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Groomer

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The MATTED PET

Grooming the
BLIND DOG

GROOM EXPO
JUST AROUND THE CORNER!



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winner of the Northwest
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Photos by Barkleigh Productions.



THE MATTED PET

It's all about communication and education

✧ *By Kathy Hosler* ✧

A first-time dog owner calls you to make a grooming appointment for her new puppy. The owner says that she got her Goldendoodle puppy for Christmas. The breeder told her that the dog wouldn't require much grooming; he would mainly need brushing. She says that she loves her fluffy boy but can't see his eyes, and he needs to be trimmed under his tail.

The day of his appointment arrives, and you see a ten-month-old, 85-pound mop of a dog dragging his hapless owner all over the parking lot. You begin to suspect that you are in for a challenging day.

You introduce yourself and welcome them as they enter your salon. It takes two people to put the dog onto a grooming table so that you

can check his condition and discuss the groom with his owner. As soon as you touch the dog, it's obvious that his coat is terribly matted and will have to be removed.

"But I brush him everyday," the client states defiantly. "I don't want his hair cut short. No, no, no!"

"Yes, I can see that you have done a good job on the top hair," you reply. "The outer hair is fluffy and brushed out, but next to his skin, the coat is completely felted."

It's very difficult for owners to believe that they are not taking good care of their precious pets. Some owners will actually argue that the lumpiness they feel under the brushed out top coat is their dog's muscles.

Every conversation with a

distressed owner must be handled calmly, politely, and professionally. This is the point where communicating with and educating your client is crucial. They only know that they don't want their pet's hair cut short. You know that besides being very uncomfortable for the pet, matted hair can conceal a multitude of serious skin issues and other problems... and you know that it needs to come off.

Many salon owners keep a sample of matted hair to show to their clients. Some even display an entire pelt that was removed in one piece. When the pet owners hold it in their hands, they can see that it is nice and fluffy on the top but the hair underneath where it attaches

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to the skin has become a solid mat.

You must impress upon the client that their pet's well-being and comfort is always your number one priority and that removing the matted coat is the only humane solution. Take the time to explain to them what must be done to remove the severe matting from their pet. When you show them your display mat, explain what a time-consuming and difficult process it is to separate the matted hair from the skin of the pet.

Educating them will make it clear to the owner that you are doing what is best for their pet. Once they understand that removing the matted hair is necessary, they have taken the first step toward forming a working partnership with you in the future care of their pet. Spend as much time as necessary to be sure the owner understands what you are saying and why the hair must come off.

You must impress upon the client that their pet's well-being and comfort is always your number one priority and that removing the matted coat is the only humane solution.

Make sure the owner knows exactly what to expect when they pick up their pet so there are no unpleasant surprises for either of you. If you have a brochure or any literature about matting and the problems it can cause pets, give it to the owner to take with them and read while you are grooming their pet.

Always have them sign a matted pet release form before they leave your salon. For your protection, it is imperative that you take before and after photos of the pet, carefully documenting any skin issues or abnormalities that you find.

When the owner returns to pick up their pet, impress upon them how to care for their pet after it has had a "smoothie." Protection from sunburn and self-mutilation from scratching and biting must be emphasized. Rebooking the pet and setting up a regular schedule of grooming appointments will prevent it from ever needing a "smoothie" again.

The best that you can hope to achieve in this situation is a happy, comfortable pet – and an owner that is satisfied that their pet received the best care possible.

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Make plans today to attend the world's largest grooming show! The beautiful Hershey Lodge and Convention Center in Hershey, Pennsylvania will become the weekend home to thousands of pet professionals for this phenomenal trade show event September 6-9!

This year's show has some fantastic brand new events scheduled... A Rescue Rodeo, an Abstract Runway Show, *Barkleigh Honors* Poodle Symposium, Therapy Dog certification and a Business Success Summit!

The Rescue Rodeo is a grooming competition that uses homeless dogs from local animal shelters. The focus of the event is to promote adoption and create awareness to the necessity of foster homes for shelter animals. Each local rescue group will receive a donation for providing an animal to the Rescue Rodeo.

The Abstract Runway Show will

be featured during the *Barkleigh Honors Awards* Dinner on Saturday evening. This show puts an elegant twist on creative grooming. Color is not allowed in this competition, only accessories. Contestants will parade their creations down a runway that extends out into the crowd while two large screens will also project the show for better viewing.

The *Barkleigh Honors* Poodle Symposium is a series of grooming demonstrations held on Friday. Last year's *Barkleigh Honors* winners, Lisa Leady, Chris Pawlosky, Michell Evans, Sue Zecco and Jay Scruggs will share their expert knowledge of Poodle grooming in these four separate seminars.

A Therapy Dog certification class is being held Friday through Sunday near the *Puppy Playground* area on the garage level of the Convention Center. The certification process is a 20-minute obedience test conducted by Nikki Huntley through *Therapy Dog International*.

Even if you are not interested in certification, this is a great opportunity simply to watch the testing and learn more about the process.

The Business Success Summit is being conducted by grooming legend Melissa Verplank. She is the founder of the *Paragon Grooming School* and the author of *Notes from the Grooming Table*. Melissa's years of experience and business success will help attendees achieve success in their own businesses.

Last year, *Groom Expo* was held during one of the largest floods the area had seen in nearly 40 years but still had 4,000 attendees and nearly 200 vendor booths. Therefore, we expect a much larger show this year!

Groom Expo will host various grooming contests and dozens of educational seminars on grooming, animal behavior, boarding, mobile grooming, retail, naturals, training and pet daycare. On Thursday,

Continued on page 12

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a day-long Animal Behavior Conference will be presented by Gary Wilkes.

The following are some of the expert speakers scheduled to conduct seminars this year. Teri DiMarino, Marlene Romani, Melissa Verplank, Chris Pawlosky, Sarah Hawks, Sue Zecco, Joey Villani, Hayley Keyes, Diane Betelak, Kathy Rose, Gary Bessette, Gary Wilkes,

Jay Scruggs, Dawn Omboy, Daryl Conner, Suesan Watson, Kimberly Raisanen, Danelle German, Jonathan David, Kendra Otto, Lisa Leady, Michell Evans, Ellen Ehrlich, Daryl Conner, Julie Wilkins-Pantages, Angela Kumpe, Lori Craig, Cheryl Purcell, Tip Campbell, Irina and Lee Phillips, Debi Hilley, Nikki Huntley and Kristie Kingsland.

Groom Expo will be home to exciting grooming competitions with generous cash awards! The *PetSmart GroomOlympics* and the following breed class competitions will be held, Poodle, Salon/Freestyle, Sporting/Terriers and More, All Other Purebreds and Creative. *PetEdge*, *Lambert Kay*, *Andis*, *Conair Pro Pet* and *Nature's Specialties* are sponsoring the competitions.

The whole weekend will be packed with extra events for fun and the opportunity to meet and mingle with fellow pet professionals. On Friday night, a "Prom Party" will be held to welcome attendees and have some fun! Be sure to pack some formal clothes and remember the ol' days from your own prom (minus those awful braces)!

Special package plans ranging from V.I.P (all four days admission to most sessions, all meals and spectator admission to all grooming contests) to Weekend packages for Friday and Saturday or Saturday and Sunday. Of course, seminars and admission to contests can also be purchased individually.

You won't want to miss all the great items up for bidding at the *Gifts of Love Silent Auction*. Thousands of unique and practical pet themed gifts will be featured daily from Friday through Sunday.

The Mobile Round-up is an opportunity to stroll through Mobile Grooming Vans. You can even bring your own to show off and receive a free Basic admission.

A *Puppy Playground* is available to view the activity of demo and contest dogs and witness some new socializing techniques learned at training and behavior seminars.

Don't waste another minute, sign up for *Groom Expo* today! ✕

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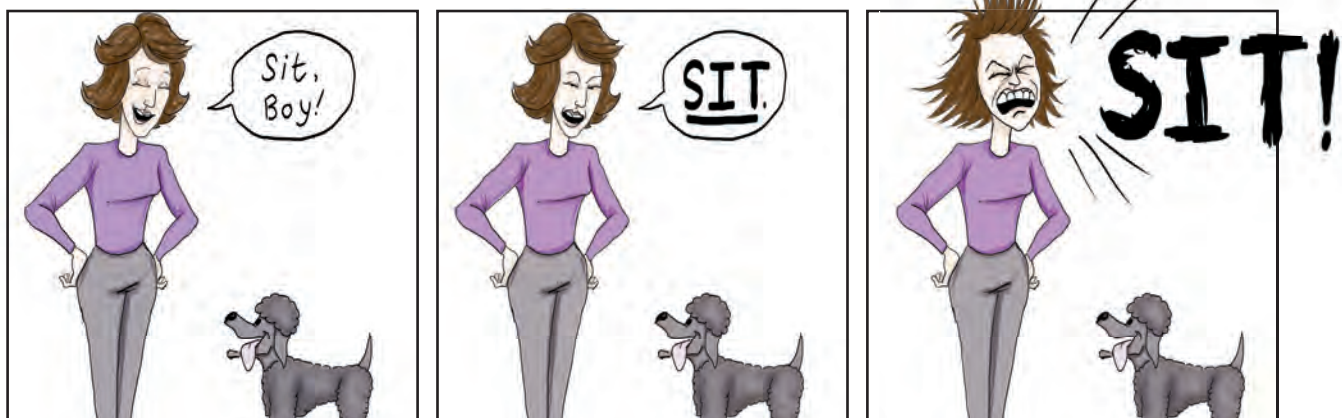
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GIVING COMMANDS WITHOUT ESCALATING VOLUME

The other day I was in one of those huge pet food megastores. A woman was having difficulty keeping her dog under control. She pulled and tugged on the dog's leash and kept up a running, one-sided conversation with her dog. As the dog continued to buck and pitch, her voice got harsher. The dog didn't seem to notice. After about 20 seconds, an employee showed up and while waving a small treat in front of the dog's face quietly asked the dog to sit. Not surprisingly, the dog suddenly paid attention to the soft-spoken and treat-laden employee. So much for "tone of voice."

For the last few thousand years, people have modified their speech when asking their dogs to do things. While some owners prefer a harsh, loud yell, others favor a "hissed through clenched teeth/paramilitary

command" tone. Regardless of the style, the logic behind these methods is obvious: commands should be verbally intimidating. Other trainers recommend that you overly enunciate the words, while others prefer that you bark the commands in imitation of your dog's ancestors. As all of these recommendations are capable of failure, it's also obvious that real obedience isn't all about being verbally threatening.

A couple of real-life examples point out the fallacy of tonal obedience. The same dog that won't stay even when you scream at him can hear a potato chip fall on thick carpet from 20 feet away. Before the chip has a chance to bounce, the dog has unerringly raced to the spot and devoured it. The chip has no power to intimidate yet has an ability that many macho owners don't – the ability to get the dog to "come"

consistently.

The most powerful proof of this phenomenon is as close as your own front door. All dogs who live in houses react to the doorbell. No one sets out to teach this association. Despite the fact that behavior is self-taught, the dogs surpass all standards of obedience when the doorbell begs for attention. Consider this:

- 1) The doorbell does not have to be repeated to get 100% obedience.
- 2) The dog can hear the doorbell faintly from a distance and still give 100% accuracy and enthusiasm.
- 3) The doorbell never changes its "tone of voice."

Few people realize this conundrum: a \$7 doorbell has better control than almost all professional dog trainers. Despite this fact, owners commit the sin of repeated

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commands, thereby destroying any chance of consistent control. The assumption is that if *Fluffy* won't come when called, call again and call more loudly. "*Fluffy*, come... Come... COME! ... *FLUFFY*, YOU GET HERE THIS INSTANT!" All this bellowing will eventually teach *Fluffy* to wait until you are quite red in the face before bothering to follow your orders. If you still believe in the power of repeated commands, let me remind you of something. Go ring your doorbell and see how many times it takes to get *Fluffy's* attention. How is it that a doorbell does not need to yell or repeat itself but humans do?

One of the reasons that these erroneous rules have been overwhelmingly accepted is that they can easily become self-fulfilling prophecies. If you get into the habit of saying all your commands in a loud voice, *Fluffy* will soon ignore

When *Fluffy* ignores your soft command the first time, you will automatically repeat yourself more loudly. Now you are convinced that it was the volume of the command that caused the behavior to fail.

soft commands. You have inadvertently told her that the sound of the command is not as important as how loud it is. If you fall into the loudness trap, you may soon be using multiple commands, as well. When *Fluffy* ignores your soft command the first time, you will automatically repeat yourself more loudly. Now you are convinced that it was the volume of the command that caused the behavior to fail. If you get into this habit of trying your commands in a regular tone of voice and then escalating the volume, you may soon find yourself repeating commands until *Fluffy* obeys.

In nature, animals must listen to subtle sounds in order to survive. The secret behind getting your animal to pay attention to you has little to do with the volume of your voice, the shortness of the commands, or how many times you repeat yourself. The real secret to obedience is to make your pet's responses connected to predictable consequences. If you find yourself repeating your commands or speaking harshly yet getting little response, here is a simple program for getting back on track.

Continued on next page

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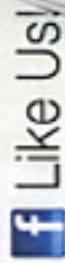
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Start holding training sessions before meals. Use some of your dog's food as treats during the sessions.

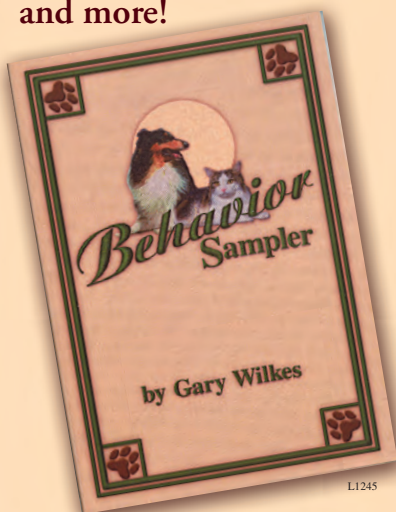
If you ask for a behavior, make sure you don't "give in" and settle for less than prompt performance. If you don't get the behavior in a timely fashion, enforce a short 30-second time out. During that time, you should ignore the dog. At the end of the time out, don't offer any treats

or affection unless the dog performs a prompt version of a behavior in response to your request.

Find something your dog doesn't like that can't be harmful (e.g. a squirt gun). Take a known behavior like "sit" and give the command in a normal tone of voice. If your dog doesn't do it promptly, say the word "NO" and give about three squirts to the face, avoiding the eyes. Then

walk away. Come back a few minutes later, show the dog that you have a treat, and ask for the same behavior. You may have to use the treat to regenerate the behavior. Wait a bit more and ask for "sit" again. In almost all cases, the dog will sit "with a will" on the first command. In reality it's not commands that make behaviors happen – it is the consequence of behaving correctly. ✕

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Grooming the **BLIND DOG**

By Mary Oquendo

Meet *Ghost*.

He originated from a pet store. When this cute bundle of fur went blind shortly after arriving at the store, the owner was going to put him down. After all, you cannot sell a blind dog. One of the employees convinced the owner to give her the dog. It was soon apparent that, in spite of her good intentions, it was beyond her capabilities to care for a dog that was exhibiting signs of distemper, ulcerated corneas, glaucoma, and giardia.

In stepped Kristin Edmond, Kaeley Blum, and Dr. Andrew Pickerstein of *VCA Northside Animal Hospital* in Danbury, CT. They adopted him, treated his medical conditions, and neutered him. All they wanted for *Ghost* was a good home. I met him at VCA, where he was named *Po*, while bringing one of my other dogs in for a visit. We

clicked immediately, and a couple of weeks later, he is now snoozing next to me as I write this.

I have groomed many blind dogs over the years. I have owned blind dogs. What they all have in common was that they went blind over time. They were used to my grooming van, the procedures, the noises, and where everything was located. Minor changes were needed. *Ghost* is my first dog that does not have a clue as to what to expect.

Dogs take life's lemons and make lemonade. They adapt. Other senses begin to heighten to compensate for the loss of one. How does all this relate to grooming? I want to make *Ghost's* experience with grooming a stress-free, pleasant experience. Did I mention he is a Husky? There is lots of grooming in his future.

I'll start with their enhanced hearing. It's been interesting to watch *Ghost* chase after my Golden Retriever by listening to *Ricky's* huffing and puffing as he runs. While we hear in the 200 to 20,000 Hz range, dogs can hear up to 200,000 Hz. They are already more sensitive to music. Throw in that enhanced hearing and add agitating music. You now have an over-stimulated dog, one that is more likely to bite. I play music softly in the background — nothing jarring or loud. My personal favorite is Stephen Halpern's "Chakra Suite." It's designed for meditation and is, therefore, very calming. I am also mindful of other background noises that I may have become accustomed to such as barking dogs and dryers. When drying *Ghost*, I use a *Happy*

Continued on page 20

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A typical dog has over 220 million olfactory receptors compared to our 5 million. *Ghost* is relying heavily on his increased sense of smell. That can be both a disadvantage and an advantage. Strong odors, such as bleach, disinfectants, and cleaners, may be overwhelming. I can use this concept to *Ghost's* advantage. I scent mark all the equipment, table edges, grooming arms, etc. with an essential oil. I choose an oil that is not common to the area. For me, it's rosemary. Using an oil from the pine family would be confusing, as pines and junipers surround my property. A little dab does the trick. He can use his sense of smell to "see" where everything is located. You can also place calming essential oils, such as lavender, in a diffuser or on cotton balls strategically around your facility. Do not put essential oils on



plastics such as AC vents, as it may cause damage.

Whether *Ghost* is in the tub or on the table, I am always touching him. Sometimes it's with my shoulder if both hands are occupied. That consistent contact ensures that I do not startle him, and a startled dog is more likely to bite. If he is in a crate or I have not maintained the constant contact, I will use vibrations by rattling the cage door or tapping the grooming table with a brush

to warn him before I touch. This is also good advice for deaf dogs.

It is amazing to watch this blind puppy adjust and flourish and to see his spirit shine. He runs and chases my other dogs, goes up and down the stairs by himself, and knows when someone is in the kitchen (where the treats are). It took my husband and me about three days to realize that *Ghost* was an inappropriate name for him. So, every body, meet *Spirit*. ✕

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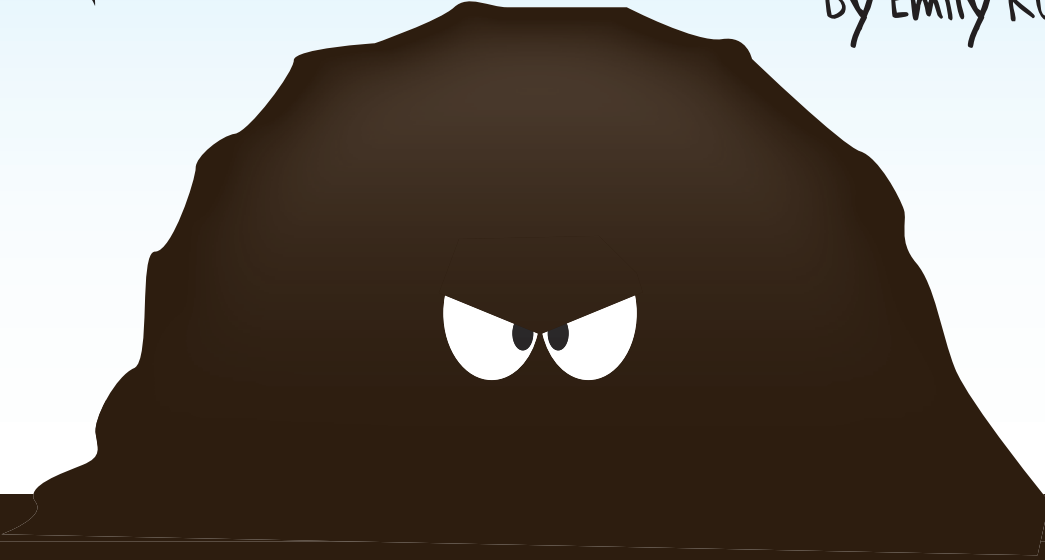
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IT'S ALIVE!

By Emily Rupe



IT was a fairly typical August. Everyone had already shelled out any disposable income on their money leeches and time bandits... Oops, I mean “kids.” Thus, the phone had been eerily silent since back to school season had reared its ugly head. So imagine my excitement when not only a call rang through, but one with a trio of dogs right down the dirt road from my own abode. Ms. Daisy (my mobile grooming van) and I were more than ready to hit the road and get to grooming again.

After dropping off my own

leeches at school the next morning, I pulled into Ms. Hazard’s drive. As soon as I left the tranquility of the van’s cabin, I was suddenly thrust into a menagerie of critters. There were chickens, cats, goats, and all other sorts of hooved, clawed, and pawed creatures. Out stepped Dr. Dolittle herself: Ms. Hazard, a short, robust woman whom one could not help but like. She was all smiles, cheer, and energy — one of those people with some form of organic Red Bull running through their veins. Dancing happily around her legs were my challenges

for the day. There was *Gracie* the Bullmastiff, *Ms. Kitty* the Catahoula mix, and *Misty* the rescue Border Collie mix, all of whom needed my attention.

While Ms. Daisy had never been claustrophobic in the past, I knew that with all three pups in her belly, she would be far too full to truly move about and groom. I opted to take each girl individually and then swap for another upon completion. Ms. Hazard put the other girls out in the back yard so that I could easily exchange them

Continued on page 24

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The yard was probably about a half acre of sand, dog toys, and a huge black boulder. For some reason, this boulder was a great source of amusement, as I watched the pack frolic and chase around its astonishing girth.

in case I couldn't locate her amongst the clucking, barking, and other barnyard commotion.

The exchanges went without a hitch, as I quickly took each pup from their spacious play yard. Luckily, each dog ran up to me without hesitation, ignorant of my true purpose of being there. The yard was probably about a half acre of sand, dog toys, and a huge black boulder. For some reason, this boulder was a great source of amusement, as I watched the pack frolic and chase around its astonishing girth. I just giggled a little and really thought nothing of it as I finished up the last groom.

Once Gracie was bathed, I decided to put her back into the yard with the other girls and then try to locate Momma. Somehow I figured being drug around a farm by a Mas-

tiff would eventually result in my being flat on my backside. I opened the chain link gate and set the overjoyed pup free. Just like her two sisters before her, she dashed over to the boulder to celebrate. However, this time the boulder began to move.

I shrieked realizing that the huge black mass was no boulder but rather a very filthy pig that had been soaking up some rays. It started to bound toward me, and being that I am no hero, I ran like the yellow-bellied coward that I am. It must have been a sight to see this short, chunky groomer try to fling herself over the chain link fence in horror. I landed flat on my back in the dirt safely on the other side, huffing and puffing almost as loudly as the swine was snorting.

As I opened my eyes, there was

Continued on next page



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Ms. Hazard, cheerful as ever, offering to help me up. "I see you met *Porkchop*! He's such a sweetie. Just gotten too big for the house and now has decided to rip off the siding like a *Twizzler*. Are you able to bathe him too?" Still regaining my composure, I went to take a better look at my assailant.

Fortunately there was no way *Porkchop* was going to fit inside Ms. Daisy, let alone the bathtub, so it was out of the question. However, I did muster up the courage to pet him, and we seemed to hit it off, one chunky monkey to another. Even with future grooms, I brought him a little goodie, too, so he wouldn't feel too left out when his sisters came back to taunt him in the yard. My only request was that he got sprayed down a little so at least I could see his big, beautiful, pink self coming and not be fooled again by the boulder miracle. ☹



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GETTING DOWN to BUSINESS
BY TERI DiMARINO



CALIFORNIA SB 969

I have to apologize to all my readers. I have missed the publication deadlines for the past two issues. In my defense, I've been a little busy! Not for a moment to imply that all of you aren't busy as well, I've just found myself in a different kind of busy these days.

We all chose to be groomers because we love pets, and after nearly 40 years of grooming, I still enjoy working on a nice dog. I love the feel of the shears as they pass effortlessly through a beautiful, clean coat. I will always get a feeling of satisfaction when I look at that freshly finished dog. And nothing duplicates that warm and fuzzy feeling I get when my four-legged friends give me kissy faces as my reward for making them look and feel good. After four

decades, I am pleased to report that I still love my job.

Never in a million years did I think I would ever find myself walking the halls of the California State Legislature in an effort to defend what I enjoy doing and what has provided me with a very nice living for so long. Legislation targeting the grooming industry has been perched on the horizon for many years, and for many years, many of us have simply assumed that it would never happen to us. Pet grooming is, after all, something that does not need to be governed. Well, my friends, wake up and smell the coffee. The day you thought would never come is here!

Please allow me to start by saying that I am not anti-legislation. I

believe that there will be correctly composed regulation of the grooming industry some day. That statement has made some enemies for me along the way, but like any industry, we have a few bad apples in the barrel that give us all a bad name and need to be weeded out. What I am about to relate would have been extremely damaging to every groomer in the state of California, and eventually it will spill over to other areas of the country.

The state of California, in which I am a tax-paying resident and have been for the past 12 years, is actively pursuing the regulation of groomers. SB 969, also known as "Lucy's Law," was introduced in January of this year by a coalition

Continued on page 28



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of well-intended but grossly misinformed individuals. "Lucy," a Yorkie mix, was carelessly injured during the grooming process, and while we can all agree that there is absolutely no excuse for this kind of treatment from a groomer, Lucy's cause has been taken up by an animal rights faction.

Ironically these people, all with backgrounds in the field of law, approached a sympathetic state

senator out of their home district to champion their cause. Legislation was drafted; a bill was introduced and successfully passed through the State Senate. This bill was written without consulting anyone with knowledge of the grooming industry.

The state of California is broke (like so many other states) and will not pass any regulation that requires the establishment of a licensing board, which is a very expensive

proposition. The bill was amended, and licensing has been changed to "certification." Understand that licensing is mandatory, and certification is voluntary. While this first appeared to be a move in the right direction, careful dissection of the bill exposed hidden agendas cloaked in the rhetoric of "legalese," something most of us just don't understand.

Well-intended people who have previously defeated legislation kept assuring us that this bill could not possibly pass, as the state cannot afford to sink money into this project. It was, after all, voluntary. Shrouded in the bill were provisions to make a non-profit entity run by an appointed, volunteer council, thus claiming to avoid any cost to the state. The major problem is that this governing council was to be composed of nearly all non-grooming members.

Continued on page 30

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This is supposed to be a voluntary state certification, but if I were not certified with the state and advertised myself as a CMG, I would be in violation of the law; cease and desist injunctions could be filed against me.

Certifications conducted by the National Dog Groomers Association of America (NDGAA), International Professional Groomers (IPG), and International Society of Canine Cosmetologists (ISCC) allow groomers to test and acquire the titles of Certified Groomer or Certified Master Groomer. This bill would make it a "poor business practice" to advertise these titles. The only title that could be advertised would be the state certification.

This is supposed to be a voluntary state certification, but if I were not certified with the state and advertised myself as a CMG, I would be in violation of the law; cease and

desist injunctions could be filed against me. It would literally take away a tool used by consumers to distinguish the difference between a new groomer and a veteran, one who went above and beyond to attest his or her skills. I, with 40 years of experience at the grooming table, would have the same piece of paper as a new school graduate, and the consumer would not be able to tell the difference. To say the least, this enraged the certification organizations as well as the already certified groomers in the state.

Word quickly spread within the California grooming community. Facebook pages and message

boards shared information, but it was difficult to get a grasp on what was happening. We are pet groomers, and this sort of thing is so out of our comfort zone! As time progressed, we began digesting what was happening, and factions started pulling together into a unified movement to defeat this bill.

Moving forward, the bill has gone through a progression of readings in the appropriate houses. In this case, it started in the Senate, and as it passed through the hoops there, it proceeded to the Assembly to go through the same process. During this process, it is tossed

Continued on page 32

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Could a simple quicking of a toenail be considered “gross negligence”? Perhaps. What about that severely matted dog that you have to shave down, not knowing what is under that pelt? Or the difficult pet that bites and snaps at the clippers, but you work with him and get him done anyway? What would the discipline be? We don’t know.

back to its originator to be amended in an effort to find all the loopholes and make it palatable to all concerned. Eventually a bill makes its way to the Governor’s desk where it is signed into law or vetoed. Please understand that this is a very simplified version of what actually goes on.

SB 969 was amended six times, but it still did not improve from the original reading. It got better in some areas and worse in others. The lopsided council now had more groomer representation on it, but it is still extremely unbalanced. The original bill called for testing, but that was removed. Fees were reduced to make them more reasonable, and all a person would have to do is prove that they were grooming for a certain amount of time.

Sounds simple enough, but with this easement of the bill came covert issues.

The council would appoint a “discipline board” to review customer complaints. References to “gross negligence” appeared with no description of what constituted such “gross negligence,” what the discipline would be for such an offense, or who was going to foot the bill for these proceedings.

Could a simple quicking of a toenail be considered “gross negligence”? Perhaps. What about that severely matted dog that you have to shave down, not knowing what is under that pelt? Or the difficult pet that bites and snaps at the clippers, but you work with him and get him done anyway? What would the discipline be? We don’t know.

Groomers seeing this are considering not taking senior or difficult animals with special needs, fearing discipline for an unavoidable incident. Groomers will close their salons, prices will go up, and pets will become neglected, as we all know that many clients price-shop their grooms.

Suddenly we see inserts in the latest rewrite regarding anal glands and nail trimming. Nails could only be trimmed and glands expressed

Continued on page 34



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We had a good showing of about 20 concerned, proactive groomers in attendance as well as the lobbyists for PIJAC, Petco, and PetSmart. We all wore blue ribbons to signify our unity in opposing this legislation. We needed five of the committee members to vote “nay” or against the bill. We got four.

by a certified groomer — not the certified bather/brusher. This doesn't make a whole lot of sense, since the tub is the place where glands should be done. Will we see more dogs left alone while a groomer goes to the tub to express glands on a dog? I certainly hope not, but this is going to add unnecessary time to the pet's visit in the salon and will lengthen the groomer's work day.

We are fortunate to have had a number of people helping us behind the scenes. Judy Breton, Director of Grooming and Special Services for the World Pet Association (WPA) lives in Sacramento, and

it was good having someone based at “ground zero.” Barkleigh Productions stepped up to the plate and hit a home run by publishing internet blasts to groomers throughout the state. They also made it possible for me to attend hearings personally. The National Animal Interest Alliance (NAIA), an organization that supports reasonable animal welfare legislation, helped with blasts to all their California members. All of the certification organizations have backed us up every step of the way.

We have been walking the halls, beating on doors, and stating our case since this bill made it through

the Senate. We went office to office, making sure all of the members of the California Assembly Committee on Business, Professions, and Consumer Protection knew our stand. Lobbyists from the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC), PetSmart, and Petco joined us in our effort; all are as strongly opposed to this bill as we are.

The Assembly committee hearing was June 26, 2012. We had a good showing of about 20 concerned, proactive groomers in attendance as well as the lobbyists for PIJAC, Petco, and PetSmart. We

Continued on next page

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Every groomer in California must now become familiar with the legislative system and familiarize their representatives with the grooming industry and how this bill will financially impact them, their customers, and their businesses.

all wore blue ribbons to signify our unity in opposing this legislation. We needed five of the committee members to vote "nay" or against the bill. We got four.

I had much of this article composed on my flight to Sacramento for the hearing, waiting to plug in the last couple of paragraphs and hoping it would be good news. But it is not. Our work just got harder. The fight against SB 969 is not over. The next step is the Assembly Appropriations Committee, which focuses on any financial impact a bill will have on businesses, consumers, and the state. Seventeen people sit on this committee, and we need to

convince at least nine of them that this bill does nothing to prevent neither harm to pets in salons nor any potential financial ramifications. Any real teeth the bill originally had have been removed, but as I mentioned earlier, it is not what is written in the bill that worries us.

Every groomer in California must now become familiar with the legislative system and familiarize their representatives with the grooming industry and how this bill will financially impact them, their customers, and their businesses. We must continue to lobby for ourselves in a united effort to defeat this bill, as it will have a huge im-

pact on the industry in California.

I received quite a bit of feedback on my May article on licensing, mostly in favor of some sort of watchdog regulation. As I mentioned earlier, I am for this type of regulation if it is done properly with the help of groomers and with the pet's welfare as a primary concern.

I did, however, get a letter from one very irritated anti-legislation groomer who told me that I should "mind my own business." Well, my friend, if you happen to read this, just know that "minding my own business" is exactly what I'm doing! ☹



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Brushing Up on New Techniques

By Dawn Omboy

I have been a creative styling artist for a long time, and one thing I learned years ago is that no one person knows everything. We all learn from each other, and everyone has something to share.

They may not even be in our industry but could have something relevant to contribute that we can adapt to our business. It is for this reason that I say to take everything you can learn and adapt it so it fits your sense of style. You may develop a technique all your own. This is what so many of us have done.

At *Groom and Kennel Expo* 2003, the West Coast champion creative groomer Sandra Hartness first introduced me to manual airbrushing in the form of blow

pens. I had never seen such a thing and was amazed. A few years later at *Atlanta Pet Fair*, I saw Angela Kumpe using an airbrush the night before the competition to apply color to her fantastic horse design. Since then, Kumpe has come a long way through trial and error to master the airbrush as we saw on the May 2012 edition of *Groomer to Groomer* magazine.

Of course I set out to learn how to use this technique. I borrowed all the equipment from my brother-in-

law, Michael, who is a master at his own craft of rebuilding cars for car shows. I then decided I needed my own stuff, so I called Kumpe to find out where to order. She suggested *Harbor Freight* and told me to get more than one airbrush gun and cleaner, too.

After some checking around, I found my best deal came from www.TPCglobal.com/AirBrushDepot. There I found a deal with a very quiet compressor just like the one I had borrowed from Michael. It had

bottles, hoses, and three airbrush guns — everything I needed to get started, except the India Ink that Kumpe also suggested. I found this at *Hobby Lobby* in a multi-pack with a rainbow of colors that could be diluted with alcohol to help it dry more quickly as it is sprayed on the dog. You can get the ink at 40% off if you pull up *Hobby Lobby* on your smart phone and use their coupon that is always online. Besides the fantastic competition grooms

we have seen, this can be used for quick stencil work. I have a lot of practice ahead of me... <3

Dawn Omboy NCMG, Queen of Color, Barkleigh Honors Award Winner for Contribution to Creative Grooming.

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PetQuest

One Spectacular Event!

PetQuest was held recently at The Roberts Centre in Wilmington, OH. The show featured educational seminars, grooming competitions and a pet care professional trade show. The show welcomed nearly 1000 attendees with 33 companies offering over 40 exhibitor booths.

PetQuest was home to IJA sanctioned breed class grooming compe-

titions. Andis awarded *Best in Show* winner Tara Denean of Port Huron, MI a \$1200.00 cash prize. The breed class sponsors were: *Electric Cleaner Company*, *Nature's Specialties*, *The Groomer's Mall* and *Tropiclean*. The Creative Styling Competition awarded Angela Kumpe first place for her "Gone Fishin" creation with a \$1500.00 cash prize, Angela's creation also won the *People's*

Choice Award.

PetQuest featured numerous educational seminars. A *Barkleigh Honors Series* with award winners, Jay Scruggs, Sue Zecco, Chris Pawlosky and Kathy Rose offered grooming demonstrations for the Cocker, Poodle, Airedale and Drop Coated breed. Award winning creative groomers, Angela Kumpe and Lori Craig were featured in the seminar *Complete Guide to Salon Creative*. *Groomer to Groomer* columnist and *Barkleigh Honors* winner, Kathy Rose, also offered a seminar on grooming the Standard Poodle. A *Pet First Aid* seminar was presented by Judy Hudson and Judy Routley. A *Canine Massage* seminar was offered by Sherri Shinsky. Mobile Grooming topics were presented by Tip Campbell Nichols and Gina Sutton. Additional speakers were Koko Tanaka, Janice Fehn, Susan Kopitz, Nancy Ward, Karla Addington-Smith, Amie Haslar, Dan Williams and Chuck Simons. <

PetQuest 2013 is scheduled for the month of June. Date to be announced. For more information, please visit www.barkleigh.com.



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Level Two Best In Show winner, Mackensie Murphy with Diane Betelak of Andis.



Level One Best In Show winner, Misty Nuss with Diane Betelak of Andis.

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Creative Styling Second Place winner, Lori Craig with Floyd Hoffman of Tropiclean.



Creative Styling Third Place winner, Adriane Pope with Floyd Hoffman of Tropiclean.

POODLES



Level Three Best in Class Winner, Megan Kaminski with Darrin Schroeder of session sponsor **Petzlife**.



Level Two Best in Class Winner, Kristen Clyburn with Mary Meeks of session sponsor **Nature's Specialties**.



Level One Best in Class Winner, Misty Nuss with Trevor Vold of session sponsor **Electric Cleaner Company**.

SPORTING, TERRIERS & MORE



Level Three Best in Class Winner, Melanie Crowther with Bill Franklin of session sponsor **Groomer's Mall**.



Level Two Best in Class Winner, Mackensie Murphy with Darrin Schroeder of session sponsor **Petzlife**.



Level One Best in Class Winner, Meredith Cassing with Mary Meeks of session sponsor **Nature's Specialties**.

SALON FREESTYLE



Level Three Best in Class Winner, Tara Denean with Mary Meeks of session sponsor **Nature's Specialties**.



Level Two Best in Class Winner, Trudy Van Arsdale with Trevor Vold of session sponsor **Electric Cleaner Company**.



Level One Best in Class Winner, Melinda Spencer with Darrin Schroeder of session sponsor **Petzlife**.

ALL OTHER PUREBREDS



Level Two Best in Class Winner, Nikki Bishop with Bill Franklin of session sponsor **Groomer's Mall**.



Level One Best in Class Winner, Donna Walko with Bill Franklin of session sponsor **Groomer's Mall**.

ADDITIONAL RESULTS:

POODLES

Level 2: Second Place, Trudy Van Arsdale; Third Place, Heather Quarg

Level 1: Second Place, Melinda Spencer; Third Place, Kiyomi Brown

SPORTING / TERRIERS & MORE

Level 2: Second Place, Lisa Baxter; Third Place, Heather Quarg

Level 1: Second Place, Eric Roman; Third Place, Amanda Mac Millan

ALL OTHER PUREBREDS

Level 1: Second Place, Courtenay Bonus; Third Place, Robin Boyd

SALON / FREESTYLE

Level 2: Second Place, Kristen Clyburn

Level 1: Second Place, Taren Denger; Third Place, Susan Kinser

"SHHHH... Do You Hear That?!"

**EASY
MONEY**

By Joe Zuccarello



For some of you, the answer to this question is easy. For most of you, the answer to this question is difficult. What is the difference between hearing and listening? Let's look at the dictionary definition of each.

Hearing: *the faculty or sense by which sound is perceived.*

Listening: *to give attention with the ear. To pay attention, heed, or obey. To wait attentively for a sound. The skill of receiving messages to accurately grasp facts and feelings to interpret the genuine meaning.*

Let's look at it from a slightly different angle, one all of us can fully understand. When a dog is barking in your salon or kennel, you can hear it. While some may tune it out after a while, your ears are still hearing it. Listening is something totally different. The definition above uses a key phrase that will frame this entire writing: to give attention. Hearing takes little effort; listening is work.

Listening is one of the most important things you can do to be an effective manager or businessperson. We must listen to our staff and to our customers - not just hear them. Studies prove that 75% of effective communication is listening, though most people only spend about 30-40% doing it. If it is this much work (and if my job is to make your work easier), then I am going to delve a bit deeper into the art of

listening to help you identify each of its parts. Baby steps... Master one at a time, and when you do, you will be a much more effective communicator.

1. Listen actively. Here is where the work comes in. This means you have to put yourself and the person you are listening to in an environment conducive to listening. I know this is not always the case, but it should absolutely be the case if you are having an important discussion with a staff member or handling a concern or complaint by a customer. Even if it means you ask for forgiveness and delay the conversation until you can change environments, it is worth it in the long run. You will be amazed by what you miss in a conversation when you are distracted by noise, time constraints, etc.

Continued on next page

Now that you have put yourself into a listening environment, the next step is to keep your mouth shut and let the other person speak. Purposely try NOT to interrupt or form any opinion about what they are sharing with you until they have finished speaking. A great way to do this is to force yourself to take notes while they speak. Your brain has a hard time writing and thinking at the same time, so write while they talk. As much as you would like to say what you are thinking at that point, don't.

Ask questions to clarify, and encourage the speaker to offer you even more information you may need to interpret what they have said, to form an opinion, and to even offer a solution. Write, ask questions, and write again. It never hurts to say thank you for telling you what they had on their mind. It's also perfectly fine to ask for some time to let the information you just heard "digest" with you for a bit before committing to any response.

2. Judge content, not delivery.

Many are not great communicators, especially if they are upset about something. Emotions sway our message delivery and often cause us to use the wrong inflection, tone, or language. Understand this is human nature, and be careful not to form any opinions or actions based on their delivery. Some may act out, while others become more reserved or even "tight lipped." Picture yourself as a judge sitting on your bench in a courtroom, absorbing all of the facts as they uncover themselves. You don't see the judge handing down a ruling or interrupting while the facts of the case are being aired.

3. Be responsive. Part of active listening is what happens after you have the information you need. You must have a response, even if it is one that will not be to the speaker's favor. While I encourage you to take a great deal of interest in what it

is they are saying, sometimes you cannot solve their problem. This is rare, however. You should commit to some form of response and action following these types of conversations. Some conversations you listen to require very little action. Sometimes a simple "I understand" or "I apologize" can suffice. Sometimes the speaker just wants to be heard. When you actually listen to them, they feel better about their concerns and are encouraged to share their concerns with you in the future instead of internalizing it and leaving or worse, blowing up.

4. Exercise your mind and listen for ideas. Most often, the person you are listening to will offer you a clue or even something very obvious that you can use as part of the solution. Instead of having to toil over what it is that will make them happy, many times they will divulge it during their part of the conversation. If they don't, ask them. Don't commit to always giving them what they want, but sometimes what they want is less than what you would have offered to begin with, saving you time and effort.

If you take my advice and understand thought is faster than speech, take time to listen and think about what you want to say before saying it. After all, we are trying to strengthen relationships and trust. Both are accomplished by active listening and appropriate, mutually beneficial responses. ∞

Joe Zuccarello has excelled in the pet industry since 1986 and is a pet industry consultant and National Accounts Sales Manager for Tropiclean Shampoo and Fresh Breath Made Easy! dental products for dogs and cats. To find out more about Tropiclean Shampoos and Tropiclean Fresh Breath Made Easy! dental products, please visit www.tropiclean.net or call 800-542-7387



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PET Boarding & Daycare EXPO

COMING THIS NOVEMBER!

Pet Boarding & Daycare magazine and *Barkleigh Productions* are excited to bring the first ever *Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo* to Baltimore, MD, on November 6–8, 2012. Like *Groom Expo*, *Groom & Kennel Expo*, and other *Barkleigh* shows, the *Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo* will feature several days of both educational classes and trade show. Unlike its sister shows, however, this national conference is specifically designed for pet care professionals in the boarding and daycare industries.

“We are thrilled by the immensely positive reception this magazine has received throughout the several months we’ve been in publication,” said Cindy Agoncillo, managing editor of *Pet Boarding & Daycare*. “For decades, *Barkleigh Productions* has created opportunities for groomers to receive education beyond the pages of *Groomer to Groomer*. It is time to do the same for the boarding industry.”

Attendees will have an array of class options at the *Pet Boarding*

& *Daycare Expo*. Each session will offer up to three different tracks of education topics. The first track focuses on general topics like business, animal health, and animal behavior, all of which are useful for anyone in the boarding industry. The second track focuses specifically on running a successful daycare operation, and the third track will feature facility design topics with industry experts on architecture and manufacturing.

Education begins with an afternoon of classes on Tuesday, November 6. Attendees will have the opportunity to take one of three four-hour classes.

Red Cross-certified instructor Nikki Huntley will present a hands-on American Red Cross Pet First Aid and CPR course to equip pet care

professionals with the skills necessary to handle medical emergencies. Two or three people will share a stuffed dog to practice on during instruction, and assistants will roam the room to offer individual help. Included in class fees are the Red Cross Dog First Aid Book and DVD, which participants can take home as a reference.

Wheeler del Torro, author of *Growing Your Own Doggie Daycare: A Start-Up and Operational Guide for Success*, will present the first part of Dog Day Afternoons’ three-part daycare certification and accreditation course. The seminar will cover the design, management, and launch (or relaunch) of a successful dog daycare business. Participants can make arrangements with Dog Day

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Continued on next page

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Afternoons to complete the second and third parts of the accreditation program.

Scott Learned of *Design Learned, Inc.* will present "Designing Your Facility," a four-part series that will address the six primary systems that affect the engineering of the building environment: mechanical, plumbing, electrical, fire protection, noise control, and architecture. Topics will include air quality, water management, lighting and electrical systems, and energy efficiency.

Following Tuesday's educational classes will be a meet-and-greet sponsored by Laura Laaman and *Outstanding Pet Care*. This will

be an opportunity not only to meet other pet boarding industry professionals but also to learn more about *Outstanding Pet Care* and their recent acquisition of the *Pet Care Services Association (PCSA)* educational assets.

Classes continue on Wednesday, November 7, when Chris Murphy will present a four-part, day-long class titled "Doggie Daycare: Keys to Success." Susan Briggs and Robin Bennett will join together to present "Understanding Canine Body Language." They will also present a special lunch function titled "Training Off-Leash Play Group Staff," an informative ses-

Continued on Page 46

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sion on the importance and benefits of formal staff training for off-leash play group staff. A special ticket is needed for this luncheon. Other Wednesday classes include facility design topics with Rick Bacon and Greg Taylor, a seminar with Dr. Randy Lynn on Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease Complex (CIRDC), and an overview of insurance topics with *Governor Insurance's* Jerry Dubos.

Carmen Rustenbeck and the *International Boarding & Pet Services Association (IBPSA)* will host a meet-and-greet on Wednesday evening. This time to socialize with fellow pet care professionals provides an opportunity to learn more about IBPSA. Carmen will also present a short seminar titled "Sniffing Out Your Financial Path: The 20 Most Important Questions to Ask Every Month." *IBPSA* will send you home with some hands-on materials to thank you for attending the meet-and-greet event.

Thursday's educational offerings include "The Fun, Foibles, and Financial Feasibility of Dog Day-care," a two-part series presented by Eileen Proctor. Wheeler del Torro will speak on the topics of market-

ing a dog daycare as well as how to build and keep a great team. Susan Briggs and Robin Bennett will once again come together to present two seminars. One session addresses the partnership between dog daycare and training services. They will also present another special lunch function called "Safe and Fun Off-Leash Play Groups." A special ticket is needed for this event. Other topics include facility design, how certification and education can advance your business, and luxury pet care with *K-9 Resorts'* Steven and Jason Parker.

In addition to plenty of educational opportunities, the *Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo* will feature a two-day trade show event on Wednesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. This is the perfect opportunity to talk with experts and manufacturers, compare prices, and take advantage of show specials.

Barkleigh expects the trade show to include nearly 30 vendor booths for your shopping pleasure.

The host hotel for the *Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo* is the *Sheraton Baltimore North*, located in the Towson business district just 15 minutes from Baltimore's Inner Harbor. If the Expo's trade show does not satisfy all of your shopping desires, the hotel's skywalk connects directly to the Towson Town Center, Maryland's largest mall. To take advantage of *Barkleigh's* special \$129 nightly rate, tell the hotel you are with the *Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo* when you make your reservation.

Packages include the Do-It-All (admission to all three days of classes, both luncheons, and both days of trade show), the Basic (admission to classes and trade show on Wednesday and Thursday), and the Basic Deluxe (Basic package plus both luncheons). Seminars and trade show admission can be purchased individually.

The trade show special, which covers admission to both days of the trade show, is \$15 (pre-registration price). Admission for one day of trade show is \$10 (pre-registration price). The trade show is free to anyone registered to attend an educational seminar. ☞

For more information about the *Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo*, contact *Barkleigh Productions* at (717) 691-3388 or go to www.petboardinganddaycare.com.

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BICHON FRISE

Since its acceptance into the AKC, the Bichon has become an ever-increasing “bread and butter” client in my salon. Even though many of the little “powder puff” dogs that grace my tables aren’t being shown, I owe it to my clients to offer a breed profile trim, even if it’s a bit shorter than the show trim.

The Bichon Frise breed standard was adopted in 1988, and familiarity with the breed standard is paramount to creating a profile trim. This compact, sturdy little dog is slightly longer than it is tall and has a long, arched neck and a level topline. Its high-maintenance double coat, with soft undercoat and coarser guard hair, will mat very easily. Frequent grooming and

trims shorter than the show ring preference are increasingly popular with my clients.

Skilled preparation on this coat is extremely important and will not only enhance your final outcome but also trim your time. Start with a good coat-brightening shampoo followed by a thorough conditioning. Force dry to remove the excess water, and then fluff dry so the coat is curl free and stands crisply from the body.

Using a 10, clip the “underwear” (sanitary), and for the pads, use a 30 or 40. To achieve a nice, round foot, shortly filed nails are important. Because of the dense coat, many Bichons develop ear

Continued on next page



problems, so make sure to trim a ventilation strip (clip or scissor the coat directly in front of the ear canal). Ear plucking is up to the individual, but I find scissoring the excess ear hair with ball tip scissors far less invasive than plucking. Pluck only minimally.

Begin by blocking in the trim with snap-on combs. To start, set the body coat length with an "A" comb. While standing to the rear of the dog, start a bit further than midway on the topline (a couple of inches behind the withers or where the tail naturally breaks over the back) and continue back toward you to the base of the tail and around the sides of the dog (Fig 1). Do not clip forward of your midway starting point on the topline.

Switching to an "O" comb, clip over the rump only on the back part of the rear legs down to a couple of

inches above the hock. Next clip the undercarriage (Fig. 2). The lowest point of the chest should reach the elbow, so the blade length can be adjusted accordingly.

Moving to the front of the dog, clip from the jaw line down the chest (Fig. 3), making sure to "fall off" (pulling the clipper away from full contact with the body) just below the shoulder, so you do not clip into the foreleg (Fig. 4). Lifting the ear, clip down the sides of the neck and shoulders, again "falling off" where the upper arm meets the shoulder (Fig. 5). Do not clip behind the ear into the crest.

For the legs, switch to a "C" comb and clip all four legs. If you have a fidgety dog, try lifting the opposite leg (Fig. 6).

Once you have "blocked in" the pet with snap-on combs, you

Continued on page 50



FIG. 3



FIG. 4



FIG. 5

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FIG. 6



FIG. 7



FIG. 8

must blend the lines of the various lengths with your scissors to create a smooth transition. It is important to remember that you have already removed the length from the coat with your snap-on combs, so you are only tipping the coat with your scissors.

Begin with the “tuck up” (the area near the groin where the rear leg meets the body) and create a very subtle arc with short curved shears. Trim the stray hairs from the rear legs, making sure the inside of the leg is parallel with the outside of the leg and the line falls straight from the hip. Continue forward on the underline with straight shears (Fig. 7).

Using long curved shears (inverted so you are “scooping”), tidy the upper forearm, slightly accentuating the shoulder (Fig. 8). Then using straight shears, tidy

the front legs, again creating parallel “posts” (Fig. 9). Finish up by rounding the feet. Holding curved shears at a 45-degree angle, create tight, round feet. It is sometimes helpful to create a square and then trim the corners to develop the round foot (Fig. 10).

The soft, alert expression on the Bichon’s decidedly round head is a trademark of the breed and is difficult to achieve with a snap-on comb. However, since using the snap-on combs is a shortcut for the body and leg work, you should have time to scissor the headpiece and still have a quick and easy trim for your bread and butter clients.

The Bichon’s muzzle should be shorter than the skull. The ears frame the face as part of the entire headpiece and should not be evi-

Continued on next page

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dent. When looking straight at its face, the eyes should appear to be in the middle of the circle that you create from the muzzle, cheeks, ears, and skull.

Using a 10 blade, clip the hair in front of the eyes. First clip the eye corners and under the eye (Fig. 11). Turning the clipper the other way, clip upward and outward to remove the coat directly above the eye. Use caution and keep the center of the clipper (not the corner of the clipper) over the eye. With a 15 or 30, clip the coat from the lips (Fig. 12).

Using short to medium curved shears inverted in a scooping motion, trim from the corner of the eye to the stop and then from the stop to the other eye corner. Using long curved shears, trim the cheeks and ears to frame the face.

With your long curved shears inverted (scooping), trim the back skull and down the crest to behind the withers. Finish up by rounding the back skull and blending the neck into the shoulders.

The snap-on comb sizes can vary according to the client, and you can adjust to the individual. However, using the combs I re-

ferred to as the "code," you can still create the proper proportion (e.g. substitute the "O" with a "2," the "A" with "1," and the "C" with "O"). Remember that snap-on comb use is a time saver. You only need to "tidy" the coat after and not re-scissor the entire dog.

My bread and butter clients love the leaner "summer" trims that keep their four-legged friends cooler and mat-free. Their referrals keep my salon tables full with return bread and butter clients. ☺

For more information on the Bichon, visit www.bichon.org. You can order the Bichon Frise Illustrated Breed Standard.



FIG. 9



FIG. 10



FIG. 11



FIG. 12

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TRADE SHOWS AND CREDIT CARD FRAUD

Credit card companies are cracking down on fraud, and that's a good thing. Unfortunately, measures to stop fraud may stop your ability to make purchases at a trade show.

Trade shows are a great way to see new products, learn new techniques, and get great deals on tools of the trade. It is a great place to meet lots of vendors and manufacturers from all over the U.S. and sometimes the world. When you stop at a booth and make a purchase, the purchase is usually reg-

istered as being made in the home state of the company.

If you buy something from the *Ryan's* booth, your credit card will think that you purchased something in Phoenix, AZ. If you later buy lunch at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center at *SuperZoo*, your credit card company thinks you are in Las Vegas. After lunch you stop by the *Barkleigh* booth and buy your "Top 10 Reasons Why It Costs More to Get Your Pet Groomed Than Your Own Hair Cut!" T-shirt, and your credit card company thinks you are

in Pennsylvania.

Making purchases from multiple states in a day alerts the credit card company that there might be fraud. Many companies will freeze your account until you call the company directly. This can be a real hassle if you have been standing in line to make a purchase only to have your credit card decline.

As an attendee, the best way to prevent this is to contact your credit card company in advance. Let them know you will be attending a trade-show and making purchases that may show up in multiple states.

It is a good idea to make sure to keep good track of your credit card, wallet, and purse while at a trade show. People get caught up in the excitement and often leave items behind. It can be daunting to have to return to all the booths you visited in hopes of finding your forgotten items. Distracted attendees can also be easier targets for would-be thieves. Keeping the phone numbers to your credit card companies in your cell phone (never store the actual credit card numbers!) can make it faster and easier to contact them should any of your cards become lost or stolen.

We look forward to seeing you at the next trade show. Please stop and see us at *SuperZoo* Las Vegas, September 11-13. We are in booth #1619!



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Same-Day Appointments for Mobile Groomers

By Ellen Ehrlich
ellen@rcmgrooming.com



Same-day appointments are always an interesting topic for mobile groomers, because there are so many opinions. Some will take an appointment on the same day the customer calls, and some won't. Let's take a look at the pros and cons of this situation together. I will tell you right off the bat that I do take same-day appointments, but they have to meet strict criteria.

This situation could occur over any holiday when many customers are on vacation. My appointment

book had openings, so every time the phone rang, I answered it. A neighbor down the street from where I was presently grooming had seen my van and inquired, "Could you stop by and groom my two Yorkies?" It just so happened I was working a short day. I had the time, extra water, and clean towels on board. After asking questions and talking with her about her pets, it was an immediate yes! I groomed the dogs; both of them were angels. The owner made another appointment.

I was tickled pink, because I had picked up a double-dog house in my own town, something I am always striving for. Had I not answered my phone that day, a golden opportunity could have slipped through my fingers.

Later in the week, my phone rang again. A pet owner had brought her Yorkie to work with her all the way from New York City and wanted to surprise her daughter with a freshly groomed pup. Was it

Continued on page 54

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possible to groom her dog the same day? After the same discussion, it was another yes. I had time to add her onto the end of my day, since her office building was right on my way home and in my own town - another bonus groom. This dog was even better behaved than the first two. I marveled at my good fortune as this little guy gave me each paw, as if to say, "Please trim my nails!" She made another appointment stating, "It is no big deal to bring the dog to work with me every four weeks." This little guy is very portable. He travels with her in his very own carrier purse!

These are two great examples of why same-day appointments benefit mobilers. Everything must fall into place from the attitude of the owner to the time of the phone call, the breed, personality, and the location of the dog. All the stars have to align for same-day appointments to work for mobile groomers. When I

decide to take a same-day appointment, I explain to the customer upfront that this appointment is the exception to the rule and urge them to make another appointment and keep it. At the very least, you've filled an empty grooming slot with a paying customer who fits your criteria for a mobile grooming customer. You have also been given the opportunity explain to the caller that mobile grooming is a special and exclusive service where people pre-book on a certain schedule as well as give advice on how an owner can better care for their pet.

There are some important variables to consider when making same-day appointments.

1. **Do you have the time?**
2. **How are you feeling at that time?** Do you have the energy? Are you tired? Have you been grooming "in the zone?"
3. **Is it sunny, cloudy, windy,**

raining, hot, or cold? What are the driving conditions? I know that if it were January and getting dark early, I'd be less willing to take a same-day appointment.

4. What breed of dog does the caller have? I'm sure you would agree that we'd be quicker to add a Chihuahua or a Yellow Lab instead of a Golden Doodle that hasn't see a hairbrush since Christmas!

5. Have you met your objectives?

On the flip side, some groomers will not give same-day appointments no matter what the reason. I decided to ask some of my grooming buddies why they do not schedule same-day appointments, and I got a variety of answers. Some groomers don't like to change their plans for the day and feel that last-minute callers don't understand the amount of

Continued on next page



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time it really takes to do a good job. Some believe that because you are not busy, you must not be a good groomer. A grooming friend said that if they did accept these appointments, it would be sending the wrong message to the customer. If they were to take a same-day appointment, it would appear that they often have openings in their schedule and are available on short notice. Customers might not want to make another appointment or be willing to get their pet on a grooming schedule. Mobile groomers who do not take same-day appointments offer the caller an appointment down the road, adding them to a day that works best for them in their schedule. The customer has to wait.

Same-day appointments... Should we take them? Sometimes yes, sometimes no. It's always a gamble. You never really know if that appointment is going to turn out to be one of your best customers or a big mistake. At the very least, you've earned an extra groom fee on your own terms. You've also had an opportunity to have another learning experience that will be to your benefit at some point in the future. There is always the possibility this situation can help you create another loyal mobile grooming customer because you said "yes" to a same-day appointment. This could be a lucky day for you and the furry friend on your grooming table. ✂

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New Product News

Merck Launches Activyl®

Merck Animal Health, a leading provider of innovative animal health products and services, announces the U.S. launch of *Activyl®* and *Activyl® Tick Plus*. *Activyl* treats and prevents flea infestations in dogs and cats; *Activyl Tick Plus*, exclusively for dogs, controls both fleas and ticks. *Activyl* and *Activyl Tick Plus* will be available only through licensed veterinarians.

Activyl is the first flea control product to utilize metabolic activation, or bioactivation of the active ingredient, to kill fleas. It is a topical, once-a-month ectoparasiticide containing indoxacarb, a compound never before used in animal health, with no known resistance in fleas. Following application, indoxacarb enters the flea by contact or ingestion and is converted by enzymes in the flea to an active highly insecticidal metabolite. Fleas stop feeding, become paralyzed and die within hours.

Activyl not only kills adult fleas, but also disrupts the flea's life cycle by inhibiting the development of flea larvae in the pet's surroundings. This aids in the environmental control of flea infestation and helps prevent re-infestation for up to a full month. *Activyl* is able to control developing stages of the flea in the environment, so there is no need for additional insect growth regulators.

Activyl may also be used as part of a treatment strategy for flea allergy dermatitis. For more information, request Reader Service Card # 9156.



BIO-MED (Veterinary Tar-Sulfur Shampoo)



Bio-Groom announces their product, *Bio-Med*, which is formulated for temporary relief of itching and flaking of seborrheic dermatitis. *Bio-Med* has a baby mild shampoo base. It is gentle to the skin and coat. It provides relief due to scratching and matting. *Bio-Med* has a rich lather, non-offensive odor, and natural skin pH. Bio-Med

leaves coat clean, fresh, smooth and manageable. For more information, request Reader Service Card # 9146.

Humane Healing

Humane Healing has created a line of advanced wound care products specifically for pets that rapidly heals wounds. This groundbreaking technology is applied ONCE A DAY, all natural, non-steroidal, non-caustic and antibiotic-free. Humane Healing products are clinically proven, vet approved, and tested on humans first! Recommended and used worldwide, their products come with a 100% money back guarantee. For more information, request Reader Service Card # 9152.



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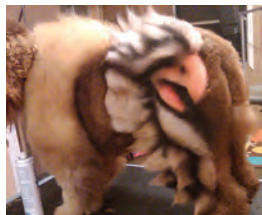
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Rescue Remedy and a chicken sandwich, we were back. Josh was regaining his strength, but we had set out of the competition and lost valuable time. I wasn't sure if I could complete him with the time I had left. Kathy Rose announced "scissors down"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

I decided to go ahead and take the design to one more show: Atlanta Pet Fair. I just had to complete this design that I had worked so hard to perfect. Just a couple weeks before Atlanta, my mother passed away; I was devastated. I had no intentions of going anywhere, especially so soon after her death. My mother was my soul, my greatest fan, my seamstress, and my inspiration. In the days before Atlanta, my entire family pushed me to go on and do what my mom would have wanted me to do. "She would want you to go, Angela!" is what my dad was telling me. I agreed to go but wasn't sure if I would compete. I just wasn't up to it. The night before we left, I told my dad, "I will work on my dog, and if I can do it, I will. For my mom!"

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



Top: Preparing for Atlanta Pet Fair just after Pasadena
- Angela thought about a more tribal eagle at first.

Middle and bottom: At Atlanta Pet Fair,
where "Cherokee Heritage" took First Place



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

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New Product News

Andis ProClip Pulse Ion

Andis introduces the *ProClip Pulse Ion*, a new medium duty professional clipper, equipped with a lithium ion battery that provides up to two hours of running time for the cordless clipper. Its 5-in-1 adjustable blade provides versatility, including #9, #10, #15, #30, and #40 blade lengths. The Certified Pro Grade clipper is designed for light body grooming on thin to medium coat dogs. The clipper is equipped with a quiet, yet powerful, rotary motor, to keep animals calm during the grooming process. The clipper is made in the U.S.A. and comes with a 1-year parts and labor warranty. *For more information, request Reader Service Card # 9142.*



Best Shot 'One Shot' Brand



Best Shot Pet Products has improved and broadened its "One Shot" brand offering of maximum strength deep cleaning products for fall. In addition to captivating

new packaging as well as notable performance enhancements to its waterless shampoo spray and whitening shampoo products, the company will introduce a revolutionary new deodorizing/deskunk shampoo. *For more information, request Reader Service Card # 9141.*

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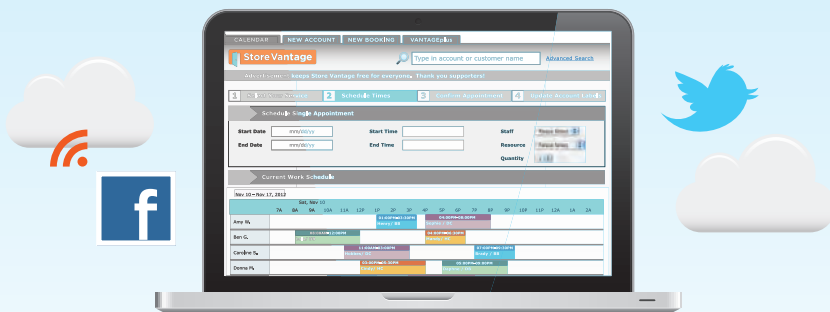
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Being ‘That Customer’

I recently received a call from my friend Kelly (the groomer from the Iceberg Theory article) asking me if I thought she should call a new customer back and cancel. The woman was obnoxious on the phone and looked to have all of the makings of a problem client. I suggested giving the woman a shot. Kelly did and then called me back to say the woman was wonderful in person and gave Kelly a big tip.

My advice was not an act of great wisdom. Actually, it came from a less pure place. That leads me to a confession I need to make. I am the customer that every pet care professional hates. I question the experts’ opinions and “shop around” for the person who will tell me what I want to hear. Such was the case with my search for a veterinarian to care for my dog, *Raleigh*.

Raleigh was a heartworm-positive rescue that came from Raleigh, NC (admittedly, I don’t come up with overly original names for my dogs). Heartworm is nearly nonexistent in northern states. After conversations with a few Southerners, I decided that I wanted to check out the less traditional “slow kill” method.

For my fellow cold regioners that also aren’t familiar with the methods, the fast kill method requires a series of shots (usually two) that are very painful for the dog. The shot itself can cause death. The dog must also remain inactive for weeks so that the dead worms won’t slough off and cause a stroke. The slow kill method involves shortening the life span of the worms and their ability to breed. It usually takes 12 to 18 months. Although less likely, the dog could experience a stroke during that time. The trade-off is a longer time to never feel that your dog is safe from a stroke.

The first two vets I went to dismissed all of my questions, making me feel like they thought the questions were stupid. The first one asked me what type of dog food I fed my dogs. When I told her, she told me I shouldn’t use that brand, because she had never even heard of it. She then recommended a supermarket brand that had recently been in the news as one of the dog foods that was part of the *Menu Foods* recall. I left knowing I was never going to come back. The second flatly stated that he would not even consider anything other than the traditional treatment. At

that point, I was ready to give up and get the shots for *Raleigh*.

The next morning, I took my dog to work as I normally do. She played for a few hours with staff members. When we went home, she took her daily hour-long swim in the river on the edge of my property. Later that night, she had her usual burst of energy and wanted to play some more.

I decided I had to try again to find out if the slow kill method was possible for my dog. I couldn’t imagine keeping such an active dog quiet for several weeks. My new search led me to Dr. Albin at the *Gettysburg Road Animal Hospital*. Dr. Albin was quick to admit that he had very few heartworm cases and was not very familiar with the slow kill method. However, he assured me that he would contact colleagues that were more familiar with the process. He even answered all of my “stupid questions” without making me feel stupid.

A few days later, Dr. Albin came back with a treatment plan. *Raleigh* was given an X-ray that revealed that the heartworms had not progressed into her lungs or heart, making her a good candidate for the slow kill method. After a year of care and check-ups, *Raleigh* tested negative for heartworm.

I don’t suggest my choice for everyone. For all I know, I may have simply gotten lucky. I also don’t mean this as anything negative toward vets (I can see the emails now). In fact, I have all the praise in the world for Dr. Albin. His “bedside manner” was a perfect fit for me.

However, I want to point out that when you have customers who, like me, ask stupid questions or ask for the outrageous, remember that we probably don’t know what questions to ask. We are concerned and want to know that we did everything possible to find the right care for our pet. Most likely, after you endure our annoying questions, you will have a loyal and appreciative customer for life. Of course, we all know that isn’t always the case. There will always be those that can never be satisfied, but that is a topic for a different article.

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