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Groomer

VOL. 32 ED. 3 • MARCH 2013

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HELPING HANDS

GROOMERS BAND TOGETHER TO AID VICTIMS OF HURRICANE SANDY

by Daryl Conner



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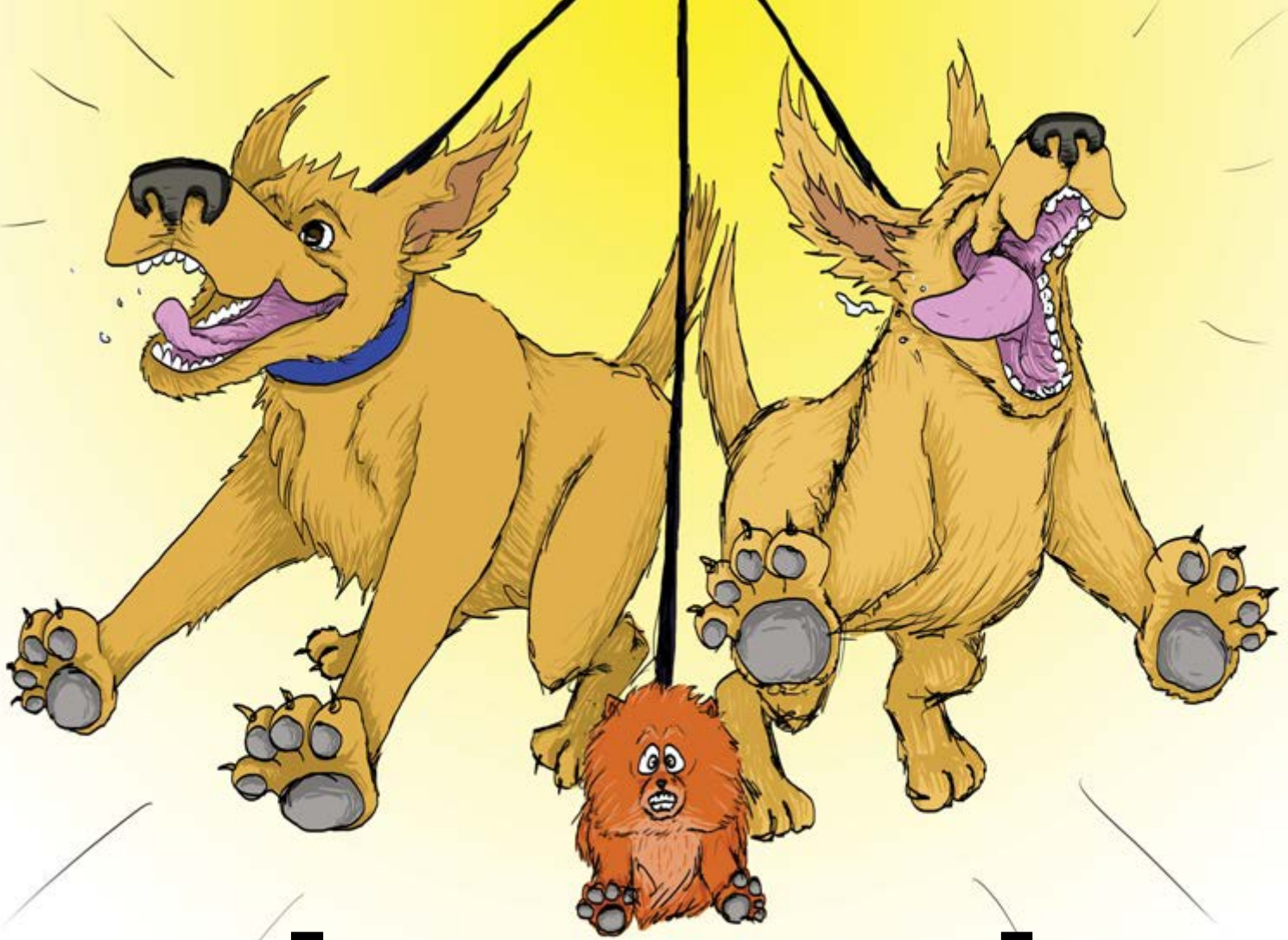
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Daryl Conner



ON THE COVER: Illustration by Lucas Colton.



What a Week...

✧ by Bonnie Wonders-Trent ✧

This past week was certainly full of mishaps at the salon. Talk about “when it rains, it pours” It was more like, “Noah built the ark, and we shall sink it.”

On Tuesday, a lady brought in two Lab mixes and a Pomeranian to be groomed. Why on earth she felt the burning desire to bring all three in at once, I’ll never understand. Personally, I wouldn’t have the death wish to be dragged across a parking lot by two less-than-one-year-old, 70-pound dogs that were totally out of control. Add to that the Pom that was just trying to stay out of the way of the Labs.

You know how when you go down the road and a squirrel comes out of nowhere right into your path? It’s like it’s thinking, “Run straight! No, go left. Fake a right. Spin around in the middle of the lane. Freeze! Go left again. Go!” Splat. Ugh, right under your wheel. Not the best directional decision on the part of the squirrel. Well, that was pretty much how that Pom looked as I watched the foursome come across the lot. The three dogs were all on Flexis and twisted up to no end. The Pom didn’t have a chance. Actually, neither did the owner, as there was suddenly a massive heap of fur right outside my door: three hairy

dogs and a lady in a fake fur coat. Oh, it wasn’t pretty. It did look remarkably like that squirrel mishap.

When I opened the door for her, in burst the four of them. The woman let loose of all the Flexis, and the thump that they made when they simultaneously bounced off the floor was loud enough to deafen a goat. The dogs ran from the front of the salon into the middle room and then into the treat room, all the while those Flexis were banging into each doorway as they went like two warthogs run amuck. Not to mention the forgotten Pomeranian who was being drug

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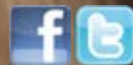


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unmercifully under the belly of one of the bigger dogs.

I all but had to throw myself onto the tangled mess of dogs and leashes in order to stop them. I cornered them all, and the owner came to help. "I don't know how they got so tangled up," she said out of breath.

"Maybe you should have only brought them in one at a time," I of-

fered.

"Oh, no! My gosh, if I don't take them both at once, the other will tear the inside of my car apart," she said. "It already happened when I did that at the vet's," she added. As I nodded, I was also silently thanking God that I have steel crates in the shop.

That was Tuesday.

On Wednesday, I was bathing

a Golden Retriever about halfway through the day. As I reached overhead to get another gallon of shampoo, the entire shelf suddenly came crashing down, and seven jugs of shampoo were airborne. It was as if it were in slow motion. I was trying to catch one or two before they hit the dog or me in the head. Luckily, neither of us got hit, but the mess that ensued was enough to make me cry. When several of the jugs hit the floor or tub or both, the pumps snapped off, and shampoo was running freely all over the floor. There were also two bottles of shampoo that were in clear plastic bottles that had completely shattered.

I looked at the Golden. He was perfectly fine. He just sat there looking at me like, "Hey, lady. Don't look at me. I had nothing to do with it. You're the idiot who just had to have that 'handy' little board over your head." It took me more than half an hour to get that mess all cleaned up. I went through five rolls of paper towels and I can't tell you how many mop buckets of water to take care of it. I even had shampoo on the clock. Thank goodness Wednesday finally came to a close.

I spent most of Thursday having to answer the wall phone, as we couldn't locate the handset for the cordless. Look as I might for that stinkin' thing, it was just unretrievable. Not under the cages nor under the tub. Not under the big dryers or the counter out front. I looked in the office, the bathroom,



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the cage room, and the retail rooms. Nowhere was it to be found. We looked on all the shelves and on top of the cabinets. It had vanished.

At the end of the day, I left the salon and headed toward my car. As I walked across the parking lot, I suddenly heard my phone ringing. I stopped dead in my tracks. It rang again, and I looked down at the giant bag of trash that I was dragging behind me to drop off at the dumpster on my way to my car. Yes, I had now found the phone. I opened my car, threw my purse into the front seat, and proceeded to open the contractor-size trash bag. Naturally, that stupid phone couldn't have possibly been at the top of the bag. No, it had to be almost halfway down as I dug through the ton of wet dog hair and KFC bones from lunch. Friday would be better...

Friday was good... until the mailman showed up with a letter that I had sent and had now been returned to me.

The post office returned [the letter] to me. It wasn't that important. It was just my estimated payment to the IRS for the quarter. It was now the 18th. I kind of missed the 15th deadline. I don't know the consequences of that one... yet.

Apparently the other mailman that we had on the 14th must have dropped my outgoing letter in the parking lot of a neighboring business. It had snowed quite a bit that week, and the envelope was barely readable. They could, however, read my return address label, and someone kindly dropped it back to the post office. The post office returned it to me. It wasn't that important. It was just my estimated payment to the IRS for the quarter. It was now the 18th. I kind of missed the 15th deadline. I don't know the consequences of that

one... yet. Hallelujah! It's the weekend.

It was Saturday, and my husband and I went shopping and for lunch. I was finally going to relax after such a week full of crap. We went for lunch and stopped at the mall. It was turning out to be a really enjoyable day. No bad news, no accidents, nothing to upset my umbrella. We did need to get dog food and horse feed, so we stopped at the store.

Dave picked up a bag of dog food and brought it over to the cart. "That's not what we always get," I told him.



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"Yes it is," he told me. (He does usually pick up the dog food.)

"No, I'm sure that's not it," I insisted. "Let me look at the ingredients in this other brand," I told him. I pushed the cart down the aisle and stopped in front of the 40-pound bags of food.

"What are you looking for? We never get bags that big," Dave said.

"I want to see the ingredients on this one, though," I told him. "Calm down." I pulled forward a large bag that was at the upper range of my eye level. We flipped the bag over, and I read the first couple ingredients. Corn was listed at the first one. "Yeah, you're right," I told Dave. "I'd never get anything that has corn in it like that. I was thinking the bags were the same color as this one. That must be where I'm confused," I told him. I flipped the bag back over. I tried to push it fully back onto the stack, but there were too many bags underneath

that one, and it was getting stuck on the top of the shelf.

"Here, let me get it for you," my big, strapping, muscular hunk of a husband said. I stepped back to let him get the bag onto the shelf.

With a mighty push, he got it where it belonged. In that instant, we suddenly heard cans hitting the floor. Lots of cans – it seemed like hundreds of them – falling everywhere in the next aisle. Dave ran down to the end of the aisle and looked into the next one. I knew exactly what had happened at that moment. I remembered seeing a huge display of canned dog food in the next aisle. There was no divider between the shelving units of the aisles, so when he pushed that big bag back on the shelf, it went just a tad too far and hit the backside of the canned display. Like dominos, dog food was falling off the shelves and the display and was rolling everywhere!

I got around the corner just in time to see an employee of the store reaching the display. "Holy heck!" she exclaimed. She looked at us at the same time we looked at her.

"What did you do?" my husband asked her. A final lone can hit the floor at that exact moment.

"I don't know what happened!" she said, shaking her head. "I think I'll need a cart for this one, though," she said, laughing.

"Here, let me help you," Dave said without admitting any guilt.

"Oh, no. I'll get it," she said.

"No, no. Now you let me get it," the brave man said as he started picking up cans. "I'll go get a cart, too," he added.

"It's okay," the employee said.

"Oh, please! You let him clean it up. It's the least he can do," I added, smiling at my husband as I went to get some horse bedding.

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SHOP SAFETY

PART ONE

✧ by Mary Oquendo ✧

Did you know that I do celebrity impersonations? My best was an impression of Carl Lewis (Olympic gold medalist for track and field) the day Cody escaped out the front door of the salon where I was working. This salon was located alongside a busy four-lane main road.

How did this happen, you ask? The groomer was not in control of Cody, as he was off lead. Cody jumped over the half door separating the reception and work area. He proceeded to bolt out the open front door that was no longer secured because a client was walking in.

Your reception area, though, is much more than where clients enter and leave. It is where you make a

first impression. Size doesn't matter; presentation does. It includes lack of clutter, good sanitation, emphasis on pet safety, and professional behavior. Upon arrival, your clients will notice a professionally attired staff, any prominently displayed awards and certifications, and whether your facility looks and smells clean.

Do all of the exterior doors and windows close securely? An open window with a screen is not secure. Are the pets under your control with cats coming in carriers and dogs on lead? I require clients who bring dogs on a flexible lead to lock it in position. I do not want miles of flexible lead wrapping around myself or other pets. As soon as a dog is checked in, his collar is replaced with my slip lead. Most own-

ers leave the collars too loose, which makes it very easy for a dog to slip out of it.

Do you have an answering machine? Repeated distractions by any phone give the clients the impression you're disorganized or inattentive to their needs. Your attention is always on the client in your presence. Include on your outgoing message a time all calls are returned.

A clearly posted sign stating your salon policies will save time during the check-in. It could cover anything from drop-off to pick-up times, late or missed appointments, payment, right of refusal, and so on.

The check-in process is the time for clear communication with the pet owner. Neither you nor the cli-

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"First off I had this little lady contact me to come and give her dog a bath. I walked up to the house and saw this fairly large mixed-breed dog. This dog was a mess and stunk to the heavens on high. The little elderly lady told me that she was ashamed because the dog had not been bathed in 5 years. I told her that I just received a free sample of a shampoo "Grimeinator" that was supposed to take off any kind of odor, even 5-year-old stinky dog odor. I bathed the dog as I would any other with the "Grimeinator" shampoo...nothing extra. When I finished drying the dog, she was fluffy and soft and smelled wonderful. NOT one linger of that 5-year smell was left anywhere on that dog! I am impressed!!! I will be purchasing Grimeinator Shampoo for as long as I am in business! Thank you for making such a great product!"

Todd Herndon,
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ent wants to spend 20 to 30 minutes checking in. Well-thought-out, organized forms ready to go will streamline the process while showing professionalism.

Let's start with the client information card. You, not the owner, fill out a card for each pet, because your own handwriting is easier to read. Allow for five means of contact: address, email, phone number, cell number, and work number. Important pet information on the card includes vaccination history (after being bitten is not time to find out the status of rabies protection!) and any personality or medical issues. If the owner states no medical issues, offer a few possible suggestions such as allergies, seizures, heart conditions, or diabetes. It may jar their memory.

The back of the client information card details the grooming. What products did you use? This is very important should an allergic reaction occur. Did

you clearly print which blades you used and the type of haircut received on the card? The client signs and dates the card at each visit and is notified of any changes to salon policies since the last visit. You can add a client agent line for drop-offs by friends, children etc.

Another form is the veterinarian consent form. If an emergency arises, it allows you to bring the pet to a veterinarian for treatment. It would include the name of the vet, under

what circumstances you would bring a pet in, who pays for what, and credit card information with an authorized amount. Keep a list of local veterinarians, their phone numbers, and written directions to the after hours or emergency veterinarian hospital, as well as a phone number to one of the pet poison helplines.

In my opinion, the snout-to-tail assessment is the most important part of the check-in. You are going from

Before you begin the assessment,
have a muzzle ready.

Always remember: any pet in pain
or moved into pain can and will bite.



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snout to tail with deliberate intent and purpose to determine the overall health of the pet. You want all pre-existing conditions noted before the groom with the owner present.

As a bonus, the time spent on this activity presents a good opportunity to educate your client on proper pet care. An educated client is a good client. This investment of time will reduce “mis-understandings” and give your clients the tools they need to make educated choices for their pets.

Before you begin the assessment, have a muzzle ready. Always remember: any pet in pain or moved into pain can and will bite. This is part of my greeting with every pet. As I am saying hello to them, I move my hands over their bodies and check their eyes, ears,

and mouth. It takes but a moment.

I will send anyone who is interested a Pet Tech Snout to Tail Assessment Form. Email me at mary@maryoquendo.org.

The assessment should include the following:

TEETH

Teeth in poor shape will cause mouth pain, and smaller dogs tend to have more problems than larger dogs. Mouth pain is one explanation for why a dog will be snappy when grooming the face. It hurts! Educate your clients on proper dental care. It is a good opportunity to sell dental products.

EYES

Hardened discharge may have irritated or raw skin under the scabs.

EARS

Foul odor, redness, and/or discharge can be an indicator of ear infections. Very thick ears may be a hematoma or contain severe matting.

LEGS

Arthritis or a prior injury will cause pain when touched or moved.

SPINE

Pain in the area may be arthritic or neurological in origin. It may also be a prior injury.

NAILS AND PADS

The area should be checked for injuries and overgrown nails.

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you should refer immediately to the vet.

ANAL AREA

Is there a foul discharge or any cysts apparent?

SKIN AND COAT

Look for lumps, bumps, and warts. Note their location. Are there any injuries that need immediate attention? Can you even see the skin? The coat may be matted, and you don't know what you will uncover.

TEMPERAMENT

This is a good time to assess the pet's reaction to being handled.

Encourage your clients to continue this assessment at home to track their pet's overall health. Problems found early stand a better chance of successful treatment. Recommend that any concerns found during the assessment

Encourage your clients to continue this assessment at home to track their pet's overall health. Problems found early stand a better chance of successful treatment.

be checked by a veterinarian, and make sure any changes are noted at future grooming appointments.

If you find any significant matting, then the matted pet release comes out. It details the risks associated with the stripping process and any additional costs.

Before they leave, have your clients initial an estimate of the groom on the client information card. If for any reason the style or cost needs to change, notify your clients first.

Remember, you have five means of contact on the client information card. I prefer a price range rather than an estimate.

Your reception area is the heart of your business. It is where you get to know your two- and four-legged clients. More importantly, it's where they get to know you.

It took us over an hour to capture Cody and keep him away from the busy road or from taking off into parts yonder. I am not sure the real Carl Lewis could have kept up with me that day. We were lucky and had a happy ending. The potential for a much different outcome was there. ☹

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HELPING HANDS

GROOMERS BAND TOGETHER TO AID VICTIMS OF HURRICANE SANDY

When Hurricane Sandy was barreling toward the East Coast last October, Lisa Correia, a mobile pet stylist from Toms River, NJ, was at a grooming trade show in Florida. “My mind was not on the show,” she told me. “I watched all the news transpire via my smart phone. The storm was projected to hit my town. I was so worried about my clients that live right along the shore. My house is 10 miles inland, so I wasn’t as concerned about our home as I was for my customers.”

Lisa, traveling with her daughter Brianna, waited until the storm had passed so that they could make the

drive back safely. “Our home survived with very little damage, nothing like the devastation that my clients experienced. A lot of them lost their homes or lost the first floors of their homes. Driving into town, it looked like a war zone. There were houses blown off their foundations, some as much as two blocks from where they originated.”

Two days after the storm hit, Lisa found herself back in her community and wanting to help those who lost so much. “The first thing I did was find out where the local shelters for storm victims were. One was at a high school right down the street from where I

live. I went there to volunteer help and was put right to work with a veterinarian. We worked triaging animals. Some had bumps, bruises, and swelling. Many had flea infestations. None of the animals we saw had broken bones, which was good.”

Lisa went back every day for about a week until that shelter was closed and people were moved into more permanent temporary housing. Not finished with her kindness, Lisa said, “I looked around for where I could be most useful next. I thought, ‘I have a very specific set of skills here. How can I use them?’”

Belmar, a community that suffered



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much damage during the storm, was known for having a lot of pet-loving people residing within it. Lisa called the township and asked if she could help. Working with a woman who was organizing relief efforts, Lisa arranged to help by offering free grooming to pets whose owners had been affected by the storm.

Using social networking and calling on groomer friends, Lisa gathered seven mobile groomers with their vans, several other groomers without vans, and a kind-hearted veterinarian, David Weiss. On Sunday, November 11, all of them met at the Belmar town square, bringing with them donated pet food, toys, and leashes. "And more than just items for pets – we had things for people, too. Cleaning supplies and things like that. So many groomers stepped up and donated. There was an amazing outpouring from the grooming community. It was overwhelming how much people wanted to give, and these were people from all over, not just from the immediate area."

The group cleaned up pets that had ridden out the storm and needed some tender one-on-one attention. Dr. Weiss

I thought, 'I have a very specific set of skills here, how can I use them?'

treated pets for a variety of ailments, referring those that needed more specialized care to facilities that could help them. The event was such a huge success that it spawned two other gatherings of helpful groomers: one in Toms River and one in Barnegat. Not only did the groomers travel and work, they also solicited donations and brought those donations with them. "Frank Rowe and Son donated so much to our cause, as did the nice people at Cherrybrook. Hartz donated, too. So many people were so generous," Lisa said.

The effect? Besides cleaning up pets that had been through a traumatic time, these groomers gave some genuine comfort to the storm victims. "We brought a little sense of normalcy back to their lives. With no power, no running water, and no phone service, they could at least turn to us to clean

up their precious pets. There were so many heart-wrenching stories. The people were so grateful that we would come out and give them what we could. Many were crying with gratitude."

I asked Lisa how all this made her feel. "We became this family. It was all about helping people that really needed us. We all walked away from this drained but so satisfied. Groomers helping groomers helping others." Because grooming matters. ☺

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 Lisa Correia
 Elaine Chelak
 Beth Cronk
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 Nancy Debruler
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BEING AN EFFECTIVE LEADER OF THE PACK

🌀 PART TWO: EMPLOYEE MANAGEMENT 🌀

Welcome to Part Two of “Leader of the Pack.” Last month we discussed the many considerations when hiring a new team member. Looking for someone with the actual skills to do the job was one piece of the puzzle, while also considering their attitude, goals, willingness to work as a team member, and being able to identify with the ideals and standards of the owner/manager. At the risk of repeating myself, I cannot overemphasize the huge impact one person can have on a small team, so hiring a new member of your staff must be done carefully.

Once you have found that person and identified that they will be an asset to your business, and they

recognize that your business will be a positive move in their development, how do you keep them? What are the things that matter most to an employee? What keeps people inspired and looking forward within their careers? You may be amazed by the answer.

Over 65 years ago in 1946, the Labor Relations Institute of NY conducted a survey that was reproduced again and again over the next several decades with strikingly similar results. The survey shows a workforce that does not identify finances as their number one inspiration. Review the following responses, listed by level of importance (from greatest to least), first by what employees say they want

followed by what managers think employees want. You may be surprised!

WHAT EMPLOYEES SAY THEY WANT (in order from greatest to least importance)

1. Full appreciation for work done
2. Feeling “part” of things
3. Sympathetic help on personal issues
4. Job security
5. Good wages
6. Interesting work
7. Promotion/growth opportunities
8. Personal loyalty to workers
9. Good working conditions
10. Tactful discipline

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**WHAT MANAGERS THINK
EMPLOYEES WANT**

(in order from greatest to least importance)

1. Good wages
2. Job security
3. Promotion/growth opportunities
4. Good working conditions
5. Interesting work
6. Personal loyalty to workers
7. Tactful discipline
8. Full appreciation for work done
9. Sympathetic help on personal issues
10. Feeling "part" of things

Flatter me, and I may not believe you.

Criticize me, and I may not like you.

Ignore me, and I may not forgive you.

Encourage me, and I may not forget you. — **William Arthur**

What struck me the first time I

In essence, if people are understood, respected, and feeling a part of something important, then they will ultimately stay and excel.

read this study is that the top three most important issues for employees were not financial but more related to feeling appreciated, being part of something, and having an understanding boss. It really was quite contrary to what most employers thought would be of the utmost importance.

Let's not kid ourselves; everyone wants to make money and continue to grow in their career. It is interesting, though, to note that the interpersonal issues seem to be the base and frame-

work to keeping employees long-term. In essence, if people are understood, respected, and feeling a part of something important, then they will ultimately stay and excel. This has absolutely been the truth at my business, with employees that have been with me over a decade.

How do we accomplish this goal and be an effective leader when it comes to retaining great, committed staff? Here's my baker's dozen on retaining great employees:

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Listen: Being open to feedback from your staff is key. People need to have a voice. Whether or not you take every bit of advice or suggestion is not nearly as important as truly listening and thanking people for their ideas.

Communicate: Be clear on what your expectations are in the workplace, both in terms of the quality of grooming as well as the day-to-day issues of professional behavior, cleanliness, and other tasks related to the running of the shop. People can only meet and exceed expectations if they know what they are.

Be Positive: For owners and managers, it is crucial to set the tone for any business. Negativity is contagious! You have to create the atmosphere that you want to work in.

Put People Ahead of Policies: Small business management requires flexibility. Have your policies in place, but don't lose sight of the human aspect of being a leader. This is also extremely important in customer relations. You can't be so hardcore on policies that you lose track of keeping people coming through the door and having the staff there to provide the service!

Learn When to Admit You're Wrong: Humble pie can be a powerful tool in connecting with your employees. I make mistakes, and that is what makes me human. We all make blunders, we overbook, we say we can demat a dog when we really can't. Sometimes it is worth much more to take responsibility for a mistake and change your mind than to dig your heels in and need to feel right. Being open and admitting a mistake also sets an example to your staff that they can be forthright with you if they make a mistake.

Don't Show Favoritism: Even if you actually do have a favorite employee, you cannot let that be obvious. Equality in your attention and praise is important in a small business. Find the good in every one of your employees and let them know that they are appreciated. It can be a one-on-one compliment or a public gesture of praise that can inspire your other employees! You have to keep the playing field level, however, and make sure you show the love to everyone.

Don't Micromanage: If you have found an employee that you believe in

and you know they do great work, let them do it! There is no need to stand over someone and pick apart their efforts. That is not to say you shouldn't check their work along the way. That is part of keeping quality control, but review their work and offer constructive criticism.

Give Your Staff Feedback from the Customers: Be certain to share all positive feedback with your employees! If someone calls the store to compliment one of the groomers, I put them right on the phone. This is the best inspiration! When it comes to criticism, employees need to hear that, too, but try to frame it in such a way that they learn from it and not just be hurt by it.

Charge Enough for Your Services to Offer Benefits: Keeping great employees means treating them right and offering benefits. Whether it is health insurance, dental, vacation time, or bonuses, people who commit



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to your business 40-plus hours a week deserve security. It is possible! Maybe it is time to review your pricing and think outside the box. Many employees would rather have a health plan and take home a little less each week. You'll never know until you explore the possibilities.

Have Fun at Work: Whether it's pizza day, a holiday bash, or fun pranks, laughter is also contagious! Birthdays are a great opportunity to do silly, fun things. Decorate the groomer's table with balloons! We had a drag queen do Marilyn Monroe's "Happy Birthday" to my mom for her birthday last year!

Encourage and Support Professional Growth: Send your staff to professional trade shows. Pay for

continuing education if they attend seminars. We offer to pay entry fees if anyone wants to compete. Bring in educators or offer educational DVDs in a staff library.

Deal with Issues Directly and Promptly: Things are typically never as bad as they seem, but they gain strength and energy the longer they fester. If issues do arise, tackle them honestly and clear the air. Whether it is addressing the groups or a one-on-one discussion, the sooner difficulties are dealt with, the better.

AND ALWAYS REMEMBER: "There is only one boss. The customer. And he can fire everybody in the company from the chairman on down simply by spending his money somewhere else." — **Sam Walton**

I personally do not like change. I love consistency. To have consistency, you have to treat people right. Every business has its own brand, and in a professional grooming business, your staff is a key component to that brand. When you find a gem, keep them! As in every aspect of life, what you put out comes back to you, and in business it is no different.

A boss creates fear, a leader confidence. A boss fixes blame, a leader corrects mistakes. A boss knows all, a leader asks questions. A boss makes work drudgery, a leader makes it interesting. A boss is interested in himself or herself, a leader is interested in the group. — **Russell Ewing** ☞

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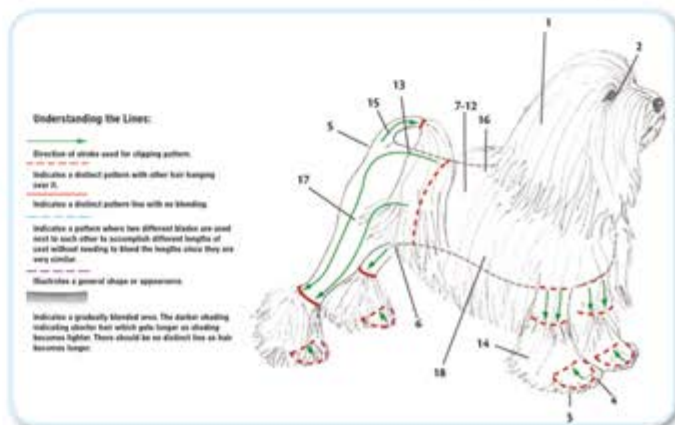


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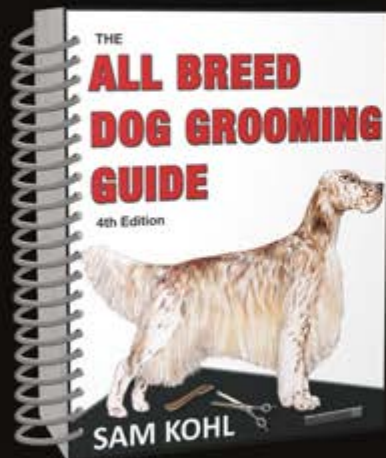
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Grooming Instructions

1. **Ear Cleaning:** First lightly dust the inside of the ears with ear powder, pulling out any dead hair from the ear canal with your fingers or a Hairmostat® hair puller. Then, clean the inside of the ears using cotton balls lightly dampened with an ear cleaner.
2. Wipe the corner of the eye and under the eye with a cotton ball moistened with saline solution to remove eye debris.
3. Clip the hair from between the pads of the feet with a #15 blade. Use the clipper to remove any hair hanging off the edge of the pads. Clip the entire foot, front and rear, to the wrist bone, like a Poodle foot. See Note on Poodle Feet on the next page.
4. Cut or grind the nails, removing only that part of the nail that grows out beyond the quick. Be careful not to cut into the quick.
5. Clip the hair away from the anal area, about one-half inch on either side of the anus, with a #10 blade. Never put the blade in direct contact with the anus.
6. Clip the hair from the stomach area, from the groin to the navel, using a #10 blade.
7. For shorter, easier-to-maintain styles, if you are going to be drastically shortening the coat, do it before the bath.
8. Brush the coat with a slicker brush, VRake® or dematting tool to loosen any tight mats. Use the line-brushing technique of lifting the hair and brushing it down layer by layer.
9. Bathe thoroughly using a conditioning shampoo, rinse thoroughly. When the coat is still wet apply a conditioner and rinse off. Or, if the dog is in a shorter pet trim, not in full coat, use the tub and high-velocity method: Brush through the coat quickly breaking up any tightly matted areas with a flexible slicker brush, VRake® or dematting tool. Blow through the coat with a high-velocity dryer to loosen tangles. Always keep the nozzle far enough from the coat to avoid "whip mats." Lather in shampoo, blow out the lather with the high-velocity dryer, rinse lightly and repeat the bath and blow out, if necessary. Put on conditioner, blow out with the high-velocity dryer, and rinse thoroughly.



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WELCOME REN!

✎ by Dawn Omboy ✎

I have introduced you to each of my personal dogs in previous articles, and I wanted to take this moment to introduce you to a cute, young fellow who came into my life on the second day of December 2012. His name was *Chibs*, which I later changed to *Ren* in honor of the great creative dog photographer, Ren Netherland. Okay, so he does photograph other animals, too — even “normal” dogs!

I traveled to Kansas, where I was met at the airport by the best darn group of gals ever, and then to the home of my dear friend and fellow groomer, Barb Hoover. This is where I met the new guy in my life, a 10-week-old Mini Poodle puppy.

The next morning, we all gathered at Jodie Fritz and Amy Schaffer’s *Hair of the Dog Salon* in Leavenworth, Kansas, for a fun day of color and holi-

day style in an educational, hands-on creative class.


I am a super *Grinch* fan, so I decided this little guy was going to get his very first creative groom. At 10 weeks old, *Ren* became the cutest little Grinchy Poo you ever did see!

With fluffy white puppy hair, this was a quick and easy groom. I wanted a true red for his Santa coat and hat. The product I chose to use for this is *Apple Red Avatar*. I applied it to the top of his little head in the center, leaving a fluffy white band of hair around his head. I left his front bracelets white as his jacket collar and the bottom of the jacket and applied the dye to his jacket and front legs or sleeves. With a different applicator brush, I brushed in green on his back legs and feet.

Avatar stains rather quickly, and this young hair took the color fast.

After keeping him warm with a blow-dryer for about 10 minutes, we then rinsed and dried the puppy. He looked great but did need a bit of *Grinch* green around his neck, which was clipped closely above the fluffy white jacket collar. To achieve this without dying it, I used green and yellow *Pet Chalk*, which I applied to the areas with a make-up brush, so the color would closely match the rear legs. My Grinch-poo was complete in under an hour and back to bouncing on the floor with his sister *Lola*. He was so darn cute that I brought him home the day after our “no more dogs” discussion. HA! Creative wins again!

Look for *Ren* in new styles here and on my *Facebook* page, *Queen of Color*. You can find out more about *Pet Chalk* and other products used for creative styling at www.QueenofColor.net. ☺



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WORKING WITH **FIRST TIME PET OWNERS** TO CREATE AN INFORMED AND LOYAL CLIENT

✎ by Kathy Hosler ✎

Most of us in the grooming world have grown up with pets and can't imagine our lives without them. However, there are many people who have never had a pet of their own. Then it happens... They fall in love with a wee ball of fluff or are smitten by the soulful eyes of a dog at their local pet shelter — and they decide to join our ranks by becoming pet owners. Once they get their pet, their lives are changed forever. More often than not, their lives begin to revolve around this new family member.

We all know that pets don't come with instruction books, so where does a new pet owner turn for help and information?

Everything is new to the first-time owner, including the grooming needs of the pet. Even giving their pet its first bath may be overwhelming... what products to use, worrying about getting soap and

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water in their eyes and ears, and even how to get their pet to hold still for the washing and drying. When a first-time owner contacts a professional groomer, it's because they realize that their pet needs more care than they know how to provide.

That new owner is like a rough block of marble, and you are the one that can sculpt him or her into an educated pet owner who will become a loyal client for the life of their pet. Often your first contact with a pet owner is over the telephone. That is a prime opportunity to go over some basics with them and to set up an appointment to bring their pet in for grooming.

They may have many questions about the grooming needs of their pet. If they catch you at a busy time and you can't stop to answer all their questions, tell them so. Get their telephone number and call them back when you

have ample time to talk with them.

How you present yourself to the client on the telephone and when you meet them in person will set the tone for the relationship you will have with them. Give them your undivided attention and spend whatever time is necessary to put the new owner at ease. If you rush them or are "all business," you might give the impression that their concerns and their pet's needs are not all that important to you.

As groomers, we expect to spend extra time with puppies during their first few grooming appointments to familiarize them with all the new things, but we seldom think about the first-time owner. They want to take the best care of their pet, but where do they start? Someone who has become a pet parent for the first time often has no idea about the grooming needs of a pet. They need information about things like brushing and bathing, how

often to do it, and what products they should use.

They may not know that toenails will need to be trimmed and sanded regularly or that the ears need to be cleaned. If new owners find that they have a pet that sheds, they may have no clue what to do about it.

When they arrive for their first grooming appointment, discuss what their pet will need and explain step-by-step what you will do while he is in your care. Let the owners know that the welfare of their pet is your main concern and that regular grooming is crucial for the pet's well-being. This all-important meeting can provide a huge payout by creating a loyal long-time client for your business if you handle it properly.

At pet pick-up, you can instruct the owner about the at-home grooming they should do on their pet between visits to your salon. Sell them



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any brushes, combs, shampoo, and other grooming products they will need. Show the owner how to use the products and equipment. Even the best brush does no good unless it is used properly.

Showing them how to brush and comb their pet is one of the most important things you can do for a first-time pet owner. Remember, these folks are brand new to pet ownership and to everything that pertains to grooming.

Many groomers keep on hand a piece of matted hair that they can show to pet owners to demonstrate what improper brushing leads to. When a pet owner can see what really happens when a pet gets matted – fluffy hair on the top and a felted, matted mess against the pet’s skin – they can understand the importance of thorough brushing and combing.

Assure them that you will be available to answer any questions that they might have. Always encourage them to rebook their next appointment before they leave.

In essence, you are not only grooming the pet, but you are also grooming the owner — educating and molding them into a client who realizes how important regular grooming of their pet is. The end result for you can be a faithful client who books standing appointments for their pet and does at-home maintenance between professional groomings – not someone who brings their pet in for a grooming once a year (whether it needs it or not).

Give your clients instructional handouts like the *Barkleigh Groom-O-Grams* and *Pet Care Brochures*. Some groomers hold occasional classes to teach brushing and grooming basics to

their clients.

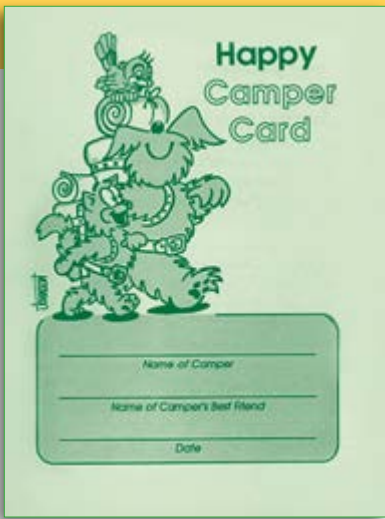
If these new pet parents follow your suggestions, they will be able to maintain their pet between professional grooming appointments, and it will be a win-win situation for pet, owner, and groomer.

If they give it their best try and at-home grooming is not their cup of tea, they can bring the pet back to you weekly or bi-weekly or on whatever schedule you and the pet owner are comfortable with. Some owners just want to love their pet and leave all the grooming to someone else. Again, this can be a win-win outcome.

If you are wise enough to invest whatever time is necessary to get the first-time owner off on the right foot with their pet’s grooming needs, they will become a loyal friend and customer for many years (and possibly many pets) to come. ☺

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LOOKING FOR LOVE

by Emily Rupe

It was going to be one of those days! Thanks to a man and a herd of dogs claiming an entire bed as their territory, sleep had eluded me the night prior. To add insult to injury, “the most wonderful time of the month” had befallen me as well. Basically, I was a cranky, crampy, bloated mess as I drug myself into the grooming salon. Quietly, I prayed to the

powers that be for an easy grooming day. Much to my chagrin, these powers had other plans and a sadistic sense of humor, because there scribbled in the book was the bane of my existence: Marshmallow.

Marshmallow, or more affectionately known as Marshmallow the humping Havanese, was one of those dogs that the entire shop begrudgingly

took turns being saddled with. While not a biter or a matted mess, these 15 pounds of pent up sexual tension would molest throughout the entire groom. Nothing was safe from his ill intentions; grooming arms, the groomer, brushes, or even just the air were all targets. In addition, his stamina and appetite were unquenchable, so there was no hope of a reprieve until

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his parents fetched him. Oh, and did I mention he was neutered? One can only imagine the monster that would have developed had he not been.

Negotiations with the parents had been fruitless as well. Originally, the groomers had hoped some at-home training would alleviate this annoying and somewhat dangerous habit. (It was a challenge scissoring a thrusting target.) To our shock and horror, though, Marshmallow's owners found his habit humorous and encouraged it as a source of entertainment. In fact, they suggested that we just allow him to finish. Needless to say we were gobsmacked.

I was less than enthused as I reluctantly grabbed the squirming fluff ball from his parents. Like each time prior, he forced himself onto everything within range. Of course my current condition only further fueled his passion. The kennel door was his lover. The cool water from the bath could

not deter him, and as he stood on my table, he wrapped his legs around the grooming arm like an exotic dancer ready for a show. Since I had no singles on me and had already witnessed this display enough times for one day, my patience was wavering. I needed to finish this horny Havanese without accidentally stabbing him with a scissor!

A PMS-fueled, grumpy idea struck me. While Marshmallow continued to work the pole, I fished out my lunchbox from my grooming station. From inside my insulated lunch cooler, I procured a small plastic ice pack. Enough was enough! I strategically placed the ice pack in range. The most girly, high-pitched scream issued from the Havanese as the bumping and grinding came to an abrupt halt. Still as night, he turned to face me. His eyes appeared to be boring into me, and I swear he wrinkled his nose up in disgust. However furious he was at me for playing this trick, it had completely

killed his mojo for the rest of the groom, allowing me to finish it safely and with some form of sanity in tact.

The next eight weeks flew by, and once again, a groomer looked on in horror as Marshmallow adorned their schedule. Once his shenanigans began, I quickly rushed to my fellow groomer's aid. With a sense of urgency, I came to the table with the ice pack. Before it could be placed in his range, Marshmallow jerked around to face the offending object and shuddered in horror. The humping ceased instantly, as the visual of the ice pack brought that indignant memory back to his mind. With the ice placed within his view, Marshmallow behaved like a chaste saint. From that point on, if we knew Marshmallow was coming in, one of us packed an ice pack with our lunch. I suppose it just goes to show that you can even teach a hormonally fueled dog a new trick. ☹



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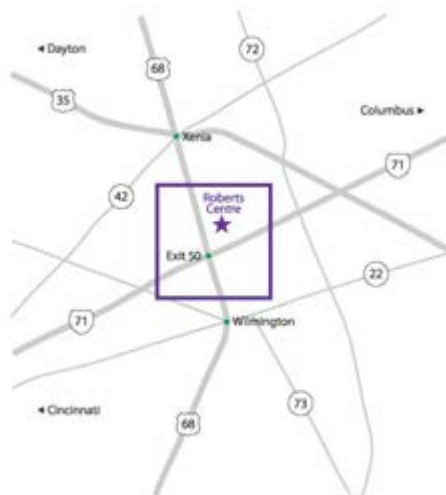
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Mark your calendars for June 20–23, 2013, because PetQuest is returning to the Holiday Inn Roberts Centre in Wilmington, Ohio! Get ready for another weekend of seminars, educational programs, exciting grooming competitions, and a three-day trade show.

Seminar attendees will enjoy a wide variety of educational programs at PetQuest. Topics include grooming, mobile grooming, pet health, business skills, and animal behavior. Among this year's speakers are world-renowned industry icons and champion groomers.

Thursday's seminar sessions include a day-long seminar featuring grooming demonstrations by the two-time winner of the Barkleigh Honors



Judge of the Year Award, Lisa Leady. Author of *Mobile Pet Grooming*, Jodi Murphy will address mobile grooming topics in her four-hour seminar. Also on Thursday, Joey Villani will debut a

brand-new seminar on business topics. Up and coming speaker Amie Haslar, who debuted at PetQuest 2012 to rave reviews, returns with a Thursday evening cat grooming demo.

Seminars also include a session with Angela Kumpe and Lori Craig on the rising creative trend of airbrushing. Education on Friday features a Barkleigh Honors demo series with award winners Sue Zecco, Jay Scruggs, and Lisa Leady and nominees Kathy Rose and Jodi Murphy. Fellow Barkleigh Honors winner Jonathan David will present a grooming demo seminar on Saturday. Robin Bennett will present a full day of animal behavior topics, and in the evening, Marlene Romani will present a Clipper Vac

demonstration seminar.

Competitions at PetQuest will be GroomTeam sanctioned beginning with the 2013 contests. Groomers will have the opportunity to compete for prizes and GroomTeam points in the open, intermediate, or entry skill level. The PetQuest grooming contests features five different classes: Poodles, Sporting, Terriers, All Other Pure-breds, and Salon Freestyle.

Grooming contests at PetQuest 2013 will also include the exciting creative styling competition. Groomers will sculpt and color their dogs' hair to transform them into works of art as they compete for trophies, prizes, and the coveted People's Choice Award. In previous years, PetQuest audiences have seen dogs transform into pandas, monkeys, "toy" Poodles, and tributes to Australia, 101 Dalmatians, and even Shark Week.

In addition to the seminars and grooming competitions, PetQuest attendees will have three full days to enjoy the trade show and the many show specials vendors have to offer. PetQuest is an excellent time to stock up on salon essentials like shampoos, blades, and bows. Take advantage of trade show discounts on your favorite products. The trade show also offers the unique opportunity to try out products and see them in action before making your purchase. Smell shampoos and test out tables that you've always had your eye on but have yet to buy! Vendors and company representatives will be available to demonstrate products and answer any questions you might have.

Save the date: June 20-23, 2013! More information will be available online at PQGroom.com. ☞

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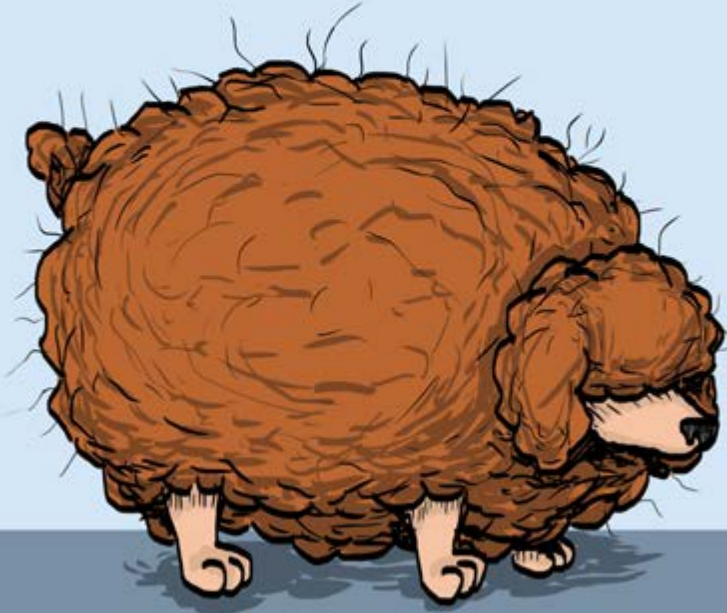
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MAKING MASTERPIECES OUT OF NIGHTMARES!

PART ONE: BATHING A MATTED DOG BEFORE YOU BRUSH

✧ by Dave Campanella ✧

Like you, I certainly have volumes of stories to share that many groomers could relate to. My experience with matted hair dates back to when my wife and I co-owned a grooming salon and do-it-yourself pet wash back in the '90s. I worked another job full-time but often helped out evenings, weekends, and holidays with the bathing and brushing. I thought it was odd that I always seemed to get the huge stinky matted messes. Hmmm. It was here that I developed my appreciation for how

hard and thankless a job grooming can be at times.

Back then we realized deshedding, dematting, and detangling were the most strenuous and time-consuming activities our salon faced on a daily basis. Today, groomers still struggle with these challenges while there are many varying opinions, techniques, and products offering help.

Too many large breed customers of ours had refused the option of having to clip their pets down, so we were determined to understand what was

really going on with all this matted, tangled hair and get the most accomplished with the least amount of work. Surprisingly, this can be accomplished simply by using the right product mix and the right technique.

Some folks prefer brushing before the bath, working out any mats and tangles beforehand. This always seemed excessive, having to brush more hair yet again afterwards. Many years ago, the founder of *Best Shot Pet Products*, Bill Marshall, had convinced my wife, Tracy, at a local trade show to



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bathe before she brushed and let his product do the work. She was understandably skeptical after being taught something quite to the contrary. Once she realized it worked, we put the dogs straight into the tub, treated the coat, and then completely dried it with a force blower from that point on. We always got more shedding undercoat out in the tub and released more hair with the blower following his “three easy steps.” When we finished drying, very little brushing remained afterwards, and the dogs were often tangle and mat free. This process genuinely saved us a ton of time and effort. Little did we know that someday it would lead me to working for *Best Shot*.

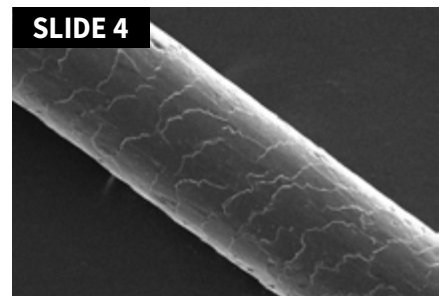
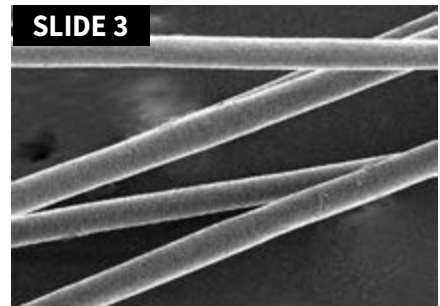
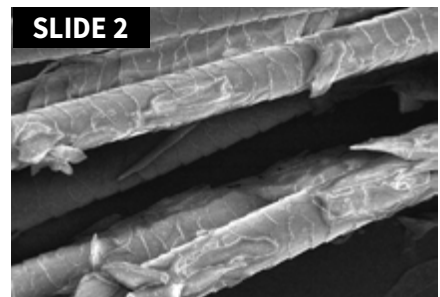
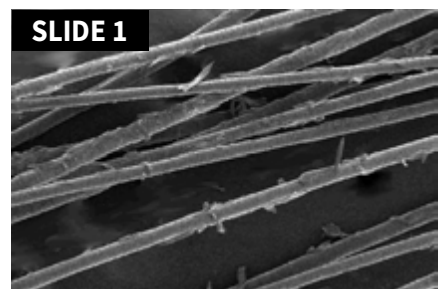
Recently I had a unique opportunity to put this technique and process to the test. The subject was a 105-pound double-coated Newfoundland dog named *Brody*. *Brody* displayed all the tell-tale signs of an “OMG, what did I get myself into?” gnarly, matted mess. He was put straight into the tub. Tracy took hair samples from the felted matt behind his ears and tangled underbelly before she started and after she was done drying. His total groom-

ing time took roughly an hour and 49 minutes to complete. I must say he looked great, and the product she used did exactly what it was developed to do. But how could she bathe him first without pre-brushing? Why did this technique work?

Remember those hair samples Tracy took? I had them analyzed at the University of Kentucky’s Electron Microscopy Facility. Their findings provide profound insights as to why bathing before brushing is a more effective approach even on a matted dog. Presented are just a few of the images taken.

Slides 1 & 2 reveal the matted hair cluster taken BEFORE the bath.

As you can see, the images are dramatic. The before images beg the question as to why one would attempt to pre-brush or deshed a soiled, damaged coat with open cuticles snagging undercoat like *Velcro* does with fabric. One begins to imagine what causes all that tugging and pulling both dog and groomer have to endure. You really get a sense of how the coat can fight you by hanging on to dead undercoat. Why





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risk further damaging the coat, aggravating the dog, or injuring yourself? There's got to be a better way.

Slides 3 & 4 reveal the hair AFTER being fully treated and force dried.

It's amazing what impact treating the coat beforehand has. The after images clearly show more closed cuticles along each hair's shaft as well as the obvious absence of oil, dander, and debris. This would explain why more hair is safely released in the tub and with a force dryer. Slide 4 was taken after misting the coat. The coat appears much healthier, nourished, and static free. Notice how the hair shines, as well. Closing the cuticle frees the dead undercoat, tangles, and shedding during the bath and eliminates much of the brushing afterwards. One can see firsthand why it's preferable to bathe before brushing using a product that

does much of the work for you.

There you have it. Please keep in mind that the type of shampoo and conditioner one selects will definitely make a difference when bathing a matted or tangled dog before brushing. Using a product specifically designed for such a task greatly enhances results, so I encourage you to look around, experiment, and pick your favorite brand. Soon you'll learn how to safely release more shedding and undercoat in the tub with a lot less brushing. You'll even reduce some mental anguish and avoid muscle strain and perhaps injury to you and your client dogs. Ultimately you'll earn more by "making masterpieces out of nightmares in record time!"

I look forward to sharing more findings and techniques that will minimize your effort and maximize your results in future issues of *Groomer to Groomer* magazine. ☺

Dave Campanella has been with Best Shot Pet Products for 10 years and is the company's sales and marketing manager. His experience in the grooming industry spans 20 years from co-owning and managing a grooming salon and do-it-yourself pet wash with his wife to designing and marketing grooming equipment and working with company president Mike Gallagher. Dave has been a sales and marketing professional for over 26 years with an extensive background in mass consumer goods, sales management, product development, and direct-response advertising.

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1. Lightly wet down pet, avoiding getting water in pet ears or eyes.
2. Pour a small amount of Calming Moisturizing Shampoo into your hands, and massage into the body of the pet for 60 seconds or more, avoiding the face and eyes.
3. Rinse hands.
4. Pour a small amount of Tearless Puppy Shampoo into your hands and gently massage on face and around the ears.
5. Rinse pet well, avoiding getting water in pet ears or eyes.
6. Pour a small amount of Oatmeal Conditioning Rinse into your hands, and massage into pet's coat.
7. Rinse and towel dry.
8. Lightly spray Instant Detangling Spray over the coat.
9. Brush through.
10. Clean around each ear with an Ear & Eye Wipe; make sure to use a separate pet wipe for each ear. Then gently clean around each eye; using a separate wipe for each eye. Using Body & Paw Wipes, clean and moisturize each paw.

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SOCIALIZATION NEED IT OR NOT?

I have a brand new puppy. He's almost four months old. Ask anyone in dog training or behavior, and they will tell you that I must "socialize" him now or I'll be in big trouble later. Maybe, maybe not.

Petey is a normal four-month-old Queensland Heeler. He loves people. He did from the moment I saw him at about six weeks. He has not changed at all regarding his social nature and is unlikely to waver throughout his lifetime. Why? He has been bred for specific traits, including his relationship with people. His innate abilities include things that are welcome as-is and some that have to be nurtured or suppressed. He heels. He chases things. He kisses faces. He squiggles. If something startles him, he moves back a short distance and observes. If there is no immediate consequence, he will approach again.

As *Petey* will be my wife's third service dog, he will have to be extra-cordial in public. I have to make sure that happens. I will have to teach him behaviors and inhibitions that will make him dependable. What I do not have to do is get him out in public to allow him to experience lots of people or other dogs. His behavior spins based on his breeding. That's what I paid for. That's what I got.

If my belief that socialization isn't automatically necessary or beneficial sounds like heresy, it shouldn't. Pointers point. Retrievers retrieve. Cane Corsos bark wildly at the sight of strangers. Presenting them with more birds, Frisbees, or strangers does not lessen their reactions to these specific events. Innate behaviors are not influenced by triggering the behavior any more than tapping your patella with a rubber mallet eventually stops you

from kicking your leg. According to the rules of socialization, putting a cattle dog puppy around a lot of cattle will decrease the pup's likelihood of heeling cattle as an adult. Not likely.

One reason that lots of early exposure doesn't always change behavior is that some behaviors are developmental and wink on later in life. If early socialization lessens a dog's natural behaviors, a Cane Corso should lose its territorial aggression and a scent-marking dog should become complacent about guests.

The concept that a nebulous exposure to people or dogs removes instinctive behaviors is a fantasy. On the contrary, when presented with the trigger for each specific instinctive reaction, the behavior winks into existence. Once it wakes up, it happens predictably for the rest of the dog's life. If increasing exposure does not

modify a cattle dog's intensity toward cattle, why would it change a lap dog's friendliness? If cordial behavior exists in the dog, repeated exposure triggers the existing cordial behavior. Either the core behavior exists or it doesn't. If it doesn't, presenting a fear-causing event will simply continue to trigger fear.

THREE DIFFERENT THINGS: SOCIALIZATION, HABITUATION, AND ACTIVE CONDITIONING.

The concept of socialization actually contains two opposing beliefs that cannot be demonstrated in the real world. First, lots of handling equals cordial behavior. If that were true, every pet shop dog should be a perfectly social dog. Second, the absence of handling causes irreparable damage. Again, the puppy-mill, pet shop dog should be a basket case. I can truthfully tell you that in more than 25

years of training and behavior work, I cannot tell a puppy mill dog by its behavior in a blind test. I don't think anyone else can, either.

Not all fearful or crazy dogs come from deprived environments. Not all confident dogs are the result of handling. The only truth at the bottom of socialization is that feral puppies are crazy-wild because of a complete lack of handling as infants. By three months, they are effectively wild and compromised for life. So, yes, very early handling is important. However, once you have achieved an acceptance to humans, additional exposure doesn't change much of anything.

HABITUATION: More than simply "getting used" to something

The actual processes that can influence a dog's future behavior are habituation and active conditioning.

Habituation refers to a very controlled exposure that includes close monitoring of the dog's reaction and terminating exposure when it approaches a specific level. For instance, if a pup is terrified of vacuum sweepers, you put a vacuum at a distance that does not trigger the fearful reaction. The next day, you put it a little closer. If the puppy becomes anxious, you move the vacuum back to the last acceptable distance. Repeat the process and gradually bring the vacuum closer to the pup.

ACTIVE CONDITIONING: More effective than habituation

In contrast to habituation, active conditioning changes the way the ball bounces. Respondent conditioning deals with basic internal responses such as triggering the parasympathetic nervous system. Operant conditioning

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can best be understood as “obedience behaviors” and should be part of teaching a dog acceptance of unusual events.

To use respondent conditioning, one makes a simple pairing of two things: an event and something that influences the dog’s physiological state. For instance, putting food in your mouth triggers salivation and then a reduction in heart rate, blood pressure, and respiration. Think of it as an organic tranquilizer. Almost any environmental cue that consistently precedes food will be able to trigger the response.

If I wanted a puppy to learn to accept strangers, I would start saying the words “nice people” just before I put down his food bowl. Repeat at every meal for a couple of weeks. Take the pup in public and say, “Look at all the nice people,” and have someone walk forward and stop at a respectful distance. Put a treat in the dog’s

mouth. Ask the “nice people” to move away or hide behind a wall so they are no longer visible. Say, “Look at all the nice people” loud enough for them to hear. That is their cue to approach. Put a treat in the pup’s mouth and repeat the sequence. Pavlov said it took him between 20 and 50 repetitions to make a simple association between the sound of a bell and food. You can expect this to be about the same, with individual variations based on the dog’s unique tendencies.

This same process can be done for dogs that are afraid of vacuum sweepers, whizzing traffic, or any other fear-inspiring event. There are a few rules to keep in mind, but the process is simple and straightforward. One caution – there are limits. The limitations on this type of training can be the dog’s breeding and/or your skill applying it. Just follow the rules and see how far you get. If you hit a wall,

you may need to seek behavioral help from an expert.

1) Make sure your catchphrase occurs before the dog perceives the thing you wish to associate with food.

2) Present the people, noises, or events at an intensity that is unlikely to trigger a fear response. Over a series of repetitions, decrease the distance. Eventually expect the dog to approach voluntarily the thing that formerly scared it.

3) Once you have accomplished a general passivity, you can include operant conditioning to complete the task. Start asking for obedience behaviors during the conditioning event. For instance, if you are trying to get the dog comfortable with people, start asking for “sit” as the “nice people” approach. You can actually transfer control to them – have the stranger ask the dog to sit and deliver the treat. ☺

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Doing Things Differently

✧ by Ellen Ehrlich ✧

I often think about what it was like when I started my mobile business in 2006. I was a beginner, fresh out of grooming school. It was my first “real” business. Little did I know what the future would hold. There were many decisions and challenges with every phone call and first appointment. I did not have the self-confidence and the experience I have today. Present day, my book is full of “regulars” - small, cooperative dogs on a maintenance schedule.

Of course, things did not start out this way. Every dog and customer was new. I remember grooming my first “client,” Riley the mini Doodle, in my brand new van. I picked up the scissors, and my hand was shaking! I had no one to help me hold the dog or tell me what blade, trim, or product to use. Each time the phone rang, my heart skipped a beat. What would they ask me? What should I say? Would my new furry friend on the other side of the door be as described?

If I could go back in time, what would I do differently?

A huge challenge in starting my grooming business was estimating prices. When the phone rang, how would I know the cost when I had not seen the pet? I could ask all the important questions – breed, weight, behavior, coat condition, age, health, home care, and the last time the pet was groomed... but I would still be left in the dark. To tackle some of these variables, I could have asked the caller



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to e-mail a picture, but if that weren't done, I was back to square one.

I have learned from experience that some owners do not know the breed of their pet. The dog or cat might have been given to them; the previous owners might have been misled. The pet might have come from a shelter, a rescue, or online, including petfinder.com. Many times they guess the weight, erring on the lighter side between five and twenty pounds.

The owner might be brushing at home, but it is ineffective because they are using improper tools and not doing it often enough. They often cannot recall the last time their pet was groomed. They might say eight weeks ago, but when I put their furry friend on my grooming table, I could tell they had been stretching the truth by looking at the length of their pet's nails and hairy paw pads.

Selling your services over the phone is critical ... This is always a challenge when starting a new business. If this does not happen, the odds are the pet owner will not make an appointment and go elsewhere.

Behavior is a big concern. I had to trust what people said, and sometimes even they were not aware of how their pet would behave during grooming. Some owners were not forthcoming, because they were afraid I would not accept the pet for grooming. Estimating is no small task. In addition, all critters are not created equal.

Selling your services over the

phone is critical. It is extremely important to make a good impression and connect with the caller. This is always a challenge when starting a new business. If this does not happen, the odds are the pet owner will not make an appointment and go elsewhere. In the beginning, a lot of it is self-confidence. Do you sound knowledgeable? Does the passion for what you do come

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through over the phone? It takes experience.

Here is one hint to keep in mind. You do not have to respond immediately when someone calls asking for a quote. Gather all the information you can and tell them you will call them back. Some estimates require more thought than others. You might want to go online to become more familiar with the breed. You can even ask opinions of your local and online grooming friends and then return the phone call. Do not be tempted to blurt out a number! I learned this the hard way. Return the phone call when you have a game plan and all the information you need for grooming their specific pet. I would suggest you give a starting point, adding the key phrase "I have to see your pet" so that you will not lock yourself into a price that is too low.

If I could turn back the hands of

time, I would change how I handled add-on services. This is a common mistake made by many groomers. I am guilty of this myself. How many of us have dematted and deshedded dogs and cats without charging for additional time and labor? This is something I would like to see change for every salon owner, at-home groomer, or mobile groomer. There is nothing worse than driving away or seeing a client walk out the door from an appointment knowing that you undercharged for your services. Grooming is hard work! If you begin grooming and see it is a much more labor-intensive task than you originally thought, call the owner and provide an update. Let them know! Consider charging hourly. They need to understand that you will have to charge extra for additional services, especially if the pet is not groomed on a maintenance schedule.

This is an overview of some of my start-up challenges. Success results from research and experience. I have always been interested in how other groomers run their businesses. I have been able to take this information and use it to my best advantage. Adjust your business to the specifics of your own market and needs. This will give you the opportunity to create a business that runs like a well-oiled machine. ☺

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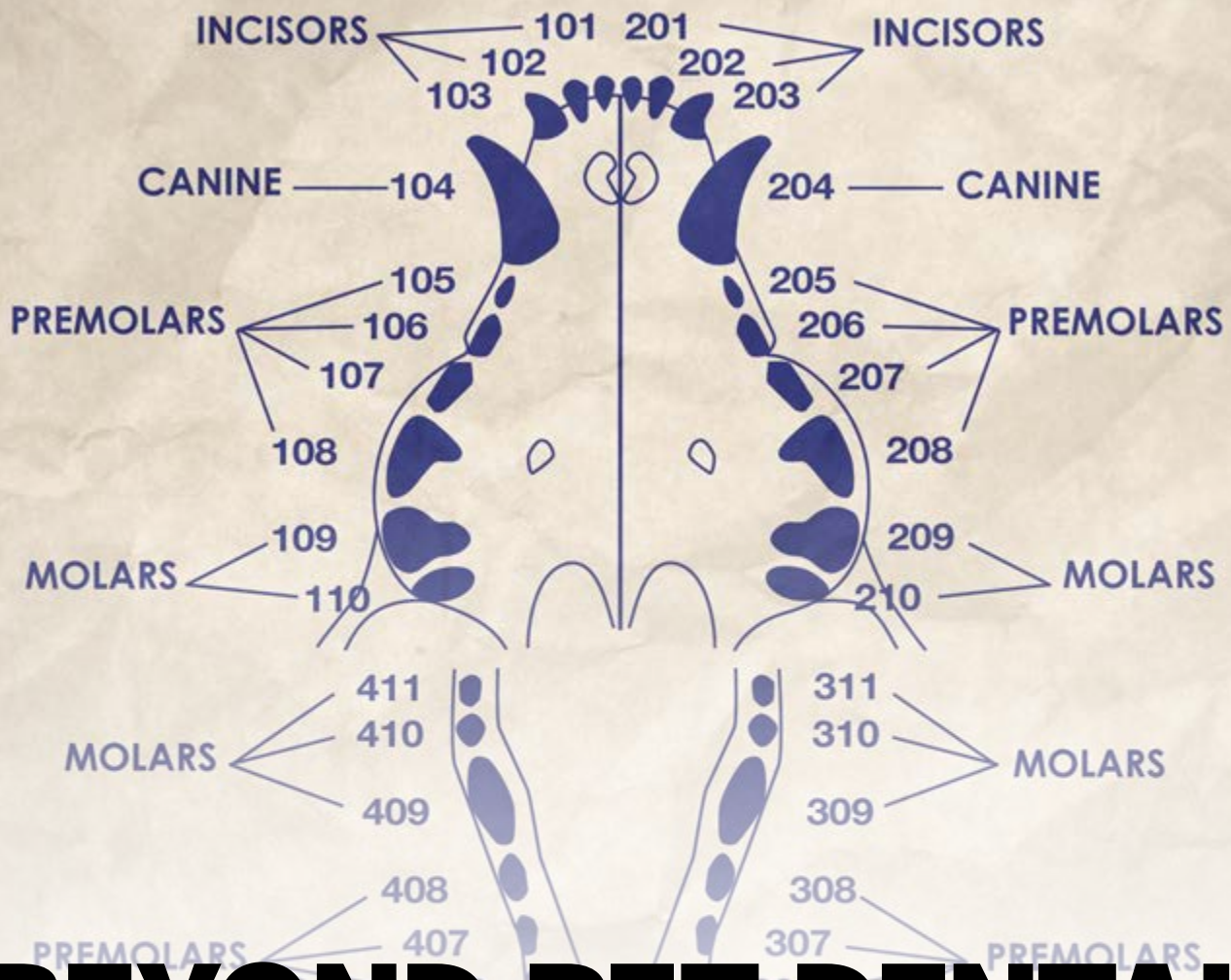
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BEYOND PET DENTAL HEALTH MONTH

THE GROOMER'S YEAR-ROUND ROLE IN PROTECTING PET ORAL HEALTH

✧ by Bruce Muller ✧

Groomers are the first line of defense in protecting pet health. They are pet professionals who care for pets once, if not twice or more, a month and see them more often than the occasional visit to the vet. These more frequent contacts allow a groomer to observe any changes in

pet health conditions, which is an opportunity to alert and educate pet owners to emerging or deteriorating health conditions and, better yet, to offer effective solutions to common pet health problems. These conditions can include poor gum, teeth, ear, skin, and coat problems.

**PET ORAL HEALTH:
NOT JUST IN FEBRUARY**

Although February's Pet Dental Health Month draws pet parents' attention to the value of pets' healthy mouths, poor oral conditions can begin at any time of year. An alert groomer will check the pet's overall health during a grooming session year round, particularly the pet's mouth. The first whiff of a pet's bad breath is an early warning sign of poor oral health and can signal the onset of gingivitis with plaque and tartar buildup.

Studies show that an overwhelming 80% of dogs and cats show signs of oral disease by age three. Left unchecked and untreated, these conditions lead to gum disease and loss of teeth. Even worse, the resulting harmful bacteria can enter the pet's bloodstream, ultimately causing infection or damage to kidneys, lungs, heart, or

liver. The older the pet, the more likely gingivitis and periodontal disease are present. So serious are these conditions that they can shorten a pet's life.

Further, a recent study reported that even kissing dogs that have a lot of bacteria in their mouths could spread bacteria to humans and cause periodontal problems. Recent health stories also demonstrate that poor human oral health is linked to heart disease and other serious medical conditions. Like people who neglect their oral care, ignoring pet bad breath is a potential danger of worsening pet health.

Just as with our dentists who advise brushing and flossing every day for healthy teeth and gums to guard against gingivitis and decay, a pet's regular oral care should be a daily routine [see photo healthy mouth]. Unlike humans, pets need their guardians to

do this for them. Groomers who check the pets' teeth and gums can suggest easy at-home care with products that will benefit and protect oral health throughout the year.

TAKE THREE EASY STEPS YEAR ROUND

Pet owners rely on groomers to take notice of their pets' health conditions and will seek and welcome their advice for remedies. These three steps will position a groomer as a reliable source for pet oral care.

1. EDUCATE PET OWNERS IN THE SALON — OFTEN

As a starting point, take advantage of manufacturers' educational brochures, posters, and signage reminders by displaying them prominently in the salon. Use them to point out before and after photos of an unhealthy mouth versus the pink gums and white

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NORMAL MOUTH



PLAQUE

teeth of a healthy mouth. One groomer even has sitting on the reception desk a jar of plaque and tartar taken from her pet clients, a vivid educational tool that graphically illustrates what can happen by neglecting the pet's oral care [see tartar build up photo]. All these tools serve to begin the discussion of the importance of pet oral care, followed by product suggestions, especially when pets are already showing signs of bad breath, plaque, and tartar [see photo]. It may take several times, but gentle persistence pays when framed as concern for the pet.

2. ENLIST THE TEAM FOR RESULTS

Take time with staff, informally or in meetings, to review pet oral conditions and what the salon offers to pet parents. Even role-play as practice for client discussions. SmartPractice, Phoenix, AZ, offers an in-salon cleansing

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treatment program as well as plentiful take-home educational materials, salon signage, pet oral health evaluation forms and gel and spray products for purchase for at-home daily care as groomer support.

3. BUILD VET/CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS FOR REFERRALS

Begin with existing vet contacts and familiarize them with the salon's oral cleansing treatments and the availability of effective oral care products as part of the pet professional team effort to protect pet health. Ask clients for their vets' names to expand referral sources.

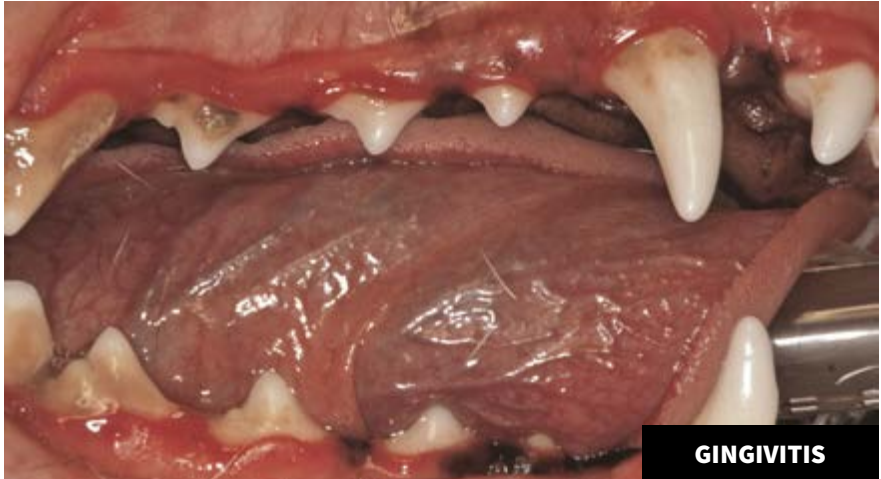
Once clients see the results of regular oral care, they will tell their friends about the salon's value-added oral care services for valuable word-of-mouth recommendations. One salon owner set up a referral rewards program for her oral care treatments.

IMMEDIATE RESULTS WITH LONG TERM BENEFITS

Pet Dental Health Month is just the beginning of awareness and the first step to pet oral care protection.



TARTAR



GINGIVITIS

The immediate benefits of pet cleansing treatments and daily at-home care product use produces easily visible results, much to the gratitude of responsible pet parents.

It has taken the ADA 25 years

of continual reminders for people to take care of their own teeth and gums. Educating pet parents to take daily action concerning their pets' oral health begins with groomers taking a proactive role in helping them understand the importance to do the same for their pets – every day, every grooming session, year round. ☺

Bruce Muller is Marketing Director of Pet Products at SmartPractice (www.smartpractice.com/vet), a company with a 40-year history of providing quality products and services for human and pet health professionals worldwide. SmartPractice markets PlaqClnz Oral Cleansing Treatment, PlaqClnz Spray and Gel, CutisClr 7.0 skin care, and OticClr ear care among other pet healthcare products. For more information, visit www.groomeroralcare.com or contact Bruce Muller at (800) 433.7297, ext. 7225, or muller@smarthealth.com.



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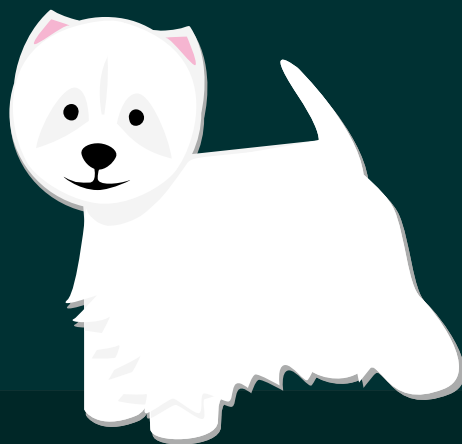
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CERAMIC BLADES

by Jeff Andrews

When these blades come from the factory, they are perfect. As they are used, the sides of the teeth of the ceramic cutter will get imperfections along the cutting edges. These imperfections tend to create a “saw tooth” on the sides of the ceramic teeth, and this causes dragging, snagging, or dullness.

For instance, if something like a tiny piece of sand gets into the teeth of the ceramic cutter, this could cause “fragmentation” to the sides of the

cutter teeth. This is harder to fix. If the ceramic cutter is damaged too much, it may never cut properly again and may need to be replaced. The best advice is to use ceramic blades on clean dogs. Never use them to “rough in” dogs. It only takes one grain of sand to cause problems so the blade doesn’t cut right anymore.

As sharpeners, we have to take enough ceramic material off the bottom of the cutter and get past these imperfections and fragmentations to

get the cutter to slice the hair again rather than ripping it. This is done by hand on a diamond surface, and most sharpeners charge a little extra for sharpening ceramic blades for this reason.

Ceramic material actually is used to sharpen metals, and the ceramic cutter on your blade is no different. As it passes back and forth across the lower blade (metal), it “seats” itself to that metal blade and gets rid of any imperfections. Tension is also very



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important. Ceramic material is just like glass, so the tension must be between 2 ½ and 3# side pressure. Any tighter and the ceramic cutter could shatter just by dropping the blade on your grooming table.

Here is a suggestion to try when you get your freshly sharpened ceramic blades back from sharpening or even buy a new ceramic blade. Instead of taking them right out of the package and running them through fur, oil first, and then run the blade on the clipper for a minute. As the ceramic cutter moves back and forth across the metal comb, I believe it gets rid of any imperfections and will “seat” itself to the metal blade below it. Blades seem

to cut perfectly when this small break-in period is done. You only have to do this break-in period one time after sharpening or if it’s new.

Another important thing to check on ceramic blades when they seem dull is dirt-filled divots on the bottom side of the cutter. To check, push the cutter halfway to one side and turn the blade upside-down. The divots are located right behind each tooth. These divots can fill up with dirt and pet dander, and when they do, it will raise the cutter up enough from the bottom blade, and the blade will start to snag or drag.

To clean the divots, push the cutter out halfway to one side. Turn the blade over and inspect the divots.

If there is dirt in the divots, take a toothbrush and scrub the divots in blade wash. If the divots are really impacted with dirt it could take aggressive scrubbing to get them spotless. Clean one side then the other in the same way. Note: Running the blade on the clipper in blade wash doesn’t clean the divots; in some cases, it may add to the problem.

After you’re done cleaning, wipe the excess blade wash off, center the cutter on the blade, then oil with blade oil. Most of the time, the blade will start to cut again. If not, it could be dull or fragmented and needs to be re-sharpened. ☹

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Coat preparation is a key element in any groom but especially when using snap-on combs. The coat must be clean, conditioned, fluff dried, and completely brushed and combed

before considering placing a snap-on comb on the dog. A tangle or mat may cause the comb to spring off with agonizing results when the blade under the comb hits the coat. I can't emphasize enough the importance of proper coat preparation!

The usual prep steps, such as trimming nails, cleaning ears, and shaving pads and underwear (sanitary), are assumed and not covered in this article.

FIG. 1: Begin by establishing the topline of the dog. By placing a large Poodle comb along the back, you can easily determine topline plane. This is important when using snap-on combs, because the guard will naturally follow the existing structural topline. For ex-

ample, a dog with a dip in the topline will require some trimming modification in order to portray the illusion of a level topline. Keep this in mind when choosing your initial blade/guard length, as the length on the rump may need to be up to a few inches shorter than the blade/guard used just behind the withers.

For this dog, a 0 snap-on comb over a 30 blade was used for the body, chest, shoulder, flanks, and down the back of the rear legs.

Begin clipping a few inches behind the withers. Many dogs have a slight dip behind the withers. This allows a little extra room for blending up to the longer coat over the withers and onto

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Rescue Remedy and a chicken sandwich, we were back. Josh was regaining his strength, but we had sat out of the competition and lost valuable time. I wasn't sure if I could complete him with the time I had left. Kathy Rose announced "scissors down" just as I added a couple feathers for a headpiece. After all that coat growth, I just didn't have time to finish what I had planned. We still managed to get third place and the coveted People's Choice Award. Lori again got first place, and the "Lion King" managed to remain undefeated.

I decided to go ahead and take the design to one more show: Atlanta Pet Fair. I just had to complete this design that I had worked so hard to perfect. Just a couple weeks before Atlanta, my mother passed away. I was devastated. I had no intentions of going anywhere, especially so soon after her death. My mother was my soul, my greatest fan, my seamstress, and my inspiration.

In the days before Atlanta, my entire family pushed me to go on and do what my mom would have wanted me to do. "She would want you to go, Angela!" is what my dad was telling me. I agreed to go but wasn't sure if I would compete. I just wasn't up to it. The night before we left, I told my dad, "I will work on my dog, and if I can do it, I will. For my mom!"

It was time to get the dogs ready, and I am sure everyone thought I had lost my mind. I just kept talking to my mom while I was working on Josh, just like she was standing there. When I was done, I was so excited. It was beautiful, and win or lose, I was happy. I pulled it together and completed the design; my mom would have been so proud. We won first place and People's Choice.



Top: Preparing for Atlanta Pet Fair just after Pasadena
-Angela thought about a more tribal eagle at first.
Middle and bottom: At Atlanta Pet Fair, where "Cherokee Heritage" took First Place

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Angela Kumpke, winner of the 2010 Groom & Kennel Expo People's Choice Award, with "Cherokee Heritage"

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the neck. Clip the entire back, stopping before you go over the point of rump. “Fall off” (skim off) at certain points, such as at the shoulder and the hip.

FIG. 2: Lift the clipper off the coat just above the point of rump, and then proceed, clipping down the rear thigh to about three inches above the hock. Leaving a little extra coat at the point of rump will help you to create a curvy, round butt.

FIG. 3: Clip the undercarriage, going against the coat growth pattern, and then blend up to the flank coat. Do not clip the “tuck up.”

FIG. 4: Moving to the front of the dog, clip the forechest, beginning just under the jawline. Take care not to clip too far up on the cheeks. The clipped area forms a semicircle from under the jaw to a bit below the ear leather on the sides of the neck.

FIG. 5: Continue clipping down the forechest and over the shoulder, falling off before cutting into the leg coat.

Clip the sides of the shoulders, leaving a triangular pattern of coat from behind the ear to a few inches behind the withers.

Switching to a longer guard comb

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FIG. 7

(in this case, an “E”), clip the legs and the longer patch of coat left over the point of rump. **FIG. 6** demonstrates how to clip the inside of the rear leg by lifting the opposite leg.

When clipping down the front leg, “fall off” before clipping the coat on the back of the front leg. Leaving coat slightly longer here helps to place the front legs well under the dog and give the illusion of a square dog. It will be tidied with scissors later.

FIG. 7: If the dog has a high rear, a shorter blade will need to be taken directly over the rump. In this case, #4 was used to help give the illusion of a level topline.

Begin at the rear of the dog at the topline with long straight shears, then tidy the inside and the outside of the rear legs.

Switching to long curved shears inverted in a scooping motion, trim the angulation on the back of the rear legs.

FIG. 8: Flip the shears and continue up and over the point of rump, creating a curvy butt.

Trim the stray hairs on the front side of the rear leg to show a slight bend in stifle (knee).



FIG. 8



FIG. 9

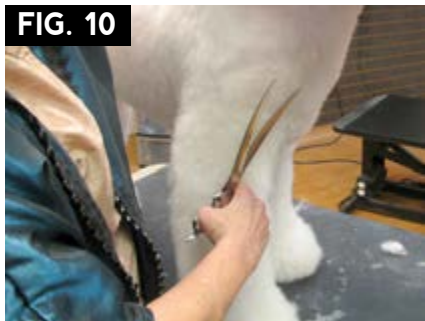


FIG. 10



FIG. 11

Using a short curved shear inverted, trim the tuck up, and then switch to a long curve.

FIG. 9: Follow the natural underline of the dog all the way through the space between the front legs and curving up to the chest.

Blend the longer coat that was left from the elbow down the back of the front leg.

FIG. 10: Tighten up the area where the upper arm meets the shoulder.

Using curved shears, create compact round feet, then still using short curved shears, create bevels on the foot.

FIG. 11 shows the parallel rear leg compared to the un-scissored opposite leg.

The head should appear large and round. When the dog’s mouth is closed, his eyes should be approximately in the middle of the circle. With his mouth open, it will appear as though his nose is in the center.

FIG. 12: Using a #30, trim the hairs on the upper lip just under the nose.

Using a #10, trim slightly under, slightly over, and slightly beyond the outside corner. This is subtle; do not scoop out the hair like a mask. Do

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not shave the bridge of the nose or between the eyes.

FIG. 13: Using a short curved shear, blend the coat from the outside corner of the eyes, creating a shelf over the eyes that curves slightly toward the nose.

FIG. 14: Switching to long curved shears, trim a semicircle, beginning under the jaw and ending behind the ear.

Combing the coat up and out, blend the face and ears to create one headpiece. The ears should be level with or just slightly longer than the jaw and not evident. If the ears are trimmed too short, they will appear prominent when the dog perks his expression. If they are left too long, they will detract from the desired circular shape of the head.

Blend the triangle of neck coat/crest into a natural arched extension of the neck. It should curve from the

shoulder into the neck when viewed from the side. It should not look like a “hunch back.”

Blend from the top of the head down to the withers. I use a long curve over the top of the head to about midway down the neck, then invert the shears so the coat curves into the withers. Use the long curves (inverted/scooping) on the sides of the neck to accentuate a graceful neck.

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GroomTeam USA Launches Applications for Lonnie Lang Memorial Scholarship Fund

GroomTeam USA, Inc. is pleased to announce the launch of the applications for the *Lonnie Lang Memorial Scholarship Fund*. There are two levels of awards; One for college education, with two awards, and the other for grooming education. The deadline is April 30, 2013. GroomTeam USA, Inc. employs the aid of *The International Scholarship and Tuition Services, Inc.* of Nashville, TN, a professional scholarship selection company. The use of this outside source insures that the selection of the recipients is professional, fair and unbiased.

Level One will provide two recipients with \$1,000 in college money. These funds may be used toward college education in any field and will be paid directly to the school. The only

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Level Two is open to any and all applicants and provides one recipient with a full scholarship to their choice of one of a selected group of nationally acclaimed grooming schools approved by GroomTeam USA, Inc. GroomTeam USA, Inc. will also provide up to a maximum of \$1,000 toward the purchase of the standard grooming tool kit available through the selected school. The participating schools include *Maser's Academy of Fine Grooming* (Kenmore, WA), *Merryfield School of Pet Grooming* (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), *Nanhall School of Dog Grooming* (Greensboro,

NC), *Paragon School of Pet Grooming* (Jenison, MI) and the *Pennsylvania Academy of Pet Grooming* (Indiana, PA).

For complete scholarship details please visit the *GroomTeam USA, Inc.* website www.groomteamusa.info and go to the Scholarship Fund page. You can read about the scholarships and click on the link at the bottom of the page or go to <https://aim.applyists.net/Groom> to begin the application process. Remember, the deadline is April 30, 2013 and all applications must be processed online.

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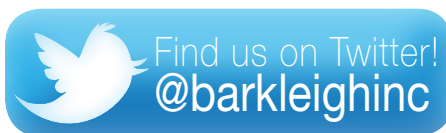
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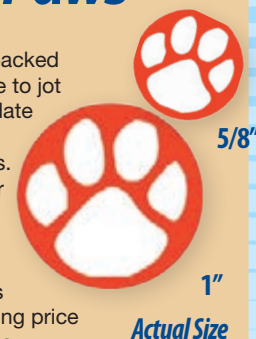
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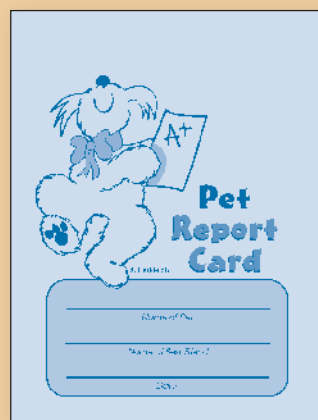
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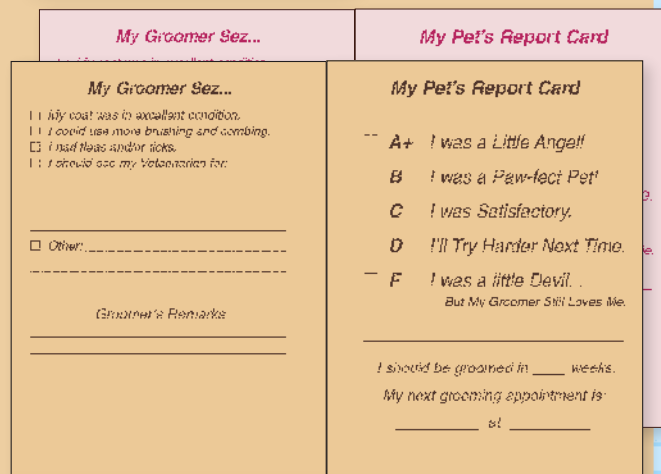
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Pet Report Cards

As low as 9.5¢ each!



Like a teacher, now you can grade each pet from an A+ to an F. Did you ever forget to convey important information to your client? A time-saving checklist of common recommendations is included, with space for your personal comments. Plus, it doubles as a reminder or appointment card. Great promotional tool, too — your clients will tell their friends about your "caring" pet report card.



#190	Blue
#191	Pink
#192	Tan

Indicate color number when ordering. Colors may be mixed by packs of 100.

Pack of 100	\$16
Pack of 1000	\$95

Available Colors



Kage Kard Holder

For Boarding or Grooming Cards 3" X 5" or 5" X 8"



This sturdy aluminum card holder will keep pet information right where you need it. Two popular sizes hold 3 x 5 Run Card or Klip Kard, and 5 x 8 Giant Klip Kard or Kenn-L-Kard. Attaches easily to cage or crate. Has holes for wall mounting near grooming table or tub. Collar and leash holder built in. Practically indestructible, won't rattle, and holds client index cards securely and cleanly.

#164	KAGE KARD HOLDER 5 X 8	1 holder	\$6
		10 holders	\$55

#163	KAGE KARD HOLDER 3 X 5	1 holder	\$4
		10 holders	\$35



Little Angel Award

Great gift for puppy's first grooming, new clients, promotions and incentives!



Your clients will be thrilled when their pet receives this frameable award. The goodwill generated will be "money in the bank" to you.

"This certifies that _____ has successfully completed a professional grooming in our establishment. Your pet has exemplified courage when confronting combs, brushes, clippers, and scissors and has shown valor in crossing the waters of shampoo, creme rinse and dip. It is with great pride that your pet has been selected as a Paw-fect specimen of beauty to be held in highest esteem by this grooming establishment."

- #169 Pink Indicate color number when ordering.
- #292 Blue 25 Awards \$15
- 100 Awards \$35

Kanine Kookie Cutters

Sizes range from 2-3/4" to 4-1/2". Great for breed club treats, fundraisers, sandwich cutouts, treats for your customers' pets or kids, dough ornaments, and more. Dog Bone Recipes included FREE!



- #377 #378 #381 #386 #383
- #385 #380 #384 #389 #390
- #391 #392 #382 #379
- #338 13-PIECE BOW WOW SET \$30
- #339 BONES AND HYDRANT \$10
- #340 SEVEN DOGS AND KITTY \$22
- #387 7-PIECE SET \$19.95
- #388 5-PIECE MINI SET \$9.95
- INDIVIDUAL (INDICATE #) \$3.95

Revolving Reminder System



Get your clients in every 4, 5 or 6 weeks with this complete ready-to-use system!

Includes: 5" x 8" File Box, #1-31 Index Guides, 200 of our most popular Reminder Cards (50 each: R-2, R-4, R-5, R-7), instructions for instituting a successful Reminder Program.

- #371 1 REVOLVING REMINDER SYSTEM \$59.95

Nash Salon Series

Salon Posters

Decorate your salon with class.

Practical artwork in 24" x 36" size. Educate and market your services constantly to your clientele. Choose framed or unframed.



Head to Tail



Effects and Accessories



Skin and Coat



Bathing and Grooming

Salon Services

Visually show your client the gamut of services you provide. Now you can charge for services that you may be doing free. Buy one or all.

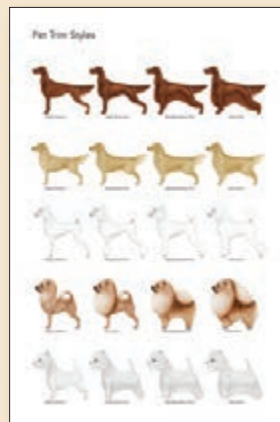
- #321 HEAD TO TAIL GROOMING
- #322 BATHING AND GROOMING
- #323 SKIN AND COAT
- #324 EFFECTS AND ACCESSORIES

UNFRAMED \$39
FRAMED \$59

- #325 SET OF FOUR (SERVICES)

UNFRAMED \$149
FRAMED \$225

Pet Trim Style



How short is short? Your clients can point at the trim they want. Popular breeds and styles are included. Sold as a set of three.

SET OF THREE (TRIM STYLE)

- #372 UNFRAMED \$99
- #373 FRAMED \$175
- #374 8.5" x 11" \$49
- #375 11" x 17" \$74

Gift Certificate

Great for Pet Shops, Groomers, Kennels, Trainers and more!

These elegant parchment certificates, bordered with paws, are "just paw-fect" for gift-giving. Great for pet shops, Groomers, Veterinarians and Kennels. A nice way to show appreciation for referral customers, too. Rubber stamp your business name in the corner. Stub attached for your records. Certificates come with beautiful matching envelopes.



- #138 GIFT CERTIFICATE WITH ENVELOPE**
- | | |
|-------------|------|
| Pack of 10 | \$10 |
| Pack of 25 | \$22 |
| Pack of 100 | \$75 |

STAND-UP COUNTER SIGN - FREE with 100 Gift Certificates
(Indicate when ordering)

- #275 GIFT CERTIFICATE COUNTER SIGN (CHRISTMAS)** \$12
#276 GIFT CERTIFICATE COUNTER SIGN \$12

Sympathy Cards

Elegant 4 x 6 cards in ivory linen or blue parchment with gold ink will tell your clients that you care. Matching envelopes included. Great retail item for your facility.

- #219 BLUE SYMPATHY CARD with envelope**
#220 IVORY SYMPATHY CARD with envelope



(INSIDE)
... brings great joy and deep sorrow. May it be comforting to know that the loss of your beloved pet is shared by those who care.

Cards may be mixed in packs of 10 when ordering 100. Indicate style number when ordering.

- | | |
|-----------|-------|
| 10 Cards | \$20 |
| 25 Cards | \$43 |
| 100 Cards | \$150 |

Sympathy Postcard



4 x 6 elegant postcard printed with rich chestnut ink on buckskin parchment and tastefully embossed with gold foil lettering. Inexpensive and easy to send. Just address and mail, or put it in an Ivory envelope for a more personal touch.

BACK: *May it be a comfort to know that we share your feelings and extend our deepest sympathy.*

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|---|-------|
| #221 SYMPATHY POSTCARD | | #222 SYMPATHY POSTCARD with envelope | |
| 10 Postcards | \$12 | 10 Postcards with envelope | \$18 |
| 25 Postcards | \$27 | 25 Postcards with envelope | \$39 |
| 100 Postcards | \$99 | 100 Postcards with envelope | \$120 |

Display Holder

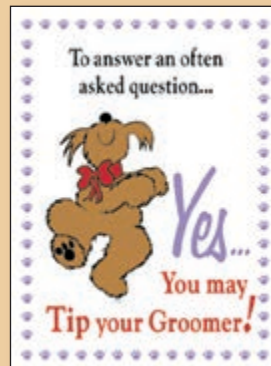
Black metal holder will put sympathy cards at your clients fingertips for resale. Includes the header card. Can be used for pegboard or countertop use.



- #303 DISPLAY HOLDER FOR SYMPATHY CARDS**
- | | |
|---------------|------|
| Single Holder | \$7 |
| 10 Holders | \$50 |

Tip Signs

8.5 x 11" ready to display Counter Signs answers the question "Should I tip my Groomer or Bather?" Increases tips dramatically without offending your clients. In plastic standup card.



- | | |
|--|------|
| #278 DANCING DOG TIPS SIGN | \$15 |
| #277 TIP SIGN FOR BATHERS | \$15 |
| #370 TIP SIGN FOR GROOMERS | \$15 |
| #274 TIP SIGN FOR GROOMERS - CANADIAN | \$15 |



PetRef Kards *Did You Find a Medical Problem?*

PETREF PLEASE TAKE THIS CARD TO YOUR VETERINARIAN

Groomer _____ Salon _____ Phone _____

WE NOTICE A PROBLEM THAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO YOUR ATTENTION!

Pet's Name _____ Breed _____ Date Groomed _____

SYMPTOMS NOTICED - This is not a diagnosis. It is only an observation.

If you need any further assistance, please call the number listed above.

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Attractive 3 x 5 cards are used to note your medical concerns. Clients can take your findings to the Vet. Your clients will appreciate your concern. The vet will appreciate your professionalism. Gray card with blue ink.

- #668 PETREF CARDS**
- | | | | |
|-----------|-----|------------|------|
| 100 Cards | \$9 | 1000 Cards | \$60 |
|-----------|-----|------------|------|

Reminder & Klient Postcards



#203
(MV-1)



#204
(R-1)



#205
(R-2)



#206
(R-3)



#208
(R-5)



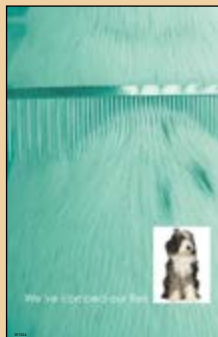
#210
(R-7)



#202
(M-1)



#207 (R-4)



#212 (M-2)



#211 (R-9)



#201 (HB-2)



#209 (R-6)

Inexpensive • Convenient • Colorful

Just stamp your salon name, address, and mail them!

Fantastic as Total Reminder Program or between GroomOgrams!

The Back Sez ...

#203 (back) See you at our new "digs!"

#204 (back) Dear _____, You are probably very busy toy-tossing, napping and dining on gourmet canine cuisine. But, I know you like to look your very best. So, I'm sending this little reminder just to say that it is time for you to be groomed again. Please call for an appointment at your earliest convenience. Thank you. Your Groomer.

#205 (back) Is your pet trying to tell you that he needs to be groomed? If so, please call for an appointment at your earliest convenience, before he finds the scissors! Your Groomer.

#206 (back) All dogs benefit from regular Professional Grooming. For you pet's continued good health, please call for an appointment at your earliest convenience. Thank you. Your Groomer.

#207 (back) Dear _____, I know you like to look your very best, smell your sweetest and feel great! Please remind your "Best Friend" that you are now due for a professional grooming. Thank you. Your Groomer.

#208 (back) ...to remind you that your pet is due for professional grooming. Please call for an appointment, at your earliest convenience. Thank you. Your Groomer.

#209 (back) Grooming is a PURR-fectly wonderful experience... when performed regularly. Call now for your pet's next appointment. Your pet will PAWS-itively love you for it! Your Professional Groomer.

#210 (back) Just a reminder that your pet is scheduled for a professional grooming on: _____ at _____. If it's im-PAWS-ible to keep this appointment, please call at once. Thank you.

#211 (back) It's been Paws-itively wonderful serving you and your pet. Hope to see you again soon!

#202 and 212 (back) ...but just can't find "hide nor hair" of your pet. Is your pet okay? Have you moved? Was your pet's last grooming satisfactory? You are important to us and we'd like to hear from you. Please call at your earliest convenience. Thanks.

#201 (back) A Happy Birthday! from your Groomer!

**Postcards Cost Pennies ... But Reap \$\$\$!
Give Your Clients a Gentle Nudge for Grooming!**

Reminder Cards

Mix and match in packs of 100 when buying 1000. Indicate style number when ordering.

20 Reminder Postcards	\$9
50 Reminder Postcards	\$18
100 Reminder Postcards	\$27
1000 Reminder Postcards	\$180

Groom-O-Grams

Exciting 8½ x 11, 4 page newsletter becomes your OWN Personal Salon Newsletter!

Over 10 Million Sold!



- Give to Your Clients at Each Visit
- Leave at Vets, Clinics and Humane Societies
- Encourages future appointments
- Educates Your Clients
- Doubles as an Appointment and Reminder Card
- Undated – Use Them Anytime!

This 8.5 x 11" four-page newsletter contains grooming and health information, stories, and cartoons that present a professional image to your community. Give them at each appointment. Groom-O-Grams encourage better home care and more frequent appointments.

Use it as a reminder card! Many groomers report a fantastic 50-100% response.

GroomOgrams are a fantastic promotional tool! Your grooming clients will give it to their friends. Leave them anywhere there are pet owners — humane societies, veterinarians, kennels, pet shops, and breeders.

GroomOgram will keep your clients coming back while teaching them proper "between grooming" care. Over 10 million Groom-O-Grams have been distributed by caring groomers like yourself.

Seasonal issues are available after February 10 (Spring), May 10 (Summer), August 10 (Fall) and November 10 (Winter). Each issue deals with the seasonal grooming needs of pets.

Standing Order Program! Save 15% on your next order of Groom-O-Grams! Mark Your Order Form! No obligation to future purchases. Cancel anytime.

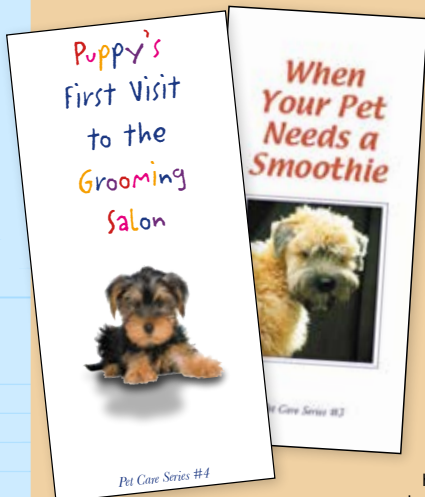
#393 GROOM-O-GRAMS Current Season Unless Specified!

25 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$10.50
50 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$18.00
100 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$25.50
200 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$49.50
300 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$70.50
400 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$88.50
500 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$95.00
1000 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$169.00
2500 GROOM-O-GRAMS	\$358.00

NOW 4 Full Pages and Full Color!

Pet Care Series Brochures

As low as 29¢ each!



Written by Professional Groomers for Your Clients!

These quality brochures not only answer the constant questions you get from pet owners, but they will also help you sell products that work and that you personally believe in - products that you retail. They will teach your client how to care for their pet in between groomings, which will save you lots of time. Great promotional tools as well.

#195 - Learning to Brush Your Pet
Ensures success in brushing, which will pay dividends to you over the years. Plus it will point them toward the right equipment that you sell.

#194 - When Your Pet Needs a Smoothie
Prepares the pet's owner for what they will see once the matting is removed. This pamphlet will keep this from happening again and will help you develop a regular customer, which means more \$\$\$.

#197 - Puppy's First Visit
Helps your client prepare their puppy for grooming. It will offer ways to teach their pet to enjoy grooming. Beneficial before and after the first groom.

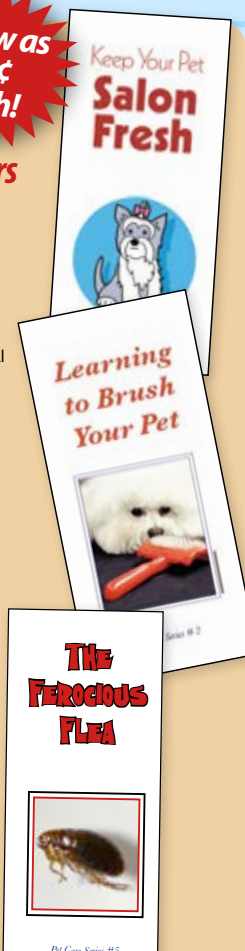
#196 - The Ferocious Flea
Helps your client learn how to protect their pet from fleas and helps you sell retail products you believe in, as well.

#198 - Salon Fresh
Your clients need to be encouraged to keep their pets groomed on a regular basis. Give them a pamphlet that will support the reasons for a consistent grooming schedule. This one pamphlet could increase your business tremendously.

- #195 BRUSHING
- #194 SMOOTHIE
- #196 FLEAS
- #197 PUPPY'S 1ST GROOMING
- #198 SALON FRESH

Order by product number. Mix and match packs of 100 when ordering 1000.

Pack of 20	\$13
Pack of 50	\$28
Pack of 100	\$48
Pack of 500	\$203
Pack of 1000	\$290



Super Sampler Pack

See Our Cards Before You Buy!

- Giant Klip Kard
- Medium Klip Kard
- Regular Klip Kard
- Groomer Sales Slip
- Boarding/Daycare Sales Slip
- Kenn-L-Kard
- Run Card
- Happy Camper Card
- Pet Appointment Cards
- Pet Report Card
- Calendar Paws
- GroomOgram
- Pet Care Series Brochures
- Gift Certificate
- Sympathy Cards
- PetRef Card
- Groomer System Appointment Sheet
- Pet Release Form
- Door Hanger
- Little Angel Award
- Reminder Cards
- Dental Card
- ... and More!

One copy of each. Only one Sampler per business!

#252 SUPER SAMPLER \$10



A Slice of Advice

Domino's Pizza designed an entire ad campaign around admitting that, for years, they produced a lousy product. The first time I saw one of those ads, my initial thought was, "This is going to make the *New Coke* idea seem brilliant." Admitting that you simply never cared about the product that you produced seemed like a bad idea to me.

Since that ad campaign started a few years ago, their stock has gone up over 200%, and their profits are at an all-time high. I failed to take into account the first rule of publicity: get people to notice you. Their marketing was so unique that it was nearly impossible to not pay attention and remember it.

I'm not advocating that you start a campaign admitting you were a horrible groomer but have now seen the light and promise to do a better job. In fact, let me be clear: don't do that! However, there is an interesting point the ad campaign makes. If you're spending the money and putting the effort into advertising, you might as well make sure you get the consumer's attention.

There is also a more subtle lesson. People love a good redemption story. The person who admits a wrong and asks for forgiveness is often held in a higher regard than they were before. Ray Lewis of the Super Bowl Champion Baltimore Ravens, who went from arrogant murder suspect early in his career to a wise mentor by the time he retired, can attest to that. As a business owner, this can be applied to a variety of situations. For example, admitting to a customer, your boss, or even your employee that you have messed up and then identifying the steps you will take to correct a problem will probably bolster the relationship.

Domino's continued to buck conventional wisdom with their "No" campaign. That was a series of advertisements where they broke all the rules by publically stating that the customer is not always right. Their "artisan" pizzas were specially designed to take all the taste combinations into account to create the perfect combination. If you asked to add a topping to it, you were told "no," you could not. (You could ask to have

toppings removed.) That follow-up campaign was also very effective.

The customer is not always right. You have probably already put your foot down when it comes to something involving the health of a dog. However, you may be more reluctant to take a strong stand when the pet owner wants you to do something that makes the dog look ridiculous. This may be the time to take a page from *Domino's* and say "no" to the customer. Of course, you should do it in a tactful way. You are the expert, and it is your job to express to the customer why the dog should be groomed according to your expertise. If you are not convinced, remember two things. First, that dog is a walking billboard for the type of work that you do. Second, your competitor will be sure to point out that groom to anyone who will listen. (Admit it: you love pointing out how you would have groomed a dog better – it's human nature. Besides, there is nothing wrong with a little self-promotion).

It is also important at times to side with your staff instead of the customer. It's better to lose a bad customer than a good employee. Nothing will kill morale quicker than embarrassing an employee in front of a customer that is obviously out of line. Tell that customer "no," and you will have gone a long way toward gaining the loyalty of your employee.

You can decide for yourself if *Domino's* pizza is any better. Personally, I buy from their competitor, because I bought into the belief that better ingredients make a better pizza. However, I am impressed with how *Domino's* used creative marketing to turn around their sales. I would like to offer this one last tidbit of advice: if you do choose to apply any of *Domino's* methods to your business, remember to **Avoid the Noid**.


todd@barkleigh.com

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**CUTS 2.5 x's
FASTER***



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*Wahl "Ultimate" Competition Series Blades cut 2.5 x's faster than Wahl Competition Series Blades



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NEW

AS LOW AS \$199.99

NEW

HYDRAULIC

20" Low - 36" High
VGR89615

ELECTRIC

19" Low - 37" High
VGR89626

ELECTRIC

21" Low - 40" High
VGR89370

EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR A FANCY FINISH

World's Largest Ribbon Selection

Fancy Finishes
by Value Groom™ bows•bands•ribbon•polish

Peridot

Raspberry Sorbet

Pawsitively Purple

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FLAT RATE SHIPPING EVERY DAY!

On Merchandise Totaling \$150.00 or More

Includes Shampoos!

FREE Shipping on Orders of \$550.00 or More
No Coupon Code Needed
Some Exclusions Apply



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Ryan's Makes Buying at the Lowest Price Easy
We Feature Your Favorite Brands and Allow You
to Mix & Match Styles & Sizes for the Best Prices