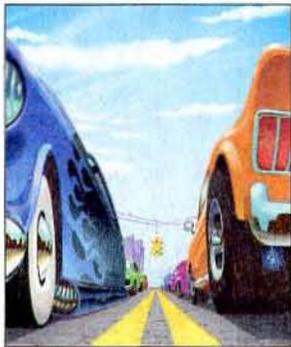


METRO EDITION

GO CRUISIN'



THE WEEKEND

Thousands of cars, thousands of people are expected for 28th Street Metro Cruise. **Page 4**

**NATION | WORLD**  
OWNER TO CLOSE DEADLY MINE **A3**

**REGION**  
MORE THAN 200 NEW CITIZENS WELCOMED **B1**

**BUSINESS**  
AUCTION OF BARRY COUNTY LAKE LAND WORRIES NEIGHBORS **C1**

COMING UP

**Friday:** In Your Life, Press film critic John Serba reviews "The Nanny Diaries"



'SOUND CHECK' BLOG  
Get John Sinkevics' weekend picks

'AMERICA'S MOST TALENTED PET'

This dog does it all

GALLERY

Family's best friend — and we've got the pictures to prove it

Toula, a 3-year-old border collie from Plainwell, won the title of "America's Most Talented Pet" in an online contest. What are Toula's talents? Let her and her owner, Christine Mahaney, show you.



Contest entry showed the world what Toula can do:



Flush the toilet ...



Open the refrigerator ...



Take a drink out of the cooler ...



Fetch a blanket ...



And finally, cuddle up and relax.

PRESS PHOTOS/T.J. HAMILTON

Talented Plainwell dog wins online contest

BY KYLA KING  
THE GRAND RAPIDS PRESS

**P**LAINWELL — Toula is a smart dog who knows how to please. Need a tissue? Thirsty for a soda? Forget to flush the toilet? No problem, she can take care of it.

Those talents earned the 3-year-old rescued border collie from Plainwell the title of "America's Most Talented Pet," and a spot in a national print advertising campaign. Toula beat out more than 600 dogs and gained the most online votes to win the "Petco Stars" competition. "I'm so proud of her. I started crying when I found out," owner Christine Mahaney said. "It's not just that America voted for her, it's more about having people recognize what you can do with a

MORE ON MLIVE

• **VIDEO:** Click the "More Press Extra" link to watch Toula's winning entry.

Online home:  
mlive.com/grpress

dog, especially a rescue dog," she said. The competition began with in-store contests in July, which led to 100 dogs being chosen to submit 60-  
**SEE DOG, A2**

# DOG TOULA OPENS FRIDGE, FETCHES AND FLUSHES

CONTINUED FROM A1

second videos, 12 of which were posted online for voting, said Petco spokeswoman Rachel McLennan.

Toula's video features her fetching slippers, a tissue, a pillow, a soda, opening the refrigerator and the trash can, and flushing the toilet.

The win has earned Mahaney and her husband, Billy Stout, a trip to Los Angeles. McLennan said a crew will

head to Michigan to shoot photos of Toula for print advertising that will appear around the holidays, or the first of the year.

For now, Toula is enjoying lots of hugs and the company of her "brother," Cole, a 3-year-old border collie, and Annie, an 8-year-old beagle-terrier mix.

So do they feel left out?

Not at all, Mahaney says.

"They are enjoying riding

on their sister's tail," she said. "They got very big juicy bones the night we found out (Toula won)."

What about Toula? Is the attention going to her head?

"She's taking it in stride," Mahaney reports. "I think she's ready to start making some public appearances and showing people what she can do."

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PRESS PHOTO/T.J. HAMILTON

**Talent:** Christine Mahaney's dog, Toula, is destined for Petco commercials.