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VOL. 32 ED. 12 • DEC. 2013

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Groomer

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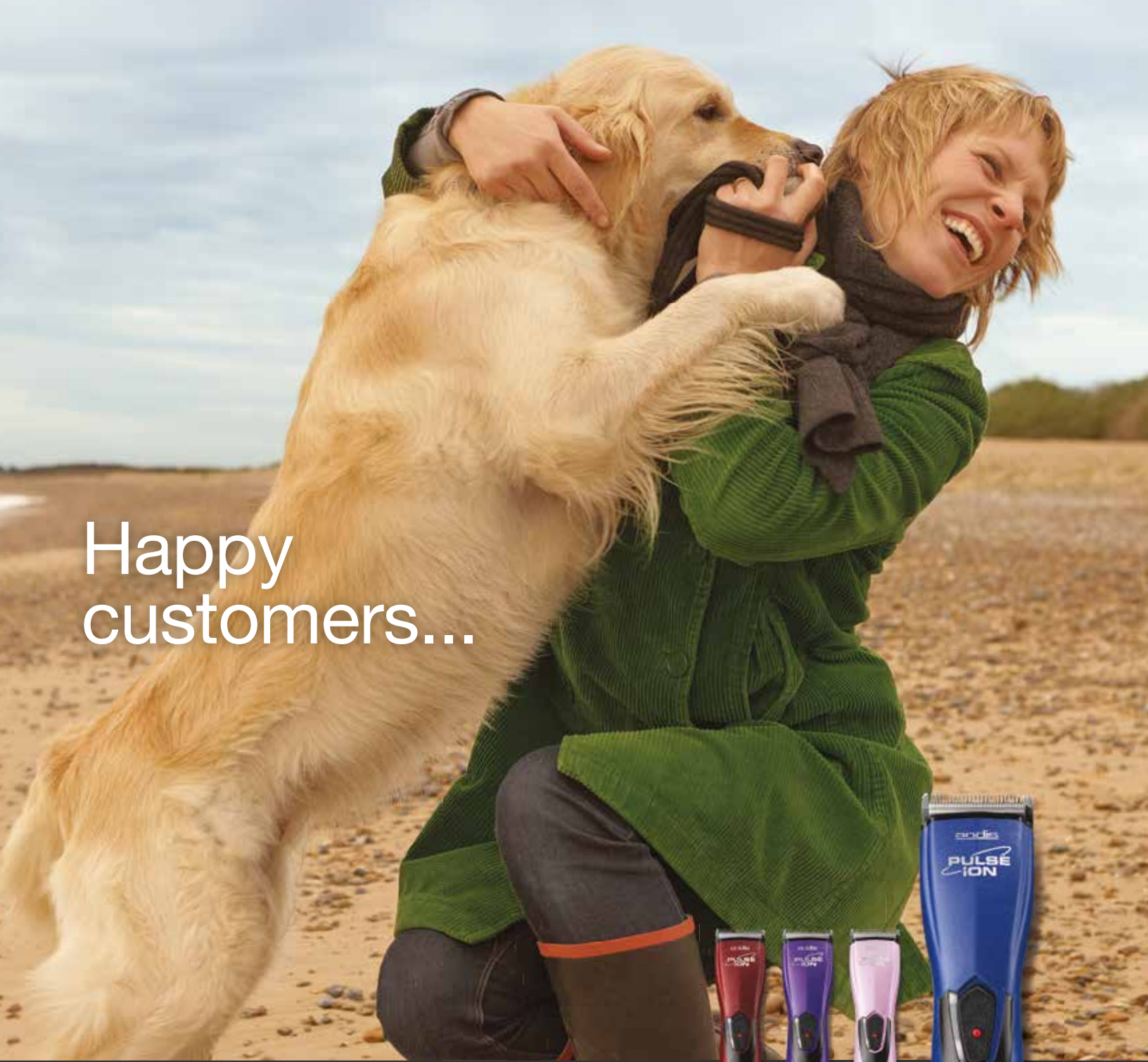
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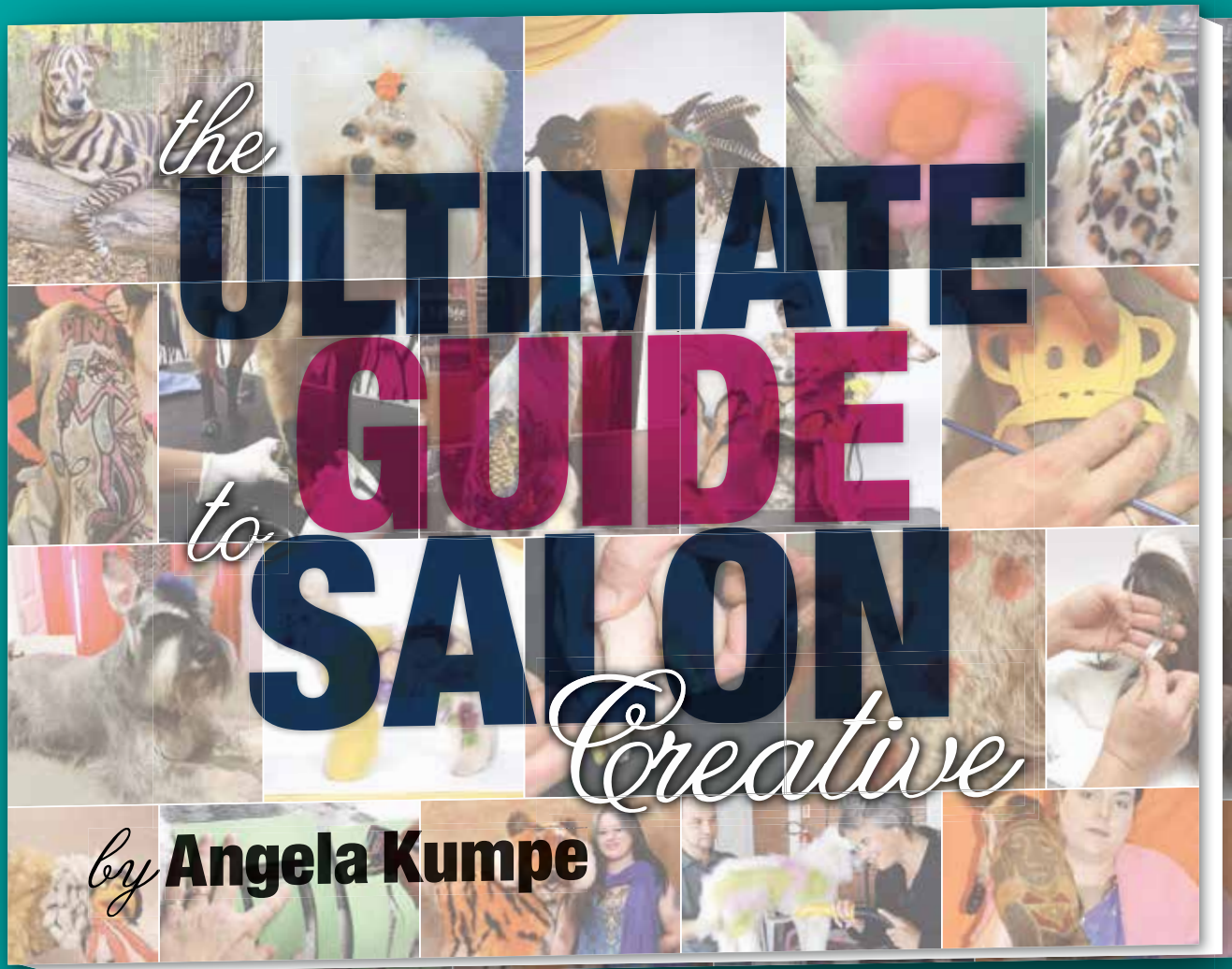
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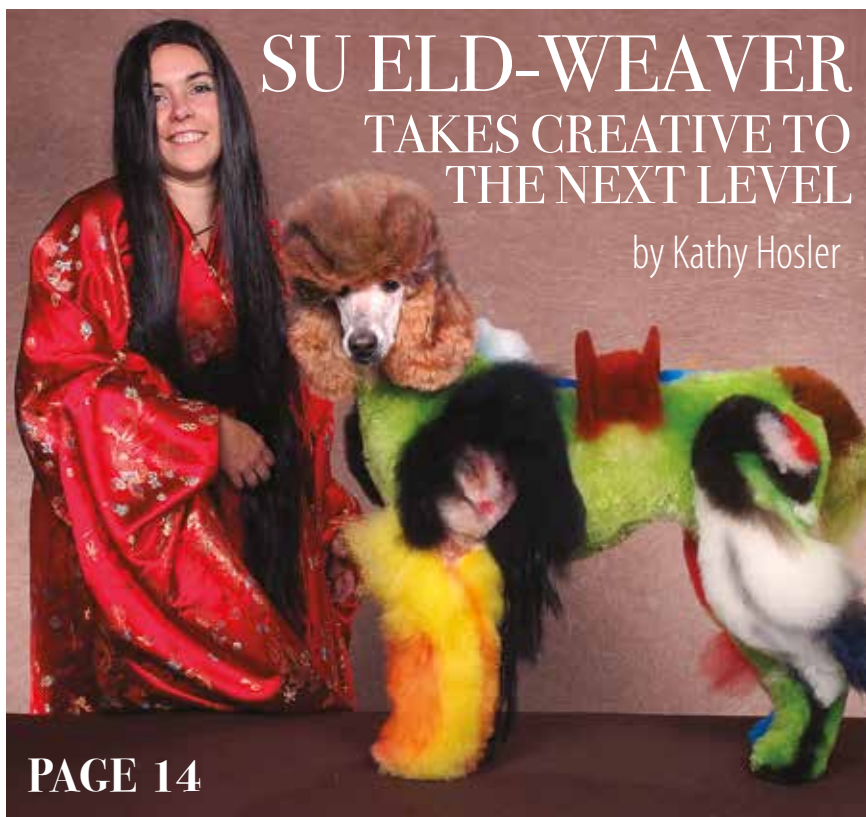


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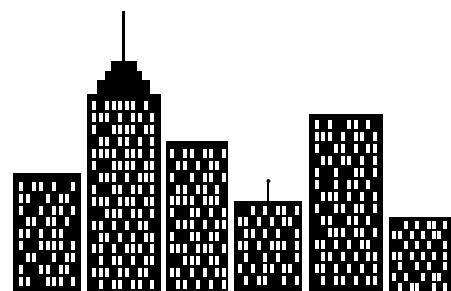
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TAKES CREATIVE TO
THE NEXT LEVEL**
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ON THE COVER: Photo by Animal Photography.



GROOMING ELDERLY PETS

✿ by Mary Oquendo ✿

As groomers, we all have a favorite breed: the one we look forward to when we see them on the schedule. For me, it is not a specific breed but an age group. I just love the seniors. There is something about the white on the face and the gentleness of their eyes that just melts my heart. They are special, and as such, need special treatment. When I am able, I prepare my clients as far in advance as I can, but that is not always feasible. I rarely turn away seniors.

THE OLD LADY SPEECH

This is what I call “The Talk.” I

convey to the owners with kindness that their grooming needs are changing, and the comfort of their pet is my primary concern. For some, it means grooming more frequently. Pets with thicker coats that are not well maintained by the owners or requiring clipper work will need grooming more often to reduce the overall time. For others, it means less frequent grooming. Short-coated pets can increase the time between grooming yet not impact the amount of time needed to finish them. As perfection is no longer an option, I may recommend a comfort trim. This is a nice way of saying that they

now need an extended sanitary clip, as they are not as neat as they once were when pottying. I will always ask what is the status of any medical concerns of their senior pet.

I may suggest grooming on the “installment plan” if I cannot safely complete grooming in one session. The installment plan breaks up the grooming into two or more visits. As this will drive the price up, most pet owners opt for whatever can be accomplished in one sitting. I am very clear that the grooming is over when I feel the pet has had enough.

This conversation can spark




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I discuss any concerns found during the assessment, as well as the prioritizing of the groom with the owner. We discuss what is important and what is not.

visions of the future death of their beloved pet. It can be very emotional for some owners. As I am a mobile groomer, this conversation usually happens over a cup of coffee in their kitchen, which helps to remove any sterility. I spend whatever time I need to ensure the owner that I will always take the very best care of their pet.

CHECK-IN ON DAY OF APPOINTMENT

When I worked at a shop, senior pets were scheduled on lighter days.

I found that the less stress the older pets were exposed to, the better they did. I always requested that the owners pick up their senior pet when I was finished. We did not have orthopedic mats in our cages. The longer they stayed in the cage, the harder it was for them to get up.

During check-in of a senior pet, I do a thorough snout to tail assessment. I am looking for reasons not to groom this pet. Is he in pain? A pet in pain is more likely to bite. Take it from

me: I learned the hard way getting two stitches in the palm of my hand from the nicest Golden Retriever. Is he coughing? Coughing may be indicative of heart failure. Are the gums sticky? Tacky gums could be a sign of dehydration. Are the gums paler than normal? If I see paler gums, my recommendation is to go directly to the veterinarian's office, as blood is not pumping properly. In addition, senior pets have a harder time regulating their body temperatures. They can overheat or chill quickly. I may even recommend that this pet's needs are better served by grooming in a veterinarian's office.

I discuss any concerns found during the assessment, as well as the prioritizing of the groom with the owner. We discuss what is important and what is not. I start with what is important, as I may not be able to complete the groom.

You should have waivers that will

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MY WORK AREA

My table goes as low as six inches off the ground and as high as tub level. One of the benefits of mobile grooming is that my table abuts the tub. The pet has a short step onto the table as well a short step into the tub. If your work and bathing areas are separate, then walk-up ramps are a must. My tabletop is non-skid. The older pets need a sure footing. In addition, I have orthopedic quality mats on the table. These mats help reduce stress on their already tender musculoskeletal system.

I use low vibration clippers and always keep a hand on the pet. Many older pets have loss of vision and hearing. Any unexpected touch or noise may incite a bite reflex.

This pet may have a difficult time standing up while you are working on them. Options include the following:

A second pair of hands. They can cradle and lift the back end.

Hip support slings. The pet can sit in them and still be upright enough to finish. One caution about slings is that they can compress the internal organs. Use them for a short period of time. Start with the back end. Let them sit while you finish up the front.

Work at an even height. You do not want a pet with a stiff neck either looking up or looking down at you.

Lay them on their sides. Complete one side and “flip” them over gently to finish the other.

Clip nails and trim the hair from their pads while lying down. Proper nail length is important. Nails that are too long will cause undue stress on

their hips, shoulders, and spine. I keep the pads trimmed of hair. Hair on the pads makes it difficult for the pet to get up off the floor.

I work at their pace and end the groom if I see signs of stress or exhaustion. Offering add-ons such as TTouch, acupuncture, reiki, massage, and crystal therapy will benefit the older pet.

BATHING THE OLDER PET

I have two choices for non-slip mats in my tub. The first is an orthopedic mat. For most pets, this is sufficient. For those pets that cannot stand in the tub, I use waterproof cushions. It is easier to rinse off all the soapy water, as they are not lying in it. The water is just a touch warmer than I would normally use. In addition, I use essential oil shampoo formulated for arthritis on elderly dogs that do not



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DRYING THE OLDER PET

If you are cage drying, place a non-skid mat in the cage. Make sure it is machine washable. I will always use a dryer with a heating element, even in the summer. The older, wet pet will chill easily. However, in warmer weather, I will turn it off or switch to a dryer with no heating element once they are almost dry, as they are more susceptible to heat stroke. If they have fallen asleep in the cage, I will bang on the side of the cage to wake them before removing.

If you are table drying with the high-velocity (HV) dryer, exercise caution as many older pets have been known to go into a dryer-induced seizure. For these pets, this is as far as the groom goes. If I cannot dry them, all clipper work is done before the bath. They are towed off well and

brought back into the house. One of my favorite clients would have a fire going and Toby's bed ready. The only thing Toby was missing was a good book and cup of hot chocolate.

On those pets that I can dry on the table, I use a Happy Hoodie. It wicks the water off their heads and muffles the sound of the HV dryer.

FINISH WORK ON THE OLDER PET

So what is the pet's comfort level at this stage? Is the pet exhausted? These are the questions I ask myself before I reach for my shears. When working with elderly pets, sometimes we settle for "good enough."

During the course of the groom, I may have found something I did not notice upon check-in. Nothing is insignificant, and the owner is notified. On more than one occasion, I made an "executive decision" and brought the pet inside incomplete (and in some

cases, wet) and informed the owner they should call their vet. That decision to stop grooming saved the life of the pet.

Have you taken a pet first aid class this year? Protocols have just changed. Will you be able to perform CPR if it becomes necessary?

Grooming senior pets is not for everyone. They have needs that are different from younger, healthier pets. There are other groomers in my area that refer the senior pets to me, and in return, I refer those breeds I do not want to groom to them. We are all happier.

I always give extra hugs and kisses to my older clients. While it can be heartbreaking to specialize in the older pets, nothing compares to having them rest their heads on your shoulder or look at you with their soulful eyes. I look forward to each and every senior pet. ☺

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SU ELD-WEAVER

TAKES CREATIVE TO THE NEXT LEVEL

✧ by Kathy Hosler ✧

“It’s like a dream! I can’t believe it... I’ve wanted this so badly!” exclaimed an ecstatic Su Eld-Weaver as the huge first place trophy for the 2013 Creative Styling competition was presented to her. “What an amazing feeling!”

A determined Su Eld-Weaver and her Standard Poodle traveled all the way from the United Kingdom to Hershey, Pennsylvania, this past September. They came to compete in the Groomer to Groomer Creative Styling Competition that was held during Groom Expo’s 25th anniversary celebration.

Su is the owner/manager of Top-Knot and Tails Poodle Academy based in Rushden, Northhamptonshire. “I

have been surrounded by dogs all my life,” shared Su. “I have been grooming full-time for over 17 years. I work as an independent breed specialist for Poodles and creative grooming. I host seminars and travel to other salons taking part in seminars.

“I subscribed to Groomer to Groomer Magazine,” Su continued. “That gave me the inspiration to push myself to see what I could create. I decided to travel to the United States to compete. I figured that if I wanted to consider myself able to hold my own and be up in the ranks of the best, then I needed to compete with the best. This led me to face the top American competitors on their own turf.”

Su competed in Atlanta, Georgia,

and in Hershey, Pennsylvania, in 2012, and then she returned to Hershey for the 2013 competition. “I feel very passionate about creative,” said Su. “Creative is a skill as well as a way to express yourself.”

Su used her Standard Poodle Dobby (as in the Harry Potter house elf) to create her entry. She wowed the judges, the audience, and the other competitors with her creative entry, *Memoirs of a Geisha*, which portrayed a day in the life of a Geisha. “I love Japanese art, and I really love the look of the Geisha girls,” shared Su. “I wanted to show the traditional Japanese art, as well, by including the waterfall, the Japanese crane, and the koi fish.

“I have been working on my dog

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for a minimum of six months. The carving took around 15 hours, and the color was about 15 hours spread over four to six weeks.”

Once Su had her theme and the prep work done, she still had to get herself and her dog to the competition in Hershey, Pennsylvania. “I fly with American Airlines,” said Su. “They are very good with my dog, and she is well cared for. Dobby travels as excess luggage, and I get to be with her at as many points of our journey as possible. We have to travel within temperature limits set by the airline, so I am never sure until the day of travel if I will make it on to our flight with her.”

Su’s entry was very detailed, and every inch of her Standard Poodle told a story. Her *Memoirs of a Geisha* begins at her poodle’s head, which became a mountain. The back of the head was a cliff from which a river of bright

blue water emerged and flowed down the neck and along the back. According to Su, “flowing water is very symbolic and is used a lot in Japanese art.”

The river passed under an amazingly realistic bridge that had been scissored into the hair on Dobby’s back, and then it continued down her back leg. Su sculpted a gorgeous koi fish swimming in the water on that back leg. Su said that the koi are considered good luck charms in Japan.

On her Poodle’s front shoulder, Su created a stunning portrait of a nighttime geisha in full makeup and with her hair up. On the opposite side of her Poodle, Su had placed a daytime geisha with her long hair down. On the back leg of the Poodle, she sculpted a beautiful Japanese crane, which signifies good fortune, long life, and good relationships. Su turned her Poodle’s tail into a bonsai tree, noting that the

bonsai is a tree that grows in adversity.

There were many fabulous entries in that Creative Styling Competition, but Su Eld-Weaver and her *Memoirs of a Geisha* came “across the pond” to sweep the competition.

“This was an extremely exciting groom to watch as it developed,” said Dawn (the Queen of Color) Omboy, who was one of the judges. “With all the different things she had going on with this dog, Su told a complete story.”

“She gave us something different,” added Teri Di Marino emphatically. “She gave us thrilling and gave us something with dimension. It’s fantastic!”

Su is a member of GroomTeam England and has won many other competitions in the creative and breed profile ring. Su was Groomer of the Year at the British Grooming Cham-

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pionships in 2011. Also in 2011, she was Best In Show at the Irish Grooming Championships, and she was named British Creative Stylist in 2010 and 2013.

Besides all of her grooming activities, Su is kept pretty busy at home with a husband, four boys, several Standard and Miniature Poodles, six royal pythons, and four tarantulas. No matter how busy she is, you can bet that Su will be back in the States to compete again. "I would like to say that the creative groomers have made me feel so welcome," said Su. "I invaded their patch and was welcomed into a family environment with open arms. It's been an amazing experience!" Su Eld-Weaver, creative superstar—what will she "wow" us with next? ☺

WHEN YOU WISH UPON A PAW DREAMS COME TRUE!

✎ by Kathy Hosler ✎

"I'm still on cloud nine," says an ecstatic Adriane Pope breathlessly. "It was the most amazing day of my entire life!"

What Adriane is referring to is the day she won the coveted Peoples Choice Award at the 2013 Creative Styling Competition at Groom Expo.

"As I was standing on that stage surrounded by an amazing, talented group of creative groomers - and as I looked at all of their fabulous creations...I never dreamed in a gazillion years that I would win

the Peoples Choice Award.

"When the audience was judging the Peoples Choice winner, I could tell that they really liked my entry," Adriane continued. "During the final clap-off, I closed my eyes and listened as they applauded for each contestant. When they got to me, the crowd roared and I knew that I had won. Tears of joy just started streaming down my face. I'll never forget that feeling!"

Adriane has been entering creative competitions since 2004 and it has been her goal since the



Evie Moder

"To me it's the Mercedes of bathing tubs."

"I love my Groomer's Best stainless steel dog bathing tub. I have some back problems but I can groom four big poodles in one day without back aches because it's so easy. And I can blow dry them in the tub too. My husband has done some welding and he's in awe of the workmanship that's behind this. It's so well made. And as far as I can see using it, I don't know who designed it, but whoever it was, they had everything in it that makes it more comfortable for the groomer - you know convenience, comfort, and performance. To me it's the Mercedes of bathing tubs."

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beginning to do a creative entry that would put her on the cover of *Groomer To Groomer Magazine*.

"I've wanted to win the Peoples Choice more than anything," says Adriane intently, and then she giggles and adds, "I have always said; I don't know how long it will take, and I don't care if I'm 90 years old, I'll do Creative until I win the cover of *Groomer To Groomer Magazine*."

Adriane decided to do a Disney theme this year. She got the inspiration for her entry, *When You Wish Upon a Paw*, from the *Happiest Place on Earth*. Then she brought it to its spectacular completion at the *Sweetest Place on Earth* (Hershey, Pennsylvania), to win the Peoples Choice Award.

Her entry featured a colorful and very life-like Disney cast of characters expertly sculpted on

her Standard Poodle that included Pluto, Daisy and Donald Duck, and Mickey. Adriane joined in dressed as Minnie Mouse—and the group was completed when Adriane's husband, Darrell, came on stage as Mickey Mouse.

Adriane and her husband, Darrell, have a bed and biscuit boarding facility, so they usually don't get to go places together, one of them has to stay with the dogs. This time though, they made arrangements and Darrell was able to accompany his wife to Groom Expo—and he got to experience first hand the incredible talent that participates in this competition and the excitement of the judging.

Adriane's family supports her in everything that she does and wanted to show her how much her big win meant to them. They contacted a

sign company (which opened on a Sunday just for them) to make a huge sign announcing Adriane's spectacular win. When she pulled into her driveway on Monday, the sign was already erected on the entrance to their bed and biscuit.

"The whole experience is a very emotional thing for me," shares Adriane. "Not many people in this world get to do what they want to. Most people go to work that they hate. I'm a groomer and I love the work that I do. And, creative is a time just for me and my own dogs. I love to turn my dogs into works of art."

"Winning the Peoples Choice Award is so very special to me—especially to be able to do it at Groom Expo's 25th anniversary celebration. It just goes to show that...*When You Wish Upon a Paw*... dreams really do come true!" ☺

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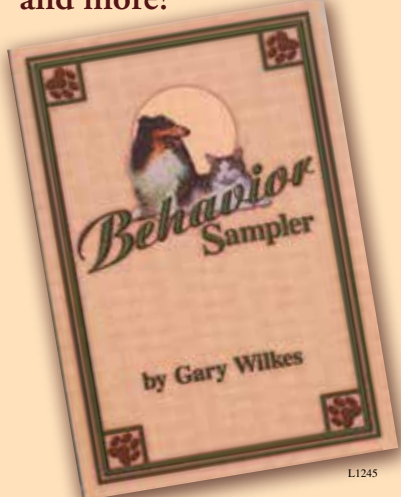
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FIG. 2



FIG. 3

Several months ago, I shared with you our new little guy, Ren the Mini poodle. Destined to become a creative dog, Ren (named for Ren Netherland the photographer) was the cutest little Grinch you had ever seen. With the holidays just around the corner, I thought it would be fun to have Ren the Mini Poo—not the photographer—wearing a fluffy elf outfit made of his own hair. Of course many of us might laugh at the thought of our favorite photographer dressed as an elf, too!

To begin the jacket, start with a freshly bathed and fluff dried dog. Using your favorite clipper and blade, depending on how close you want to go, clip the area around the neck just enough so that it will make the collar of the jacket stand out. I used a #5f for this. There are a couple ways to set the pattern, but my favorite for this one is to use my shears and draw it onto the dog using his body as a guide for fitting the jacket before cutting it in.

With your shears, cut in the jacket collar by outlining it just behind the

withers over the top of the shoulder and dropping it down to a point on the chest, making points there and bringing the line back up, meeting in the middle at the bottom of the throat, just about where you feel the hole. Your result will be a cute fluffy collar when you go in and shorten up the body behind the collar.

Now you need to figure just how long and even the shape you want the jacket. You should always try to pick a style that will complement your dog. On Ren, I chose to leave a fluffy white trim (Fig. 1) and shorten the rest of the coat to define the edges. His front legs were trimmed close, leaving nice bracelets, which would also remain white to match all the trimming on the coat.

For the next step, I used Avatar green dye and outlined the jacket with a small product application brush (Fig. 2), and then I filled in the color, being careful to make the application even. If you line brush it in, you should have even coverage. Avatar does not process but stains the hair, so while giving the green plenty of time to set, I used a

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2. Wipe the corner of the eye and under the eye with a cotton ball moistened with saline solution to

6. Clip the hair from the stomach area, from the groin to the navel, using a #10 blade.

7. Brush the coat quickly with a slicker brush or dematting tool to loosen any tight mats. If the dog is on a regular, frequent grooming schedule, the body pattern will be put on after the bath. If there is excessive coat, remove it by presetting the body pattern before

Use an Aaronco® coarse stripping knife to card the coat to remove as much undercoat as possible before clipping. A longer blade will give a more proper look and make it easier to blend pattern lines.

10. Using a #2 snap-on comb, #4, #5, or #7 blade clip from the base of the skull down the back stopping about one inch before the base of the tail. This hair is

Understanding the Lines:

Direction of stroke used for clipping pattern.

Indicates a distinct pattern with other hair keeping over it.

Indicates a distinct pattern line with no blending.

Indicates a pattern where two different blades are used next to each other to accomplish different lengths of coat without needing to blend the lengths since they are very similar.

Illustrates a general shape or appearance.

Indicates a gradually blended area. The darker shading indicates shorter hair which gets longer as shading becomes lighter. There should be no distinct line as hair becomes longer.

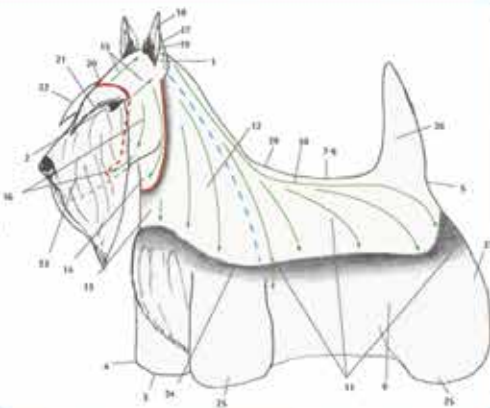
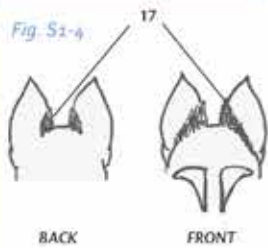


Fig. S1-4



BACK

FRONT

Fig. S1-5

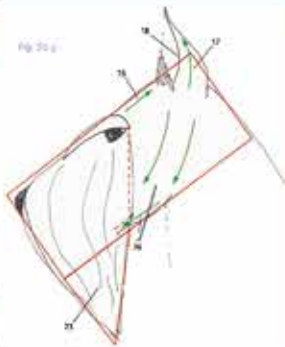
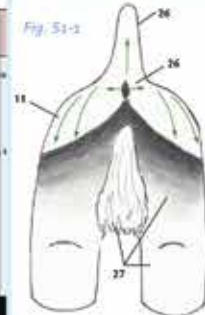
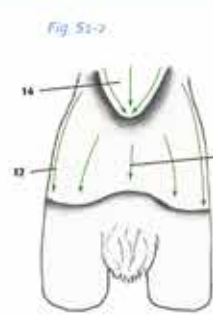


Fig. S1-3



REAR OF DOG

Fig. S1-2



FRONT OF DOG

Fig. S1-6

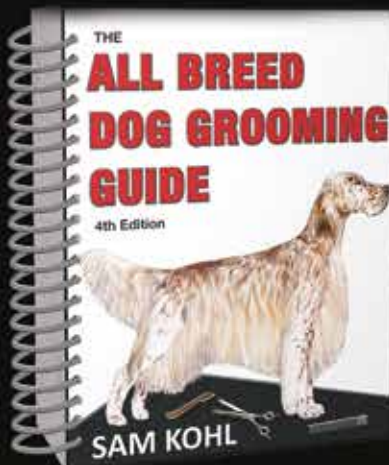


Fig. S1-7



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FIG. 4



FIG. 5

very thin paint brush and some Apple Red Avatar to paint three thin lines around both back legs to give Ren the illusion of socks. An easy way to reach the inside of the back leg while painting is to hold one leg up while painting the one that is down (Fig. 3).

Also notice that to protect his still white tail, I had wrapped it in a soft paper towel and secured it with round hair clips to prevent color from getting on it until I was ready to put some there. After a rinse with cool (not cold) water and then dried, Ren was ready for playtime until the next morning when I decided to use two Kiss Express black dyes (98 and 99 together to get a great shade for my little elf's shoes) and painted his back feet with the mixture, wrapping them in foil to prevent color transfer disaster, and freehand added a black line around his waist to be the belt.

With this done, I banded the hair of the jacket trim to protect it and so

that I could use it as a place to secure the foil that would cover his bum with while making his tail into a peppermint stick (Fig. 4). To do this I used Kiss Truly Red and a small paint brush to apply the red dye in a swirl from the base of the tail to the tip (Fig. 5), again after waiting about 20 minutes before rinsing.

When dry, scissor jacket to a desired length. To make cute brown britches, add some Queen of Color PetChalk to the back legs between the edge of the jacket and the socks. Try different color combinations and styles to give your pet a most unusual and comfortable coat of his own to be dressed for success. ><

Dawn Omboy QoC

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SO YOU WANT TO ADD RETAIL

✧ by Emily Rupe ✧

After much blood, sweat, and tears, you've built quite the grooming business. While not a corporation or conglomerate, you are what the American dream imparts. Never one to rest on your laurels, you're looking to expand your business. While reviewing all the routes toward expansion, it's been determined that the extra overhead and headaches of an additional location and/or employees aren't what's best for your business. Instead, the decision to add a small retail area seemed like the logical next step.

With every new journey, there is always some anxiousness. Like the rest of the country, your area has a variety of corporate retailers who seemingly have an advantage with their larger

locations and ability to undercut prices with mass purchasing. However, the trick is to employ some of their methods that catapulted them into national giants while still maintaining your distinct identity.

Corporations spend fortunes on having professional architects and marketing experts design their locations and visual displays. Obviously, you want the space to be clean and tie into the rest of the grooming salon's décor. However, there are some less blatant tactics that will draw in more customers as well. Height is a key concept. Ideally, the retail space should have a variety of display vignettes in various heights. This draws the eyes in and forces them to focus on the different levels of products, whereas

if everything were at the exact same height, the public generally tends to hastily glance over the wares.

Wall space can be invaluable, especially when floor space is at a premium. The goal, however, is not to place your displays above the height of the targeted client. That's why at the grocery store, sugary cereals with mythical creatures are at child height. Items that get the best mark up or aren't necessities should be placed at waist to eye level. Subconsciously, consumers tend to gravitate to the less strenuous product to reach, and if it's a necessity rather than a want, such as food or puppy pads, they bite the bullet and are willing to bend down or reach above.

Much akin to ladies putting on

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Rotate some products monthly to create a buzz for what hot new item might be available next month. If creating large window or dramatic displays, use items that themed together, along with some props.

makeup, sometimes it's a good idea to put a little paint on the barn to make your displays even more appealing. While not attempting to lure in a man, you still want to bag yourself some consumers. "Facing" is a big box concept that keeps the shelves from looking bare or disjointed. Essentially, all the products are arranged at the same depth on the shelving, and the back stock behind is pulled up as items are sold. Any gaps in displays from out of

stock product are filled with additional products. This should be addressed daily to keep the retail area looking its best at all times. Display areas should be well lit and items easily price tagged as well. There's nothing more annoying than having to ask constantly how much something costs.

Once again, just like changing your hair color for a little attention, stock should have some variety as well. Rotate some products monthly

to create a buzz for what hot new item might be available next month. If creating large window or dramatic displays, use items that themed together, along with some props. Even though your prop will pertain to the display, it still creates a visual interest. For example, it's February and you're making a Valentine's themed display. Having a huge pink cupcake surrounded by sweet smelling colognes, shampoos, as well as all the holiday outfits and neck adornments draws interest in, because the cupcake is unexpected. Oh, and don't forget that the interest and decoration should be addressed from all angles. You don't want fabulous window drama that is nothing more than the backside of all products when viewed from inside.

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of grooming, you know what your demographic is. The business already has an identity; find unique products that relate to that. If you're an upscale salon, carry higher end food, treats, and bling collars. If you cater to more rural areas, carry dog hunting supplies, budget-friendly foods, and licensed products that are stereotypical with the blue collar group.

Know and trust the products you sell. Your clients already view you as an expert, since they trust you with their precious pet. Most likely you're aware of the lifestyle and any issues the pet has been dealing with; use that to your advantage. If you provide tooth brushing in your shop, sell the same dental product and tools for at home use, so that if they purchase the service, you'll be able to show them how to continue care at home. This concept pertains to shampoos and colognes as well. Sell

the line that you believe in strongly enough to use daily. It is a misconception that if the consumer is able to purchase the products used during grooming that they will forgo your service and do it at home in the future. Generally those wanting to bathe in between visits are doing it regardless (and you might as well encourage them to use a superior product you provide), and those coming in frequently are enjoying the time and effort saved by letting the professional handle it.

Adding retail in a well thought out manner can reap huge rewards. Take the wisdom that the big guys paid handsomely for and let it benefit you. Just remember the goal is not to put yourself in direct competition with the chains but rather to capitalize on the firm relationship you already have with your client base and carve a distinct niche. ☺

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GETTING DOWN TO
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 by Teri DiMarino



GROOMTEAM USA TOPS THE GROOMING WORLD

“The USA wins the gold! The USA wins the gold! The USA wins the gold!” Those words rang across the grooming world as, once again, GroomTeam USA won first place in the World Team Grooming Championships in Barcelona, Spain, this past October. The events leading up to this fantastic win stands as a testament to the tenacity and determination of the

American spirit that lives on in our industry.

No strangers to the international grooming arena, the members of GroomTeam USA were Lindsey Dicken (Florida), Irina Pinkusevich (Florida), Michell Evans (Oregon), Veronica Frosch (Minnesota), and team alternate Olga Zabelinskaya (New Jersey). Guided by the GT board of directors and the very motivated coordina-

tor, Cheryl Purcell (Massachusetts), they worked together in anticipation of this trip. Support came in many forms, from help in the months-long preparation of the competition dogs to the planning of transportation of team members and their models and everything in between. I know firsthand that these trips can be difficult to put together, and Team Coordinator Cheryl Purcell did a fantastic job.

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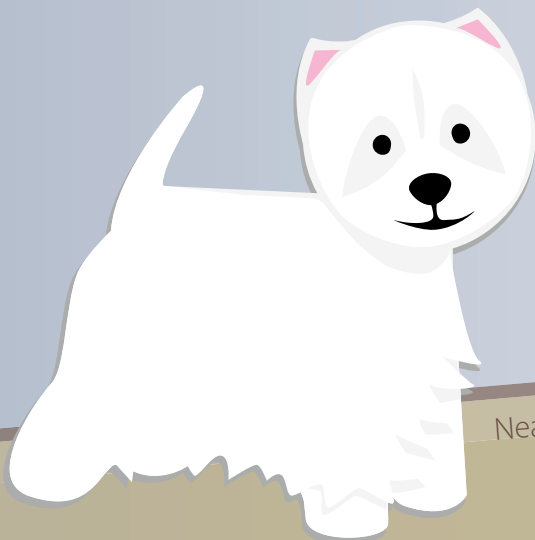
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Flights, transfers, and lodging for contestants and canines as well as the sizable group of American supporters went smoothly.

The two-day competition started out with the individual competitions. Hosted by Arturo International and organized by the European Grooming Association, the contest arena was a spectacular site with its show-style lighting effects and big screen TV coverage, enabling the large crowds to get a bird's eye view of the huge contest ring. Saturday morning brought the Handstrip Competition as well as the Commercial Class, the European equivalent of Mixed/Miscellaneous. The afternoon was for the Spaniel and Scissor classes. Sunday morning saw the Poodle class with GT team member Lindsey Dicken winning the class of about sixty entries. Lindsey's big win definitely set the pace for the rest of

the day.

On to the team competitions as Sunday afternoon saw the introduction of all 16 teams (a record number) entered in the world competition: Australia, Belgium, Canada, Czech Republic, England, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, USA, and for the first time in international competition, China and New Zealand. The ring was a thing of beauty with each team lined up in a row of four with each class running the entire length of the ring. Sixty-four beautiful dogs and their respective stylists! Each team was smartly outfitted in uniforms reflecting their home country, and each team was accompanied by their nation's flag, alternate team members, and team coordinators. The United States was the last team introduced, guaranteeing us a prime ringside location. Following

the introductions, the members were led to their tables, their dogs were delivered, and the grooming began.

As I made my way to the USA side of the ring, I met Doug Berry, Lindsey's father, among the American cheering section. On an iPad ringside, he was running video that was being streamed live to the NEPGP show in Rhode Island, which was going on the same weekend. He was in communication with Barkleigh's Todd Shelly and Skip Bond, the tech whiz who helps make GroomerTV happen. They asked if I would do the live feed "play-by-play" of the competition. Suddenly I was thrust into the role of sports commentator for our industry, since I knew what was going on as well as all the players. What a thrill it was to share this experience with all my friends not only back in the States but worldwide!

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It was obvious from the start that this was going to be a tough competition, as the groomers from many of the other teams were well known in the industry, and their models had been prepared to perfection. The judges certainly had their work cut out for them. There were four classes that qualified for international competition: Poodles, with our representative Veronica Frosch and her model Cindy Lou; Spaniels, represented by Irina Pinkusevich and her black and white American Cocker Nicky; Michell Evans with Phil, her Australian Terrier Handstrip entry; and Lindsey Dicken with the Bichon, Zoey, in the Scissoring class. The clock started, and the grooming began.

Six international judges presided over the event along with two team leaders. Poodle and Purebred Scissoring judges were Mirjam v.d.Bosch (Netherlands), Shaunna Bernardin (Canada), and Kitty Ponnett (Belgium) with Umberto Lehmann (Italy) presiding. Judges for the Handstripping and

Spaniel classes were Chiara Piccionetti (Italy), Martial Carré (France), and the USA's own Scott Wasserman with Emilia Diaz (Spain) leading the team. As finish times were called, the judges examined their charges, ranking them from first place to sixteenth place.

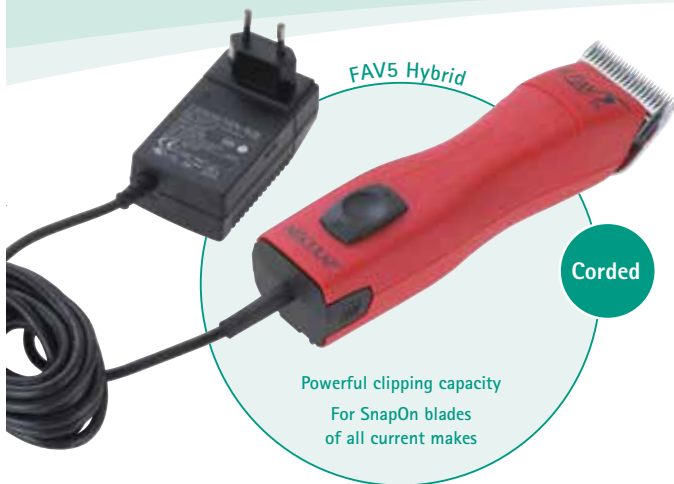
As the time ticked down and the classes finished, it began to feel like the last two minutes of the Super Bowl... an eternity! While I was broadcasting live through GroomerTV, they could hear everything I was saying, but I was not able to communicate with them in any way other than texting. As we closed in on time, Todd and Skip texted that they were so anxious to hear the results that they were going to call "scissors down" in the middle of the NEPGP grooming class to listen to the results. Finally, six finalist teams were announced. Italy, Spain, France, Australia, Russia, and the USA! The room went crazy! The World Competition two years ago had been won by the French with the USA coming in

second, and the USA had taken the gold two years before that with France in the Silver position. The tension of these see-saw wins was hanging over everybody. The French had made a good showing, and their dogs looked marvelous, as did the Americans.

The ring was cleared, and only the six finalist teams remained. As if it weren't taking enough time already, a computer glitch caused further delay, and the anticipation of the crowd was growing. The live broadcasting had been going so well that we were joking that the only thing that could possibly go wrong would be to lose the WiFi. Just as they get up to the podium to announce sixth place, the iPad power goes low and we lose the feed. I am feverishly writing down the placements while Doug is sweating to get us up and running again. Skip at GroomerTV finally texted me with "You're live again." With that said, I announced sixth place going to the Italian team and

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fifth going to Australia, their first ever placement in team competition. We were live again, and the world stopped to hear Spain garner the fourth position.

Tension was mounting. National spirit in the crowd was getting loud and proud. The show organizers asked everyone to tone it down a bit so all could hear. The hall was packed with hundreds of people all cheering on their teams like rabid soccer fans. Russia was called up for the bronze medal, leaving just France and the USA to await their fate. Gold or silver: what would it be? Finally, when the spectators had calmed down, we heard "Second place: France," and we all went crazy! I found myself screaming into the microphone "The USA takes the gold! The USA takes the gold! The USA takes the gold!" not unlike the broadcaster at the 1984 Olympic hockey team win. It was electric! Our ladies in red, white, and blue did it again!

All this did not come easily, and GroomTeam USA has had a lot of support over the years. The Premium Sponsors backing has been an essential part of the organization. Andis Company, Wahl Clipper Company (who also supplied the groomers with international clippers for the competition), PetSmart, Trendy Wendy, Espree, Nature's Specialties, and Ultra Lift have all helped make it possible. Once again, Jodi Murphy outfitted the team beautifully with her custom-made uniforms. And then there was the American cheering section. Doug Berry with his iPad made it possible to stream the video to GroomerTV. Lulu helped with travel plans. Michael, Willy, Alex, Elizabeth, Katie, Osmundo... I could go on and on! There were SO many of you, and everybody worked together with the team as a team. Washing, drying, walking the dogs, and helping take care of the team members. There is SO

much that goes on behind the scenes, and we can't thank everybody enough. You are ALL part of this!

Congratulations to GroomTeam USA. Once again, you have done us proud and shown the world what we are made of. It's safe to say that the best pet stylists in the world are right here in the USA! ☺



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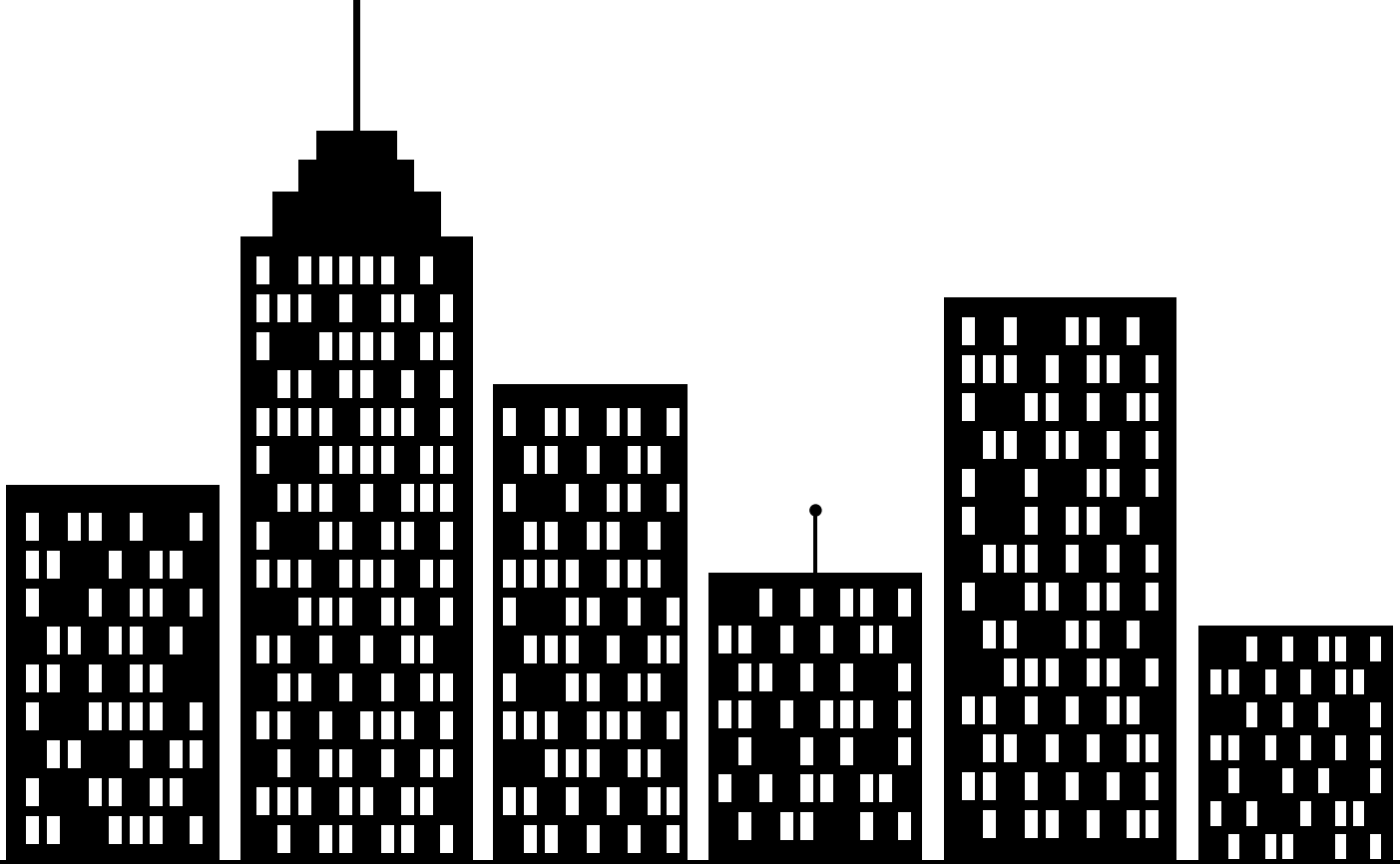
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A TAIL OF TWO CITIES

✧ by Erin McLaughlin and Jill Pipino ✧

As dog groomers, every once in a while we run into a special situation that makes us go “Eww!” Whether it be the poopy bums, the bleeding and oozy growths, or the owners that cannot resist calling their dogs deliciously sexy. What to do? Take pictures? Yes! Call your groomer friends? Of course, they’ll understand! Here are some stories we shared with each other recently.

CLIFTON PARK

Last week, I had a doozy. A 14-year-old, every-two-weeks, full-coated Briard came in. He has been battling and winning against old age for a couple of years now. He is on a boatload of pills several times a day, herbal supplements, and acupuncture. He lays down for his grooming and is

in good shape. Any matting I do find we just shave out. His parents want him beautiful and comfortable. At this particular appointment, he was behaving a little odd. We chalked it up to weather, old man mood, or maybe a full moon. He got his bath and some warmed up conditioner and began to settle into his spa day.

He had lots of sticks and leaves in his hair. Even at his age, he is still an adventurous dog with lots of surprises in his long hair. After his bath, I laid him down on a towel and proceeded to stand dry and brush him when he suddenly launched himself off the towel and across the room. He has never done that. Shocked, I looked him over. I didn’t notice anything off or weird, and he was behaving normally, so I brought him back, laid him down, and picked up

my brush when something caught my eye. It looked like a weird wire. I pulled it out of the brush and examined it a little closer... It was an acupuncture needle! It had been left in my poor old man since his last treatment and had been pulled out by the brush.

If you have never been to acupuncture, let me tell you why I wanted to pass out. The acupuncturist always tells you not to move with the needles in. I never questioned why, letting my imagination run wild with what could happen. This dog had the needle in for at least a few days, was running around, probably laid on it as it was somewhere near his hip. All I could think about was how uncomfortable he must have been. I didn’t see this needle through all his hair, and obviously neither did the acupuncturist. It

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Photo by Sheri Hightland

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gave me the heebie jeebies all day!

I called the owners and the vet and sent a picture of the needle to both. I never found an inflamed or irritated spot on his body. Every time they come in, he now goes on the table first with the blower on low in hopes that I find that literal needle in the haystack.

HAMDEN

When Jill calls me with her gross stories, of course it brings up something in my mind that makes me cringe. This one's going way back when my budding grooming career was truly put to the test. I had just finished expertly bathing a Vizsla (as you know, they require a lot of skill and expertise), placed her on the table, and began drying her. I started at her back end as I had been taught, since it gives

the dogs time to become accustomed to the sensation before getting too near the head. Well, she was all wiggly, like the dryer was scratching an elusive itch, which made me smile.

I was loving my new job and thinking how great it was to be working with animals and making them feel so fresh and so clean, when suddenly it hit me. Now when I say, "It hit me," I don't mean the proverbial light-bulb-over-my-head eureka moment... I mean explosive evacuation of this girl's large intestinal fermented waste products. All over me, the bank of crates with finished dogs awaiting pick up, the wall (which was three feet away), the table—you name it, it was covered. I stood in momentary shock. Time seemed to stand still as I looked at the scene that had just unfolded

before me. Finally, feeling slightly embarrassed, I'm sure, the dog turned to look at me and then sat down as if to say, "I made this bed; now I'll lay in it," literally.

The rest of that day was a blur of cleaning, which at first included what seemed like just a lot of smearing before I saw any real progress. Somehow I made it through and amazingly showed up for work the next day. Here I am, 10 years later with innumerable things that make me go "eww!" since that day, but that is for another time. One can only take so much at one sitting. Here's to hoping you never say "eww" at work, but if you do, a gross story shared with a friend does help ease the pain and gives you both a good laugh. ☺



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GROOMER INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

GIVE IT AWAY, BUT DON'T GIVE IT AWAY

One of the most satisfying experiences from working closely with people that love pets is helping them solve problems with their four-legged babies. Whether it is a simple recommendation for a safe chew toy or completely changing the diet of a pet that suffers from allergies, as professional groomers, each and every day we willingly and lovingly share our “groomer’s intellectual property.” This is the vast knowledge base we have accrued and absorbed from years of caring for pets, networking with veterinarians and

other alternative therapists, and simply having our hands, ears, noses, and eyes on dogs and cats every day of our working life, all day long.

My customers will frequently remark, “You should have been a vet!” Honestly, I don’t think I could handle the level of loss my vet friends face every day. I know that the loss is offset by great triumphs and successes, but I’m a crier, okay? I’m a disaster those few times a month we lose one of our grooming kids. All of my respect to the life savers out there. I’ll stick to making them gorgeous and keeping them

healthy in the first place!

I do, however, have a lot of solid knowledge floating around in my noggin, and I try to educate and support my customers whenever possible. I know that many of you do the same thing. Our customers look to us for guidance and information every day. They turn to us for help because we already have an established relationship based on trust and connectivity with their pets. I cannot stress to you enough that a person consciously choosing you to care for their baby is not a decision they make lightly, for

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our ideal customer is that pet owner that consider their dogs and cats members of their family. Whether it's the lady with the Bassett with terrible ear funk or the nervous little Italian Greyhound that gets sick every time his owner takes him out for a ride in the car, we listen closely, share our own experience, and recommend possible solutions.

On one level, I highly recommend that you give away your knowledge! Share your ideas, your solutions, your stories, and the things you have learned over a career lifetime as a professional groomer. On the other hand, once you offer up all of that wisdom, what's next? When the customer responds, "Thank you so much! Do you have that ear cleaner in stock?" do you reply, "Of course. Let me get it for you," and make an extra \$10 in profit, or do you say, "Uh, no, but Joe's Pet Paradise down the street has it." Worse even still, send them to the box store down the road that has no connection

to them and their pet whatsoever, unless, of course, they happen to be a stockholder! You may as well send Joe your regards and a gratuity for taking such good care of your customer while you're at it!

All right! Settle down, Miss! I am serious, though, my professional pet care sisters and brothers! You have everything every business in the world wants! The secret to success! The key to the city! You already have a clientele that loves you, and no amount of market research, analysis, or advertising can buy that kind of devotion. So what are you waiting for? Why aren't you retailing today?

Here are the top four excuses I have heard over 20 years of teaching business classes to groomers:

I don't have time! I'm on the clock, and I have a dog going home every 3.5 minutes!

I don't have the space!

I tried it, and no one bought anything!

There are no distributors that will do small deliveries!

Let's take these on one by one.

Like anything else worthwhile, you have to make time. Your hands will not last forever. At some point, you will want the opportunity to possibly man the front room and have a grooming staff caring for the animals. There is also this to consider: grooming one dog makes a certain level of profit. Once you factor in all of your overhead, including utilities, shampoo, staff (if you have other people working with you), advertising, rent or mortgage, etc., figure out how much you are actually making. Figure out the amount of time it takes to make that profit. Then consider this: this morning I had customer ask about a good

supplement for her Golden with dry skin. She then wanted a Red Sox collar and leash (World Series Champs!). Before she left, she also picked up some treats and Pill Pockets. Within less than five minutes, I rang up a sale for over \$90.00, of which over \$40.00 was pure profit. Huh. Retailing BOOSTS the bottom line. Poor Joe at Pet Paradise is out of luck!

You can be very creative with space, even a minimal amount, to add a little retail. Whether it is a simple slat wall behind the checkout area to display some collars and leashes or a spin rack with tasty treats next to the register, every little bit of income stream helps. A small selection of impulse items priced below \$10 are what I call "no-brainers." A little toy or bag of snacks for the guilty pet owner picking up is a great little add-on. If I were going to choose a selection of "must-haves" on hand, I would think about those things that are most commonly brought up in our grooming shops (e.g. nail clippers and styptic, breath products, brushes, teething toys, eye stain products, etc.).

Perhaps the things you offered weren't really what people needed and wanted. My dad used to have the worst, most gaudy faux diamond, gold metal collars at the old shop. They looked like they belonged in a museum! I think they may actually be in a museum now as artifacts. One groomer I visited in Connecticut had every breed of little dog statues taking up an entire display case under her register. Wonder why she wasn't selling anything? A dear friend with a very high-end boutique was psyched when she sold one of her \$100 sweaters, but with one sale each month or so, it just wasn't adding up! You have to put in front of people product that they want, that they identify, and hopefully that they will need again. I sell an enormous amount of dog food, and they have to come back week after



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week after week to keep feeding their babies. Really effective breath solutions are another product people will come back for over and over again. Eye stain products, as well as ear solutions, are another repeat product. Topical flea and tick products are sold in many areas year round. Give the people what they want!

There are plenty of small distributors and catalog companies that cater to smaller businesses. It may take a little searching, but they are out there. As a matter of fact, if you attend one of Barkleigh's trade shows, you can meet them in person! Many offer free shipping if you meet a minimum, and inside sales reps can even talk to you about their more popular products. Some of these catalog companies even cater to small businesses by offering consumers products they'll never find in box stores. If you'd like some suggestions, shoot me an email at villagegroomer@comcast.net and tell me what you're looking for.

As an independent business that

already offers your customers so many things that are rather hard to find in this day and age, like compassion, familiarity, first-name recognition, and a genuine love for their bestie, cashing in on your own "groomer intellectual property" is, to me, an easy choice. How many times have your customers called you first—before the vet, before a friend—to share a concern

with a health problem with their pet, a complaint that their dog's appetite is off, or their cat is huckin' up hairballs? Each and every day, on some level, at some point, you are putting it out there. All that you know can really help your business grow!

As far as Joe down at Pet Paradise, I wish him all the best, but he'd best keep his paws off of my customers! <3



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GROOMERS BEHIND BARS

“Kristie and I were initially kind of worried when we went to prison,” said pet stylist Emily Rupe. Kristie Kingsland, owner of As the Tail Wags Grooming in Oviedo, Florida, joined Emily in doing some time. But it wasn’t hard time. These two generous ladies volunteered to help out with the Prison Pups n Pals program. Sponsored by the West Volusia Kennel Club, Prison Pups N Pals is a canine obedience program. The program is located at the Tomoka Correctional Institution.

Emily explained, “Promising dogs are taken from Halifax Humane Society, and the prisoners have them living in their cells with them as they

train them [in] basic obedience. Once the dogs know some basic obedience, they become more desirable as pets, and their chances of being adopted are increased. They also help train dogs to become narcotic detection animals or even support dogs for veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder.” These special dogs learn to provide comfort, pick up dropped objects, and assist with tasks such as turning light switches on or off. The dogs are with their inmate trainers for seven weeks. Emily said, “The prison provides inmates with water, the rest of the dogs’ needs come from donations.”

The water provided is not only for drinking. Inmates are responsible for

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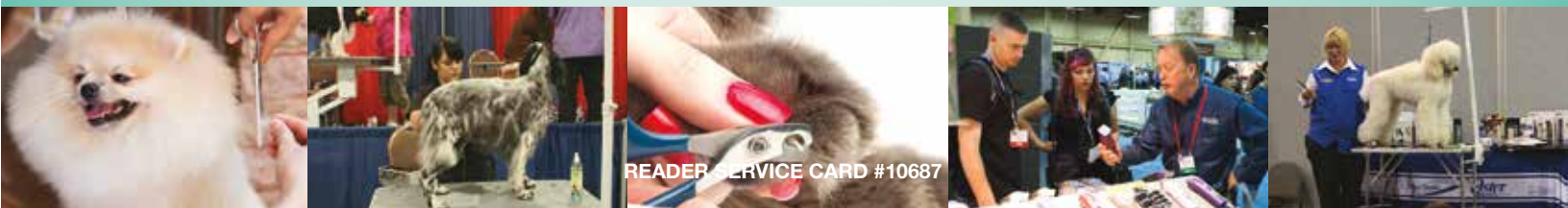
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keeping the dogs clean and groomed. That is where Emily and Kristie came in. "Most of the dogs are smooth or short-coated mixes. The men have to keep them smelling good so they are not offensive to the other inmates. They were washing them too often, and that was causing some problems." Emily and Kristie came in and talked to the men about proper shampoo technique, how different types of shampoos

work to improve the pets' skin and coat, how to brush the dogs, how to restrain them to trim their nails safely, and how to clean their ears. "We were able to bring in some grooming tools, but no scissors and oddly no slicker brushes!" she said. "Something about removing the teeth and using them in ways they shouldn't."

"All the men were very receptive, and they were extremely interested in

learning about the grooming business. They asked lots of questions. They even sent us a thank you card."

Kristie and Emily are hoping to help raise funds to enable the inmates to purchase high quality food and shampoos for the dogs. They plan to make a return visit to help the inmates and their dogs in the near future. Because grooming matters. ☺



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✧ by Sam Kohl ✧

Through the years, there have been many inventions and innovations that have contributed to the growth of our grooming profession: the A-5 clipper, detachable blades, rechargeable clippers, adjustable knob scissors, hydraulic tables and tubs, vacuum clipper systems, high-velocity dryers, mobile grooming vans, computer programs, and professional grooming books. Each one of these advances has had a huge impact on our industry and the creativity they have helped to inspire. None of these have caused a greater amount of interest from the press, the Internet, television, and the general public than the creative styling contests. Creative styling has also brought more income to us as a result.



New York's East Village

WHO CREATED CREATIVE STYLING?

The first form of creative styling began in the 1960s and '70s during the Vietnam War era. The war protesters back then were referred to as hippies, beatniks and flower children. All were

free-spirited, free-thinking, and peace-loving. Their efforts to attract attention to their protests were not usually appreciated or welcomed throughout the country. This spurred a huge migration to New York City's East Village

and San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury district, where they enjoyed the freedom to express themselves.

St. Mark's Place in New York's East Village was home to the infamous "Electric Circus" psychedelic discotheque/nightclub that was among the first to have strobe lights flashing, dayglo art, and flame-throwing jugglers. The Grateful Dead, The Allman Brothers, and Sly & the Family Stone played there. Janis Joplin, Bob Dylan, Jimi Hendrix, and Andy Warhol were frequent patrons. Any and all were welcome in the East Village.

The street was lined with shops—a second-hand store, barber and beauty shops, various gift shops, and even a tattoo parlor—operated by very creative people that designed and produced new and very different clothing, jewelry, wooden crafts, and posters. These businesses served the hordes of



revelers and shoppers by staying open 24 hours a day, seven days a week in "the city that never sleeps."

This free-spirited group of hippies (sometimes with the help of psychedelic drugs like LSD) inspired the introduction of tie-dyed clothing, mohawk haircuts, and brightly colored hair dyes. They purchased and dressed in theatrical costumes and clothing from

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second-hand stores. Their bizarre displays extended to dressing and painting their dogs and sometimes even cats. The dogs got mohawk hair-dos, spiked hair, wigs, and dyed hair. They were also the first to put on their male dogs bandanas, tie-dyed T-shirts, and men's neckties, which were also used as headbands. Love beads and sunglasses were put on them as well. The females were adorned with artificial flowers, large hand-made sunglasses, and love-bead-necklace collars, and their nails were painted with vivid colors.

My wife, Cynthia, and I were born, raised, and lived southeast of the East Village in the now very "trendy" Lower East Side. Having our grooming school located walking distance from St. Mark's Place was a memorable part of our lives. We shopped there, ate in their great little homestyle East Village restaurants,



Jerry Schinberg

and of course, groomed many of the hippie dogs! The students attending our school in that era, from in-country and outside, also had the pleasure of being able to spend time in the East Village and be a part of that scene.

WHO CREATED THE CREATIVE STYLING CONTESTS?

In 1973, I attended the first national grooming show in Atlanta, GA, which was presented by groomer Vickie Naylor and her partner, Pete Flontek. Vickie and Pete also published the Southern Pet Journal newspaper.

At that show, I had the pleasure of meeting a young groomer (I was young then, too) who was dressed in a khaki-colored army fatigue jacket and blue dungarees. He had been a professional stage actor, and I also suspected that he might have been a hippie as well. His name is Jerry Schinberg, and he went on to start and then continue to operate his All American Grooming Show in Chicago for the past 40 years.

In 1980, Jerry came up with an idea to "juice up" his show. This was when and how the creative styling contest was born! Jerry was far from




Misty Gieczys, Pet Palace (Columbus, OH)



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thrilled with Lynette Wallace Jacobson, the first winner, and she overheard him saying so. Lynette got her revenge the next year and did thrill him with her sensational “Screw you, Jerry!” design. She clipped the dog so that it appeared as if its body was a giant corkscrew turning round and round as it moved. Creative styling had now “turned” into a huge success. THANKS, JERRY FOR MAKING OUR LIVES MORE COLORFUL!

The ever-increasing popularity of these contests has its participants donning costumes and singing and playing CDs with either songs or background music to enhance their presentations.

One of the first creative champions, Dawn Omboy, is regarded as the “Queen of Color” since she is responsible for inspiring many of the current competitors through the years. There are many other true artists in the

contests now, winning thousands of well-deserved dollars for their victories. Kudos to Angela Kump and Lori Craig, multi-talented, multi-contest winners who graciously give advice and answer questions for newbies and now have their own line of creative grooming products that they sell at grooming shows around the country.

A pleasant surprise from the creative explosion is that it has spread to the general public. Some folks are shocked or taken aback by the sight of dogs in color. On the other hand, the more daring and artistically inclined grooming clients are asking for their dogs to be styled or colored creatively. This has resulted in an increase of grooming income to those who have taken advantage of this latest trend.

People outside of the grooming profession don’t realize the enormous talent and skill that goes into the actual

design, grooming, and scissoring that is encompassed in the completion of creative styling. I am constantly amazed and thoroughly entertained by the creative artists that participate in the contests. Before I incur the wrath of the groomers that compete in all of the other grooming categories, let me say that it gives me great pleasure to see the artistry, courage, patience, and proficiency displayed by you to groom amidst the noise and crowds—BRAVO!

I eagerly anticipate attending each grooming show. I am very proud of all of you and what you have all contributed to this great profession of ours. ☺



YOUR PROFESSIONAL GROOMER

Name _____

Date	Address	Groomer																										
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">BASIC GROOMING <input type="checkbox"/> No Bath</td> <td style="width: 30%;">\$</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Tangling / Dematting <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Problem</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Flea Treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Medicated Shampoo</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Skin and/or Coat Conditioning Treatment</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Pattern</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>BATH <input type="checkbox"/> with Comb-out <input type="checkbox"/> with Nail Trim</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nail Trimming</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bows</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dental</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">Sales Tax +</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: right;">TOTAL</td> <td style="text-align: right;">\$</td> </tr> </table>			BASIC GROOMING <input type="checkbox"/> No Bath	\$	<input type="checkbox"/> Tangling / Dematting <input type="checkbox"/> Behavior Problem		<input type="checkbox"/> Flea Treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Medicated Shampoo		Skin and/or Coat Conditioning Treatment		Pattern		BATH <input type="checkbox"/> with Comb-out <input type="checkbox"/> with Nail Trim		Nail Trimming		Bows		Dental						Sales Tax +		TOTAL	\$
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GROOM & KENNEL EXPO

RETURNS TO PASADENA, CA FEB. 20–23, 2014

Groom & Kennel Expo returns to Pasadena, California for another exciting weekend of seminars, competition, and trade show. Barkleigh will host the event at the Pasadena Conference Center from February 20 to 23, 2014. Among the weekend's events is the Groom & Kennel Expo debut of several new seminars as well as the Rescue

Round-Up competition.

One of the new seminars is "The Passionate Groomer" by Lisa Leady, winner of the Barkleigh Honors Award for Speaker of the Year. In this four-hour session, Lisa will conduct a series of four one-hour breed demos. This seminar, however, is not just about technique but also about Lisa's love for what she does. "My goal," Lisa says, "is

for everyone to leave the seminar with a renewed passion for grooming, the dogs, their customers, co-workers, and this great industry."

Lisa will then join her sister, Sue Watson, for a seminar called "What My Sister Taught Me." Sue will also present "Grooming the Difficult Dog," which was the highest attended class at this year's Groom Expo in Hershey, PA.

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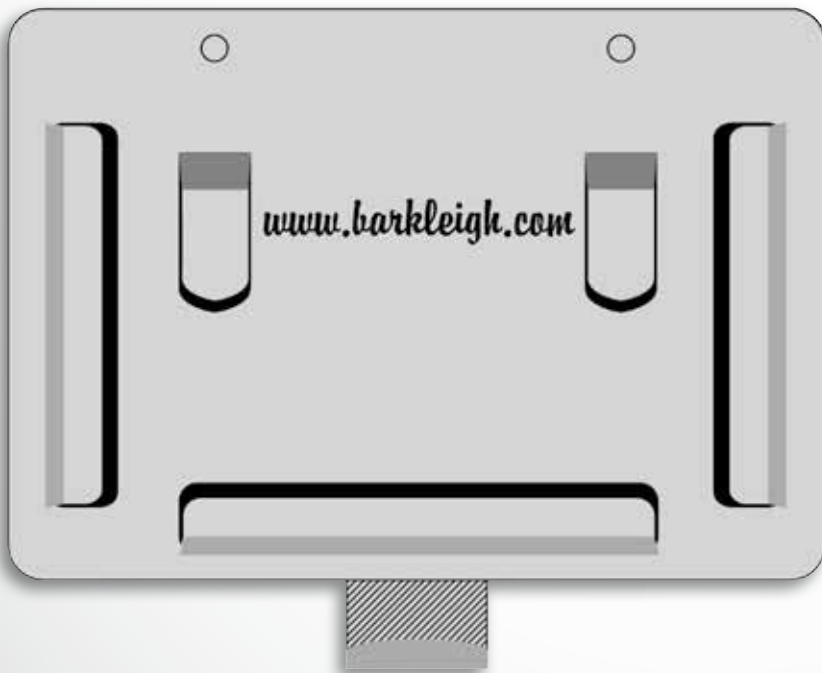
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Award-winning champion groomers like Jay Scruggs, Sue Zecco, Olga Zabelinskaya, Michell Evans, Chris Pawlosky, and Naohisa Tsujihara will showcase their world class skills as they demonstrate the techniques that attendees can take back to their own salons.

In this seminar, Sue will demonstrate handling and finishing techniques to help you successfully groom the dogs that no other salon wants.

New at Groom & Kennel Expo is Kathy Rose's "The In Crowd: Grooming the Most Popular Breeds." This seminar debuted to fantastic reviews at the 2013 New England Fall Fest. In this four-hour session, Kathy will go over the most popular breeds that you see at the salon, including the Shih Tzu, Yorkie, and Poodle. The techniques that Kathy shares in this seminar will help groomers improve in both skill and speed.

Another speaker at Groom & Kennel Expo is Danelle German, a Bar-

kleigh Honors nominee for Speaker of the Year. Among her weekend topics is a seminar that she will co-present with fellow Barkleigh Honors nominee Jodi Murphy.

Dr. Cliff Faver will be presenting "From Check-In to Check-Out: First Line of Defense." This series of seminars addresses the important role that groomers play in the life and health of their clients. Topics include what to look for before the groom, how to handle the most common emergency situations, and long-term services and solutions.

Other seminars available at Groom & Kennel Expo are Teri DiMarino's "Brusher/Bather Certificate Pro-

gram," Joey Villani's "Dogfather Knows Best," and Linda Easton's "Stress-less Grooming for People and Pets." Cheryl Purcell will present "I Want That," a seminar that reveals some of the latest grooming tools worth trying and how to use them correctly, and Angela Clark will lead a session to review competitive recruitment strategies.

Many seminars at Groom & Kennel Expo also include live demonstrations. Award-winning champion groomers like Jay Scruggs, Sue Zecco, Olga Zabelinskaya, Michell Evans, Chris Pawlosky, and Naohisa Tsujihara will showcase their world class skills as they demonstrate the techniques that attendees can take back to their own salons. Breeds include the Poodle, Yorkie, Schnauzer, Pomeranian, Airedale, and the Bedlington. Creative groomers Angela Kumpe and Lori Craig will demonstrate creative styling techniques like airbrushing to give attendees the skills and tools they need to introduce some color into their everyday salon grooming.

An exciting addition to the Groom & Kennel Expo schedule is the Rescue Round-Up grooming competition on



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Sunday morning. During this event, groomers compete for prize money and trophies as they give makeovers to dogs from local shelters. This grooming improves the contest dogs' appearance and comfort as well as their chances of adoption. The dogs sometimes end up going home with one of the groomers or someone in the viewing audience. Because of the event's incredible popularity, those interested in entering the competition are encouraged to register as soon as possible. Space is limited, and the competition fills up quickly.

The World Cup Grooming Games at Groom & Kennel Expo are GroomTeam sanctioned. Competitors vie for GroomTeam points in addition to trophies and prize money provided by this year's sponsors. Groomers are divided into three skill levels and can compete in multiple classes, which include Poodle, All Other Purebreds, Salon Freestyle, and Sporting and Terriers. On Sunday afternoon, the judges will reveal the Best in Show

winner, who will appear on the cover of Groomer to Groomer in addition to winning a special trophy and cash prize.

Also on Sunday is the exciting creative styling competition, during which groomers will color and style their dogs on stage to transform these animals into living works of art. In previous years, the creative competition at Groom & Kennel Expo has seen dogs transformed into dragons, buffalo, and even the mysterious chupacabra. Following the completion of their groom, the competitors present their creations to the judges and the crowd, often accompanied by original songs, poems, and skits. These groomers are competing for trophies and prize money, but they also hope to win the People's Choice Award. The winner of this award, chosen by the audience, wins additional prize money and gets

to appear on the cover of Groomer to Groomer. This is perhaps the most coveted award of the weekend.

Groom & Kennel Expo would not be complete without a bustling trade show. With nearly 100 booths, the trade show affords plenty of opportunities to stock up on salon necessities like shampoo and bows at special show prices. Attendees also enjoy the chance to get a feel for new shears, try on smocks, and see tables and tubs in action. In addition to the shopping, groomers can watch grooming demos at various booths on the trade show floor and speak directly with vendors and company representatives.

Mark February 20-23, 2014, on your calendar and get ready for Groom & Kennel Expo! For more information, visit groomandkennelexpo.com or call (717) 691-3388. ☞

GROOM & KENNEL EXPO

FEBRUARY 20-23, 2014
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BETTER BUSINESS RESOLUTIONS

✧ by Veronica Boutelle ✧

The new year is coming, and if you're like most small business owners, you've made a number of promises to yourself. Maybe you've resolved that this next year will be the year you get serious about your marketing plan or repainting your space or finally raising your rates. If you're like most humans, the initial excitement of these promises will give way by mid-January to the sense of inevitable doom that comes along with resolutions. Whether at the new year, upon returning from an inspiring conference, or anytime we promise ourselves change, that brief period of determination and hope we know will

give way soon enough to the reality of day-to-day life.

What can we do to help the promises we make ourselves actually come to pass? The key is good planning.

ASSESS THIS LAST YEAR

Grab—or make—a few quiet hours to sit down and reflect.

Question your services. Ask yourself what worked well this year and what didn't. How much revenue did each service bring in? How much time, effort, and expense went into generating that revenue? Is it time to add something new? You've noted that clients regularly ask for boarding refer-

als, for instance; maybe it's time to offer in-house boarding services.

Look at your policies. Did your policies (cancellation, payment, scheduling, pick up and drop off, etc.) do what they were meant to do? If yours aren't protecting revenue, avoiding client conflict, increasing efficiency, and contributing to your enjoyment of your work, they aren't doing what they should. A cancellation policy, for example, that asks clients to give you 24-hours' notice for a boarding cancellation isn't a very effective policy if it generally takes you two days to fill an open slot.

Check your rates. How do they



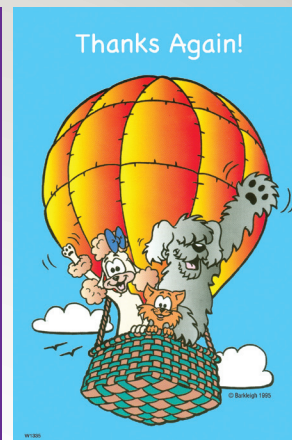
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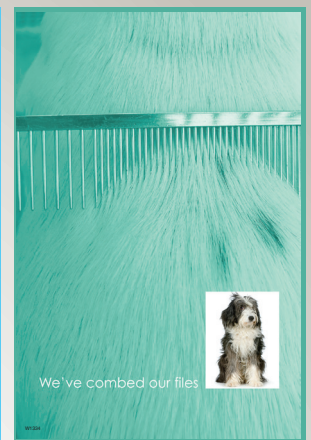
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#210 (R-7)

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stand compared to those of your colleagues? Do you feel well compensated? Do they accurately reflect your marketing message? For example, if you tout your staff as the most qualified and well-trained in the area or your facility as the most advanced and pleasant but your rates are average or below, you're undermining your marketing message and leaving money on the table.

Review your schedule. Did you feel in control or like the proverbial headless chicken? Where was your time most spent, and were those the right places? Do you need some assistance this year? In what areas? If you're like most small dog business owners, you're likely spending most of your time in the business—providing direct care to dogs and customer service to clients—and very little time on the business—pursuing the kinds of activi-

ties, like marketing, that are essential to growth and longevity. If that's so, you'll need to reprioritize, and that may mean hiring some help. Do you want that help on the business end, for direct care activities, or maybe even at home to give yourself more time to focus on your business at large?

Assess your enjoyment. Do you feel excited about the year to come or exhausted at the prospect? What parts of your work do you look forward to? Which parts would you like to improve, hand over, or jettison altogether? Again, it may be time to hire, and the first tasks off your plate should be the ones you enjoy least.

MAKE DECISIONS FOR THE YEAR TO COME

Based on your assessments, what do you want to do differently this coming year? Break any broad strokes

down into specific goals. For example, if you decide you'd like to make more money, decide how much more. If you want to get control of your schedule or feel less frazzled, spell out what that means. Time for yoga class three times a week? Two days off in a row? A master schedule to live by?

BREAK OUT THE CALENDAR

Now it's time to plan. This is where most resolutions fail. It's easy to make determined statements about what we will and will not do, but without planning it's also easy to fall back into regular patterns of behavior. Pull out the 2014 calendar now while it's still relatively wide open and unscheduled, and set aside specific days and times to work on the goals you've set. Literally mark them out in your calendar, and then plan around them as though they are intractable. Do not give in to temp-

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tation to schedule over them when things get busy. This is exactly what keeps us from moving forward. Write these work times down in pen, literally and figuratively.

HOLD QUARTERLY PROGRESS MEETINGS

Yep, even if you're the only one in

the company. (Just close the door so no one hears you talking to yourself.) Set aside as much time as you can (at least a couple hours but a whole day if possible) once per quarter to check on your progress, make adjustments to your plans, and keep yourself on track.

Successful resolutions are dependent on breaking the domination of

the day to day. You have many demands competing for your attention: emails to be answered, phone calls to be returned, clients and dogs to care for, invoices to prepare, bills to pay, and on and on. It's hard in the midst of these pressures to make changes, even when you know those adjustments will improve your bottom line or daily experience.

Take a moment now to create space in the coming year to come up for air on a regular basis. To meet your New Year's resolutions, you'll have to work on your business, not just in it.

*Veronica Boutelle, M.A.Ed., CTC, is the founder of dog*tec, the dog industry's leading business support company, the author of How To Run A Business: Putting Your Career Where Your Heart Is, The Business of Dog Walking: How to Make a Living Doing What You Love, and co-author of Minding Your Dog Business. Veronica writes regularly for professional dog journals and is a sought-after speaker at conferences and seminars around the country and internationally. You can learn about how dog*tec helps dog businesses succeed at www.dogtec.org or reach Veronica directly at veronica@dogtec.org.*



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ARE YOU A VICTIM OF GRITTY BLADES?

by Jeff Andrews

Gritty blades are the result of the sharpener not taking the time to clean the blade thoroughly after it's sharpened. Grit sticks to a blade after it's taken off the sharpening wheel, because it's "magnetized" from the metal-to-metal contact on the spinning wheel. The majority of sharpeners just use a paint brush to clean away the grit from both sides of the blade and call it good. That is far from good enough!

Grit hangs up in the spaces

between the teeth and along the inside of the cutter blade and the rails. Just using a paint brush to brush it away quickly will not get it all, especially if the blade hasn't been "demagnetized." Everything will seem okay until some form of liquid is applied to the blade like oil, blade wash, disinfectant, or coolant. The grit then starts to break away from its hiding places and gets on your cutting surfaces and contact points to make a black mess. If you see it, it can be cleaned off, but the real

problem is this: "The same grit that sharpened your blades could dull them in seconds."

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First, we brush the obvious grit from the blade, run the unassembled blade over a demagnetizer, then finally take an air gun to blow away any grit that may be left on the blade. We pay special attention between the teeth, along the rails, and the underside of the cutter. When we are done, there is no black grit left on the blade to make a mess later, or worse yet, quickly dull your blade or cause a black streak on the dog. It takes a little more time, but like groomers, we want clean blades too! ☺

Jeff Andrews is a World Class Sharpener and owner of Northern Tails Sharpening, Inc. He is an author and pioneer of many equipment maintenance videos and how-to articles that are appreciated by groomers worldwide at no cost. Jeff is a member of NDGAA, IPG, and NAPCG, and still grooms at his shop in Mobile, AL. 251-232-5353 www.northerntails.com

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by Kathy Rose



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and tail. The length will vary depending upon your client’s brushing skills. In this instance, a #0 snap-on comb over a #30 blade was used.

Although the snap-on comb is used all over, some scissoring is still required in order to add style to the trim and eliminate the stray hairs. Keep in mind that thorough preparation is still paramount.

FIG. 1: Starting about two inches behind the occipital bone, clip toward the tail, following the coat growth direction. Clip the entire body, undercarriage, flanks, rump, and hind legs.

FIG. 2: Lift the ear and clip the throat and neck, following the coat growth direction. If you encounter cowlicks, trim the opposite direction.

FIG. 3: Lifting the leg slightly, trim the front legs and feet.

FIG. 4: With super blenders or thinning shears, blend the trimmed areas and shorten the coat on the back part of the upper and lower thigh to help with the angulation.

FIG. 5: Continue with your blenders over the “spring of rib.”

FIG. 6: Use blenders to trim the stray hairs on the undercarriage, creating

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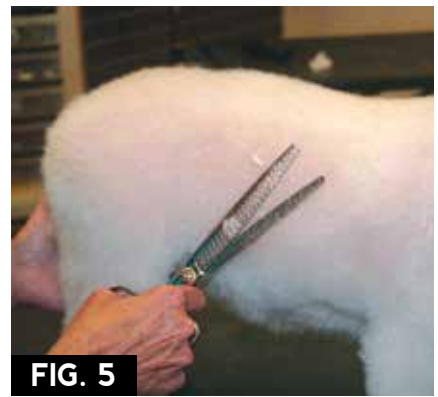
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5. You sit still for your hairdresser.
6. Your hairdresser doesn't remove the boogies from your eyes.
7. Your hairdresser doesn't clean your ears.
8. Your hairdresser doesn't give you a sanitary trim.
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a natural line up to the forehead.

FIG. 7: Using curved shears, create tight, round feet.

FIG. 8: Trim the inside of the rear legs using curved shears to give the illusion of parallel lines. Then move on to the front and trim the excess hairs to create columns.

FIG. 9: With a #10 blade, lightly scoop out the eyes. Do not actually touch the skin—just skim.

FIG. 10: Use a #30 to trim the hair just under the nose.

FIG. 11: With curved shears angled outward, trim the foreface and brow from one eye corner to the other. When viewed from the side, the eyes should be visible.

FIG. 12: Still with curved shears, blend the cheek coat to the ears and topknot.

FIG. 13: With your thumb placed just under the nose in order to protect the tongue, use curved shears to round the jaw from the nose to the cheek and ear.

FIG. 14: Flip the ear back and trim upward toward the skull.

FIG. 15: Use blenders to smooth and soften the entire face, blend the top knot to the ear, and round out the bottom of the ear. Finish up by blending the tail into a pom pom.

The longer the snap-on comb that is used, the more scissoring will be required to polish the trim. A good portion of my “Bread & Butter” clients are stocky little dogs in an “all over” trim. These are easy trims to execute in a minimum of time but still present a cute little teddy bear effect that requires minimal client maintenance. ☺



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PET BOARDING & DAYCARE EXPO 2013 SETS NEW STANDARD

The Second Annual Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo was a great success, with over 590 attendees coming from across the country and Canada to the event in Baltimore. The conference this past November featured several days of educational seminars, social events, and shopping at the trade show.

Many of the attendees arrived Monday evening for the official kick-off. Barkleigh's president, Todd Shelly, and Pet Boarding & Daycare's managing editor, Cindy Agoncillo, welcomed the attendees and invited them to en-

joy the many opportunities the show would present. "This is a time for you to recharge, learn something new, and find some extra motivation and energy as you head into the holiday season," Agoncillo said. She also encouraged everyone to spend time making connections and learning from other attendees.

Following Barkleigh's official welcome was the evening's main event: a keynote address by Eileen Proctor. Titled "Unleash Your Passion: From Boardroom and Boredom to Biscuits,

Balls, and Bellyrubs!" Proctor's address told the story of her transition from a career in corporate marketing to a new venture in doggie daycare. She energetically shared the lessons learned from the various mistakes and good decisions she made while pioneering the industry in the Phoenix area.

While her address was full of incredible advice for the attendees, Proctor left her audience with two main points: ask and help. She encouraged those who were just starting and those who want to grow and improve

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to ask others for help. "What's the worst they could say?" Proctor asked, to which the audience answered in unison, "No." Proctor also encouraged those who consider themselves experts and those who feel like their facilities have no room left for improvement to help those facilities who ask for advice and assistance.

Attendees immediately applied Eileen Proctor's "ask and help" advice during the question and answer session following the keynote address. Some audience members asked Proctor about her personal story and her decision to leave the corporate world for doggie daycare. Others asked for her opinion on topics like web cameras, dog trainers, employee motivation, and working on the business versus in the business. In response, fellow attendees stepped forward to offer their own thoughts, experiences, and recommendations. For example, one

attendee shared her idea of using a "Caught Ya"--a small token like a gift card or a favorite candy bar--when her employees are "caught" doing an especially good job. It is a simple way to motivate employees and show appreciation for a job well done, and it was an idea that seemed to resonate well among the managers and owners in the audience.

Closing out the first evening was a meet and greet party sponsored by The Dog Gurus, Robin Bennett and Susan Briggs. This was a fun way to wrap up the evening and allow time for everyone to meet other attendees. The Dog Gurus hosted a BINGO game with prizes to encourage attendees to talk and meet one another.

Educational seminars began the next morning with two-hour sessions by Laura Laaman, Gary Gentzler, Tim Larson, and Chris Quinlan. They addressed a variety of topics from

facility design and sanitation to liability and customer service. Robyn Adams of Chamblee, GA, said that Gary Gentzler's morning session on cyber liability "opened [her] eyes to many risks that are out there," and Cierra Little of Riverview, FL, thought Chris Quinlan's seminar, "Be Number One at Cleaning Up Number Two" was very informational. "We use bleach," she said, "so to learn how it works and doesn't work was impressive."

Seminars continued with four-hour sessions in the afternoon. Keynote speaker Eileen Proctor led a seminar on trade show marketing while Susan Briggs and Robin Bennett, Ken Karmie, and Dr. Valarie Tynes addressed temperament testing, artificial grass, and exotic pets, respectively. Amberle Behr of Bellevue, ID, attended Susan Briggs and Robin Bennett's seminar on temperament testing and said, "The amount of information was amazing. It was nice to pick and choose what could work for our facility and what wouldn't."

Wednesday and Thursday included hour-long seminars throughout the day, shopping and product demonstrations in the trade show hall, and sold-out round table discussion luncheons. This year's show featured a larger trade show hall and more vendors than last year, with 39 vendors at 45 booths. During the luncheons, attendees gathered together to discuss differences in operating procedures, product recommendations, and information learned at the expo's seminars. It was an excellent opportunity to meet other boarding facility operators, managers, and staff from various parts of the country.

Barkleigh is excited to see the growth of the Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo and looks forward to its continued improvement and expansion. Make plans to attend the Third Annual Pet Boarding & Daycare Expo in November 2014. ☺

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Wahl Clipper Corporation Launches the New Designer Blade

Wahl presents the New Designer replacement blade for the ChroMini and BravMini rechargeable trimmers. This specially designed blade is ideal

for creative design grooming styles. It is perfect for trimming many different designs into coats and gives a smooth edge to any creative design. It works great for trimming in small areas such as paws or pads, face and Schnauzer eyes and is designed and manufactured in Germany.

All Wahl blades are made of high grade steel and go through a quality process that guarantees long lasting durability, effective sharpness and efficient ease in cutting ability. A superior tooth geometry has been developed that provides excellent feeding of the coat, yet protects your animal from cutting or jabbing. For additional information, request Reader Service card #10713.



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Daniel Heiniger leads the family company Heiniger AG, which was established in Herzogenbuchsee Switzerland in 1946 by the founder Herman Heiniger, and is now in the third generation. Heiniger is the worldwide leading manufacturer of animal shearing equipment, having subsidiaries in

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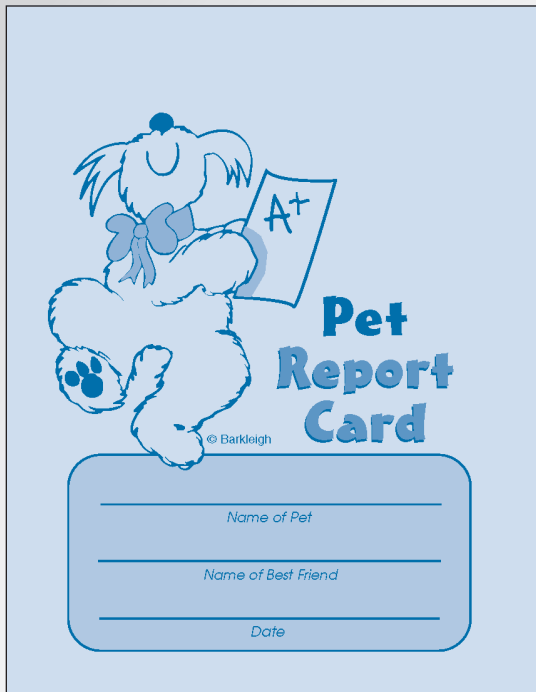
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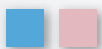
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