier on a leash. The younger woman introduced herself and then introduced me to the senior woman and dog. The senior woman seemed very happy to meet me and her little dog companion seemed just as happy.

The apartments were senior housing, which the woman was lucky to have acquired. Even with her reasonable rent she was struggling with the recent expense of her daughter's funeral. After a quick tour of the small apartment, including my looking in the refrigerator and cabinets for food, we sat down to talk. The woman had a neat folder with her bills inside and some hand written notes. The apartment manager noticed me glancing at them and said she had read in past columns that she should have her expenses/budget ready for me to go over. I told the women no need to rush, we could just talk for a while first. The woman politely offered me some tea and I asked a few questions. After talking for a while the senior woman got a sad look on her face and hugged the little dog. She said, "You know how I got my little friend here? She was my daughters beloved pet when she was so sick with cancer. During my daughters last days, she made me promise to take loving care of her best friend. Now she is my sole companion. I could not just let her go to a stranger or put her in the shelter after my daughter passed away. I had to keep my promise. I went to a shelter to see what it was

like. It was so loud, and crowded with so many beautiful dogs. I could never leave her there not knowing if she ever got a home. It would have broken both our hearts." By the time she finished this sentence she had dissolved into tears. Having adopted my last four dogs from a shelter I understood her not wanting to leave her little friend there. While our shelter does a wonderful job keeping our homeless animal friends sheltered, fed and cared for, it is a stressful environment for them to live in while they wait for their forever home. I assured her we would do all we could to keep her little companion right there with her. With that she was crying even harder, mumbling, "I am so grateful. I did not know what I would do. I never knew there were people that would help me. God Bless you, God Bless you."

Once she calmed down I asked her about her other bills in the folder. She looked embarrassed and said, "I could never ask you for more than you have already promised me. This little dog staying right here with me was the most important thing to me. Another loss to my life, leaving me all alone..." She started to cry again as she hugged her little dog, "I cannot accept anything else." I told her, "You did not ask me for help. I am offering. No, I am insisting. I can see just by looking around that you are already going without enough food and it is so chilly in here because you have your thermostat set so low. I am here to relieve some of the stress you have been in. Let's go over your bills."

She showed me the bills from the very frugal funeral she had held for her daughter, which had emptied her meager savings. She did not have any family and her daughter had been divorced without any children. Her rent was a few weeks late and her utilities were overdue. She needed more than just her dog spayed and required shots. She looked ashamed as I looked through the bills taking notes. I noticed this and said, "Do not be ashamed. You were not out gambling or drinking. You do not smoke cigarettes or spend money on foolish items. You worked hard your whole life. You paid for the funeral for the daughter you love very much." I got a little smile out of her behind her tears as she nodded in agreement.

After we reviewed all this I told her about all of "You" and how you make our work possible. I explained how we have donors that give specifically for the purpose of veterinary care and how Petco Foundation supports our spay/neuter program, so people can keep their special animal companions by their side, always there to listen and comfort, with their gift of unconditional love. She began to cry again saying, "You do understand! No one would ever listen to me talk like my little dog friend." I told her, "Yes, I do understand. This is good news so please smile." I told her how we would help with her rent, utilities and provide much needed food, toiletries and household necessities. She was again crying but this time I could see it was tears of relief as she repeated, "God Bless all of you, God Bless all of you." I gave her a big, long hug. She asked me if we could pray together before I left. I was honored to share a special prayer with our struggling senior widow in need. The little dog jumped in her lap. This made all of us laugh. She seemed to know we were helping her to stay in her loving home. The last picture I have in my mind, as I left, was the little senior widow hugging her dog smiling, still saying, "God Bless all of you, God Bless all of you."

I thank all of you for making our good works possible. Together we will continue to remove the many pains of poverty including, hunger, loneliness, fear and homelessness. Together we

provide hope, compassion, care, shelter, food, ...all the necessities of daily life, through our Caring and Sharing. God Bless all of "You" for helping.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C./Sal

Please Help: There are many coming to us in desperation. Our good fellow creations need our compassion. Together we make a big difference. Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 1, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing how your donation provided assistance for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Fox Charities, Dick & Jean Honeyager, The Summertime Foundation, Clarence & Marilyn Schawk, Schawk Family Foundation, The Geneva Inn, Kunes' Country Stateline Superstore, Kunes' Country Ford-Lincoln-Mercury Employees, Paul Ziegler, Ziegler Charitable Foundation, Geneva Lake Development Corp., Robert & Kelly Borden, Building Reserves, Gregory L. & Jean Marie Dexter., Martin Group, John Stensland & Family, Bernard Labovitch, Bonnie Glennon, Creek Road Community Church Guild, Roland & Diane Marie Schroeder, Michael Glass, Gerald & Joyce Byers, Dale & Virginia Reed, Deborah Holcomb, Toni Flickinger, Corinne Moore, James Borden, Margit Erickson, Deborah Lenchard, Carroll & Shirley Rands, John Poiron, Frances Flucke, Chris & Kelly Welch, James & Susan Mirabella, Jr., Arlene Weyrough, Jeffrey & Deborah Wrate, Martin & Karan Kearns, Marilyn Heiden, Stanley & Carolyn Logterman, Marvin & Shirley Bigelow, Leonard Peacock, Margarie Egger, Arlene Torrenga, Margaret Guidarelli, Donald & Jean Smith, W.S.D. Golden Girls - Barb, Evie, Marlene, Celene, Patty, Anita & Jan, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, and all the God loving volunteers of all our caring pantries, ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262) 249-7000.

Honoraries: Johannesen-Farrar Inc. in honor of the following birthdays: Lois Lindholm, Matt Becker & Janet Lueck.

Memorials: In memory of Elmer Zingle from the Zingle Family. Mark & Gretchen Kitzman in memory of their father Richard J. Herr. Claudia Garber in memory of Gary Walsh & Arnie Hope. Rita Popelka/Rita's Wells Street Salon in memory of Randy Kremple.

Furniture Donations: Please contact Love, Inc. for all your furniture, clothing and household item donations. Call 262-763-2743 or 262-763-6226 to schedule pick-up. We are no longer affiliated with Chris Ann's Resale Shop.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org