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Groomer

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THE IRISH
WATER
SPANIEL**

HIP DYSPLASIA
A Quick Overview

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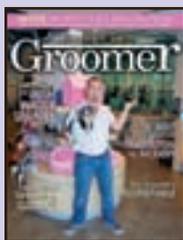
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COVER

Jonathan David shows off his new grooming salon, *The Lap of Luxury Dog Spa*.

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Off the Top of My Head by Todd Shelly



Back to Boutique

A few years ago, Sally and I were at a pet industry show and noticed that at least half of the booths were selling boutique type items. There were a huge number of new companies that sold clothes, jewelry and accessories for dogs.

It did not take a genius to recognize this emerging trend. I looked at it through the eyes of a businessman. At the time I didn't have a dog, so I didn't look at the products from the perspective of a consumer.

That led us to create *Pet Boutique & Spa magazine*. The magazine did well for a few years, but when the recession hit, boutique items and spa services were hit very hard. We suspended the magazine with the thought that someday we might bring it back.

As often happens with an idea that is not at the forefront of the mind, we pretty much moved on from it. Out of sight, out of mind you could say. That was until I finally adopted a dog, *Raleigh*. As you may remember from an earlier editorial, *Raleigh* is a rescued dog that I adopted and take to the office every day.

That is when the boutique and spa subject became front and center again. Because *Raleigh* is a girl, a few people in the office felt that she should look more like a girl. The biggest offender is Maggie, our advertising sales rep. At best, Maggie is dog obsessed. At worst, she is a self-proclaimed nutcase. Maggie can't stand that this sweet girl dog has to live her life without the pretty things owed to any self-respecting dog.

I tried to explain to Maggie that a dog doesn't know or care how it is dressed or if it is properly accessorized. A dressed up dog is for the owner's pleasure, not the dog. With that said, I'd be thrilled to dress *Raleigh* as a biker dog or in Penn State football garb. Of course, that is unacceptable to Maggie.

It remained a friendly joke until one day I heard a commotion outside my office. I was on a business call, so I closed my door and finished the call without giving it a second thought (my office is by a high traffic area, so it's common to have to shut my door). When I came out of my office, I found Maggie and Sherri, our administrative assistant, on the floor with the dog giggling like a couple of school girls. The bright red nail polish made it impossible to miss why they were so amused. In their minds, *Raleigh* took her first steps towards looking like a proper girl dog.

As luck would have it, *Raleigh* had a vet appointment that very afternoon. Upon seeing *Raleigh* the vet smirked and said, "My, doesn't she look pretty. Did you do that yourself?" I tried to explain, but realized the vet was on to the matters at hand. A few days later, a friend came in to visit me at the office. She took one look at the dog then looked up at me and exclaimed, "Todd! Your dog is wearing nail polish. What are you going to do next, carry her around in your purse?"

Since then, I have waged a battle with Maggie over *Raleigh's* look. I entered her as *Brian* from *Family Guy* for the company Halloween party. Maggie dressed her in a sweater for our ugly Christmas sweater contest. *Raleigh* also now wears a pink faux diamond encrusted name tag.

I did have to concede that *Raleigh* loves all the extra attention she gets when she is dressed up. She doesn't mind the costumes or bling at all. And on the spa side, I'm certainly willing to splurge to get my girl special treatment.

So, with that said, I hope you enjoy the rebirth of *Pet Boutique & Spa* as this month's special supplement to *Groomer to Groomer*.


todd@barkleigh.com



The Naked TRUTH!

by Bonnie Wonders

I just KNEW it would finally happen to somebody other than me for once! After all these years of making a fool of myself in front of clients, UPS guys, the mailman and anyone else within missile range, the tables have finally turned. Call it a late gift of the holiday season, if you will.

By the time you read this, Thanksgiving will be a distant memory for you. But alas, for me, it was the holiday that gave me the insight that I am not the only klutz in my corner of the state. It was a MasterCard moment for me. One that was TRULY “priceless.” It was the best non-paying job I could have ever gotten.

I didn’t have to defend myself for charging the grooming rates that I do. I didn’t have to listen to the “Groomer so-and-so charges less than you do,” speech. I didn’t have to answer 50 questions about “Have you ever groomed a Yorkie before?” I didn’t even have to wipe up a single pile of dog pee.

It was actually *free* both to and from me. It was the most enjoyment I have EVER had from not getting a single cent from a customer and

It was one of those momentary things. Like when people say they get into a car accident and their whole life flashes before their eyes!

having them practically RUN out of my place. It made the remaining two hours of grooming in my day just fly by. It made me wish I had the foresight to have security cameras or something going. I could have been in contention for the grand prize on a ridiculous reality show.

And here’s EXACTLY what happened ...

I got a call from some guy in the morning about cutting the nails on a basset/beagle mix. That’s all he wanted done. He asked when he could come in for it and how much it would be. I gave him the price and told him that he could stop in any time during the day, as long as it was before 6:00 that evening.

My helper left around 4:00 and there I was, all alone except for the Bichon that I was drying. The buzzer on the door went off and I looked out front to see a thin guy about 6 feet tall with a Basset looking dog. I figured this must be the one that had

called for the nail clipping.

“I’ll be right out,” I told him as I turned off the force dryer. He was standing in front of the counter squeaking the latex toys in their display. I took the Bichon into the cage room and placed her in one of the cages.

“Are you here for the nails?” I asked the guy as I stepped out around the corner to the front room.

“That’s what I called you about. You said I could come by any time,” he said defensively.

“Yes, now is fine,” I told him.

The dog looked to be almost as wide as she was long. I was guessing her to go at least sixty pounds or so. I decided to just have the guy bring her back and help me lift the dog onto the table.

“Come on back,” I said to him. The guy followed me into the grooming room all the while pulling the dog who had put the brakes on the

Continued on page 8



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whole way back. I stopped in front of the larger of the two grooming tables. "I'll help you get her up here," I told him as I leaned down toward the dog.

"It's a boy," the man said.

"O.K., then I'll help you get HIM up," I said still leaning over the animal. The guy then pulled the dog backwards, away from my reach.

"I don't need any help. I'll pick

up my own dog," he said with an arrogant tone in his voice for some reason.

Now, you and I both know how heavy those short legged dogs can be. Especially if they decide to fight you on the way up. I had a feeling that this was going to be one of those dogs that wasn't going to be overly cooperative. As he tried to reach under the dog the legs went

out from under the beast. Now he was lying flat out and the man couldn't get hold of him.

"It really would be easier if you let me get one end and you take the other," I offered once again.

"I said I'll get him myself! I don't need YOUR help," the guy snapped at me.

"FINE," I said in that tone that women use when what they really mean is more like "You're an idiot."

The man yanked up on the dog's neck with one hand under his collar and the other under the animal's chest. The dog was horribly off balance as the owner picked him up. The dog started doing that "fish thing" that one does when they have been caught and they are flopping around at the end of the line. The guy was near to losing his balance as he was near to losing his grip on the dog. Just as he was trying to get the dog's body onto the grooming table it happened...

It was one of those momentary things that had to have happened so fast, yet seemed to go on for five minutes. It was like when people say they got into a car accident and their whole life flashed before their eyes. That they think of a hundred things they would say or should have said to their loved ones.

I don't know for sure if the dog caught his hind foot or feet in the waistband of his owner's pants or if his pants were just exceedingly loose. All I know is that as the guy struggled with trying to keep hold of the dog, he lost his pants in the process. And I DO mean lost. Those babies hit the ground and I suddenly stood looking at a guy with his pants on the floor and ABSOLUTELY no underwear in sight....not a stitch. He was totally naked from the waist down, STILL holding onto the writhing dog.

I saw and thought so much in those few seconds which seemed to go on forever. In that short span of

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time I saw IT ALL. His butt was as hairy as a goat and I saw a large ball of lint in the “plumbers crack” area.”

I had NO idea what to do.....or say.....I was frozen in place. I don't know if I should have asked if he needed help (again) or tried to reach for the dog before the guy totally lost his balance and fell on the floor. I don't think I uttered a word. If I did, I really don't recall what it was. I guess I should have turned away or closed my eyes or SOMETHING. I do remember thinking, “Just drop the dog, drop the dog....drop the dog.” That thought did seem to last me forever.

He must have zoned in on the telepathy thing, because he finally did release his grip on the dog. I DO recall the only sound I made at that point. There was the guy, his face redder than red reaching for his pants and I burst out in laughter. I mean I absolutely howled. Tears came out and it began to get dif-

ficult for me to catch my breath. I think I was near convulsing for the fit of laughing. In those few short moments the scene kept replaying in my mind in an endless loop. My power of speech was completely gone.

The man finally got his pants up and without even fastening them, grabbed for his dog, who was at this point sitting under the other grooming table. Me, I was still laughing hysterically. “I can't do this now,” is all the guy said as he held onto his pants with one hand and his dog's leash with the other. He all but ran through the shop to the front door.

All this, and I was left in an incredible position. I had no one to tell. There I was, all alone. Everyone had gone home from the adjoining businesses and my helper was gone. I tried to call home and I got the answering machine. I called my sister and only got her machine, too. I pranced around the shop like a cat

that had caught the prize mouse and had no one to tell.

I couldn't wait to get home to tell my husband how my day went. I finally had something out of the ordinary to tell him. As soon as I hit the door I ran over to him and grabbed him by the hand. “Come sit down, I GOTTA tell you what happened today,” I said ready to burst.

I relayed the whole story in great detail to him and was once again overtaken by fits of laughter. Dave sat quietly as I told the details of the “event.” “So how's THAT for an exciting day?” I asked as I tried to catch my breath.

Still quiet, he sat pondering my tale. Finally he got up and looked directly at me as he reached down and patted my hand. “Are you sure it was “Lint?” He asked, as he headed for the kitchen for a cup of coffee.

In “hind”-sight, maybe I'm not certain ...

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HIP Dysplasia

A QUICK OVERVIEW

by Dr. Boyd Harrell



Hip dysplasia is a common condition for large breeds of dogs and a lesser problem for smaller dogs. Some breeds have a higher incidence than others, such as the German Shepherd Dog, Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, Saint Bernards, Great Danes and other giant breeds. Even though giant breeds are more prone to hip dysplasia, just about any size and breed could be affected.

Dysplasia means abnormal growth and hip dysplasia is a degenerative condition of the hip joint resulting from abnormal development during growth. So one might ask “If hip dysplasia is a growth problem, why is it that most dogs diagnosed with the disease are mature dogs?”

That is a fair question and the answer is that hip dysplasia

is a progressive disease, that is, it worsens with time. More severely affected dogs will show signs early on, possibly at 6 months of age or less. Many more dogs are able to tolerate the condition in their developmental period and possibly for a few years more until the arthritis and the discomfort level reaches a threshold at which signs start.

Symptoms are those of arthritis: limping, slow to rise, stiffness in the rear legs, decreased activity levels and in severe cases; possibly loss of appetite, wasting of muscles in the hips and rear legs, pain associated with pressure on the hips or forced movement of the rear legs. It is also interesting that the severity of the signs seen on x-rays don't always match with the amount of lameness one might expect, suggesting that individual pain tolerance is an

important factor in how lame any given patient may become.

The hip is a ball and socket joint with the head of the femur or thigh bone (the ball) seated into the acetabulum (the socket) of the pelvis. Normal hips have a deep seated ball and smooth edges around the socket. Dysplastic hips have a shallow socket, which in the worst cases may even allow the ball of the joint to move upward and partially out of the socket.

This condition is called subluxation, and as you might imagine is a very uncomfortable situation due to bone rubbing on bone and the ligaments and tendons being stretched as the hip partially dislocates. Though changes associated with hip dysplasia are often bilateral (ex: affecting both hips) some dogs will

Continued on page 14

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have one normal hip and one dysplastic hip, referred to as unilateral hip dysplasia.

So what causes a dog to develop hip dysplasia?

The causes can be multiple. Genetics can be a huge influence and multiple genes are involved, making selective breeding and genetic selection more difficult than most would imagine. Mating two dogs free of dysplasia does not guarantee that the offspring will not develop the problem. Selective mating will, however, significantly reduce the chances of producing affected offspring. *The Orthopedic Foundation of America (OFA)* is one organization that will review x-rays of dogs and grade their hips as normal or some degree of dysplasia. By allowing only certified hip dysplasia free dogs into a breeding program the incidence of dysplasia can be significantly reduced.

“ DOGS THAT GROW QUICKLY, ARE POORLY NOURISHED OR ARE OVERWEIGHT PLACE AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN ON THE HIP JOINT...”

To complicate the picture, environmental factors also influence hip dysplasia development. Dogs that grow quickly, are poorly nourished or are overweight place an additional burden on the hip joint making hip dysplasia more likely to develop and/or add to any genetic factors in play.

How is Dysplasia Diagnosed?

Hip dysplasia is diagnosed with a combination of a physical exam to check for laxity in the joint, abnormal gait, range of motion and discomfort. Next an x-ray is needed to evaluate how deep the ball fits into the socket of the hip and to see if there is any roughness around the socket, a flattened ball, bone spurs

or other signs of a diseased hip.

If a dog has hip dysplasia what are the treatment options?

There are two categories of treatment: medical and surgical. Often the two are combined.

Medical management might include restricted exercise, weight loss, warmth; including a warmed or well insulated bed, injections, physical therapy, massage, pain medications, anti-inflammatory medications and natural supplements to support healthy cartilage.

There are several surgical options and only a simplified description of the more common options will be mentioned here.

Continued on page 16

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Juvenile Pubic Symphysiodesis is primarily a preventive surgery. The idea is to cause the two halves of the hips to fuse together more quickly than they would on their own. This welding of the pelvic halves reduces some of the rotation of the socket that would otherwise occur, helping to keep the ball seated more deeply which in turn creates a more stable hip joint less prone to degenerative changes. This procedure is done on pups at risk of dysplasia which are less than five months of age.

Triple Pelvic Osteotomy (TPO) is a surgery done on young dogs of about 8-18 months that do not yet have severe signs of dysplasia. The technique is designed to move the acetabulum into a position that causes the ball to be seated more deeply. This in turn will minimize further deterioration of the joint.

Femoral Head Osteotomy is a procedure that basically removes

the head of the femur (the ball of the hip) leaving the hip to be supported by muscles in much the same way that muscles suspend the shoulder blade from the rib cage. This eliminates bone on bone contact and comforts many patients.

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To summarize, hip dysplasia is a condition primarily of large breeds of dogs that leads to degenerative or arthritic changes in the hips. There is a heavy genetic influence and

sound breeding programs that can reduce the chances of offspring being affected. Environmental factors are influential and providing good nutrition and preventing obesity, especially in the prepubic period, is healthy business even if your pet is not one in the high risk group for dysplasia.

Dr. Harrell recently authored a book titled "Groomers Guide To First Aid, Injuries and Health" published by Barkleigh (RSC #7567). He is a former multi-veterinary practice owner and current business coach to the pet industry and pet health advisor for Oxyfresh Worldwide. In addition, 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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The **Groomer's Roundtable**

Roundtable Question:

- **What retail products have recently worked for you?**

I use the Tropiclean Spa brand Facial Scrub (RSC #7717) and have just ordered the Ultra Max Pro line (RSC #7718). *Lisa Kerr, Borden-Carleton CN*

Fromm Dog food! (RSC #7719) *Vicki Graves, Silverton OR*

Breath-less Brushless Toothpaste. (RSC #7720) *Chicago IL*

Soy candles that really make my shop not smell like dirty dogs or shampoos. *Vickie Smith, Phenix City AL*

The Davis Products work wonders, I purchased their spa collection shampoos and hair products that enhance the coat and leave the dogs relaxed and refreshed. (RSC #7721) *Tess Hilderbrand, Lanett AL*

The Starmark interactive toys are great for my training clients and grooming clients. (RSC #7722) *Jennifer Lavelle, Brookhaven PA*

I just recently purchased Plaqlnz, I have spoken to owners about it and everyone seems very interested in it. I just hope that it delivers on its promises. (RSC #7723) *Sara Fincham, Whitby CN*

Spa shampoo and cologne. *Lisa Calderon, Ahoskie NC*

FURminator. Done properly (a competitor of mine offers it, but doesn't do a very good job). I add \$34.00 to a \$33.00 brush/bath on a Lab over 80 lbs, it has great results and people

return for this service. (RSC #7724) *Amy Howard, Beavercreek OH*

Espree Facial Cleanser. (RSC #7725) *Robin Hughes, Russellville KY*

Some retail items that are selling well: Whole Life treats (RSC #7726), Red Dingo tags (RSC #7727), Angels' Eyes (RSC #7728). *Renee Bartis, Mebane NC*

We have started to carry Pegetables (RSC #7729). The dogs love them. Also, some select gourmet treats. *Sarah Weiss, Winamac IN*

Angels' Eyes. (RSC#7728) *Bridget Edgington, Port Angeles WA*

Premier Spray Collar (RSC #7730) and Puppy Bumpers (RSC #7731)! *Donna Anderson, Richmond VA*

I purchased the Kokos Pet Spa Vitamin Shower and I have seen vast improvement in the condition of the skin and coat of clients that have previously suffered from skin problems. (RSC #7732) *Elena Jordan, Fort Washington MD*

The Blueberry Facial (RSC #7743) followed by the blueberry spritz spray. One sniff from the clients and they're hooked! *Lynn Holmes, San Luis Obispo CA*

Eye Envy (RSC #7733) and Oxy Fresh (RSC #7734) *Oksana Fagenboym, San Ramon CA*

Nuvet Nutritional Supplements. I was skeptical, but tried it because

it didn't cost me anything; in fact they paid me! It really works. I know a dog that had thousands of dollars in vet bills and nothing was working for her yeasty, smelly, bald, raw, itchy skin. She stunk! Nuvet completely eliminated her coat issues and ear infections. She even tried to jump in the tub last time. I am a believer. Excellent product. (RSC #7735) *Becca Curry, Maricopa AZ*

Skunk-Off Yeah!! After years of products that didn't do the trick, even trying the douche rinse. I was thrilled to receive this product in a sample and now buy it regularly. This time of year in my area I have MANY calls about skunked dogs. (RSC #7736) *Gail Grogan, Woodbury Heights NJ*

It's been around for a while, but the SPA brand Facial Scrub. Its "tearless" and a little goes a long way. (RSC #7717) *Auston Gross, Grandville MI*

Puppy Pinata has been selling very well (RSC #7737). We also now stock the Universal Soft brush with the "open teeth." It is the only brush we use in the shop and they fly off the shelf. (RSC #7738) *Beverly Stecker, Weston FL*

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THE YEAR AHEAD Groomers' Health Issues



Very few occupations are without risks: especially jobs involving any kind of physical labor. Pet grooming is no exception. In fact, our profession is peppered with its own unique set of work related issues. We knew the risks when we got into grooming or at least we should have been aware of the potential hazards.

Some of these are repetitive motion problems, such as carpal tunnel. Others manifest themselves as sensitivities to some of the products we use. Then there are the ones that can be caused purely by the physical exertion of the job, like trying to pick up that struggling ninety pound Labradoodle without help. And what about the injuries that, to a certain extent, are out of our con-

trol, like inadvertently getting torn up by an aggressive cat that you are trying to handle. Many of these physical issues can be avoided. Others are, unfortunately, part and parcel of our chosen profession and we must do our best to circumvent potential problems before they dramatically shorten our careers.

For the next twelve months I will be putting health issues, that are common to groomers, under the proverbial microscope. I am talking about the physical problems

many of us experience: issues with our neck, back, knees, wrists and hands. Hearing problems, while preventable, are abundant. Allergies, skin problems and respiratory issues are also on the agenda. How about our exposure to sick dogs and their "accidents" that are all too common in our salons?

Our industry seems to have its share of emotional issues too. Depression and burnout generally top the list. And, has anybody out there

Continued on page 20

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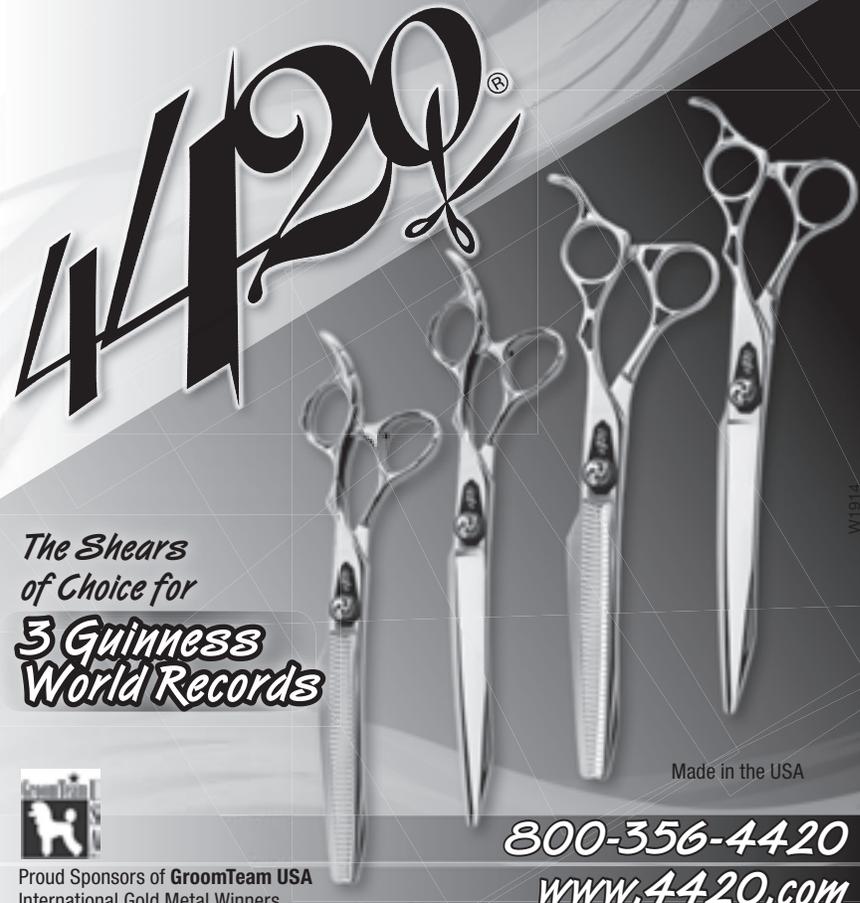
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ever given much thought to the issues of fertility problems and miscarriages? How about birth defects and learning disabilities among our children?

Just how common are these problems? How are we affected by the equipment we use or the chemicals to which we are exposed on a daily basis? What can we do to make our jobs safer for us, our families and the pets in our care? There are organizations that have taken these subjects under their collective wings, so to speak, and I will be consulting with them and presenting you with as much topical information as possible.

While this column is short, please realize that it is more than just a column. It is a request. Please accept this "column" as an appeal from me to you that you help and

What can we do to make our jobs safer for us, our families and the pets in our care?

guide me with my research over the next twelve months. I am looking to simply identify experiences and problems.

I am also hopeful that you have identified solutions. What industry related issues have YOU experienced? What have you done to prevent, improve or correct these conditions in your life? I invite you, the *Groomer to Groomer* readership, to contact me directly through my e-mail address: teri@barkleigh.com. I welcome open dialog on any issues that you care to share with me and your fellow readers. This subject is very important to us all and your assistance will help me to broaden

the scope of given issues and then narrow them down to potential solutions.

I am first and foremost a dog groomer. I have been a groomer for nearly forty years and I would not trade the experience for anything. I would, in retrospect, change some of the things I have done and some products and equipment that I have used. I am talking about things that have had an adverse effect on my life and well being; many years after the fact. Let's all put our collective heads together and raise our communal awareness. The things we learn today will help the groomers of today and tomorrow.

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The Chicken or the Egg - which did more damage with salmonella poisoning?

When you get to the Pearly Gate of Heaven, don't forget to look down to the base for the Doggie Door because all dogs go to Heaven.

If you read the last Solid Gold ad explaining the damage that GMO (not God Move Over) but genetically modified organism did to chickens/ eggs and crops, then you know that there are far-reaching consequences. 90% of all corn has been Genetically Modified to be unable to reproduce (called Terminator Corn). This forced farmers to buy new corn every year rather than saving this year's seeds to plant next year.

This Terminator Corn was fed to some chickens in the mid-west, it weakened their immune systems. Their eggs became infected with salmonella poisoning and the eggs were recalled. Soon after, the chickens died of salmonella poison. The farmers ground up the chickens and sold them to some dog food companies.

Solid Gold has never had a chicken-based dry dog food. A few years ago, we were going to put one out. But then came the bird/avian flu and chicken-based foods were pulled off the shelves. Solid Gold waited for years for safety reasons. In the spring of 2010, Solid Gold Sundancer chicken-based dog food was being developed. Suddenly, the news warned that chicken-based dry dog foods were pulled off the shelves due to chicken salmonella poisoning. Two well-known American dog foods were banned worldwide.

Then, things got worse. Some mills didn't clean out their machines after they made the chicken-based dog foods. So when the venison, duck or rabbit food became cross-contaminated with salmonella, dogs got sick. They were told to clean out their warehouses and ran big sales to get rid of the food quickly. They couldn't tell which were contaminated and which were not.

If you had a dirty pot in your kitchen, you wouldn't put food into it until you cleaned it out. But some dog food companies did just that.

History – In 1975, Solid Gold produced the first natural dog food in the U.S., Solid Gold Hund-N-Flocken (lamb & fish). It had been a top seller in Germany for 20 years. Then, other dog foods copied us.

In 1985, Solid Gold produced the first holistic dog food in the U.S. Fish is the only source of protein at 18%. It is called Holistique Blendz and it is suitable for older dogs and dogs with a white coat, who do well on reduced protein due to photo-aging. Other dog food companies copied us.

In 2000, we produced the first bison and salmon dog food – Wolf King, Wolf Cub and Just a Wee Bit for the smaller dog. We used only hook and line caught wild salmon. If small salmon were caught, they were thrown back.

Other companies copied us. But they used big nets. Soon, Alaskan wild caught salmon were fished out. We were told that only farmed salmon was now available. We said "NEVER." Farmed salmon are fed GMO Terminator Corn. The corn can't reproduce. The salmon which were fed this, are sterile and cannot reproduce. The dogs fed this salmon also may not be able to reproduce. That was the end of wild caught Alaskan Salmon.

A lady who raises Pomeranians said that for the last two years, she had not been able to get any litters. She had fed a salmon based dog food, which was fed GMO corn.

Solid Gold now gets its fish from the cold-waters of the East Coast- nothing farmed. (Atlantic salmon oil)

Some poultry farms sold the chicken manure to farmers. Within a few months, cilantro and celery from these farms were recalled for salmonella poisoning. Some dairy farms bought the chicken manure for their pastures. The cows developed pus in their udders, developed cancer tumors and died young.

Whenever Solid Gold feels that chicken is safe to use, you will see our sparkling purple Sundancer bags. We are also introducing Chia/Salba ingredients into the food. Chia is called the Ancient Grain of the Future. Chia is frequently seen as a clay head with green grasses growing out of it. But it is much more than a decoration. Chia has the ability for endurance, and when mixed with water, it heals wounds. It helps with diabetes, epilepsy, heart conditions and bone and joint problems.

Solid Gold uses hermetically sealed/vacuumed packaged bags, so we don't use any chemical preservatives. After you open the bag, close it with a clothes pins or bag clips. Do not pour the contents out into another container. Pouring exposes it to air.

Solid Gold is the best pet food you can feed your dog. Look for Sundancer this spring. To receive a free catalogue and a list of stores near you, call (619)258-7356, M, W, F 10am to 5pm, California time.

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Farmer Jones was the most negative man in the world. Farmer Smith was his next door neighbor and a very happy fellow. "Ain't a beautiful day?" Farmer Smith would smile

"Huh!" replied Farmer Jones "If it don't rain soon, the corns going to burn"

Next day: Ain't it nice it's raining? asks Farmer Smith,

"Huh! If it don't stop soon the corn's going to drown" replied Farmer Jones.

One thing the two had in common was their love of duck hunting. They would compete vigorously every day and took pride in their hunting dogs. Yes, every year Farmer Jones proved to be the best man with the best dogs.

Then, one year, Farmer Smith got the best hunting dog he had ever come across. "Just wait until Farmer Jones sees this-he's gotta say something positive." And so they went duck hunting. As luck would have it, a flock of ducks flew overhead, Farmer Smith took a shot and a duck dropped right in the middle of the pond. "Watch this." he grinned at Farmer Jones. "Dawg-go get that duck" he ordered his new dog. The dog ran nimbly to the edge of the pond, and without breaking stride, walked on top of the water, picked the duck up, walked back to shore and deposited the duck at Farmer Smith's feet, with not a feather out of place. "Well" smiled Farmer Smith "What do you think of my new dog?"

"Huh!" answered Farmer Jones "dumb dog can't even swim."

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FINDING THE RIGHT TRAINER

TRADITIONAL VS. MODERN



There are two basic categories of trainers in this country: Traditional and Modern. Which style is right for you and your clients?

At the Barkleigh Groom Expo in Hershey, I gave a presentation on training, specifically for groomers. After it was over, one of the groomers thanked me for not assuming that she wanted to add training services to her business. She simply doesn't want to be a trainer or behaviorist, but she wanted to know how to find a good one when her clients needed that service. That is a really good question.

It's obvious that if your client has a dog with a deal-breaker behavior, you will probably lose the client if someone can't fix the problem. Statistically, eight out of ten dogs do not see their first birthday. The primary reason they don't is

that their owners cannot control their behavior. The reality is that some seemingly innocuous behaviors are actually lethal; eating inedible objects, jumping fences, aggression and constant barking, to name a few. If you can fix the problem or refer to someone who can, you will have a grateful client and future referrals ... if not, not.

Experience vs. Thinking

There are two basic categories of trainers in this country, *traditional* versus *modern*. *Traditional trainers* tend to stick to methods that have proven their effectiveness in many settings for many years. *Modern trainers* lean toward academic sources for their information and

usually reference "learning theory" and "scientific methods" when validating their style.

These groups are very much like oil and water in the context of the Gulf Oil Spill. Meaning they don't mix well. When modern trainers make a reference to traditional training, they usually imply abusive, harsh treatment and archaic methods. Traditional trainers generally think that modern training is wimpy and undependable. This type of rhetoric distorts the strengths and weaknesses of each philosophy and won't automatically help you find a good trainer.

Currently, these two groups are separated into two professional

Continued on page 23

organizations, *Association of Pet Dog Trainers (APDT)* and the *International Association of Canine Professionals (IACP)*. Each of these groups provides a test that leads to a certification. This allows their members to put letters after their names, just like board certified surgeons and registered nurses. Whether or not these certifications assure competence is questionable.

A friend of mine recently passed a trainer's certification test by answering the questions based, not on how she actually trains, but on what she thought they wanted to hear. The problem is that neither the tests themselves nor those who pass them are required to prove that their methods work or that they actually use approved methods. A fine trainer might flunk the test while a hack trainer might pass by simply spitting out phrases learned at training conferences or on the internet.

Along with these two groups are the *National Organization of Dog Obedience Instructors (NADOI)* and an alphabet soup of groups who assert a connection to science and academia. Most of these groups require academic credentials that would allow bored elementary school teachers to train dogs for a short time and then start adding letters after their names. Imagine a grooming certification for human stylists that only required six months experience and no proof of competence with the myriad of breed styles, coat styles and highly difficult scissoring that is the mark of a professional groomer.

Even the highly educated get a pass on proving their expertise. The certification for veterinarian behaviorists qualifies them to prescribe psycho-tropic drugs, but does not require that they demonstrate competence actually handling the types of animals they will ultimately treat. If their role in solving a behavior problem is primarily drug therapy,

they have extensive training in that area. If you want them to actually go in the field and train a dog not to bite strangers you may be disappointed in your choice.

There is no veterinary school that teaches budding behaviorists how to stop unwanted behavior ... or something as simple as teaching a dog to walk on a loose leash. If they have any knowledge of that, they got it from a dog trainer, not a science text book. To put this in terms you might appreciate, imagine telling someone over the phone how to scissor a Bichon even though you've never been trained to do the job yourself.

With this rush to capture market share through "proof" of expertise, the large pet store chains cut through the smoke and mirrors and simply created their own certifications. They put their trainers through a course of instruction and then give them a piece of paper that says they are certified trainers. "She's certified because I say she's certified" is a great way to side-step the issue.

There are several internet based training "colleges" and "universities" that do the same thing. In

your quest to find the right trainer for your clients, you will simply have to look at things other than a piece of paper. Some great trainers are not certified and some lousy trainers are, and vice versa. The broader point is that there really is no trustworthy certification that would help you through this maze of credentials.

Traditional Trainers

The systematic training of large numbers of dogs came from the trenches of World War I. The Germans used dogs as couriers through the trenches. Between the wars, this methodology was used to create The Seeing Eye, the first successful use of dogs to help large numbers of disabled people.

In WWII, the tradition of military dogs continued and expanded. At the end of the war, hundreds of military dog handlers came home and applied their new skills to a new career. They may not have been academics, but they knew how to train dogs. Over the next thirty years, the vast majority of pet dogs were trained by this standard. Contrary to current beliefs, traditional

Continued on page 24

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training is not inherently harsh. No method can be constantly nasty and still be effective.

After the 1960's, Americans softened their view of the world. Any method of training that included aversive control came under attack. Some of the criticism of the military style training was valid. Many dogs do not thrive under stern handling. However, the attack on tradition doesn't focus on specific issues, but simply assumes that all dogs will be traumatized if they are trained with a choke-chain. This is illogical.

While some dogs at obedience competitions do hang their tails, some engage in the most rigorous competitions with tails flying. The same is true of field trials, an event that relies heavily on shock collars to create consistent performance. If shock collars are innately damaging, why do the vast majority of the dogs wag their tails while competing? Why do they greet their owners

enthusiastically if they are so horribly abused?

Traditional trainers don't get off the hook in the illogical accusations arena. There are still many trainers who refuse to use food in training because it supposedly creates a dog that is dependent on treats. Hunters have rewarded their dogs with a part of the kill for thousands of years with no ill effect on the dog's hunting ability. To not use food treats simply wastes your clients' time and sometimes fails to spark the interest of the dog, which leads to a program heavily weighted toward unnecessary force.

As a groomer, recommending the right training services does not require that you join the battle between tradition and modernity.

The problem with this perpetual argument is that it isn't relevant to professional training. It's simply a spitting match between opposing ideologies. An objective analysis yields a far more flexible and dynamic approach. There are times when forceful methods are the perfect solution for head-strong dogs. There are also times when overbearing handling can ruin a sensitive dog. Sometimes the same dog needs to be wooed and coerced through a series of training sessions to get the right combination. Dogs are far too complex to be treated identically in all situations.

As a groomer, recommending the right training services does not require that you join the battle between tradition and modernity. Your job is to find the person who knows how to solve problems and provide effective, safe training for your clients' dogs. If a dog loves to leave the property, you might consider getting to know the local distributor for underground containment systems. If a dog is so wired that he can't sit still, you may have to know a good veterinarian with additional credentials to prescribe an appropriate medication. If a crusty ex-military trainer can housetrain a Yorkie, run with it. If a modern trainer claims to use exclusively positive methods but loves to use head-halters, a punishment device, your clients' dogs will still be better behaved on leash; even if the trainer doesn't know how that collar works or that using it actually breaks their commitment to "positive" training.

My advice is that you use your

Continued on page 25

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own knowledge of dogs and then follow up on your recommendations. Keep track of who you sent where and then check back after the training is over. Stick with the people who get the results and please your clients; otherwise your clients won't be pleased with you.

Ten Questions to Ask a Prospective Trainer:

What kind of training do you do? Don't assume that any one trainer is going to be appropriate for every situation. Just as you have multiple suppliers for your salon's products and equipment you may need to have knowledge of several trainers and their specific strengths and weaknesses.

Are you a good teacher? Dog Training includes training the owners. How well does the trainer teach? Request a presentation for your staff to find out. Use your staff's dogs and solve some real problems in real time. Get a consensus from your employees to help you make a decision. If the trainer is reluctant to display his or her methods to your staff, that might be a reason to look elsewhere.

What kind of training have you done? Five years experience teaching dogs to sit means you can teach dogs to sit. That doesn't mean you have any experience solving a housetraining problem. Likewise, teaching rudimentary obedience in a parks class or mega-pet-store isn't automatically connected to stopping a dog from biting a child or even darting out the front door.

How many dogs have you trained? To be a good trainer you have to know dogs. That requires handling hundreds rather than dozens. While someone may feel they have a gift with animals, earning mastery is a matter of proving your ability over and over, again. Given a choice between someone who claims to have an innate ability to handle animals and someone who's han-

dled thousands of dogs, I'll take the latter, every time.

Private or Group

Group classes may be all your client needs. However, groups limit the individual attention for each student. Anything more than general control, on-leash, should be handled privately.

Is the training in-home or at a facility? Any serious problem requires one-on-one training in the home. You have to see the behavior at its worst with all the factors that

cause and maintain it. Sitting in an office and filling out a questionnaire is rarely sufficient. Likewise, meeting at a facility devoid of everyday items makes it very difficult to recreate problem behavior. If a dog surfs kitchen counters, you need a kitchen to elicit the behavior and eventually must fix the problem in the kitchen that triggers the behavior.

What training materials do you use or recommend? Most owners need some kind of written or visual

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guide to help them train their dog. Handouts that go along with a training program help insure success. If a trainer has not prepared materials for clients they should at least be able to name a selection of books and videos they make available.

If a trainer pitches a specific tool, the incentive may be profit and not effectiveness. Not every dog needs a choke chain, shock collar, head halter or other device. If a trainer has developed a favorite tool it may indicate they offer cookie cutter training, which of itself is neither good nor bad. Some people offer services limited to their skills; which is better than someone who claims to be able to train everything, but does not have the experience to back it up.

Do you handle behavior problems? Which ones? Very few trainers are effective with tough behavior issues. Knowing how to create an obedience trial champion or agility dog has nothing to do with being able to stop a dog from ingesting socks. There are some behaviors that are difficult to fix that do not respond well to experimentation. When someone says they can fix behavior problems you should require some tangible proof including what they did, how long it took and how long the behavior remained arrested.

Do you work with veterinarians? There are several behavioral problems that can be the result of disease or illness. My last Cattle Dog, *Tuggy*, had Cushings Disease. The first symptom was unexplained urination in the house. If I had only addressed the housetraining, I would have disguised the keys to diagnosing his disease. Anyone who wishes to work with behavior problems should have ready access to veterinarians who can help determine whether the behavior may have its roots in a medical problem.

How do you stop a single behavior, now? A fashionable dog magazine recently printed a regular column that offered a solution to the common frustration we have over

When someone tells you to assume that a dog is going to destroy things, they really want you to drop your expectations, not of your dog's behavior, but of their expertise.

unacceptable behavior. We should lower our expectations and all will be well. The column was written by a highly respected behaviorist...with letters after her name. To buttress her position she quoted another behaviorist (with the obligatory letters) as saying, "People shouldn't get a puppy unless they are willing to lose one very expensive pair of shoes." The author's comment was "Truer words were never said."

The letters I will place after that little offering are B and S, in that order and without a space between. Think about this for a second. What if pup ingests the pieces of the shoe and they create a gastric obstruction? Ask your vet, it's a common occurrence. An obstruction invariably leads to major abdominal surgery and possibly death. If you can't stop a dog from eating an expensive pair of shoes, how do you stop a dog from ingesting anything? What if it's a hunk of a cheap shoe? If you can stop a dog from ingesting hunks of cheap shoes, why wouldn't you teach your clients to stop a dog from ingesting anything of value?

There's the rub. When someone tells you to assume that a dog is going to destroy things, they really want you to drop your expectations, not of your dog's behavior, but of their expertise. They don't want to admit that they don't have a clue about how to stop a puppy from ingesting a pair of shoes, a cherished teddy bear, your passport, a bottle of prescription medication, pairs of glasses, wedding rings, your cat's food or any other thing, dangerous or not.

If you are interviewing a trainer or behaviorist and they tell you

that there isn't any way to stop a behavior immediately, teach them the error of false statements in public. Spritz a mild soap solution in their mouth every time they open it. Repeat as needed. Then find a behaviorist who doesn't blow bubbles when they talk.

Final note

It is beyond the scope of this article to tell you how to control the behavior of dogs and cats in the real world. Feel free to browse my website at www.clickandtreat.com or email wilkesgm@aol.com for information based in reality and proven to be effective.

Gary is an internationally acclaimed behaviorist, trainer, author, columnist and lecturer. He has more than 30 years experience working with dogs, including eight years of shelter work. Gary Wilkes is responsible for the innovation and development of clicker training as a practical methodology for dogs and with his former colleague, Karen Pryor, introduced this method in 1992. He currently has a full-time, veterinary referral based behavior practice in Phoenix, Arizona and is an author, a columnist and feature writer for Groomer to Groomer and Off Lead & Animal Behavior magazine. Contact Gary at wilkesgm@aol.com or visit www.clickandtreat.com.

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the lap of *Luxury* a whole new world

BY KATHY HOSLER

The Lap of Luxury Dog Spa — doesn't it sound fabulous? Just hearing the name made me eager to visit it and see what it's all about.

The spa is located between Boca Raton and Delray Beach in Florida at The Shoppes at Addison Place. It's in a two plaza strip-mall that is situated among more than one hundred gated communities, where the homes sell from five-hundred-thousand to several million dollars each.

I drove in and found a parking space between a Mercedes and a Bentley. Yes, this is definitely a very upscale area.

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By Christein Sertzel

36 Spa Services: Selling Luxury in Today's Economy

By Joe Zuccarello

39 New Spa Products & Classifieds

The entrance to the spa was beautifully landscaped with palm trees and lush greenery. Stately entryway pillars invited me into a world where pampering is the order of the day.

I was met by *Lap of Luxury's* new owner, Jonathan David, star of Animal Planet's *Groomer Has It* and *Dogs 101*.

Upon entering the 2200 square foot spa, I was surprised by the spaciousness and pleased by its friendly atmosphere. The high ceiling with its exposed ductwork and abundant lighting has a very clean and futuristic look. The cheerful white walls accented by lots of stainless steel and glass compliment the spa's white with silver motif.

I almost have the feeling of being on a Hollywood movie set. There are framed posters from *Groomer Has It* showcasing Jonathan, and also a television playing episodes from *Dogs 101* that featured Jonathan.

My inner shopper sprang to life when I saw the entire left side of the store lined with mini-boutiques, each one with its own theme.

Ready for adventure, I headed for one that had all kinds of giftware and jewelry, the next was overflowing with doggie dress-up and playwear, another is filled with all kinds of travel items, I see a huge selection of interactive game toys, and further down designer strollers for owners to carry their precious pets.

But then, my eyes were drawn to the grooming salon area located on the right side. Awesome! Every groomer's dream is a pretty accurate way to describe it. What a set-up!

The show-stopping salon is completely enclosed by glass, which creates a wonderful open feeling for the stylists, the dogs, and their owners. There is no crowded, dark, back room grooming here.

I asked Jonathan about the glass enclosure. "The salon set-up is a big thing for me," says Jonathan.



“We are the most expensive salon in all of Florida ... But once people try us and see the difference in grooming, they stay with us.”

“I want people to be able to see everything we do and know exactly what is going on with their dogs at all times.”

There are five grooming stations. Each one is equipped with a hydraulic table and other state of the art grooming equipment. The mirrors and cabinetry are all built into the wall and fully stocked with products the stylists use. The dryers are suspended on a floating arm that comes out from the wall. Everything is well organized and roomy, and the lighting is fantastic.

I walked into the bathing room

located in a separate alcove on the left. It's a beautiful room where the color theme of white and silver continue. It houses their washer and dryer. The bathtub is made of stainless steel (of course), and there is a bank of thirty-six stainless steel holding kennels where the pets may rest while they are waiting for their owners to pick them up.

“We groom about thirty dogs per day,” says Jonathan. “We have two groomers and me, and we have three bather/fluffers. We offer many grooming services from our *Aqua Spa Bath*, (a basic bath and blow-out), to the *Elite Full-Body Groom*, (hand-scissored grooms).” Before being released to its owner, every dog is gone over by Jonathan personally to insure the groom is perfect.

“We are probably the most expensive salon in all of Florida,” says Jonathan. “But, once people try us and see the difference in grooming, they stay with us.”

Returning to the grooming salon, I saw some owners watching through the glass while their little baby was being styled. Because the spa is designed with so much open space, the dogs being groomed are comfortable and not stressed. There

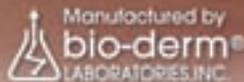
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is very little barking. The relaxing atmosphere invites you to linger, whether you watch the dogs being groomed or browse the boutiques.

"Lots of our clients drop their dogs off, then go for breakfast or lunch at one of the outdoor cafes in the mall," says Jonathan.

Still others were like me, fascinated by the wonderful retail items. I just had to explore all the unique offerings. As I looked at a doggie dining set in a tropical tangerine color, a doting owner and her freshly groomed Maltese were choosing a new ruby-red patent leather pet carrier designed exclusively for the *Lap of Luxury*.

I picked up a gorgeous collar and leash set made of white python and chrome and another made from Stingray. You can't find that just anywhere.

In the funwear section, a little Yorkie was modeling a *Kiss* polo shirt from the *Paris Hilton Collection* (RSC #7744).

There was a fabulous four post *Marilyn Muttroe* (RSC #7745) bed with *Swarovski* crystals encrusted in bone shapes. It came with a pillow and blanket, and a price tag of \$2250. Oh, a dog's life...I should be so pampered.

Jonathan tells me that they have just opened their Treat Bar and it's a real hit with their four-legged clientele. "We offer a wide variety of premium treats and chewies, and everything is made in the USA. We won't sell any foods that are not derived from the USA."

The Lap of Luxury is also very involved in community activities and with the local rescue groups and animal shelters. They host events to raise funds for these organizations and to help adopt pets. The owners can even bring their own pets with them to these functions.

The Spa has brought in experts to speak on pet nutrition, offered pictures with Santa, organized a Singles Night at Yappy Hour, and more. Other stores in the mall have even joined with them to help promote these events.

They will soon begin training

classes for puppy socialization and also basic and intermediate obedience, with more services in the planning stages.

When it comes to filling all their client's wants and needs, no one does it better than Jonathan David and the staff at the *Lap of Luxury Dog Spa*.

I should know. I got to experience being in the *Lap of Luxury*, if only for a day.

“When it comes to filling all their client's wants and needs, no one does it better than Johnathan David and the staff at the *Lap of Luxury Dog Spa*.”

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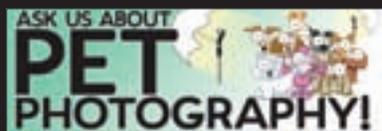
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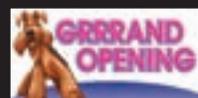


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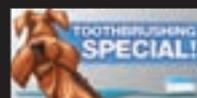
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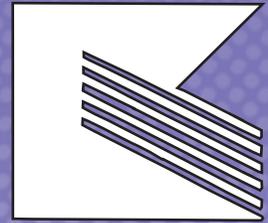
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GIVE YOUR SALON A FACELIFT!

By CHRISTEIN SERTZEL

A few years back, I decided that I needed to make some changes in my grooming business. I added additional services and retail items. The result was that my salon was invigorated! Here are some ideas to boost your revenue without grooming more pets. Give your Salon a Facelift!

BOUTIQUE OR SPECIALTY RETAIL ITEMS

If you don't want the extra work of retail, or lack the space, consider specialty retail. Whether it be at-home grooming supplies, gourmet treats, nutritional and vitamin/mineral supplements, flea and tick care, collars and leashes, breed specific gifts, or seasonal supplies and gifts; give it a try! If you are strong in recommending the products you carry and know many owners could use them then offering specialty items is a must!

EXPANDING YOUR BUSINESS

Do you have a knack for baking? Do you have an eye with a camera? Do you organize a great party? Then why not utilize your talents to grow your business? You could add pet photography, gourmet treats, or host play dates or pet birthday parties at your salon to generate more revenue.

BRANDING YOUR BUSINESS

I took my passion for supportive care and encompassing grooming and created my own line of skin and coat care products for dogs, *Canine Spa Therapies*. These are products that address skin and coat care issues that I commonly saw in my salon. They offer all natural topicals for overall better health and relaxation during a grooming session. I offered pet care through these products that no other salon in my area was offering. There is no better way to specialize in a service than to offer supplies and products that carry your own name and business credo behind them. And with creative and dedicated marketing, the products you believe in will be what your clients reach for when they care for their pet. Sell what you use and use what you sell. It does take time and money to brand your business, so do not enter into it lightly. Do your research and get the education you need to do it the right way.

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MASSAGE THERAPY, AROMATHERAPY AND HYDROTHERAPY

Once you obtain your certification and education, the possibilities are endless. I once was the traveling canine sports medicine therapist for a German Shepherd Schutzhund team, and I got to travel all over, including overseas, by caring for their animals. Not only can you add this to your existing business, if you can't groom or want to change your career focus, this field is a wonderful one. It is rewarding, and gratifying work, and lucrative as well.

BREED FUN DAYS

Book all dogs of the same breed and have a meet and greet for the owners and a play day for the dogs. Offer seasonal treats and promotional gifts that spotlight the breed. Offer add-on services in the salon that are simple to do and can be offered at a discounted or special price to promote the day's events for owners.

DAY SPA STAYS AND WEEKEND SPA RETREATS

If you have the staff, the time and the space, look at adding day care and integrate that with client grooming visits. Many clients enjoy knowing their pet is at the Spa getting pampered while they are at work or running errands. You could offer your regular grooming clientele an extended stay option when they are leaving on vacation. Not only will you groom their pet while they are gone, ensuring it is not a matted mess when they return, but you'll also have added revenue by having them stay with you. Much can be done for "boarding" pets, without having a complete boarding facility. Be sure to have all of your bases covered for the best of care while they stay. Be sure that your own pets are safe, and everyone is current on vaccines and interacts well with each other. You'll likely find, through word of mouth, that this service grows quickly!

Reinvent your business ... Host a special day and advertise everywhere!

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Re-invent your business. Host a special day and advertise it everywhere. Whether it is a new coat of paint, new services, or a total revamp and build out, be excited about it! Focus your energy and you'll see yourself and your business rewarded.

Remember that your busi-

ness will grow in the avenues that you pursue. Deciding to turn your business around or to start new from the ground up takes resolve and dedication. Your outlook must match your business plan in order to succeed.

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SPA SERVICES selling luxury in today's economy

BY JOE ZUCCARELLO, SALES MANAGER, TROPICLEAN

SPA Services offered in grooming salons continue to amaze pet parents and are some of the most talked about topics between pet owners and their friends and family. With the trend of pet humanization still going strong, a growing majority

see pets as a beloved member of our family and naturally want the very best for them.

This desire for our pets' well being has driven pet professionals to consider offering supplemental or extra service offerings to drive sales

and enhance the pet and pet owner experiences with our businesses. I can hear it now, "Joan, you won't believe what I treated my dog *Buddy* to while he was at the groomer today? After all it is his birthday and he deserves it!"

This may sound very familiar to you. Word of mouth referrals remain the top method of getting new customers. A referral for good grooming is one thing. A referral for good grooming with exciting extra services purchased during the appointment is a BONUS!

Facial Scrubs, Paw Treatments, Aromatherapy, Massage, Acupuncture, Hydro-Therapy, Tread Mill Workouts, Oral Care, Nail Painting, and other pet pampering services continue to pop up in salons all over the world. If you are not taking advantage of this services phenomenon at some level you may be missing out. If you are offering some or all of these services, or if you are contemplating starting to offer these services, you

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Continued on page 37

are probably asking yourself how you can go from groomer extraordinaire to salesperson extraordinaire. Believe me, selling is MUCH easier than grooming! You are the expert and your clients rely upon your expertise to recommend beneficial services for their pets.

I have written about three selling “rules” below, which if you follow my advice, will help you prove to yourself you can be successful at selling, and in turn, reap the rewards of your efforts.

Somebody once told me; **“Those with money are still spending it.”** This is the first rule of selling. I know it is hard to believe, but there are plenty of people out there still spending their money on what some may consider frivolous or unnecessary things. Almost every market has a population of people in it that can afford to live a lavish lifestyle.

To understand the buying patterns of such people, we need to ask ourselves this question. Why do people spend money on luxury

With the trend of pet humanization still going strong, a growing majority see pets as a beloved member of our family and naturally want the very best for them.

items anyway? One reason could be they can afford it, so why not? Another reason could be they want to keep up with the Jones’. Yet another reason may be they value the product or service so much that they couldn’t fathom going without it.

Let’s focus on the “value” reason I just mentioned. Why do we focus on the value factor? Value is an equalizer of economic classes. Whether you are white collar or blue collar, all appreciate value.

What is value? Some would define it as the validation between price and product. These people would likely agree if the product or service is offered at a fair price compared to alternative products

or services, they see value in the purchase. Oh, if it were that simple! Really, value is more often defined by the individual’s perception of what is a fair price for the non-monetary emotional fulfillment a purchase gives them. In other words, “How will this make me feel after I buy it?” or “How will I feel if I don’t buy this?”

Many feel guilty about leaving their pet at a pet resort or even at the grooming salon for a brief period of time, so they place a high value on providing the pet an enjoyable experience while they are apart. Some would argue this doesn’t

Continued on page 38

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make the pet miss their owner any less, but I can guarantee it makes the owner feel better about leaving their pet! That's emotional value!

I have truly seen people arrive at very nice pet resorts in a vehicle that looks like they live in it, only to come in and spend hundreds of dollars on their pet. This is the second rule of selling. **Don't judge a book by its cover.** In this case, don't judge a customer by their appearance. Another version of this rule could be applied when you assume that because you think a product or service is expensive, so too will the customer. Making this mistake could result in losing the sale because you didn't even ask or the customer gets upset because they didn't know the service was even available. In either case, the customer loses, the pet loses, and you lose.

The third, most important rule

in selling is the easiest rule of all.

Just ask. Ask every customer if they would like to buy what you are offering. Pick your favorite two or three items or services you offer and ask every customer if they would like to buy them. Is it really this simple? YES! Try it. More will say "no" than will say "yes," but compared to not asking at all, the "yeses" will have a huge impact on your income. Don't be pushy. You are just asking. Nothing more. If they say no, that's ok. Don't beat yourself up about it.

Here's your challenge. Starting tomorrow (or today if you are the ambitious type), ask every customer to buy your extra services, and you will sell more than you ever have. If you have staff, teach them to do this also. Do this every day, every week, every year, and you will love the results!

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PET BOUTIQUE & SPA PRODUCT NEWS



Pony Express Carrier and Walking Vest

Pet Flys introduces the *Pony Express Carrier* and matching *Walking Vest*. Both are made of faux suede with faux shearling lining for comfort, are machine washable and available in five original styles: Dixie Doe, Baby Burro, Puppy Love, Courage or Betsy Ross. The products are made in the USA. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7747.

Bumper Bed

West Paw Design is introducing its eco-friendly *Bumper Bed* for dogs and cats in two new floral patterns. Match a center pillow in the new pink-tone Monaco pattern or the blue-tone Breeze pattern with six outer bolster options to find the right blend for your customer's home decor. Each *Bumper Bed* is stuffed with recycled *IntelliLoft* created from reclaimed plastic soda bottles that have been turned into an ultra soft and durable fill. An extra-large *Bumper Bed* reuses 108 twenty-ounce bottles. Sizes XS to XL. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7746.



Nikki Green Olive Oil Shampoo

Posh & Co is proud to introduce *Nikki Green Olive Oil Shampoo* line for dogs. The products are eco-friendly dog shampoos made without harsh detergents, chemicals, artificial coloring or toxins that can harm and dull a dog's coat. Instead, only the purest ingredients nature has to offer, like 100% consumption-grade olive oil, Mediterranean Sea salt and essential oils from all over the world are used. With *Nikki Green*, four-legged friends will experience a clean so pure, their coat will radiate with a healthy glow that only Mother Nature can provide. For more information, request Reader Service Card #7714.

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GROOMING THE IRISH WATER SPANIEL



By *Michell Evans*
and *Melissa McMunn*



COMPLETED GROOM

The breed standard states that Irish Water Spaniels are “a smart, upstanding, strongly built, moderate gundog bred for all types of shooting, especially for water-fowling. Great intelligence is combined with rugged endurance and a bold, dashing eagerness of temperament. Distinguishing characteristics are a topknot of long, loose curls and a body covered with a dense, crisply curled, liver-colored coat contrasted by a smooth face and a smooth ‘rat’ tail.”

Grooming this breed starts with a clean straight coat. To achieve this, bathe the dog, blow out most of the water with a forced air dryer and then heat straighten it with a brush and a relatively hot, but not forced, air dryer. The pads and sanitary areas should be clipped and the nails trimmed.

Use a #10 or #7 blade to clip the cheeks and throat in the same pattern as a Poodle except for one very important characteristic, the beard, which is sometimes called a goatee. The hair on the throat and muzzle forms a natural pattern making it easy for you to follow. The

natural pattern forms more of a U shape than a V shape. The chin and muzzle hair will already be short, but should be neatened (*Picture #1*).



PICTURE #1

With the dog standing in a stacked position and with the muzzle parallel to the table, run your #7 blade up the larynx until it comes to rest just above the Adam's apple. It is important that when the dog is in a stacked position, the goatee is hanging from the jaw line and not protruding forward from the throat. Make sure that the goatee does not come forward from the corner of the mouth and it should not be longer than the ears. Leaving the goatee more forward under the jaw line will

shorten and broaden the muzzle and taking it farther back will create a longer leaner muzzle.

Use your #10 blade to clip the entire tail with the grain of the hair, but leave two to three inches of coat on the top of the tail at its base. This coat will become part of your top line (*Picture #2*).

In order to make this groom simple, I propose blocking in your body coat with attachment blades the first time you groom the dog. After that, I hope you will have the confidence to make your own judgments as to what lengths, in what areas, will best make your Irish Water Spaniel fit the AKC standard.



PICTURE #2

Continued on page 42

NATURE'S SPECIALTIES®

GROOM EXPO 2010 WINNER'S CIRCLE CHAMPION

IRINA PINKUSEVICH



Irina Pinkusevich (center) with
Nature's Specialties representatives
Bob Harris and Mary Meeks.

Clip the area from about two inches behind the occiput to about the middle of the top line, leaving hair approximately two inches in length. The neck should appear long, arching, strong and muscular. The shoulder should appear moderately laid back. Clip the rest of the top line, including the croup, leaving the hair approximately one inch in length. Leave the area just in front of the tail and the coat at the base of the tail to be rounded with scissors.

The back should appear to be broad with a rounded croup. Even though it is acceptable for the Irish Water Spaniel to be slightly higher in the rear, it is more appealing to the eye to make the top line level. Clip the shoulder and area outside of the shoulder points to about an inch in length, leaving an apron and showing the return of the upper arm. The shoulder should appear moderately laid back and powerful, but not heavy. The forechest should appear to be moderate.

Clip the ribs leaving the hair about two inches in length. Leave a slight skirt by falling away from the body with your clippers when the ribs turn under. The ribs should ap-



PICTURE #3

pear to have a barrel shape. Clip the thighs about two to three inches in length, leaving enough coat to create parallel lines when viewed from the rear. The hips are to appear wide with muscular, well developed thighs. Clip the area from the point of rump to the deepest part of the rear angulation leaving that area of hair two inches in length. The dog should appear to have moderate rear angulation with good width through the thigh (Picture #3).

Now that you have this basic blocking accomplished, scissor all of these parts together. Trim the brisket coat to appear to extend to the elbow. Continue your underline, keeping it almost level. The loin should appear short, wide and muscular without a tucked up appearance. Round the ribs and shape the apron.

The forechest should appear to be moderate and the ribs should appear well sprung. Trim the feet to appear large and round and create cylinders with the front legs. Trim the rear legs to balance with the front. Hocks should appear to be set low.

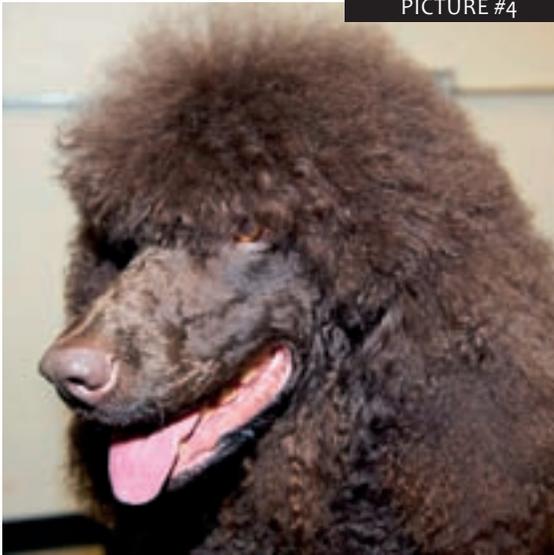
As well as the rat tail, the topknot of the Irish Water Spaniel is an essential characteristic of the breed (Picture #4). The topknot should not be trimmed in an exaggerated or excessive manner and should obstruct the eyes. Comb the topknot forward and trim the bangs so that they lightly graze the muzzle. You can use thinning shears to thin the coat over the eyes so the dog can see a little better (Picture #5).

From the portrait view, the topknot is trimmed to blend with the ear. There is no separation between the topknot and ear as with a Poodle. The area of the topknot over the occiput and on the top skull is used to blend into your long arching neck and should give a domed appearance. The area above the cheek in front of the ear is trimmed to blend with the ear, so that it gives the impression of a softly drawn curtain. The ears are to frame the face and

Continued on page 43

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PICTURE #4



PICTURE #6



are layered. The ears are never to be longer than the breast bone and never all one length.

The final step in creating the style of the Irish Water Spaniel is to wet the coat to bring back the curl. Spray the body coat with a bottle of water and pat it with your hand. Do not wet the legs. They should be left fluffy. Wet the topknot and ears just enough to style them, but not enough to flatten them. Blot the coat with a towel to remove excess water and allow to dry naturally (Picture #6).

Irish Water Spaniels are not a common breed to turn up in grooming shops. Tuck

this article away and when you get the call you will be ready. Happy Grooming.

Author: Michell Evans ICMG, NCMG, Owner of The Grooming Tutor LLC, Michell is a multiple Best in Show and Best All Around winner. She has received the Liz Paul Best Scissored Poodle award. She was ranked 3rd in 2010. She will be traveling to Belgium in 2011 to compete for the United States. She has groomed and/or handled 24 different breeds for AKC including Irish Water Spaniels. She works very hard to bring the most sensible and current information to you through her tutoring business. For more information please visit www.groomingtutor.com.



PICTURE #5

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New England Pet Grooming Professionals Fall Fest Review



Photos by Animal Photography

Barkleigh Creative Runway Lights up the Northeast!

WARWICK, RI — With over 700 people in attendance, the *New England Pet Grooming Professionals* hosted their 30th Anniversary Fall Fest at the Crown Plaza in Warwick, RI November 5-7, 2010. It was a multi-leveled event: educational seminars, three levels of competitions, and a trade show with many vendors. Headliners included: Chris Pawlosky, Eric Salas, Judy Hudson, Barbara Bird, Kendra Otto, Jody Murphy, Dr. Liz Hassinger, Bob Harris and Chuck Simons.

This year's events included a PomAdorable scissoring contest sponsored by "Chicken Joe" Taylor of *Groomer Has It* on *Animal Planet*. Kendra Otto was the winner of the \$500. Winner takes all. Eric Salas called it "a show with heart." The top Open Level competition was a GroomTeamUSA sanctioned event.

The next *FallFest* will be moving to July and will be called the *NEPGP Summerfest* held on July 15-17th, 2011.

Continued on page 46



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Pictured clockwise from top left: Creative contestants Tara Lamper with "Irish Tapestry," Jill Pipino with "Toy Story," Susan Vickers with "Groomer Slayer" and Linda Kay O'Neil with "Eye of the Tiger."



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NEPGP Competition Results

Sporting

Entry

1st — Julia DeGiovanni
2nd — Mary Erickson
3rd — Nancy Serabian

Intermediate

1st — Lisa Correia
2nd — Mary Finlayson
3rd — Chiloe Hunt

Open

1st — Jennifer Lee
2nd — Amy Triezenberg
3rd — Greta Dalrymple

Terrier

Entry

1st — Sara Szymanski
2nd — Allison Lavotato
3rd — Heather Budney

Intermediate

1st — Mary Finlayson
2nd — Lisa Correia
3rd — Debbie Davis

Open

1st — Jennifer Lee
2nd — Lindsey Dickens
3rd — Tara Denean

MIX/AOP

Entry

1st — Carol Horton
2nd — Emily Morelli
3rd — Danielle St.Louis

Open

1st — Julie Pantages
2nd — Lindsey Dickens
3rd — Erin Andrianoff
McLaughlin

Poodles

Sponsored by PetEdge

Entry

1st — Laureen Behan
2nd — Jason Ronn
3rd — Emily Morelli

Intermediate

1st — Lisa Correia
2nd — Mary Finlayson
3rd — Debbie Davis

Open

1st — Lindsey Dickens
2nd — Olga Zabelinskaya
3rd — Kendra Otto

BAA Sponsored by Nature's Specialties

Entry

Emily Morelli

BAA Intermediate

Lisa Correia

BAA Open

Lindsey Dickens

BIS Sponsored by Andis Company

Entry

Carol Horton

BIS Intermediate

Lisa Correia

BIS Open

Jennifer Lee (Scottie)

Scissoring Awards

1st — Julie Pantages

2nd — Kendra Otto
3rd — Lindsey Dickens

SPECIAL AWARDS

Taxi

Kelly Knight

Best Groomed Poodle

Lindsey Dickens

Spider

Olga Zabelinskaya

Trinket

Jennifer Lee

Daquiri

Jennifer Lee

Sailor

Jennifer Lee

CH, Majesties Delight

Lisa Correia

Will Stone Joulie

Erin Andrianoff

Best First Timer

Laureen Behan

PomAdorable

Kendra Otto

Barkleigh Creative Runway

1st — Tara Lamper

"Irish Tapestry"

2nd — Linda Kay O'Neil

"Eye of the Tiger"

3rd — Jill Pipino

"Toy Story"

People's Choice, Honorable

Mention — Susan Vickers

"Groomer Slayer"

BARKLEIGH SEEKING NEW AUTHORS

"Our industry needs new books to keep up with the pace and changes of grooming," says Sally Liddick, co-owner of Barkleigh Productions.

"This has been one industry that has been lacking a large resource of good educational materials and Barkleigh hopes to change that in the future."

Books are needed in all aspects of grooming, boarding and pet business... pet styling, pet spa, animal behavior in the grooming salon or boarding facility, ergonomic aspects, groomer health, pet massage, add-on services and more are being accepted.

If you have a book idea, send it with one sample chapter to Sally@Barkleigh.com.

If you already have a printed book, and would like consideration on republishing it, please send a copy to: Sally Liddick, 49 Longwood Drive, Mechanicsburg PA 17050



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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 18-20, 2011. The three day trade show event will host pet product exhibitors, grooming competitions and educational seminars.

Seminars will feature well-known pet industry experts with live grooming demonstrations by award winning groomers. Speakers include: Donna Owens, Teri DiMarino, Sherri Shinsky, Carol Hoover, Molly

Exner, Michell Evans and Deanise Stoops. Educational topics include: Brusher/Bather Certification, Pet First Aid/CPR, Canine Massage, Marketing Your Business, Retailing and more. Grooming demonstrations will offer instruction on hand-stripping, salon freestyle grooming, scissoring techniques, Portugese Water Dog and Sporting Breeds grooming and more.

The Northwest Show will also be home to exciting grooming competitions! The All Other Purebreds class

will be held on Saturday morning followed by the Poodle class in the afternoon. Sunday will feature the crowd-pleasing Creative Competition. Make sure to bring your cameras!

Trade show exhibitors will offer special show pricing while introducing and demonstrating new products to attendees, making it a great time to stock up on supplies!

For more information on the 2011 Northwest Grooming Show, go to www.nwgroom.com.

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Groomer to Groomer • Vol 30 Ed 3 • March 2011 47

Exciting Changes for *Barkleigh IJA Grooming Contests* in 2011

Barkleigh will not seek GroomTeam sanctioning for next two-year cycle

Due to a recent ruling by GroomTeam USA Board of Directors, *Barkleigh* will not offer GroomTeam sanctioned competitions for the next two-year cycle, according to Todd Shelly, President of *Barkleigh Productions*, due to the Conflict of Interest Policy dated November 8, 2010.

"Though well intended, we believe this policy would leave *Barkleigh Productions* open to litigation from competitors. There are many cracks in the policy that are not addressed. We feel it is not fair to our top competitors to risk losing their GroomTeam points by competing at one of our events and then having those points

denied after the fact," states Shelly.

"In the absence of GroomTeam points, many exciting changes are planned for competitors at *Barkleigh* shows," says Shelly. Contestants are encouraged to watch for new announcements as things develop.

Barkleigh plans to continue to place emphasis on international competitions. As more countries come on board with IJA's panel judging system, more international opportunities will become available to winners at *Barkleigh* events. Poland, Australia, and South Korea have already offered IJA shows.

The IJA cycle will run for just one year. The top competitor will win bigger opportunities to compete at an IJA international show of their choice. A new awards structure will begin in 2011 with point ratings given to every competitor's grooming. This point system will determine the Best Technical and Professional Groomer in various categories during the year and will culminate in an awards ceremony in 2012 at *Groom & Kennel Expo*.

"We at *Groomer to Groomer* magazine plan to increase professional opportunities for top competitors to speak, demonstrate, write and use their skills at *Barkleigh* shows and in the magazine, since IJA does not place limits on competitors," says Todd Shelly. "It is also our goal to create opportunities for those competitors to become spokespersons to the general pet owning public for topics involving pet care and responsible ownership."



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GroomTeam Announces Lonnie Lange Memorial Scholarship

GroomTeam USA, Inc. is pleased to announce the launch of the applications for the *Lonnie Lange Memorial Scholarship Fund*. There are two levels of awards; One for college education, with two awards, and the other for grooming education. The deadline for applications is April 30, 2011. 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 1 will provide two recipients with \$1000 in college money. These funds may be used toward college education in any field and will be paid directly to the school. The only stipulation is that the applicant must be the child, stepchild or grandchild of a bona fide profes-

sional groomer. No other students may apply. This is strictly for the families of groomers!

Level 2 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 will also provide up to a maximum of \$1000 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.com) 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, 2011 and all applications must be processed on line.

The Lonnie Lange Memorial Scholarship Fund is intended to help the families of hard working pet stylists, like you. It is made possible through the generous contributions of our Premium Sponsors, *Andis, Wahl, 44/20 Shears and Groomers Helper*, as well as the continued support of the numerous manufacturers, distributors and groomers.

Any questions regarding the Lange Scholarship fund may be directed to groomteamusa@aol.com.



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GLAMOUR GLITTER!

by Dawn Omboy, NGMG



Opal sporting the IJA logo

You have seen the sparkle and shine in the Creative Ring on those fantastic and magical grooms done by the creative stylists. Now is the time to bring some of that pizzazz to your everyday salon dogs. There are many ways to utilize *Davis' Glamour Glitter* (RSC #7748) that will make you shine in your clients

eyes and give you that winning edge over your local competitors.

First, as we all know you can simply sprinkle a little sparkly magic over your finished dog but I like to seal it with a bit of hair spray to make it hold better. Another thing I like to do is "paint" designs onto the ears, or any part of the dog with short coats for

that matter, with a small bristle paintbrush dipped into washable Elmer's school glue and into the glitter. This will allow you to be precise with your application and have virtually no waste.

You can apply freehand or use a stencil of your choice. Make sure to allow a minute to dry and you

Continued on page 51

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may also seal your design with a bit of *Davis Glitter* adhesive for extra staying power. Just a light mist over the glitter is all you need.

Another thing I love to do with *Davis Glamour Glitter* is dip the tip of a freshly painted wet nail into the glitter giving it a glitzy French pedicure, with so very many colors of *Davis* quick drying polish and *Glamour Glitters* the color combinations are endless. No occasion will ever be left out again; from holidays to matching the owner's outfit!

You can easily add designs in glitter to the nails too! Dip a small paint brush into tacky glue and paint on the dry freshly painted nail, then lightly dust with *Davis Glamour Glitter*, blow off excess and Whala! So stock up today and take advantage of this unique add on service.

Another tip; I usually place a sheet of paper under the foot of the dog so that I may save any extra glitter that blows off the nail or whatever part of the dog I happen to be using it on.

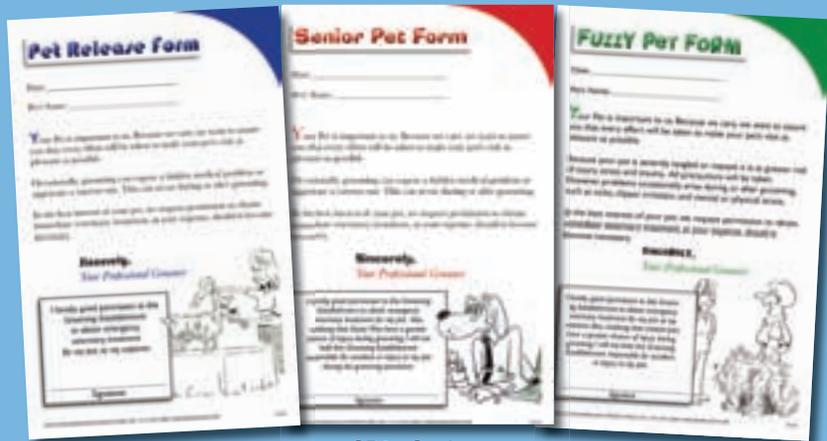
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Dawn owns and operates Klippers in Columbus, GA and is well known in the grooming industry for her creative work.

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Paw Brothers has added *Dental Spray Complete* to their dental product line. *Paw Brothers Dental Spray Complete* is a 2-in-1 formula that freshens breath while helping to reduce plaque and tartar. *Paw Brothers Dental Spray Complete* fights bacteria that cause bad breath and helps to reduce the accumulation of plaque and tartar. It has a fresh mint flavor and can be used on dogs or cats. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #7740.*

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Now professionals can cut their clipping time in half with the faster cutting ability and smoother feeding capability of the New *Ultimate Competition Series Blades*. The new *Ultimate* line of blades features a high performance blade, cutting 2.5 times faster than previous blades. The smooth feeding of the *Ultimate Blade* leaves no clipper tracks. The *Competition Series Ultimate Blades* have every characteristic a professional looks for in a USA quality manufactured blade



with the new midnight color for easy reference and fits most standard detachable blade clippers. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #7716.*

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Private Label Enterprises has introduced a new product line available for all pet related businesses. This line offers pet businesses a way of instant branding without the up-front or on-going cost of hiring a marketing firm. *Private Label Enterprises*, through exclusive contracts with two of the nation's leading pet manufactures, offers small to medium-sized pet related businesses top quality USA made pet products covered with each business' full information. The company has two catalogs with over 50 different types of products that can be private labelled, as if they were custom manufactured for each individual business. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #7742.*



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Quadruped offers new *Natural Yucca Medicated Tearless Shampoo*. The Mojave Yucca's natural cortisone-like properties make this product the perfect choice for use on pets to alleviate itching, sensitive skin, "hot spots," dermatitis and other skin-related



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Grooming Today • Vol. 30 • Feb. 2011

W1753

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INDUSTRY NEWS

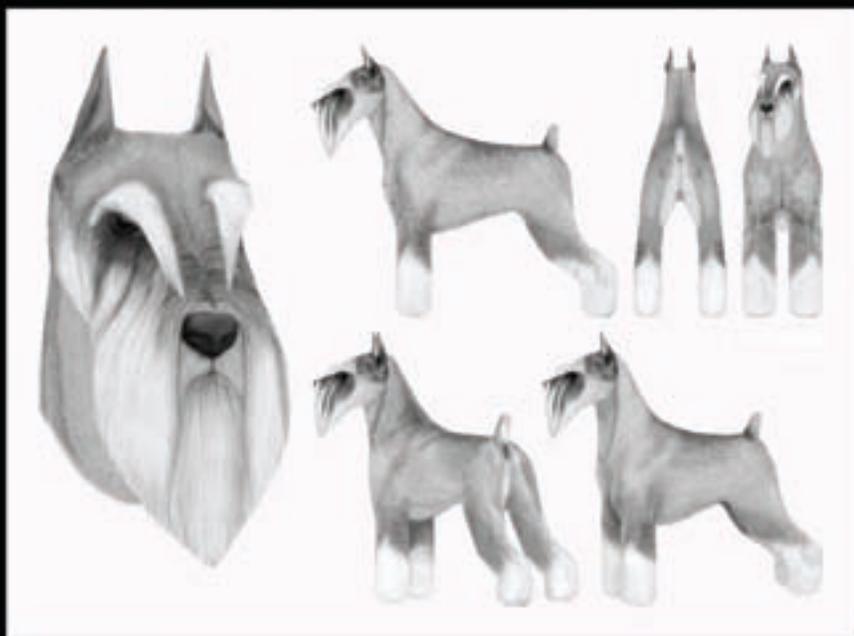
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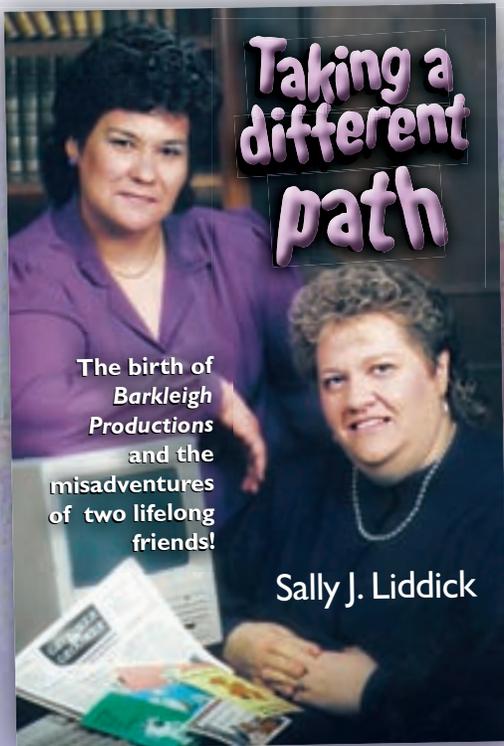
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TAKING A DIFFERENT PATH by Sally J. Liddick

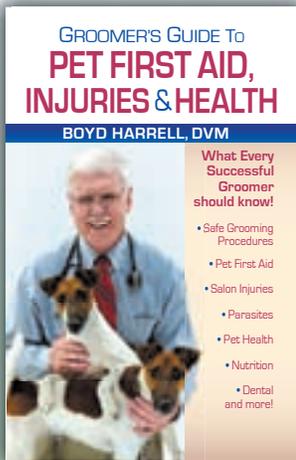
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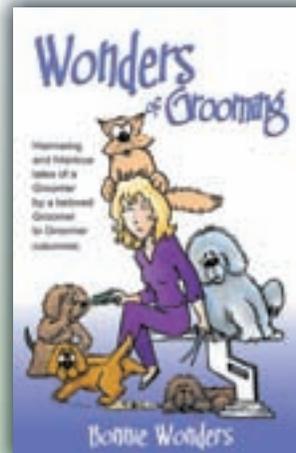
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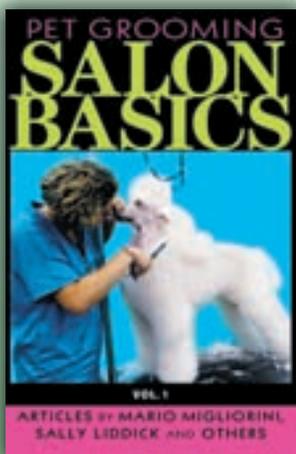
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WONDERS OF GROOMING By Bonnie Wonders

This publication features over 200 pages of Groomer to Groomer columnist, Bonnie Wonder's, humorous tales of everyday grooming. Through Bonnie's eyes and words, you will be able to relate and chuckle about some of your own crazy clients. Laughter is the best medicine; a little dose of Bonnie will help you to see the humor in your every day grooming life.

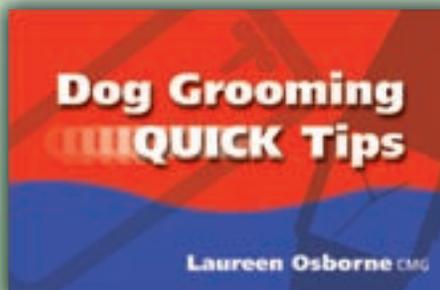
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PET GROOMING SALON BASICS

This book contains grooming secrets from Sally Liddick, editor of Groomer to Groomer and Groom-O-Gram; Mario Migliorini, author of many books on grooming and handling; plus other grooming authorities. Original grooming cartoons! 128 pages full of illustrations and photos.

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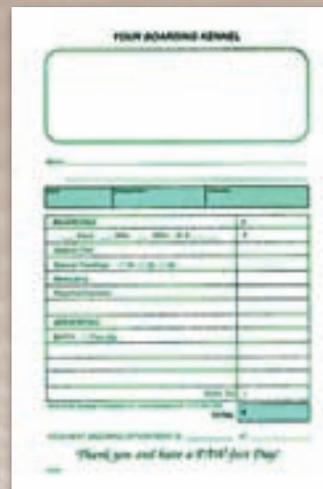
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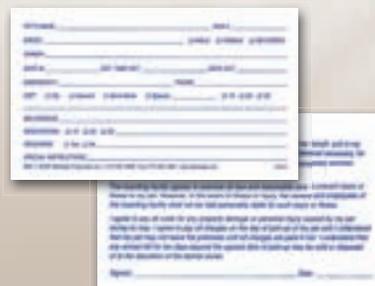


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READER SERVICE CARD #7803

The Last Word

by Sally Liddick



Grooming GIZMOS

I love kitchen gadgets. And I have bought numbers of them over the years. I probably started with the *ChopOmatic*, then the *MinceOmatic*, and the *VegOmatic*. I bought two of the dehydrators, but that's another story. Ron Popeil and I have had a wonderful ongoing relationship for many years. I love everything he offered and for the most part bought almost everything he had. My kitchen was the better for it. I was faster and smarter than my neighbors.

Since I am retired I find myself pursuing the internet to find easier ways to do kitchen stuff again. Always taken by a gadget, I found the *One Touch* can opener. This little thing just sits on top of the can and vibrates its way around it. No hanging the can on an opener or having a big appliance out on your countertop. This little palm sized battery-operated can opener just rotates around on the top of the can and in moments it's done. How smart

is that? I would've called it the Can Bug though. Because that's what it looks like and how it acts as it jiggles its way around a can of peas.

I have a long-standing carpal tunnel problem from grooming. Even surgery only alleviated the pain, but didn't give me back the dexterity that I needed. So, now I've been looking for an easy way to peel potatoes. I recently ordered two

Continued on next page

Making the Spring Groom-O-Gram Work for You!

Here's a neat way to circulate your Groom-O-Grams and drum up some business! Give some short pet care demonstrations at your child's pre-school or elementary school. Once the demonstration is over, hand out a *Groom-O-Gram* to each child with a pet treat or a cookie attached. Make sure that your business information is visible on the *Groom-O-Gram* because when the children head home and tell their parents about the great pet care demo, you will be getting some grooming calls! This is also a great idea for senior citizen groups, scouting troops, church youth groups, etc. You can also contact the local Chamber of Commerce and ask to be placed on the speaker's listing. This list is sent to civic and social organizations for use when they are needing a speaker.

items from Amazon. The *Presto Peel-a-meal* and the *Rotato*. Hey, if one is good, two would be better. The *Presto* arrived first. It was the size of a crockpot and was as noisy as a jet plane taking off in my kitchen. But it did the job and made the cutest little round balls of their former selves. So what if it made me deaf. The potatoes were clean of peels.

Then the *Rotato* arrived. It sat on my table for a week as I needed nothing more in my life than the *Presto*. Last night, I decided to give the *Rotato* a chance. It was smaller than the *Presto* and I was a little dismayed to see that it was hand-cranked. No modern marvel like the *Presto*. But I stuck a potato on it as shown, moved the little blade to the top of the potato and cranked. It was love at first use. This simple gizmo removed the potato skin in the most fun way in just seconds.

And the side benefit is that I have a beautiful long snaky peel for which I had not yet found a use. It even removed most of the eyes and each potato took very little touch up.

So how does all this kitchen talk relate to grooming? Actually lots. How many grooming gizmos have you bought in your lifetime? How many of them could save you a great deal in time, effort and health? I believe that there are lots of them and you're behind the eight ball if you're not buying. Perhaps each one would not end up being just your cup of tea. But you may find some wonders out there that, like my *Rotato*, will knock your socks off.

Some are expensive like the *Clipper Vac*, lighted hydraulic table or floor model cage dryer. Some are a lot less costly like mat splitters, *Furminators* and more. I know of a new product coming

on board that will remove matting painlessly and without mess. Get in line for that one.

So, open up your mind and your pocketbook. If one gizmo doesn't quite work the way you hoped it would, chalk it up to a learning experience. I guarantee there are gizmos out there for grooming that will outperform your expectations and help you in many ways. It's the cost of doing business. But if you are not trying something new, your grooming job just gets older and more tedious. And you will become stale, burned out and broken down.

Go through this magazine again or visit a grooming trade show and try something new. There are lots of grooming gizmos, and one is sure to benefit you. Hey, anyone looking for a slightly used *PeelOmatic*?

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