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Groomer

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Thank you for such a brilliant shampoo! And yes, I HAVE used it on my own hair - I was getting my dogs ready for a show and my hair needed to be washed, so while I was in my grooming salon, I thought I may as well do my own hair. We laughed all day when people commented on how shiny my hair was - and yes, I did admit using Grimeinator!"

- Maxine Bradbury • www.poshnbarks.com • www.demelewis.co.uk



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Groomer To Groomer

6	NAILED...
10	CHOCOLATE POISONING
14	GROOMING... OUT OF THE BOX!
22	SOPHIE
26	GROOMING THE MINIATURE POODLE
30	QUICK HOLIDAY TIPS
32	RETAILING TO YOUR CLIENT BASE
35	GROOM EXPO 2010
42	GROOM EXPO 2010 RESULTS
44	ALL AMERICAN GROOMING SHOW REVIEW
46	NEW PRODUCT NEWS
50	GET READY FOR GROOM & KENNEL EXPO 2011
50	THE NORTHWEST GROOMING SHOW COMING TO TACOMA!
52	THE ROAD AHEAD
59	CLASSIFIEDS
61	CALENDAR OF EVENTS



COVER

Angela Kumpe, winner of the Creative Styling and People's Choice Award at Groom Expo 2010 with her winning creation, *American Pride*.

Designed by Lucas Colton
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Off the Top of My Head by Todd Shelly

Sally's Retirement Party



How do you throw a retirement party for the woman responsible for creating the company that you work for? That was the problem we faced when Sally Liddick announced her retirement a few months ago. A nice dinner is certainly a fantastic gesture to honor an outgoing employee, but we wanted to do something extra special.

Adding to our problem was Sally's recently released book. This was our chance to add some sort of interesting experience. You can't give a traditional send-off to the person who just published a memoir of all of her interesting and often crazy adventures.



We decided to do a dinner on a paddleboat called "The Pride of the Susquehanna." The boat cruises up and down the river around Harrisburg, PA. Of course, being that Sally was involved, we were all a little apprehensive about getting on a boat to begin with. Can a paddleboat used for dinner cruises on the river get lost at sea?

Fortunately, nothing crazy happened. We started the trip by spending some time on the upper deck of the boat, taking in a unique view of Central Pennsylvania. Then, we made our way down to the lower deck for a nice catered dinner.

We ended the evening by allowing guests to express any thoughts they had about Sally's retirement. Friends, staff and business associates took advantage of the opportunity.

A theme started to emerge. People wanted to talk about the impact Sally has had on them beyond business. Some people were inspired or motivated by her. Others talked about the integrity she always displayed, even when it was not easy.

It is obvious that Sally used Barkleigh to try to make a bigger impact on the lives of others, in and outside of the grooming industry. You know she has done things the right way when, at the end of her career, people want to thank her and talk about everything she has done for them beyond just business. Her retirement dinner was a nice opportunity for us to show our appreciation for those contributions. It was also a reminder that someone's success in business is measured in so much more than dollars and cents.


todd@barkleigh.com

NAILED...

by Bonnie Wonders

Today was one of those days that really make me want to throw in my grooming towel. It's not all that often that I feel this way, and usually a hefty tip at the end of the day will change my attitude. Today, however, I needed more than a monetary bonus. I'll bet that if someone took a poll of what occupation had the most AA members in rehab it would turn out to be pet groomers.

We are a group that can honestly say our bosses literally try to bite us in the rear, give us a lot of sh_t, and pee all over us. Sometimes we are even sexually harassed by them as we try to peel them off our arms when we have

been holding them up in order to shave around their "parts." One day I fear you will turn on your TV, and there will be a headline story about a dog groomer who super glued a cork into the end of one of those male dogs who wouldn't give up. Yup... it will be me that you see in the mug shot holding up the numbers on a plaque in front of me.

Today this lady brings in a downright ugly (sorry) Poodle/Terrier-looking thing. "I only want his nails cut," she says. She handed the dog to my helper and told her that she didn't want to come back and hold the dog or watch, because she couldn't bear

to see him "in pain." Apparently she couldn't have cared less about MY pain. I heard Trudy ask her if the dog was okay with having his nails cut. "Oh, yeah. He's fine. I just don't want to watch," she told her.

So Trudy comes back with the beast and is holding it for me to cut the toenails. I clip one nail and the little demon goes after me. He managed to get a severe pinch onto the side of my hand.

"Oh, yes. It's all fun and games until you try to bite the groomer," Trudy informed the dog. "You did it now," she tells him as I reach for one of the fabric muzzles

Continued on page 8

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with mesh covering the front of it.

Now, these are my favorite muzzles to use. I've told Trudy countless times that the dog can only "pinch" you if they have one on. They can't actually bite you. I tell her this every time I see her jerk back when a dog that is wearing one lunges at her.

As of 2:47 today, I respectfully rescind that statement. There we were... I, so confident in my

nail clipping abilities, seeing as how I now had the maniac's jaws enclosed. He, like a glassy-eyed Gargoyle, was glaring at me. I closed the clipper on a toenail, and "Yee-oww!" The nasty little thing (dog with the jaw of a snapping turtle) had latched onto the side of the SAME hand that he had before; this time he really managed to connect, and the blood was flowing freely.

Mine, not his, I discovered soon enough.

"Uh-oh," was my trusty little helper's utterance. "Shoot!" was mine (replace the oo's in that word with another vowel and you get my real response).

"Is Teddy alright?" the lady asked apprehensively from the other room after hearing me yelping.

"He's fine," I replied in a controlled yell as I surveyed the side of my palm. I held it up for Trudy to see.

"Don't worry, they can only "pinch," she said, reminding me of my telling her that something like twelve thousand times. I rolled my eyes at her as I walked over to the tub to drown my hand in peroxide. I wasn't going down without a fight on this one. It was now a matter of principle. I was going to get the little bugger's nails cut even if one of us lost a digit; his, mine or Trudy's.

I cleaned my hand and went back to my task. I wound a towel thickly around his neck and had Trudy hang on. It was like watching a miniature bull in a rodeo. He bucked and jerked and screamed his little head off for a few seconds, but I persevered and won. The towel did the trick.

Triumphantly, I released the dog from its restraints and took him out to the owner.

"Did you get them all cut?" she asked with her eyes open as wide as an owl's.

"Yes, we did. It was quite the fight, but I won," I told her.

"Did he bite you?" she asked as she looked at his feet.

"Actually, yes, he did," I told her, holding up my hand as proof.

"Only one time?" she asked in seemingly disbelief.

"Uh, once was enough," I informed her. "You said he'd be fine to have them cut," I reminded her.

"Well, yes. I meant he'll let you do it, but I didn't say he wouldn't bite," she replied with indignation.

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CHOCOLATE POISONING

*There really can be
too much of a good thing!*



by Dr. Boyd Harrell

Though chocolate poisoning in the dog can occur any time of year, the number of reported cases is concentrated around holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's and Mother's Day when chocolates are frequently given and received. This time of year is a good time for groomers both to be aware and to create an awareness around the danger that chocolate can pose to dogs.

So what is it that makes such a delicious treat a canine threat? Chocolate contains a couple of xanthine family stimulants: caffeine and theobromine. Theobromine is responsible for most of the toxic threat in chocolate, while caffeine plays a supporting role. Typical signs may include hyper-excitability, muscle tremors, panting, pacing, irritability, increased heart rate, frequent urination, vomiting and diarrhea. More severe intoxication can cause seizures, coma and death.

That is the scary part. The good news is that chocolate poisoning is dose dependent, and if a twenty-

pound dog eats a couple of squares of a milk chocolate bar or finishes off a child's glass of chocolate milk, it won't be necessary to race to the veterinary emergency clinic in a panic. Not all chocolates are equally toxic either. Compared to milk chocolate, dark chocolate is about three times more potent, and baking chocolate is nearly eight times more potent.

Here is roughly how chocolates stack up, from least toxic to most toxic, and the amount, in ounces, of each that could cause mild signs in a 20 lb dog. Double the amounts will cause mild to severe signs.

1. Milk chocolate - 5-8 ounces
2. Dark and Semisweet chocolate - 2-3 ounces
3. Instant cocoa - 1.5 ounces
4. Cocoa shell mulch - 0.75 ounces
5. Baking chocolate - 0.5 ounces
6. Cocoa beans - 0.4 ounces
7. Dry cocoa powder - 0.25 ounces

Most dogs can't eat enough white chocolate to cause chocolate

poisoning (200+ lbs for a 20 lb dog), though digestive upset is common, even with small amounts being consumed.

Here is how to treat chocolate poisoning in dogs.

- Induce vomiting to prevent more chocolate from being absorbed by giving one teaspoon of 3% hydrogen peroxide per 5-10 lbs by mouth (maximum of 2 tablespoons). If vomiting doesn't happen in 10-15 minutes, the dose can be repeated once.
- Next, give activated charcoal by mouth, which will help neutralize toxins still in the intestine. Toxiban® is a popular and readily available form of activated charcoal. It is available without a prescription from many sources and should be a part of every pet first aid kit.

The best treatment is prevention. Dogs may have a strong attraction to chocolate just as many people do, so don't leave candy where a dog can reach it. Better yet,

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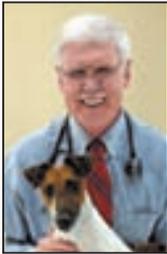
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store chocolates in a safe, closed container, cabinet or refrigerator. Clean up, and put ingredients away after cooking and baking. Teach children not to give “people food,” including chocolates, to dogs. Dogs that have had chocolate may develop a craving for it, which can be a dangerous thing, possibly turning that decorative open candy dish into a canine land mine.



Dr. Boyd Harrell

Dr. Harrell recently authored a book titled “Groomers Guide to First Aid, Injuries and Health,” published by Barkleigh. He is a former multi-veterinary practice owner, current business coach to the pet industry and pet health advisor for Oxyfresh Worldwide.

He presently serves as Medical Director for the SPCA Animal Medical Center in Lakeland, Florida. He has been speaking internationally and coaching others to succeed in business for over fifteen years. He is a certified Human Behavior Specialist and helps people to understand themselves, how others tend to perceive them and how personalities affect team building, performance and harmony in the workplace. He can be reached by emailing boyd@petprosbusinesscoaching.com.

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Getting Down to BUSINESS
BY TERI DiMARINO



That mass of hair on the table was actually hiding a wheaten-colored Scottish Terrier.

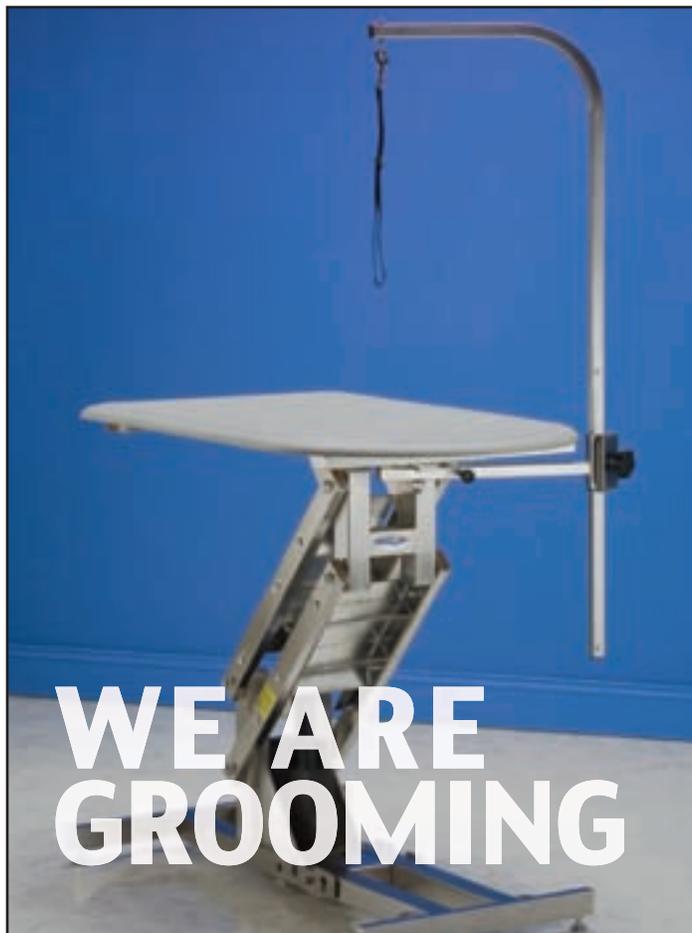
I learned a long time ago to treat myself to simple pleasures. I work very hard, and I figured out that if I don't take time for myself, I become angry, bitter and burned out. It would be all work with nothing in return, or so it would seem. I would ask myself what I was doing in this business, but a simple indulgence every now and then would be very healing.

With that said, I was sitting in the pedicure chair in my local nail salon when I noticed pictures coming to me on my Blackberry. They were from my buddy, Kathy Rose, in

Florida. Kathy and I have been good friends for over twenty-five years and stay in touch. The notation that pictures were attached told me that she was probably working on some project and wanted to share the results with me. Holy cow, what a project it was!

As I downloaded the first picture, I recognized it as some kind of "dog." It was not one of the "model dogs" you often see her working on at the Barkleigh shows, but a live animal that took up about half of her grooming table and was, basically,

Continued on page 16



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unrecognizable. It was a cream-colored “something” that obviously had prick ears and was in dire need of my friend’s professional touch. It appeared to be one of those dogs that we have all had enter our salon at one point or another. We just pity the dog and want to strangle the owner.

The small Blackberry screen downloaded picture number two, and I saw that it was a mid-groom

picture. That mass of hair on the table was actually hiding a wheaten-colored Scottish Terrier. The outline of the body was evident, and breed identification became easy, as I could now see the head. Picture number three revealed the finished product: a nicely groomed Scottie that would make any salon proud. As the nail tech finished the polish on my toes, I gave Kathy a ring. Caller ID told her it was me, and she



Wheaten-colored Scottish Terrier mid-groom.

answered the phone with “Waddaya think?”

“Where on earth did that dog come from?” I asked, knowing full well that this is just another average day in many salons. Ends up that this dog was two years old and had never been groomed! The owner had purchased it from a breeder as a potential show dog but could never find anyone to strip it out for her. So he sat home, growing hair. Lots of hair! The owner finally found that one of Kathy’s specialties is hand-stripping, and she brought the dog in.

Long story short, it took Kathy one and a half hours to strip the dog’s body. I was impressed! The coat did not pull as easily as she thought it would have, as the dog was carrying a lot of undercoat. She was able to get a nice, even strip on the dog and send him home looking quite handsome. It was no small feat, given that the wheaten color is very tricky to work with. Kathy stated that the dog was extremely well-behaved and patient for all the body work, but it took her an additional hour just to complete the dog’s head, as he had never been exposed to clippers or scissors.

You would figure that she would be exhausted and cranky, given the condition of the dog that entered her salon. But quite the opposite was the case. While tired, she was proud as a peacock and couldn’t wait to

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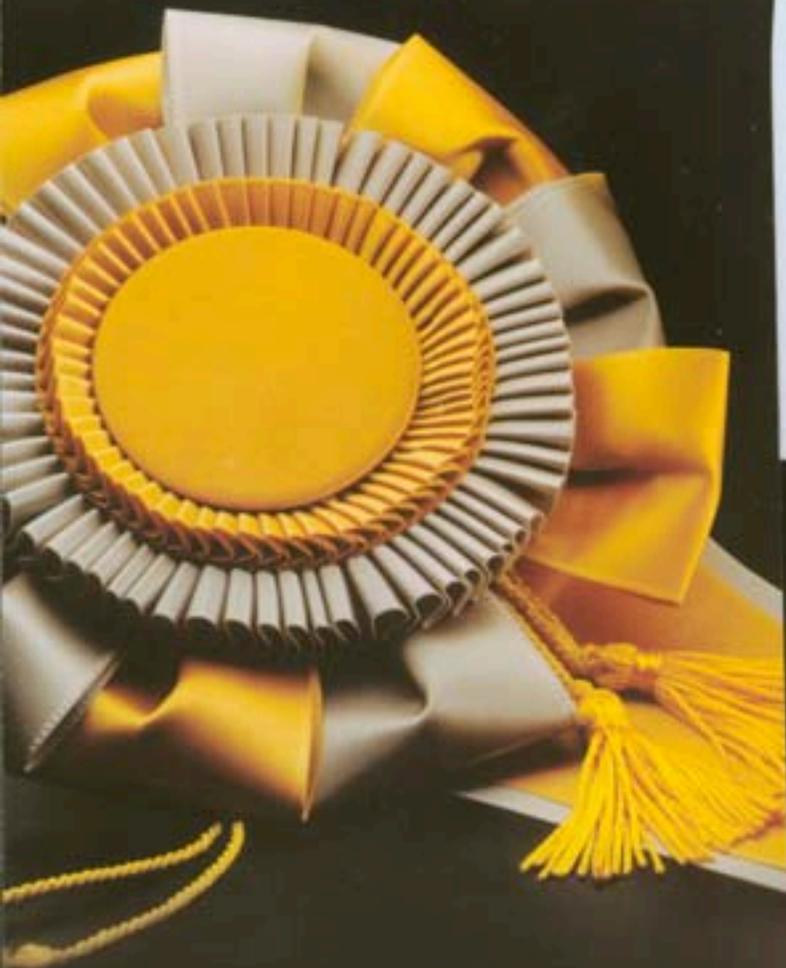
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show off her work. Then she said the words that reflect why we do this job. In a very excited voice Kathy said, "This is the stuff that really makes me love my job!"

Kathy had just spent over two and a half hours (not counting bath and dry time) on a new client, a first time groom, hand-stripped Scottie, no less. While this would have many groomers shaking in their shears, the reality is that this is our job. This is our chosen profession. This groomer has taken the time to learn a technique that not only brings her business, but gives her a true sense of pride and accomplishment. While Kathy does a lot of hand-stripping in her salon, "adventures" like this really punctuate her love of the industry. How often do we take the time to appreciate our talents and where they have gotten us in our lives? It's a shame that many pet stylists lose their passion over time. Sometimes we have to take a step

back, scrutinize our work and smile with a well-deserved sense of pride.

One of the problems that many of us face is boredom. Let's face it. When you walk into your salon and it's nothing but a day of *Puppy clips*, *Lamb trims*, and *#4 all over*, life can become mundane. Now I'm not saying that routine is bad. I like knowing what to expect from day to day, and I don't particularly like surprises, like aggressive pets (or owners). But when something that crosses my table takes my mind off the everyday humdrum schedule, I dive into it with conviction!

Many stylists love a challenge and consider it a part of continuing

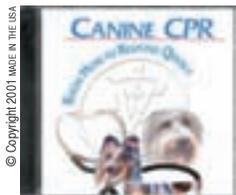


Scottish Terrier finished groom.

education. When you get an appointment from someone with a rare breed you should be shouting "Yeah, something different!" instead of "OMG! What am I going to do with this?" You have to turn these challenges into a reminder of why you chose this profession.

Continued on page 18

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"Skittle" turned into "Leopard" kitty.

One way that Kathy and many other groomers are turning ordinary days into extraordinary days (both mentally and financially) is with the incorporation of creative styling with their everyday grooms. I am not talking about the astonishing haircuts that grace the cover of *Groomer to Groomer* on a regular basis. I am talking about the simple addition of color or design. Kathy has taken to using colorful hair extensions in her

salon. "If you see a dog with an extension, you know it was groomed at my salon," says Kathy, confident that this uniqueness is one of her trademarks.

Even a recent personal visit by my Australian groomer/friend, Christine Speerin, was not without adventure! She was in the U.S. on a teaching tour of her creative coloring skills. We were sitting poolside with a couple of "adult beverages," and Christine began plotting. We decided my ordinary-looking red tabby rescue kitty needed some "jazzing up." I have a very small, private salon in my home, and Christine had the coloring products. Who could ask for more? Over the course of the next

three days we transformed "Skittle" into "Leopard Kitty." "Skittle" had been shaved about a month prior, so her coat was relatively short but long enough to get great results.

Each of the three sessions was forty-five minutes long so as not to stress her, and they got more exciting as we progressed with the design. I cannot tell you how much fun it was to "groom out of the box." While I have done some color in my career, this was totally different. I still have a huge grin on my face every time I look at my cat! While this was definitely not a simple job, due to the design, it was a wonderful learning experience and is one I hope to duplicate when Skittle grows out. Thank you, Christine!

I really found myself appreciating my profession when I went mobile in the early 2000s. Not plagued with ringing phones, barking dogs or impatient customers, I could finally

Continued on page 20



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relax and appreciate what it is that makes my work so "different." I actually rediscovered my craft and my talent. It had become buried in the everyday monotony that sometimes smothered us.

Many years ago a customer was watching me groom, and she said, "You have a neat job." That simple statement has followed me through the years, and I often tell myself, "Yes, I have a neat job." It is different. It is unique. And I am blessed and fortunate to be a part of it.

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Sophie

Behavior CLIPS

by Gary Wilkes



Sophie is a real dog. I didn't make her up as a composite of a bunch of dogs I've seen. She's a four-year-old Labrador Retriever. She was one of ten pups and lived exactly as they did. She wasn't roughly handled or neglected. She wasn't subjected to loud noises that weren't also heard by the whole litter. She was cuddled, loved and handled as much and as little as the other pups.

Her first owner was a man who wished for Sophie to bond solely to him. He planned to make her a hunter. For the first months in his home, he was the only one who fed her. At about a year, she went to school to be a gun-dog. She handled everything just fine. She was trained with a remote collar and learned quickly.

She wasn't traumatized by the E-Collar and will happily do everything a flushing retriever is supposed to do. She is steady to wing and shot, honors a point and won't flush until told to do it. She gets

Every population of dogs contains a broad spectrum of personalities.

the bird (or finds it if necessary) and makes a solid retrieve. In other words, she's perfect in the field. That is obviously what she was bred to do. In virtually every way she's the perfect hunts. What she isn't, is a perfect pet.

The one thing I didn't tell you about Sophie is that she is generally fearful when she's not in the field. At home, if a guest enters the house, she stays in the master bedroom and will not come out. She will not accept food from strangers. If there is a guest in the house, she won't eat at all. She lives with another dog but never plays or solicits affection. She doesn't solicit affection from her current owner – the

original owner's sister. He passed Sophie to his sister because the dog was so maddeningly not like a Labrador Retriever at home.

In her current home of three years, Sophie *does* like a teenage niece who visits from time to time. She doesn't like men – even though a man fed her every meal for her first year. She doesn't like loud noises at home, but has no problem with shotguns, loud trucks or any other loud noise in the field. The other thing I haven't told you about Sophie is that she's perfectly normal.

Every population of dogs contains a broad spectrum of personalities. They get this from their ancestor, the wolf. Wolves are group-living animals who hunt large prey on a regular basis. If all of them were equally courageous, they might not have survived. Some wolves are plainly scaredy-cats. They aren't the ones who dive into a battle with an elk or moose and go for the throat.

Continued on page 24

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Almost all adolescent wolves behave cautiously as they learn how to hunt as a group. Some of these animals simply never develop a “killer instinct.” The best you can say is they have the “harasser instinct.” They leap and dart around the prey animal and nip at its flanks, never attacking head-on with brutish determination. That doesn’t mean that they aren’t as important to the survival of the pack as are the heavy hitters.

The many different styles of attack and chase of any pack are impossible to stave off forever. If a prey animal beats down several of the biggest, most ferocious wolves, the lighter, less committed wolves will chase and harass it until it stands its ground, and the heavy hitters can have another shot at it. The species survives specifically because there is a wide diversity of personalities within the group. Our dogs are no different.

any a Shih Tzu has the heart of a lion and others have the heart of a hamster.

If you’ve been grooming for a while, you know that this rings true. Many a Shih Tzu has the heart of a lion – and others have the heart of a hamster. Most Poodles are considered dingbats, and some of them retain the stalwart nature that made them great retrievers. Some dogs bravely defend their territory while others cower under the bed, just like Sophie. The point is that this wide difference between brave and cowardly isn’t a sign of abuse or mental defect. Both types are well within the “norm” for dogs.

Despite the reality that most litters have a physical runt, the concept of a genetically endowed behavioral runt doesn’t seem to cross

most peoples’ minds. If you adopt a fearful dog from a shelter or buy one from a breeder, you assume that environmental influences caused the behavior. If the breeder swears up and down that all the puppies were raised identically, most people raise their eyebrows. They assume that the pup must have been dropped on its head or teased by cruel children.

Yet we also know that some dogs that lived through horrible conditions and events turn out just fine. I have never seen any consistent problems with dogs that were purchased at pet stores and undoubtedly came from puppy mills. I have seen pups from champion lines that were behavioral basket

Continued on next page

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cases. The only thing that explains this is if you assume that behavior is like coat texture, eye color, height, shape and weight. Conformation judges can list scores of things that make up a good Fox Terrier, which are all purely physical attributes. That doesn't preclude a Fox Terrier that doesn't chase cats or rats or any other small, furry creature from winning a group title.

If the idea of inherited fearfulness still throws you a little, consider this. The art of purebred dogs includes the goal of getting behavioral traits that repeat from generation to generation. Regardless of the diligence and knowledge of the breeder, they can't guarantee that every English Pointer pup will point birds as an adult. Not every Terrier is a good ratter. No breeding program can possibly ensure that every pup will have the same

behavior as its siblings and parents. That's because wolf genes are very, very slippery. Our dogs' genes are just as elastic, stretchable and unpredictable. Some Basenjis bark. Some Cockers don't. Many German Shepherds wouldn't know what to do with a sheep or cow despite the name of the breed. Anyone who has been around dogs for a long time knows that there is great diversity within any single breed and often major differences between siblings of serial litters.

If this topic interests you further, there is a foundational book that can help you better understand the way dog behavior is passed genetically. The authors are John Scott and John Fuller,

Our dogs- genes are just elastic stretchable and unpredictable.

and the book has had several titles since its first publication in 1965. Originally published as *Genetics and the Social Behavior of the Dog*, it has also been called *Dog Behavior* and *The Genetic Basis*. It's still in print, and it's a fine read for anyone with a passion for dogs.

Author's Note "Sophie is no longer a generally fearful dog. I fixed her to her owner's satisfaction, and her progress has been remarkable. She now solicits affection and competes with the other dog in the family. She has bonded with the owner's new boyfriend. She will take treats from strangers and doesn't hide out in the bedroom when guests are in the house but that is another story.

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THE FEET — The entire foot, from the nails to the second digit, including all the hair between the toes and pads, is clipped against the grain with your blade of choice.



THE TAIL — The base of the tail is clipped against the grain. That clipped area is no longer than 1 inch.



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Continue to the rear angulation, skimming down on the side of the back leg.



Moving to the front assembly, sculpt out the side of the neck and front angulation, skimming down the front and the side of the front leg.



Continued on page 28

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Now you're ready to start the scissor finish. Remember to spray your dog with conditioning finish spray and comb through the entire dog before you start scissoring.

Start scissoring in the cuffs. Comb all the hair down to the shaved part of the foot. Hold it firmly in your hand, place your scissors in an approximately 45-degree angle out and scissor around the foot.



Once all 4 cuffs are done, start scissoring the parallel lines on all four legs.



Scissor finish the body, making it even and plush.



START YOUR TOP-KNOT —

Scissor around the eyes with your scissor placed in a 45-degree angle out. Scissor your sides in the same manner, blending the shaved cheek into the longer hair of the top-knot. Continue your side line over the ear and back into the neck.



Continued on page 29



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Split the top-knot in half and comb them to the opposite sides towards the ears. Trim the excess hair with your curved shears, fluff the top-knot back up and round out the top. Now continue into the neck hair, blending to the sides and topline.



Last but not least, ears on Poodles have to be trimmed. If they are too long, trim them up to the level of the breastbone. If they are too short, just make the edges neat. In *Della's* case, the ears are tasseled, which is

another way to keep your trim low maintenance.



The tail is scissored into a pom-pom-like shape to balance the topknot. For symmetry, have the topknot and tail match. The tail should not be taller than the back of the skull of the dog (Occiput).



Irina "Pina" Pinkusevich is currently an instructor at Merryfield School of Pet Grooming in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She has been teaching there for over 4 years. To her credit, she has mentored the students into First, Second and Third places in the NDGAA Career starts. Also to her credit, she has coached one of the students into gaining the status of NCMG prior to graduation and now Division A Competitor. It is truly a remarkable task for both teacher and graduate.

Pina came onto the scene and gained a national reputation in a relatively short period of time. She started her competitions in 2006 and became the Nation's number one groomer in 2008. She has a passion for teaching and is always willing to share her knowledge. Her students are truly grateful to have her as an instructor at the Merryfield School of Pet Grooming.

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Quick Holiday Tips

by Dawn Omboy



The holidays are nearly upon us. Are you ready? Here are holiday tips that could help you be ready for the busy days ahead. Stock up on bandanas, bows and holiday-themed polish for perfect finishing touches to compliment your holiday groom. If you do not have the time or patience, there are plenty of companies who will sell you beautiful bows in a variety of styles and sizes sure to fit anyone's budget.

Davis Manufacturing has glitter in a wide assortment of colors (*Request Reader Service Card #7442*). *ShowSeason* has a wonderful spiced glitter spray that will bring the scent and sparkle of the season home for the holiday (*Request Reader Service Card #7443*).

Jazz up your bandanas with glitter and bells, or personalize them by writing your client's names in glitter glue or puffy paint. You will really stand out if you go to the extra trouble just for them. It will say to each client, "You are special."

For something different, use feather boas in red, white or green. Cut them to the proper neck size for the dog, and use Velcro dots to secure

them or even close them with a small band. You could hang a jingle bell from the fluffy boa necklace. Some clients may not appreciate bells, though, so it would be a good idea to find out ahead of time.

Just a little temporary color added to ears, tail or pom-poms could work a bit of holiday magic. Pick up a package of *Sprayza Pens* (*Request Reader Service Card #7444*). They have an airbrush delivery system and are readily available at many toy retailers. They are online if you Google the name. They are similar to *Blow-pens* and come with a wide variety of colors. *Sprayza's* are an inexpensive method of temporary color that can be added to your groom in mere minutes and bring smiles to the faces of your clients.

Stock up on supplies for next year when everything goes on sale right after Christmas. It can save you a small fortune!

Happy Holidays!

Email dawn@klippers.com with questions or creative ideas you would like to see in print.

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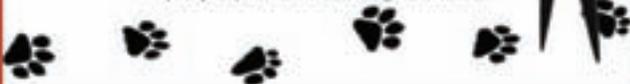
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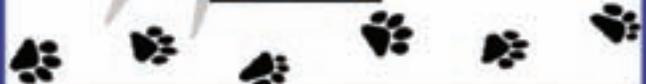


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RETAILING C TO YOUR CLIENT BASE

By Joe Zuccarello

Being in the pet industry for 24 years, 22 of which in grooming, I have heard it time and time again. When asked why you don't sell shampoo and other hygiene products such as dental care, colognes, wipes, etc., this is a very common response: "I don't want my customers bathing their own pets at home. I want them to rely on me for that. If they bathe their own pets at home, they will visit me less, and I

will make less money. I don't make any money selling retail."

If we take a quick look at the many different things said in this statement, we can quickly understand why groomers are unwilling to jump on the bandwagon of selling retail to their customers. If I didn't think about this as I have detailed below, I would tend to agree with the groomers out there when it comes to selling retail. But take a

moment and consider the following before making this decision.

First lesson: The first statement above has to do with "control." Although we would like to believe we can be "in control" of our customers... we cannot. We cannot MAKE them not bathe their pets at home. We cannot MAKE them totally reliant on us for professional grooming instead of resorting to a tub and scrub at home. If the customer gets it in their head that they want to attempt bathing their pet at home... THEY WILL.

So, this brings me to our second lesson: If you don't sell it to them, SOMEONE ELSE WILL. With the economy being what it is today, no

Continued on page 34

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one can afford to “invite” their customers to purchase a product from another pet care provider where they may be influenced to try that provider’s grooming services, get a referral for another groomer in the area, or pick out the wrong product for their pet.

Let’s face it...if you did sell retail and a pet owner came in your salon looking for a product for their pet, whom you haven’t met yet, wouldn’t you try to win them over as a customer? Your competition is doing the same thing...as they should be. Okay, you say you have loyal customers and that’s great! But not all of your customers are as loyal as you may think. Economic changes cause even the most loyal customers to entertain making different choices in their lives, sometimes in our favor and sometimes not.

Third lesson: If you want them to rely on you, then deliver what they need. You need to be the “expert” for their needs and wants. If they need or want something for their pet, you need to be the first, and only person that pops in their head. Sell only those items you can confidently put your whole heart

into and your customers will appreciate it more than just selling retail to make a few extra bucks. Your endorsement goes a long way. Don’t give them a reason to stumble upon another “expert” out there. If that person is perceived to be more of an expert, you may lose this customer. Think about this loss for a minute. Is it just a \$10 bottle of shampoo sale or a \$15 dental product sale? It could be a lost customer for the life of the pet equaling more than \$5,000 in grooming services alone!

Fourth lesson: Small space, no problem. Decide on products that have displays that are supplied from the manufacturer when possible. This will give you the best, organized, most concise, professional look without breaking the bank.

What I have discovered over the years working in the grooming industry and now with *Tropiclean*, manufacturers of *Naturally Green* shampoos and *Fresh Breath Made Easy* oral care products, is just how important groomers are in the lives of their clients’ pets. Just ask anyone who has ever attempted to bathe their own pet at home.

We don’t have to rehash the

nightmare results that typically come from this, but the highlights usually include water and suds everywhere, increased tangles in the coat from not brushing properly before the bath, etc. Groomers, keep this in mind and take comfort in the fact that yes, while some clients will buy shampoo from you and need less of your services, many will return to you the very next time and appreciate your efforts that much more as now they have had a glimpse into your world. Again, it is much better to sell them the shampoo you recommend from the carefully selected inventory you have decided to carry, versus sending the client out into the marketplace where you are more out of control than you think.

Joe Zuccarello is the sales manager for Tropiclean Pet Products. For more information about the products mentioned, please contact www.tropiclean.net.

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GROOM EXPO 2010

BY KATHY HOSLER

Anticipation filled the air as more than 4600 excited pet care professionals gathered at the beautiful Hershey Lodge and Convention Center, in Hershey, Pennsylvania for the 2010 Groom Expo.

Eager attendees from all over the world munched on Hershey's candy and chatted about the coming events as they picked up their registration packets. Frank Brown extended a warm 'Groom Expo' welcome to each person as they passed through the registration area.

A show as large as Groom Expo can be overwhelming – finding seminar rooms, meal functions, trade show, etc. – but *Sparkly Barkleigh*, Joanne Russell, had that under control. Joanne gave Newbie tours of the Expo. She took first time attendees through the entire convention center explaining where everything was located and showing them how to get from one place to another.

Groom Expo has always been known as the 'learning' expo. This year there were tons of seminars to interest the long time groomer and for those just starting their careers.

Susan Bulanda in her *Understanding the Mind of the Dog* seminar said, "What you do says more to

your dog than what you say, show him what you want in a way he can relate to and understand."

Melissa Verplank in her *Best Time Saving Tips* seminar suggests, "Break your tasks down into chunks. Set time goals and objectives. Knowledge leads to success, but having the best tools gives you the edge you need to win the game."

If you want the best tools and equipment...look no further than the enormous Groom Expo Trade Show floor. There were over 170 booths overflowing with everything from the basics like bows and bandanas, to the newest salon and spa products, or even an entire salon on wheels - brand new mobile vans.

Many of the manufacturers had their newest products showcased. Some of the industry's top stylists were on hand at the booths to conduct mini-seminars and breed grooming demonstrations using these products and equipment.

There were fabulous show

Continued on page 36



The Pupweiser "Clydes-Doodles" were a big hit!



Dr. Harrell speaking at Groom Expo.

specials, and groomers took full advantage of them. Some of the booths completely sold out of everything they brought.

"It's been a phenomenal show – absolutely phenomenal!" exclaimed Hilery Zusi, Grooming Consultant for *Lambert Kay*. "Yesterday was the busiest day I have ever been a part of at any show. It was incredible. I can't even begin to count how many groomers came through my booth."

Yes, it's true. Groomers can absolutely shop till they drop, but just give them a few minutes to rest and they are ready to kick up their heels and PARTY!

The Opening Night Wild West Party gave the attendees a "Yee-Haw!" good time. Mr. B supplied the foot-stomping music, and line dancers filled the floor.

Words of encouragement were shouted to the brave souls that lined up to ride the mechanical bull. One by one they climbed aboard, confident that they could conquer the mighty beast. And one by one the bull tossed them high in the air.

One of the bull riders was Kristen Hyatt, from *A Painted Poodle Pet Salon* in Columbus, Indiana.

"What a party. I've had a

BLAST!" exclaimed Kristen as she picked herself up off the mat. "I love Groom Expo. I traveled 600 miles to get here. I learn so much at the seminars; I feel like I have information coming out of my ears. With the VIP Package, I can go into all the seminars. I especially loved the *Intro to Creative Styling* and the seminar that Sasha Reiss gave. He spoke to my inner free spirit when he said, 'Grooming is an art, and art is in the eye of the beholder. Be yourself when you groom. Follow the basic rules... then... the sky is the limit!'"

People enter the pet care industry for many reasons, but something they all have in common are big hearts and the desire and willingness to help those in need – be they two- or four-legged.

Every year at Groom Expo the *Gifts of Love Silent Auction* raises money to fund these efforts. Groomers love the unique items offered and often get into good-natured bidding wars, all the while supporting a great cause. \$10,000 was raised at this year's auction.

There were two very special guests at this year's Expo – Long time groomer, Lisa Parrish, and her

Continued on page 37



Photo by Animal Photography.

Derrick Kassebaum of Tropiclean showing us his skills on the mechanical bull at the Wild Wild West Party!



Photo by Animal Photography.

Mr. B emcees as Brad Killion from *AnimalsInk.com* is handcuffed to our costume contest winner at the Wild Wild West Party. Congratulations to Delaine Phipps who won a VIP package to Groom Expo 2011!



Andis international liaison, Marea Tully, was serenaded by Serbian judge and opera singer, Sasha Riess, on the occasion of her retirement.

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Three Korean Kennel Club and IJA judges, came to Groom Expo to further their education in breed judging.



Jeri Hoppe a level 3 competitor wins second place in Terriers and more.



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Attendees enjoy specials at the Davis distributor booth.

new service dog, *Max*. Lisa lost one of her legs and is now waiting for a kidney transplant due to complications of diabetes. She needed a service dog to help her in her everyday life and at work. Money raised at last year's Groom Expo enabled Lisa to get *Max* and to continue the career she loves.

There were other special guests at Groom Expo, too. Natalia Vianna came from Brazil to experience Groom Expo. She is the publisher of a pet magazine and is very involved with *Groom Brasil*, a huge event for Brazilian groomers, which includes grooming and Creative Styling competitions.

Three Korean Kennel Club all breed show judges and grooming judges were present at Groom Expo. They were Rebecca Kim, Sylvia Jang, and Jenny Joeng. In addition to their judging duties in Korea, they are very involved in organizing IJA grooming competitions and teaching grooming and presenting seminars.

Earlier this year, two representatives from the Korean Kennel Club attended the Groom & Kennel Expo in Pasadena to observe. They returned to Korea and duplicated

the show – right down to the music played during the competitions and the *Sally Break*.

In between attending seminars, bidding at the Silent Auction, and shopping at the Trade Show, attendees could watch the many grooming tournaments in the Red Clipper Arena.

It was amazing to see the stage filled with talented groomers and spectacular dogs. It is an education in itself to watch these artists cut in patterns and create perfection right before your eyes. You get to see the equipment they use and watch their techniques from start to finish.

Top stylists from all over the world entered the *Nature's Specialties Winner's Circle Tournament*. It's an all-or-nothing competition, but if you win it three times, you get the ever increasing jackpot – which now stands at a whopping \$30,000.

On Friday and Saturday the *PetSmart GroomOlympic Tournaments* were held with the Groom Olympic's World Champion to be crowned at the Saturday evening Best In Show Awards and Reception.

The reception began with a

Continued on page 38



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Bridget McAlister and her dog, Canyon, performing a ribbon dance.



Vivian Nash, presented the John Nash Orchid Award to the GroomOlympics Champion. Vivian has been the cofounder and codirector of IJA, the International judging organization of Groom Expo.



Luncheon Hostess, Judy Bremer-Taxman and Master of Ceremonies, Mr. B., ham it up for one last event. Judy retired this year at Groom Expo.

touching tribute to industry icon John Nash. Sasha Reiss, top handler and groomer from Serbia, sang *Time to Say Goodbye* while groomer and WCFO member, Bridget McAlister, and her twelve-year-old dog, Canyon, performed a fantastic ribbon dance. Sasha's rich voice filled the ballroom as Bridget's graceful, fluid movements and Canyon's precision steps were encircled by the long flowing ribbon, and beautiful video of John's life passed on screen.

Shirlee Kalstone shared some of her fondest memories and happy stories about John Nash – telling of his great love for music, fine art, orchids, and all things Italian. She even told a story about Sergio, John's limo driver, who would sing Italian gondola songs as he drove them to their destination.

"Everything John did he did with style, elegance, taste, and grace," said Ms. Kalstone. "He was an innovator who was way ahead of his time!"

It was a magnificent tribute to the man who had done so much for the industry that he loved.

Then it was time to crown the *PetSmart GroomOlympic World Champion*. The Level III winners of each of the five tournaments

entered the ballroom and presented their winning dogs. The crowd roared their approval when the gleaming World Champion Trophy was awarded to Michell Evans and her flawlessly groomed Irish Water Spaniel.

A spectacular buffet banquet followed the awarding of all the prizes. The special entertainment of the evening was the ten-year anniversary presentation of the WCFO's Dancing With Dogs extravaganza. Patie Ventre introduced the teams of trainers and dogs as they entered the ballroom dancing to the *Anniversary Waltz*. Each fully costumed team gave individual performances that they choreographed to music they had selected.

The Sunday morning Gospel Concert and breakfast provided attendees the opportunity to share fellowship with each other and to enjoy the message and the music presented by the Duffields's.

At the Gospel Breakfast, Sally Liddick shared that she was retiring and that Barkleigh was in the very capable hands of Todd Shelly and Adam Lohr. Sally and Gwen brought their husbands up front and gave recognition to many of the people who have been instrumental in Barkleigh since its inception.

Sally said that she is going to devote more time to writing. In fact, Sally's new book, *Taking a Different Path*, was introduced at Groom Expo – and she generously gave a copy of her book to each person attending the breakfast.

The Sunday Luncheon was titled *Thanks for the Memories*. It was Judy Bremer-Taxman's (aka the Fairy God Groomer) retirement party. What a party! It was filled with laughter, great food and jewelry gifts from Judy's husband, Paul, and touching and hilarious stories about some of Judy's adventures.

Judy shared her story about growing up without pets and being deathly afraid of dogs. She told about getting her first dog, a Schnauzer, when she was in her twenties, and how she got into grooming.

She told how her life has been richly blessed by the grooming industry and all the wonderful people in it, and encouraged everyone in the room to reach for the endless possibilities that were out there for them.

The Sunday afternoon Groomer to Groomer Creative Styling Competition is always a show-stopper, and the entries this year were awesome.

Continued on page 40



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Kathleen Putman's creative entry "Stained Glass Illusions."



Jean Honsinger working hard during the creative contest.



Noted author, Shirlee Kalstone, presented the first annual John Nash Memorial trophy to the GroomOlympic champion.

The stage was filled with dogs of every size and every color of the rainbow.

As the competition progressed, an amazing menagerie began to appear... a beautiful Clydesdale stallion in full harness stood ready to pull a beer wagon, a flower bedecked Tiki Mutt was drinking bark-a-rita's at the local Tiki Bar, in a lush meadow Bambi and Thumper played, and an intricate stained glass masterpiece appeared on a beautiful living canvas. You had to be there in person to truly appreciate the skill and artistry that was

being revealed on that stage.

Every stylist who entered the competition had high hopes of taking home one of the placements, but the one award that everyone hopes to win is the People's Choice Award. To be chosen as the best by one's own peers is one of the greatest honors anyone can attain.

Every seat in the arena was filled, and people were standing shoulder to shoulder to vote for the People's Choice Winner. The crowd erupted in thunderous applause and roared their approval for each of their favorites.

It was not easy to narrow down the finalists. But in the end, the People's Choice and First Place honors went to Angela Kumpe with her entry "American Heritage" - a salute to 9/11.

As all the winners were awarded their prizes, the convention center became one big party. Cameras were flashing, and videos were recording the amazing artists and their fabulous colorful creations. Everyone crowded in to see their favorites and began peppering them with questions about their entries - the colors they used, where they got their ideas, and more, more, more.

Then suddenly a voice in the crowd said, "Oh my gosh. Look at the time. Groom Expo is almost over, and I still have to get some things at the Trade Show." Another added, "I have to pick up the CDs and the DVDs that I ordered of some of the seminars!" Everyone began to say their goodbyes and scampered off to wrap up their last minute shopping.

Yes, Groom Expo 2010 was coming to a close, but no one goes away empty handed. Each person takes lasting memories of Groom Expo with them. The fun, fellowship, and learning they experience draw them back year after year.

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Terriers and More Tournament



Level 3 Expert Best in Class • Jennifer Lee



Level 2 Intermediate Best in Class • Jill Pipino



Level 1 Novice Best in Class • Stephanie Montreuil

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LAMBERT KAY Sporting Tournament



Level 3 Expert Best in Class • Michelle Breen



Level 2 Intermediate Best in Class • Trudy Van Arsdale



Level 1 Novice Best in Class • Emily Morelli

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TROPICLEAN Salon/Freestyle Tournament



Level 3 Expert Best in Class • Michell Evans



Level 2 Intermediate Best in Class • Jeanette Genthner



Level 1 Novice Best in Class • James Pesce

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BARKLEIGH All Other Purebreds Tournament



Level 3 Expert Best in Class • Michell Evans



Level 2 Intermediate Best in Class • Shannon Moore



Level 1 Novice Best in Class • Paul Romeo

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38th All American Grooming Show held recently in Chicago Area



Jerry Schinberg

“Nearly 1300 attendees, including many first timers, visited 68 vendors at 101 booths,” stated veteran show organizer Jerry Schinberg, founder of the oldest continuously running grooming trade show and contest – the All American Grooming Show held recently in the Chicago area.

Fifty-eight lectures were offered, covering everything from bathing

basics to business management. Not surprisingly many attendees were drawn to those topics that challenge them on a daily basis: de-matting, hard-to-handle dogs, and how to make the finished groom look better. “In grooming, as in life, one can always learn more,” suggested Schinberg.

In the competition arena, there were 81 contestants with 156 entries in GroomTeam-sanctioned classes and 18 entries in Special Classes. This is the oldest continuously offered competitive grooming contest in the world. Although competition in the regular classes was keen and the Creative Styling was exciting, Mr. Schinberg was especially pleased that stylists in the Abstract Design Competition seemed to grasp the concept he’d been seeking . . . simple, yet stunning creations that could be used in a grooming salon.

It was good to see some old faces at the show. Luther Edmondson, a long-standing grooming show judge,

dog show handler, and one of the nation’s earliest grooming contest competitors was there with his wife, Tomilee. Luther had been very ill in the last year or two but was looking good and was again available for a frosty cold Coke in exchange for a hug, something that he has been doing for many years at numerous grooming shows.

The 39th Annual All American Grooming Show will be held August 11-14, 2011, in Wheeling, Illinois. For more information, visit www.aagrmgshow.com.



Luther Edmondson

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Best in Show Michell Evans from Albuquerque, NM with an Australian Terrier, with judge Jodi Murphy, and Sponsor Andis Co. represented by Roxanne Zenner.



Best All Around Groomer Lindsey Berry sponsored by Kenchii Shears and All American Grooming Show.

ALL AMERICAN GROOMING SHOW CONTEST RESULTS

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3rd Ellie Kinnunen, Hinsdale, IL

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2nd Butch Singson, Bolingbrook, IL
3rd Shannon Moore, Birmingham, AL

Open Division

1st Lindsey Dicken, Altamonte Springs, FL
2nd Penny Underhill, East Peoria, IL
3rd Jessica Rudden, Lake Forest, IL

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NEW PRODUCT NEWS

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The Royal Treatment Italian Pet Spa is excited to launch its new scent for the season, Italian Milk and Vanilla, in their most popular products:



Refreshing Shampoo, Instant Bath Spritz, and Moisturizing Detangling Conditioner. In addition to many other ingredients, these products utilize Organic Honey, Organic Shea Butter, Organic Virgin Olive Oil, Pathenol, Silk and Wheat Proteins. A perfect scent for fall and winter seasons, the Italian Milk and Vanilla fragrance is warm, soft and nurturing. The Royal Treatment Italian Pet Spa was created to not only clean a dog's coat, but to help moisturize and soothe the pet's sensitive skin. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7344.

ANDIS E CEL 5-SPEED FOR PROFESSIONAL GROOMERS



Andis Company has introduced the E CEL 5-Speed, a power-

ful new detachable blade clipper equipped with a 4 x 4 blade drive and a maintenance-free rotary motor. The clipper is quite versatile with a choice of five speeds. Lower speeds are ideal for sensitive areas and higher speeds deliver a smooth, uniform finish for the body coat. A CeramicEdge #10 blade is included.

Finished in a soft pearl pink, the E CEL 5-Speed clipper offers a new anti-slip soft grip housing in black, is contoured to fit comfortably in the hand and has a detachable blade that allows easy blade changes for clipping, trimming and cleaning. Its locking blade hinge keeps the blades securely in place. Any of Andis' UltraEdge and CeramicEdge blades can be used in the clipper. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7347.

I A LA DOG SPA S PETITE PUPPY SHAMPOO

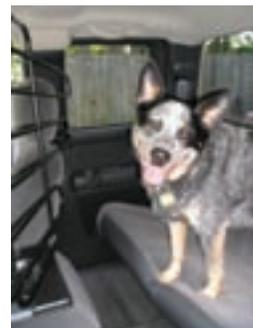
Cardinal Pet Care offers professional-quality *iva la Dog Spa Petite Puppy Shampoo*. The product is safe for puppies over six weeks old because it does not contain harsh chemicals and detergents. It cleans and conditions coats thoroughly, leaving behind a soft, fresh scent of baby powder. Extra mild and tearless *iva la Dog Spa Petite Puppy Shampoo* is like a puppy spa in a bottle, but is gentle on tender, young skin. The product can also be



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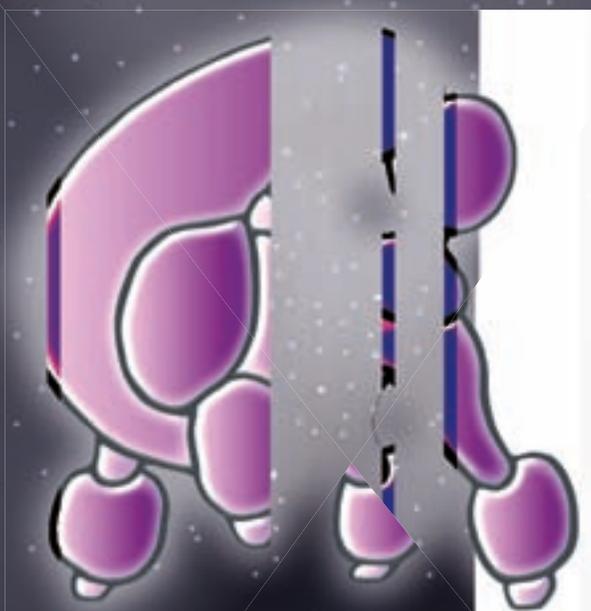
PROVERBIAL WISDOM

When a good man speaks, he is worth listening to, but the words of fools are a dime a dozen. Proverbs 10:20, The Living Bible

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barrier. The product is designed to keep animals in the back seat, so the driver can concentrate on arriving at their destination safely. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7356.

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Stainless Steel Greyhound Combs are European-style combs with easy-grip rounded spines and long stainless steel teeth that penetrate deep into coats, ideal for fluffing, detangling and removing dead hair. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7362.

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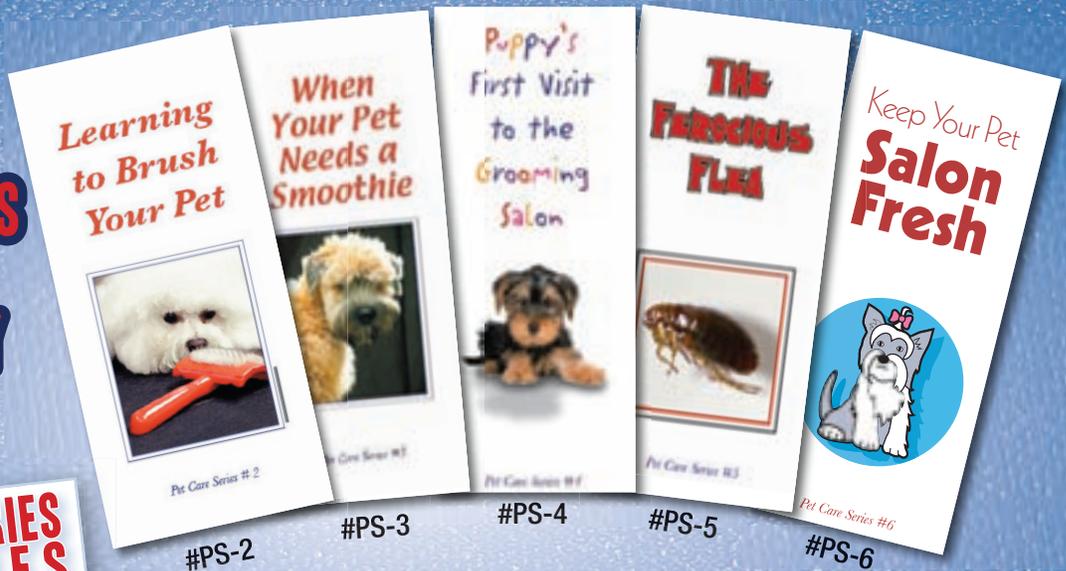
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Groom & Kennel Expo 2011 will feature the educational seminars you need to expand your professional skills. Leading industry experts and well known speakers will present a wide variety of topics to help you

advance your business and enhance your knowledge!

Of course, all of your favorite grooming contests will be presented. The Winner's Circle Tournament, World Cup Grooming Games and Creative Styling Contest will entertain attendees throughout the weekend. A Silent Auction featuring hundreds of pet themed items will be held daily with the proceeds being donated to Gifts of Love International.

For more information on Groom & Kennel Expo 2011 visit www.GroomExpo.com or request Reader Service Card #7349.

The Northwest Grooming Show Coming to Tacoma!

The Northwest Grooming Show will be held in Tacoma, Washington at the Murano Hotel and Convention Center on **March 18th-20th, 2011**. Last year's show featured 30 exhibitor booths!

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For more information, visit www.NWGroom.com or request Reader Service Card #7357.




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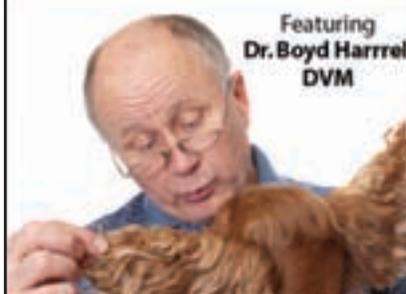
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Best Shot Pet Products International has launched its new Scentament Spa Collection of upscale grooming products in time for the Holiday retail season. *Scentament Spa* features a caressing body wash and fortifying conditioner, oatmeal wash and soothing conditioner, a puppy wash and conditioner, and over 12 spa inspired botanical body splash sprays. Each product has a unique blend of certified organic extracts, silk protein and vitamins, finished with capti-

vating natural essence blends presented in fine exquisite packaging. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7529.

THE MONKEY CORD

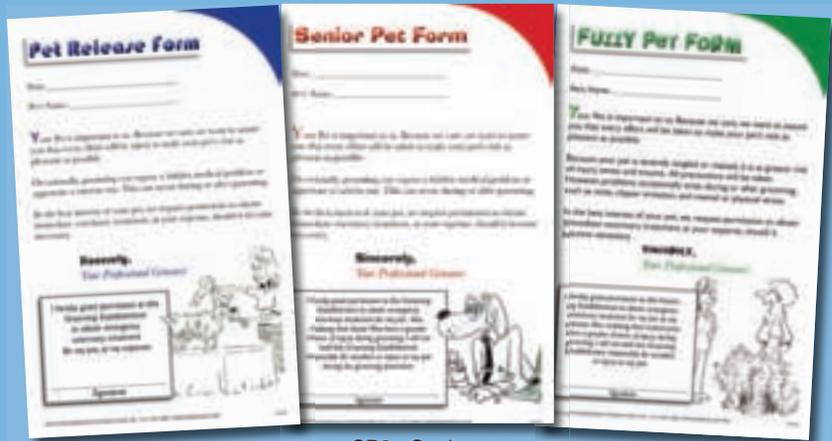
A new product called the *Monkey* is now available for the grooming industry. Stephen Toth, has been working with groomers and cosmetologists for years. Their major complaint was how to get rid

of the tangled cords. So he created the *Monkey Cord* to wrap around electrical cords preventing them from twisting and tangling. It comes in five colors. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7508.



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The Last Word

by Sally Liddick



Gwen and William getting ready for Chicago!



The Road Ahead

I waved goodbye to Gwen and Adam as they drove away on their trip to PetQuest. Later in the morning, I called to see how far they had gotten. Gwen was a little sad leaving me behind. I was too. We always traveled together. I truly regretted that travel was over for us, or at least for me. From those little walks around The Circle as teenagers, Gwen and I derived unending enjoyment from getting behind the wheel and heading down the open road. And we were lucky enough to have husbands that sometimes were happy to see us go, as well.

"It's like the Lone Ranger and Tonto," I said, alluding to her Indian heritage. "They were never separated as they went about doing good all over the world," I said kiddingly.

I had been thrown into an unwelcome semi-retirement due to recent health conditions. Oh yes, it gave me a lot more time to write and had the side benefit of providing an opportunity to put my first book together, *Taking a Different Path*. But the one thing that saddened me most was that I no longer could travel to grooming shows. At one time, airplanes took Gwen and I on adventures, but now they were out

of the question.

Never one to accept the status quo, I began thinking about ways that I could still travel. Recently, the idea of an RV started to gel in my mind. I started looking online for a handicap accessible RV that would work. Due to very bad knees, I ride a handicap scooter and now have to travel with other medical equipment as well. Handicap accessible RVs are few and far between, and none of them met my needs. Besides that, it was like finding a needle in a haystack. You just couldn't put the words "handicap accessible RV" into Google without coming up with half a million responses, as they were connected with every RV sales site in the country.

I breathed a little prayer after weeks of searching. "Lord, if you think that we could still travel, please show me an RV that would actually work for us."

"I found an RV in Alabama," I e-mailed Gwen at the office. I had included a link and against Gwen's usual reserved nature, she e-mailed back "Go for it." That in itself was a miracle. Later that day, she told me of the second miracle.

"You'll never believe this... I had

just hung up the phone after talking to the credit union when I had another message," she said excitedly. "The bank called to ask me if we wanted to close the two credit lines that were unused."

"What credit lines?" she responded. We were not even aware we had these leftover SBA credit lines from buying our building five years before. The interest rate was extremely low, and we could buy the RV without being limited by automobile financing. So begins a new chapter... driving a big RV with two chubby semi-retirees down the road.

Getting the RV to Pennsylvania from the shores of Alabama was no small feat. Gwen had things to do at the office and could not take a lot of time away, plus she didn't want to drive this big rig to Pennsylvania by herself. We turned to Frank Brown and Lions Security in Atlanta. Frank is that wonderful, friendly face you see at our shows handling our security. William, a fellow security guard, was willing to drive it to Pennsylvania and then on our first trip a few days later to the All American Grooming Show. The plan was that William would fly back to Atlanta

Continued on next page

from Chicago, and Gwen would take it slowly back to Pennsylvania with a stop in Ohio to look at a potential site for PetQuest 2011.

Should Gwen fly back from Alabama or travel with William? At my urging she opted for a flight back.

The deal was made in Alabama. Gwen headed back to the Pensacola Airport while William left in the rig. *Oh no.* When she got to the airport, her plane was canceled due to storms. She wouldn't be able to get out until late the next day. She looked at all the options. There was none. So it was a lonely hotel room until she could leave. Meanwhile, William was bookin' to Pennsylvania and even arrived before she was out of Pensacola. Sounds like the start of a typical Sally and Gwen trip. She could have had a comfortable RV ride but ended up in a lonely hotel. Oh well. Now our luck would change.

"I would like to pull out around 3 AM," suggested William at dinner that night at my home. "Well that's just not going to happen," said our husbands laughing hysterically. "They don't go anywhere until noon." William raised his eyebrows as he tried to convince us of the wisdom of leaving early. We left at noon.

We threw everything into the RV, not knowing what we would need. William looked worried as load after load disappeared inside the rig. Well, not really disappeared. Kind of got stuck all over the place. *Air mattress there. Bottles of water here. Breathing machine over there. Scooters here. Boxes in the back. Clothing in the drawer. Pillows everywhere. Towels galore.* It was a free-for-all. Meticulous William tried to corral everything and tie it down for the nearly 700-mile trip to Chicago.

Finally we pulled out. At 12:15 PM we stopped at a truck stop for fuel. We had gone six miles. Gwen and I wanted out to go to the bathroom, and William obliged by lowering the automatic wheelchair lift. A half hour later we were back on the RV, laden with cookies, chips, crackers and drinks for the long road ahead. William was good-natured about the stop. Much better than a husband, Gwen and I decided.

"We have to make better time in the future," suggested William gently. "I don't mind getting you out, but if we try to keep our time to how long it takes to fill the tank, that would work really well." Great idea, William. We will keep it in mind.

Once we were settled, we were the best darn travelers you ever saw. William was able to lay down some miles, but every time we needed gas, (and a 36-foot RV guzzles it), Gwen and I were out of there. Our timing was improving, and William was patient. That night around midnight we stopped at a hotel. Gwen and I stayed on the rig, and William got a room.

Continued on page 54

Holiday Wishes

from The Barkleigh Bunch!

"How do we read these tanks?" I asked Gwen as I pushed the panel buttons. She had a crash course on RVs from the previous owner but was having trouble remembering the details. There were various red, yellow and green lights on Tank 1, Tank 2, and Tank 3. Ominously nicknamed *black water*, *gray water*, and *fresh water*, they were not labeled as such. Black water is bad. It's the toilet water, and you carry the stuff with you. Gray water is shower water, etc. Fresh water, of course, is your drinking and bathing water.

Some tanks you want one way, and some you don't. We misread the tanks. What we thought was very little black water was actually full. I've been told I am full of crap, and it was literally true on this occasion. But we really didn't know it. One tank we thought was full of fresh water, but it was almost empty. And the gray water tank? Who knows. Well, we found out rather quickly as we drove down the road and gray water started sloshing across the floor. Hmmmmmm. And what's that yucky smell?

Gwen started throwing towels on the water, and we determined

that we would have to figure that out. A quick call to the previous owner gave us a heads up on the tank situation. We would remedy it when we got to Chicago that afternoon. William would have the time to get all that cleared out and the freshwater tank filled before he had to catch his flight back to Atlanta. First he wanted to make it to Chicago and beat the heavy traffic around the city.

Meanwhile I began reading the User Guide for the RV. Strange it should have such a small book for such a big vehicle. My Ford came with more information. Since I had a lot of time on my hands, I wanted to become the go-to girl for all things Tank. I knew that my happiness for the next couple days would now be tied to tank levels. Some of the lights went up, and some of the lights went down on the panel. It seems logical that Tank 2 would contain Number 2, but it didn't specifically say. It was all a guessing game, and we were novices.

Oh no. Stop-and-go traffic on the highway around Chicago. We used up tons of extra time creeping along this huge city expanse. It was getting too close to William's

departure time at the airport. Would we have a chance to get everything flushed and filled? Gwen was more interested in getting her boxes into the show while William was still there. But even that plan went by the wayside as we pulled into the hotel parking lot. William would need to grab a cab, give us hugs and take off. I felt apprehension as he left. But no worry. Dan Rowe of Frank Rowe and Son Sharpening of Hershey, Pennsylvania stopped by and volunteered his help.

Dan and his wife deftly maneuvered our rig into a permanent parking place for the next three days. And Dan was an RV expert in my book. Just look how he parked that rig! Being a retired aviator from the service, he wanted to look at the controls. Tanks were his first selection. *Uh oh*. I could tell by the concern in his voice that we might have to sacrifice some convenience

Continued on next page

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since there were no hookups at the hotel.

"You will need to take RV showers," his wife Debbie said. Those are tiny little droplets of water dribbled over your body momentarily. Then you lather up. Then you run tiny little droplets of water back over yourself to rinse your body. I'm sorry. No can do.

Being the queen of grooming as I am, Dan knew that he might have to try to solve this for us. His dad, Frank Rowe, a longtime friend of ours in the industry, would never forgive him. After setup he was going to sneak us out of the hotel parking lot to the nearest dump station, flush all the tanks and fill us with fresh water. Dan said we will want to go to a dump station whenever we have a chance and not push it like we did on this trip. The nearest one was 35 miles away. And even then, once filled and drained, we would still have to conserve tremendously

to get through the weekend.

Dan got in the RV to drive. He turned the key. *Nothing.* He popped out. *Lifted this. Attached that. Cranked that, and checked this.* And eventually jumped it. The engine roared to life. The GPS was set, and Dan started out. The GPS ran us around every backstreet in the Chicago suburbs. Now just how is a GPS any different than the way Gwen and I always traveled? Gwen always said I could get lost in the parking lot.

Thank heavens an experienced driver was behind the wheel, or we would have been stuck on these narrow neighborhood streets. Time was clicking away. We got on the highway and were faced with another tangle of traffic. With a 70-mile round trip ahead of us, it only seemed fair to Dan to turn back. After all, he had been driving all day, setting up his booth, and now was trying to resolve our problems in the

late evening.

"I'll see if I can rig up a way to get you some fresh water," said Dan. "If you are real careful with the water, I think you'll be able to get by with the black water tank if you flush only occasionally." Now there's good news. Flush occasionally. No can do, but we did.

Dan said good night around midnight and went to his RV. I flipped the switch in the bedroom, and all the lights went out. So did my oxygen machine. An emergency call to Dan brought him scurrying back in the midst of a thunderstorm to find the problem. It was a fuse buried in one of the basement compartments near the generator. He showed the unmechanical Gwen how to change it should it happen again. I couldn't even imagine Gwen doing this stuff. *Tank unloading. Tank filling. Fuse changing. Water on the floor. Full tanks. Empty tanks.*

Continued on page 56

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Dump stations. Dead battery. Leveling R . There was so much to learn.

All this upset came with a price for me. I sobbed. We've made a mistake. This is just too much. Let's leave tomorrow. Let's call William back and see if he'll take us home right away. Gwen agreed. She tried to find reasonable answers, but it seemed we were over our heads this time. I settled down, went to the bedroom and touched the air conditioning... or so I thought. The lights went out, and the oxygen machine stopped running. We couldn't possibly call Dan again. Gwen got a flashlight, went back to the generator as instructed and changed another fuse at midnight. Yes, she vowed, we will call William tomorrow.

That morning, we talked it over again. I told her how I could probably market this to the grooming industry or dog show people. We could get the RV sold at Hershey without a problem. Yes, my traveling days would be over, but I accepted that. More tears. But we both agreed. After our discussion, Gwen went inside the show and talked to some of our friends about the dilemma. She reminisced with Marlene and Angie Romani of our wonderful past

trips together and how sad it was that they were over now. She called Frank Brown, and he assured her that William would be on the next plane out of Atlanta to Chicago. We would be going home soon.

I sat on the couch in the RV alone and contemplated my decision. I was exhausted. I had a miserable night on a hard bed. I was hungry. I was crabby. I was sad. Nothing was where it I needed to be.

What would make my life better this morning? A good hot shower. I was going to be leaving today anyway, and we would be dumping the tanks. I needed a good hot shower after two days on the road, and I was going to let the water run. No RV shower for me.

I got into the ample handicap accessible shower stall and lathered up. I brushed my teeth at the bathroom sink and let the water run. I enjoyed some milk and goodies from the convenient refrigerator. Not the best breakfast, but it worked. I sat on the couch and looked around. I really loved this RV. It was perfectly suited for me. A few modifications and it would be great. I called Frank.

"Has William left yet?" I inquired.

"Yes, Miss Sally... I just left the airport, and William is on his way," he said proudly, having solved my problem. I broke into tears. I had decided to stay, and now it was too late. I had ruined William's life. He dropped everything after a few hours of being home and was now on his way back. He had a new baby, and I was taking him away from his baby and his two young daughters again. Now I was not just ruining my life, Dan's life, and Gwen's life... I had added William to the list. And Frank Brown wasn't having an easy go of it either as he tried to satisfy my whims.

"Just let William come up and help you, and he'll do whatever you need. Let him stay at the hotel until you're ready to go, and I think you'll get your confidence back," said Frank with his usual sage advice. I agreed with him, and William arrived hours later.

I got dressed, went into the show and had a blast. It was great being on the road. It was wonderful seeing my industry family again. I was back in my element and enjoying it all. I had not seen Jerry's new venue for the last few years, and it was beautiful. The show was great, and I connected with old friends whom I had not seen in a long time. We went out to dinner with Dan and his wife, Debbie, and Marlene and Angie... and determined that we would hit the road at the end of the following day. We would keep the RV, and we would learn how to deal with it. We would understand more about tanks and dump stations, and Gwen would become more mechanical. In other words, Gwen would work like a dog to keep me happy. She always refers to it as getting extra jewels in her crown in heaven. And other friends who know me well agree.

We left the next day for Ohio and an opportunity to look at a new facility for PetQuest. Our first stop was going to be a dump station

Continued on next page

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where we would gleefully discharge our holdings. We traveled about 100 miles that evening until we could find a dump station along the major highway. This told us that these places are not to be taken for granted. Like Dan says, always take advantage of one along the road, and don't wait until you get to your destination.

In preparation for the big event, I started reading the owner's manual out loud on black water and gray water flushing.

#1. Locate tubing for discharge of black water.

#2 Put on gloves and connect tubing to discharge.

#3 Thread tubing up through basement compartment.

#4 Remove screw-on cap from underneath discharge hose attachment and connect to dumping receptacle.

Gwen and William didn't seem to be paying attention. When we stopped, I asked them if they'd like to take the book with them as they drained the tank. Gwen had no use for it, and William was on his way out the door.

"It's not rocket science, Sally..." she said with that "you're stupid" look. William looked so nice in his white Adidas jogging suit and pristine white Nike shoes. He had been a semi-pro basketball player, and though he was now in his mid 40s, one would take him for much younger. William followed Gwen to the side of the RV. Occasionally Gwen would come back to give me an update. It was taking forever to dump these tanks. She assured me that it was going okay, but it was just time consuming.

"Do you want the book?" I would ask again. "No" would be her agitated reply, and she would disappear into the night on the other side of the RV. I kept abreast of the dumping procedure by watching the gauges. I wanted to figure out which ones were the black and gray tanks. It never really was clear, but it was

evident that the levels were going in the right direction, albeit slowly. I reasoned that draining poop is a time-consuming detail.

Finally the flushing went quickly. What could have happened? Gwen finally appeared at the door. It seems William had an accident. Getting tired of waiting, he pulled the plug to see what was wrong. The little cap was never removed. When William twisted it off, a surge of black water rushed out. It seems, when attached properly, it might have been a quick job. However, one might want to remove the cap before one starts to discharge the black water. It said that in the book. Remember that white Adidas jogging suit and Nike shoes? Gentleman that he is, William doesn't care to discuss it.

A good rinse of the shoes and suit seemed to help, and we were back on the road again on our way to the Roberts Center in Wilmington, Ohio. We arrived late in the night, and William checked into the hotel while Gwen and I enjoyed our first night with proper fillings of the tanks. No more RV shower. No more conserving of black water tank space. No more yucky smell.

In the morning we got up, took our showers, got dressed and just generally appreciated the RV. We made plans for future trips and even decided to take it across country to Pasadena in February. A glutton for punishment, William even offered to drive again.

We visited the Roberts Center and found it to be a fantastic place for PetQuest. It is probably even a better facility than the Hershey Lodge, in some ways. They even welcome RVs with a large area for them to stay. This will surely be our PetQuest home for years to come. It has lots of growth potential and is nicely located. A huge outlet mall nearby even boasts "PETS WELCOME" signs on almost all the doors of over 100 stores. Now where can you find something like that? And the hotel and convention center is very wel-

coming to pets, something that we never had at any other facility.

As we left from touring the outlet center, I continued to read the RV User's Guide. Near the back of the book was a recommendation to new owners.

#1 – Do not take this RV on an overnight trip for the first time.

#2 Your first trip should be one half hour away from your home.

#3 Do not stay overnight.

#4 Your second trip should be a few hours from home.

#5 Do not stay overnight on the second trip.

#6 Go on an overnight trip within an hour of your home.

#7 Go on an overnight trip for one day only the first time.

#8 Now you are ready to go on a longer trip. Have fun!

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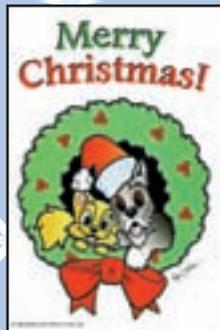
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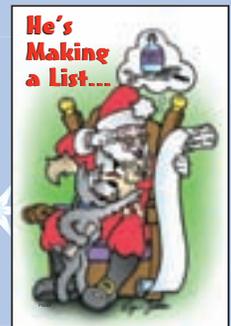
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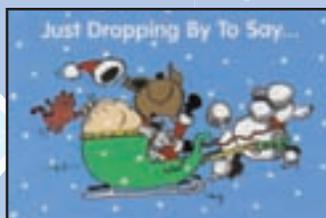


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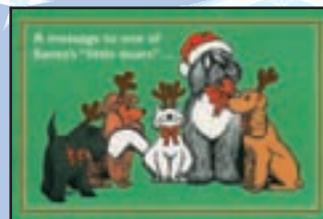
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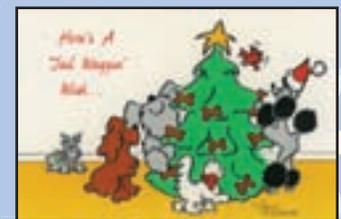
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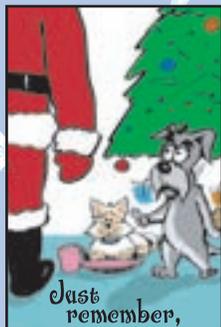
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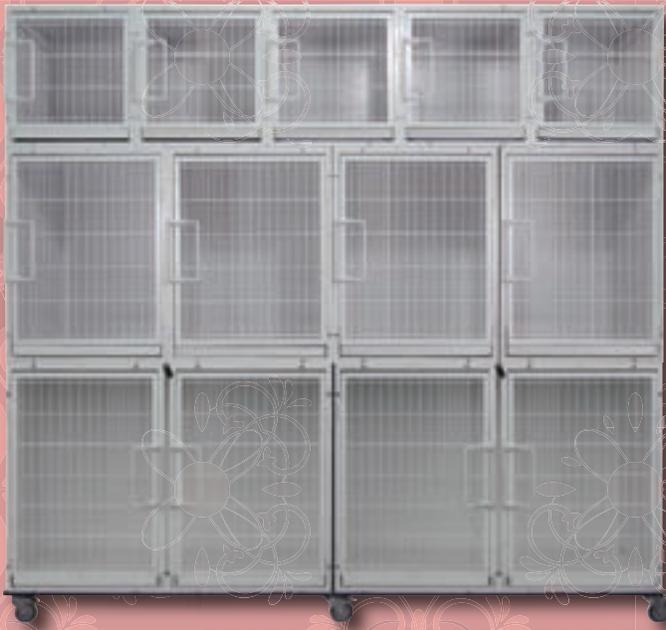
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