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ON THE COVER



Angela Kumpe, winner of the Groom & Kennel Expo 2012 Creative Styling People's Choice Award Sponsored by Tropiclean.

Photos by Animal Photography Designed by Lucas Colton

Todd Shelly

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Off the Top of My Head by Todd Shelly

Lowered Drawbridge

Last year was our first year in a new facility for *PetQuest*. The move has been fantastic; the hotel and their convention facility are a perfect set-up for us. The hotel even used our bathing salon blueprints to create a permanent bathing area. You have to love a hotel that is so dog-friendly that they do construction to help bring in more dog events! This is especially rewarding for us because of what we had to endure with our previous hotel.

When we moved *PetQuest* from Lansing to the Cincinnati area, we were amazed that we immediately found a location that had the space and availability to accommodate us. The *Drawbridge Inn* was being renovated and offered us everything we needed at a reasonable rate. It also offered room to grow, so we would not have to ever deal with outgrowing it.

The family that owned the *Drawbridge Inn* was fixing it up over the course of a few years. We went into it knowing that the first year would be a work in progress. That was okay, because you could see that the place was being worked on. The second year there was significant improvement. The third year, we were concerned that there were no noticeable improvements.

The fourth year is when things got crazy. We were informed shortly before the show that, due to the recession, the family that owned the *Drawbridge Inn* had to surrender it to the bank. The bank hired a management company to run it. We went into the show knowing that the bank could determine it was a losing proposition and close the doors.

By the time *PetQuest* rolled around, they were still in business but probably should not have been. The place was in disrepair. The rooms were bad, and many had bugs. There were puddles throughout the hotel, and the air conditioning was broken. The temperatures in the trade show reached 90 degrees.

After the show, Sally informed the management company that we were not going to be coming back. They informed us that we were contractually obligated to return (if they were still in business) for the few remaining years of our original contract. We knew there was not going to be another show there, because most of the vendors and groomers were not going to return.

Sally has never been one to take an injustice without a fight. She did the last thing any show manager would ever want to do: she asked vendors and attendees to write her emails explaining the various issues they had at the show. It's not fun reading letters about their bad experiences.

However, it worked. After Sally sent them about 100 emails, the hotel let us out of the contract. I think they realized they were about to get hit with a lot of bad publicity at the very least.

Sally's tenacity paid off. In fact, it saved the show. Before writing this, I did a quick Google search. A local news channel did a story on a bed bug outbreak at the *Drawbridge Inn* the very weekend that our show was to take place. The hotel has since been foreclosed on and purchased by the bank at an estate auction.

todd@barkleigh.com





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(and sometimes wacky) clients that have provided Adriane with plenty of excitement.

One of Adriane's clients flies her to Los Angeles several times a year to pick-up and fly her two dogs back to South Carolina to be groomed. The dogs are seasoned travelers and are used to flying often; you never hear a peep from them.

However, the last time that Adriane flew with them from LA to Charlotte, North Carolina, it was a different story. Less than 30 minutes into the flight, the 22-pound Shih Tzu/Bichon mix became restless and agitated. Then it happened... Explosive diarrhea. Adriane grabbed the dog in the crate, dashed to the tiny bathroom, and surveyed the damage.

The dog was covered from head to tail, as was the entire inside of the crate. A flight attendant gave Adriane a trash bag, paper towels,

Armed with the bathroom Dial soap, she bathed that entire dog – one ear, one foot, one leg at a time – in that smaller-than-small room.

and some *Febreeze*. Armed with the bathroom *Dial* soap, she bathed that entire dog – one ear, one foot, one leg at a time – in that smaller-than-small room. Then she took the crate apart and cleaned it. She even scrubbed the bathroom floor. After the emergency grooming session, the dog slept peacefully for the rest of the flight.

That's just one of the many adventures Adriane has embarked on. In her travels as a mobile groomer, there's never a dull moment.

Adriane was the personal groomer for the late Anna Nicole

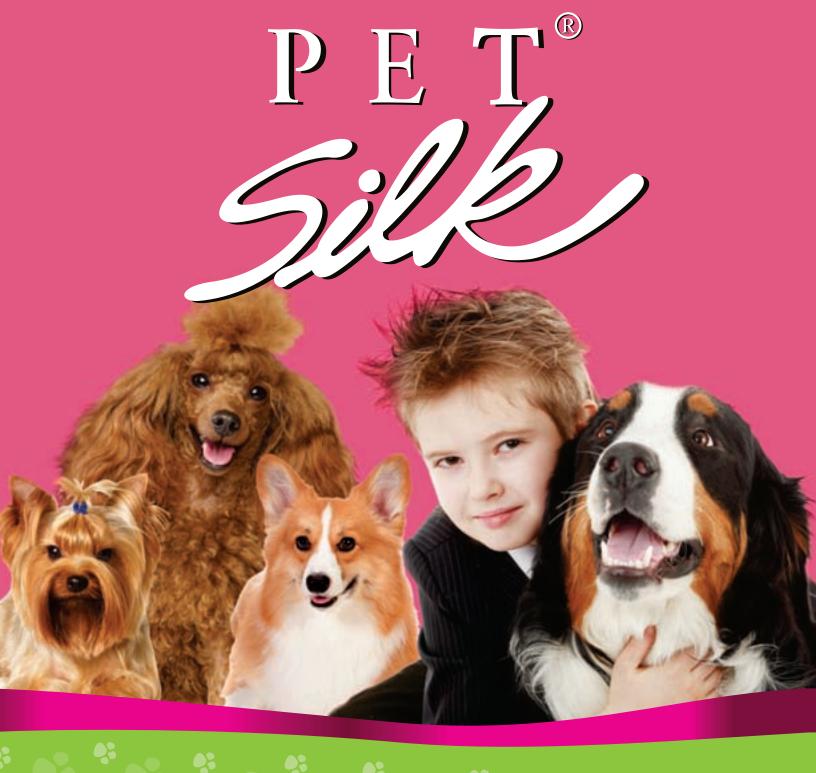
Smith – model, actress, television personality, and 1993 Playmate of the Year. "I can reveal that now," says Adriane, "... but while I was grooming her four dogs, I was sworn to silence."

"Often I would have to go into Anna Nicole's bedroom and get the dogs out from under the covers as they slept with her. Other times, I would have to go out to the swimming pool to get them, and Anna would be sunbathing completely nude." It's safe to say that's not an everyday occurrence for most

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groomers.

Adriane's elite clientele often told her that they didn't want to put their precious pets in a kennel when they had to go away. Adriane's background in the kennel industry kicked in, and an idea began to form.

Adriane and her husband, Darrell, decided to design and build their own boarding kennel, but they planned to make theirs different

from most. Their kennel, the *River*town Bed & Biscuit, offers magnificent suites and luxury rooms for each guest. Adriane always refers to the accommodations as rooms. never kennels or runs. Adriane and her husband built most of their kennel themselves, from laying the brickwork to installing the electricity and plumbing and all of the finish work.

Their kennel is not the first petrelated project that Darrell has to his credit. He has done the conversion on every grooming van that Adriane has used for her mobile grooming business. He customized everything for Adriane, placing all her equipment in locations and at a height that works best for her.

In the early 1990s, Adriane decided to try her hand at competitive grooming. "The first grooming competition I ever entered was at the Atlanta Pet Fair," recalled Adriane. "It was the Mobile Roundup - a competition where you do the complete groom of a dog, from start to finish, in your own grooming van. In the late 1990s, I started to compete in breed classes."

Once Adriane began to enter creative styling competitions, her artistic side shifted into overdrive, and she began to churn out amazing creations. "I love competing. It is a passion. I don't do it for the money," said Adriane emphatically. "Sometimes you don't even cover your expenses, but every time I compete, it makes me want to do better."

At Groom Expo 2011 in Hershey, Pennsylvania, her Creative Styling entry was a tribute to her brother who passed away. She transformed her Standard Poodle, Logan, into the mascot of her brother's college team. When the team coach heard about it, he asked Adriane and her dog (in his full creative design) to lead the team through the tunnel and out onto the field for a game.

Adriane also uses her creative talents to spice up the ordinary. "I do a lot of Career Days in my local area schools," shared Adriane. "On the dog that I am taking, I try to do a creative theme that has something to do with the school. If I am going to a daycare, I may color it and scissor ABC blocks into its coat. My next visit is to a school whose mascot is the Conway Tiger. I'll turn my dog into a bright orange striped

Continued on page 12



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tiger before that presentation."

Adriane always says that she has the best clients in the world and illustrates it by relating this story:

"Last year TLC, The Learning Channel, produced a show called Extreme Poodles. It was filmed in Pasadena, California," said Adriane. "I was invited to be one of the participants, but financially, I lacked the funds to go. When one of my clients heard about it, they made it possible for me to go. They paid for my flight, my dog's flight, my hotel, and all my expenses.

"When I knew I was going to California, the first thing that popped into my mind was – Rodeo Drive... *Pretty Woman*.

"That's how I got the idea for my entry. I did a design of a woman walking a poodle on my dog and called it 'Pretty Poodle.' I colored my dog purple before we boarded the plane for Los Angeles. "I was worried to death about flying my Standard Poodle cross-country... We had three plane changes, and he was in cargo, but before each takeoff, the pilot would come on the speaker and say, 'The purple dog is safely on the plane.'"

"I was worried to death about flying my Standard Poodle crosscountry," Adriane recalled. "We had three plane changes, and he was in cargo, but before each takeoff, the pilot would come on the speaker and say, "The purple dog is safely on the plane," Adriane said with a chuckle.

"Almost from the moment we got there, a film crew followed us everywhere, even when we took the dogs out to the bathroom," said Adriane. "It was a little nerve-wracking to have a camera right in your face when you are trying to scissor a dog, but it was the neatest thing to be a part of. It was a wonderful experience that I will never forget."

Adriane will probably never run out of challenges and adventures. In fact, her next project is already in the works.

"My next goal is to be on the cover of *Groomer to Groomer* magazine with the People's Choice winner of the Creative Styling competition," said Adriane confidently. "That's my dream!"



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book that has circulated the Internet for several years now, Why Paint Cats, is a pictorial of cats that are creatively colored. Many think they are really done that way, and many others think it is the mastery of Photoshop. Whether it is real or not remains a mystery, but for many years now, we have been creatively coloring our dogs. Mostly we see this done on coated breeds, and more often than not, they have all been white dogs. We do white dogs because colors show up truer on a white coat.

But not every dog has a fluffy coat to add a touch of color. Is this fair to the short and smooth-coated breeds and their owners? Heck no! So here it is: get out your paint brushes and dyes, and let's get busy!

There are several dyes that will work better on coarser coat types than on others. For instance, blow pens are generally not good on hard coats. The hair is not porous or open enough to allow the pigment in, nor will the pigment stick to the outer layer of the hair shaft. The

color will slide right off. Dyes such as *Avatar*, *Dyex*, *Pet Esthe*, and *Kiss Express* can be used and will hold on most of those short or hard coats.

Before you begin, draw out your pattern on paper or a printed out picture of the dog. This will give you something to go by as you begin your project. Decide on the color scheme and test your colors so you will know what to expect. Remember to do a test spot in an inconspicuous place on the dog to make sure Fido is not going to have an allergic reaction. Just because you have used the product on a dog before with no problems does not mean an allergy cannot occur at another time. It is a good idea to test each time. If a reaction is going to happen, it will likely show up in the first 20 minutes or so.

Hand-painted designs are not difficult to do and can be anything from a simple school insignia to a very intricate animal pattern. These can be achieved by dipping your small paint brush into the dye and painting on your pattern or design. Use only small amounts of dye on your brush to ensure accuracy and prevent running. These dyes are not

bad with color bleeding, so you can actually work with more than one color at a time.

You can use stencils for your designs or freehand the design using your picture as a guide. If doing animal prints, look at pictures of the actual animals to give you the basics of the pattern. Remember these are random, so do not try to make them uniform. As with any dyes, make sure when you rinse it quickly and use cool water.

Why paint dogs? It makes us happy to look upon the art we have created, especially when it looks lovingly back at us. The time spent with the dogs we love is almost therapeutic for both the dog and the artist/groomer. Colored dogs get more of the very thing that all dogs love and need: attention!

Queen of Color Dawn Omboy is the recipient of the Barkleigh Honors Award for her contribution to creative styling. She is an international creative styling industry speaker and judge and conducts online webinars for creative styling at www. pawsativeeducationaltraining.com. For more information go to www. klippers.com.

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A COMMON PROBLEM

By Rick Kesler, DVM

et dental disease, the most common pet disease, is found in nearly 80% of dogs and cats over three years of age but is almost completely preventable with proper care. Clinical signs are varied; they include pain, reluctance to chew, bad breath, infections, behavior changes, loss of appetite, sneezing, and tooth loss. More severe and advanced clinical symptoms can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney and liver problems, low birth rate, and shorter life spans.

Dental disease, or periodontal disease, affects the area around the teeth, including the gums. This disease is infectious, inflammatory, and ongoing. Bacteria cause the inflammation and lead to serious plaque formation. This plaque, an unsightly accumulation of bacteria and minerals, causes continuing destruction of the tissue surrounding the teeth. In small breed dogs, it is common for this disease process to lead to jaw fracture.

Plaque is the yellow-grayish substance that strongly adheres to teeth. All plaque, whether found on the teeth or under the gums, is responsible for the progression of dental problems. Prevention, control, and remission of plaque are the ultimate goals of brushing and professional veterinary dentistry. A mouth free of plaque is unattainable, but all plaque prevention measures will keep the disease from progressing to advanced periodontal disease. Without plaque control, periodontal disease will occur, and our pets will suffer the effects.

Calculus (or tartar) is calcified plaque that has a rough surface to which bacteria cling. By itself, calculus is not disease producing, but it is very unsightly. When pets breathe through their mouths, dehydration of the oral cavity occurs, causing the plaque to become tougher and stickier. When this occurs, the protective function of saliva is reduced, and the cycle continues.

Groomers have the opportunity to educate their clients on the importance of pet dental health. Plaque removal methods that groomers can suggest to their clients are daily brushing, chews, and water additives.

Daily brushing aids the removal of plaque buildup. It is essential

that groomers know the proper procedure to follow when brushing pets' teeth. Brushing properly avoids a mouth-shy pet and causes no damage to the teeth or gum tissue. Brushing the lateral, or outside, of the teeth is the critical component in this process. A circular motion that cleans and removes unhealthy material is the proper method. Both the teeth and gums need to be brushed to keep the tissue healthy. Removing the plaque also removes the infectious and inflammatory component of the disease and restores the gums to health. Dog and cat teeth are generally not as close together as humans', so daily flossing is not necessary.

A soft bristled toothbrush with a small head is best to remove the plaque and is easily accepted by most pets. Special pet toothpaste is a must; using human toothpaste is not recommended because of the foaming agents found in these products. Pet toothpastes come in flavors such as poultry and seafood. You may need to try different flavors; our pets have their favorites, also.

In addition to brushing, or for

Continued on next page

pets that will not tolerate brushing, chewing offers the next best alternative. Chewing helps prevent the plaque from hardening into calculus. In the pet market, there are many products that pets will chew, and some of these have added dentifrices that allow for cleaning. There are even toys that have value in keeping the gums healthy. These chews have the added benefit of keeping pets' breath fresh!

Other products used in pet dental care are water additives, paste, and zinc treats. Their aim is to reduce the bacterial load, which in turn reduces the plaque buildup. Most contain chlorhexidine, an antiseptic and antibacterial product. Zinc-containing products inhibit bacteria from proliferating and calcium from depositing. Zinc also aids in the prevention of bad breath.

When the disease builds up, nothing short of a veterinary visit

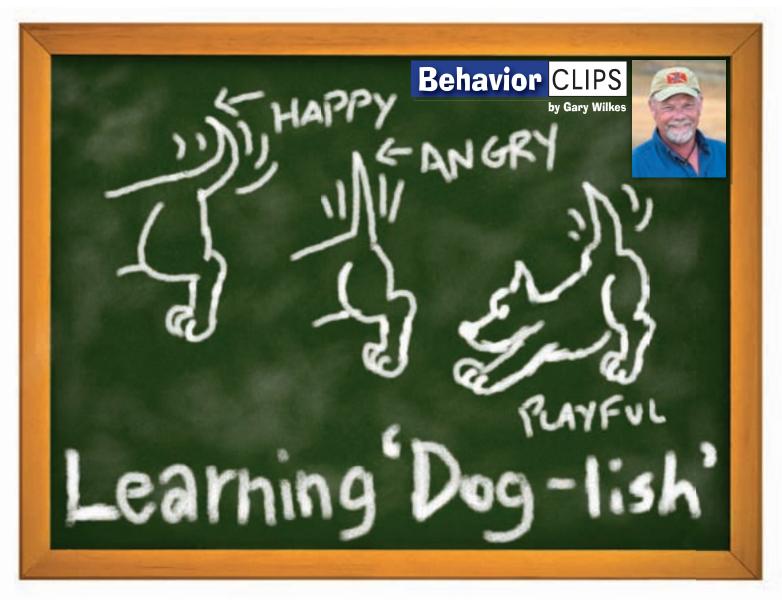
and professional cleaning will help. Dental X-rays are usually necessary, or the severity of the disease will be missed. Most veterinarians will prescribe antibiotics for infections and pain medicines for inflammation. After professional cleaning, owners can start programs to maintain their pets' oral health.

A professional prophylaxis, or teeth cleaning, is an involved procedure done under anesthesia for the comfort of the pet and to allow for work under the gum tissue. Most complete dentals involve the use of an ultrasonic cleaning device that removes the calculus and bacteria. Newer models work in a 360-degree motion and are far superior to older models.

Dental polishing is the next step in a professional cleaning. Polishing serves to reduce the tooth irregularities created by the scaling. Polishing uses a soft cup, pumice polish, and a slow-speed handpiece. A slow, circular motion is used so as not to damage the gum tissue by heat buildup. After polishing, irrigation with water is done to remove the pooled bacteria found in the crevices of teeth and the oral cavity. After the cleaning and polishing, veterinarians then flush with a solution of chlorhexidine, which is used for its powerful antibacterial effect, providing a good start for home care. With a fresh mouth, appropriate home care is started to keep pets free from pain and disease.

Rick Kesler, D.V.M, practices at Main Street Animal Clinic (Fairbury, Nebraska), specializing in companion animal medicine. He is also the consulting veterinarian for Lambert Vet Supply. Dr. Kesler also has an extensive background in equine medicine and surgery. Subscribe to Dr. Kesler's biweekly newsletter, "Dr. Kesler's Corner," at www.lambertvetsupply.com/Email-SignUp.aspx.





In one episode of the television nature series *Wild America*, the focus was on the relationship between predators and prey.

The setting was a North American forest, where wolves and deer live in violent harmony. Amid the backdrop of rocky crags and dense forests, the camera focused on several wolves, obviously on a hunt. The predators scented a doe and pursued the scent with a grim purpose. As they neared their hidden prey, a doe broke from cover and bounded frantically away. The wolves spotted her and redirected their chase. Soon the doe was forced

into a small, rocky cul-de-sac. She quickly saw that she could not escape and turned back — toward her pursuers.

As the doe turned to flee, the lead wolf entered the clearing. As he broke through the trees, the doe bunched her muscles and dropped her front end, preparing to leap either left or right. Her posture was unmistakable — to the wolf. It was a posture he had known since his earliest days as a pup. She had her tail up, front legs close to the ground, and head moving from side to side. That could only mean one thing — she wanted to play. As the wolf recognized the invitation to play, he returned the gesture. He dipped his front end and waved his tail in the air. A slight "grin" showed on his face.

As the wolf froze for a second in his playful stance, his would-be dinner saw her opportunity and bounded off into the brush. By the time the other wolves reached the clearing, the doe was long gone. They had lost their chance for a meal because of a simple misunderstanding.

While the doe's accidental miscommunication may seem miraculous, it is not. Many wild animals are capable of inadvertently imitating the appearance and behavior of other species. Rather than waiting for a TV special or a coffee table book to illustrate this process, you need only look at your own dog to see more of this phenomenon.

Every day you groom, you experience interspecies communication

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— and miscommunication. The exchange of signals between groomers, clients, and dogs happens on a moment by moment and almost constant basis. A few of the signals we use, like "sit" or "come," are taught; some communications are unplanned and unlearned by either party.

Most people have a small set of words reserved for their animal in English. The dogs most often interpret things in "Dog-lish" — a combination of sights, sounds, and touches that have specific meaning to them. When both species are on the same page, all is right with the world. If you put out signals that inadvertently imitate Doglish, the results can range from humorous to dangerous.

An innocent type of miscommunication can be observed when an owner offers a play invitation to his dog. The owner may not be

aware that standing on his hands and knees and dipping his front end is an invitation to play. The dog's reaction (returning the pose and then racing madly around the room) is a natural recognition of the signal, just like the wolf "recognized" the doe's body posture. Even if the owner is not aware that he is speaking the dog's language, the dog will respond to the signal.

While an invitation to play is a pleasant and natural type of communication, some types of conversation can lead to more serious consequences. When you stare intently into a dog's eyes, you may be simply looking at some stained hair around the eyes or muzzle. If you get the wrong dog, you may be sending a completely different signal. Most animals instinctively perceive direct eye contact as a challenge or threat. The fact that your dog gets used to

your eye contact does not mean that a stranger's gaze will not be recognized as a threat or that your staring might not set off a client's dog. If you stare at the wrong dog, you may regret it. Being a little cautious of new dogs in your salon is a very good habit to develop.

Another example of a potentially harmful situation that can result from miscommunicating with a dog starts with a common gesture — a pat on the head. To the average human, this gesture is a friendly sign of love and affection. For the dog, this signal is subject to interpretation.

When two dogs meet, they often feel compelled to establish which is the boss. One of the goals of the more dominant animal is to place his paw, neck, or body on the head, neck, or shoulders of the other dog. A dominant dog will not tolerate the

Continued on page 22



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unwelcome touch of a stranger on the head or shoulders. Your own dog learns to accept this type of touch from you as it grows to adulthood. If a stranger attempts to offer the same touch on your dog's head, and if *Fido* has learned to forget his instincts, the gesture may be tolerated.

As a groomer, you are often put in the position of being a stranger to a new dog. Dominant, fearful, or poorly socialized dogs may assume that a touch on the head is a threat—and respond by biting. For groomers, a good tactic is not to work on the front of the dog before you have properly introduced yourself to the back—with the dog in a loop.

Another form of interspecies confusion occurs when signals have multiple meanings. English-speaking people know that the word "there" sounds just like the word "their." We can tell which meaning is intended based on how the word is

used in a sentence. For dogs, body postures can also have multiple meanings depending on context.

If you watch a dog move its tail loosely from side to side, you are watching a sign of general happiness: wagging. If the tail starts to move more rapidly in shorter strokes and elevates to a higher angle, it takes on a whole new meaning. This behavior is a sign of potential aggression, called "flagging," as it resembles the way people wave small flags on the 4th of July.

For the human who does not understand the context, a flagging tail is a sign of a friendly dog. In reality, the dog is displaying an obvious threat — obvious to dog, that is. If the human does not read the signal correctly, aggression will be the likely result. Some breeds have tails that constantly flag. While you may have the dog-eyes to see that they always have their tail up, an-

other dog may recognize the flagging as a threat. If a terrier is in your salon and happily flagging away, a Lhasa may perceive the tail carriage as a threat. Even dogs sometimes have trouble reading another dog's body language.

Groomers have a great opportunity to see canine language every day. The good ones use this knowledge to decode a dog's emotional state before, during, and after they handle them. Young groomers should strive to gain this kind of knowledge and soak up as much dog-body lore as they can from more experienced groomers and handlers. A full knowledge of the sights, sounds, and touches that have instinctive meaning for dogs is as necessary as knowing how to scissor a poodle. Good handling includes learning "Dog-lish" as a second language.



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here isn't one dog groomer in this world who doesn't get frustrated over it: the dreaded customer who wants a price quoted on grooming an unseen dog.

The worst times seem to be when I'm already up to my armpits in a room full of barking terriers. Some of these people get on my last nerve, and I'm dangerously close to wanting to yank out their eyebrows (the people's... not the terriers).

Last week, I got yet another person wanting a price on grooming a new dog. A guy probably in his late 60s or so walked into the shop and immediately made his presence known to all... which was only me, as I was alone.

"Hi, can I help you?" I asked smiling.

"I would hope so," the guy started out saying. "I'm going to let you know if you'll be grooming my dog

after you answer a few questions for me," he continued.

"Fire away," I responded as I leaned on the counter. Fire away he did...

"So what do you charge to groom a Poodle?" he asked.

"That depends on what kind of Poodle and a couple other things," I responded. "I can't give you an exact price until I see the dog," I added. "Is it a toy, mini, or standard?"

"It's not real big. About medium," he said. He made a motion with his hands that bounced like an accordion from a height of about six inches to a foot and a half. "She's black," he threw in.

"Well, there's no difference in

price according to color," I said smiling. He didn't smile back. I don't think he appreciated my humor. I continued. "What kind of shape is her hair in right now?" I asked.

"Dog shape," he said, looking all cocky. "What do you mean what 'shape'?"

"I mean, is it matted or do you keep it combed out? Is it six inches long or is it more like an inch?" I explained.

"I'd say it's about like this," he said, doing that accordion thing again, but this time with his fingers. They were bouncing between one and four inches.

"Do you keep her brushed out?" I asked again.

"Oh sure. I brush her. Some. Now and then." He gave me that roundabout answer.

"Can you get a comb all through her hair or not?" I tried again.

"Well I guess you could. Most of her probably," was his firm

Continued on page 26



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response. I tried not to let him see me rolling my eyes. "So how much?" he asked again.

"Has she ever been groomed before? Is she a biter?" I continued questioning.

"How much more is it if she would happen to nip you a little?" he asked. "Not that she would for SURE," he added. "But what IF?" he threw in.

"I see," I said. "So has she been groomed before or not?" I tried again.

"If you want to call it that," the guy said. "I've always taken her to _, but they do a lousy job. They make one heck of a mess out of her," he said, shaking his head.

As we all know, sometimes it's not the groomer's fault the dog doesn't look the greatest if the owners are bringing in a wild, matted mess. I get that. "Well, if the dog is difficult, it might not be easy for

"... Personally, I've always wanted hair like Farrah Fawcett, but I just don't have it," I said, trying to be gentle.

"I can see that," the guy responded. I should have thumped him in the head. It was an example that didn't need affirmation, thank you.

the other place to do as well as you would like. Personally, I've always wanted hair like Farrah Fawcett, but I just don't have it," I said, trying to be gentle.

"I can see that," the guy responded. I should have thumped him in the head. It was an example that didn't need affirmation, thank

"So how much?" he asked for what seemed to be the hundreth time.

"I really can't say, but I'd ball-

park it between \$___ and \$___." I gave him a range of pricing.

"Well, it sounds like you're trying to hit a homerun in your ballpark," he said. "I'd be willing to give you six dollars less than your lowest pitch," he continued.

"Sorry, I don't play like that. I don't quote firm prices, and I don't 'bargain' here," I told him matter of factly.

"Well, the other groomer does it for six bucks less than your lowest

Continued on page 28







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"And you also said they 'make one heck of a mess out of her," I reminded him.

"Well, what do I have to do to get you to come down to that price?" he asked.

"Actually, nothing," I told him. "I haven't done a Poodle of any sort for that kind of price for many, many years, and I'm not going to now," I said flatly.

The guy propped his arm up on the top of the cash register. "Listen, this other place is out of my way, and I hate driving over there. I'm gonna split the difference with you and give you the job. Go three bucks less than your lowest price, and I'll give you cash money if you don't charge me tax," he offered. (Don't you just love it when they say "cash money"? What else is cash but money?)

I could have pinched his little

"I really am serious about giving you the job, young lady," he said. I guess that was supposed to make me all warm and fuzzy inside when he called me "young lady." Well, it didn't.

head off at this point. "Sorry. Everybody pays the tax. I have to pay it, you have to pay it. Period," I added.

"I really am serious about giving you the job, young lady," he said. I guess that was supposed to make me all warm and fuzzy inside when he called me "young lady." Well, it didn't.

"I'm sorry, but I think you'd be better off trying another groomer just up the street," I told him. "She's open seven days a week, does evenings, and charges much less than I do. I think you'd be happier there," I

offered with a fake smile.

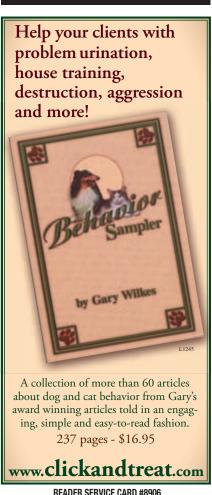
"You mean you are willing to lose a customer over a few dollars? I can't believe you are sending business away!" he retorted. "I don't think you realize what kind of business I could send your way," he added.

Ahh, yes. He certainly was FULL of the "business."

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Satisfaction



By Joe Zuccarello

Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones said it best:

"I can't get no satisfaction.
I can't get no satisfaction.
'Cause I try and I try and I try."

How do we make sure this is something our clients are not saying about us? How do we make sure our customers are satisfied with our service? How do we make sure they are so thrilled with our service that they recommend us to others?

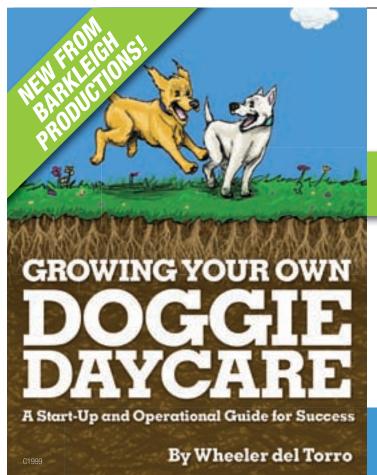
In one of my recent articles, we were introduced to Mr. and Mrs. Picky. They could easily say this

about any of us at any given time if we are not careful. Worse yet, they could say this as they walk out the door of our business and start giving their money to another shop down the street. I have learned over the years that this customer only has to try another shop once, and be more satisfied with the outcome at the other shop, for us to lose

this customer forever. Again, what is a client worth to your business? Not just the \$40 to \$50 from one lost appointment but an average of \$4,000 to \$5,000 over the life of the dog! That's an expensive loss!

The secret of customer satisfaction lies in our communication with the client. Yep, the number

Continued on page 32



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one reason for relationship challenges at all levels is poor or lack of communication. This reminds me of another famous television commercial that uses the following question to drive home their presumed competitive advantage over their rivals: Can you hear me now?

Listening versus hearing. Are they two different things? VERY. The difference between hearing someone and listening to them is a level of engagement you have in the conversation. Hearing is simply catching a sound with your ears. Listening is interpreting what the client is saying, using it to create a substantial response, and committing the conversation to memory. Some business coaches call this "active listening." The term implies a use of energy to focus on what is being said and how it is being said to guide us in our response and our actions. If this focus is used correctly, we can better satisfy the needs of our clients by delivering the outcome they are looking for.

I have observed and participated in tens of thousands of grooming client check-in procedures. I have seen some real masters and some

Listening versus hearing. Are they two different things? VERY. The difference between hearing someone and listening to them is a level of engagement you have in the conversation.

real disasters. The following tips are based on actual occurrences.

TIP ONE: Ask Questions.

Not only does this engage the customer and allow them to be part of the grooming process, it helps you delve into what they are specifically looking for and what you have to do to deliver satisfaction. If the customer says they want a "puppy cut," ask them how much hair they want left on the dog -- not how much you are to trim off. Ask the customer what time they want to pick up their pet. Don't leave this open ended with a simple "call when finished." Time after time, the customer's interpretation of how long a groom should take is much different than yours. Ask the client if they

would like you to perform certain extra services during grooming instead of waiting for the customer to request them. Pick your top one or two extra services and ask every customer every time. Your income will improve. Ask the client to make their next appointment at the time of check out. This reinforces the likelihood of their return and lessens dissatisfaction of not getting in when they need to because your schedule is booked.

TIP TWO: Don't Assume.

While this is a lesson we can all

Continued on page 34





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use numerous times in our lives, it plays a particularly important role in the satisfaction of our grooming clientele. A style you think will look good on a pet may not be what the pet owner has in mind. Be specific in your description of the services you will be performing on the pet, and define what the pet owner should expect at the completion of your work. I have said it before, but although you may see dozens of pets each day, your client only sees their pet. See the pets as individuals. Don't dictate what you will do on the pet; let the customer choose from what you can do for the pet.

TIP T REE: NO Sur rises.

If there is something I cannot tolerate, it is unnecessary surprises. I am a planner. I plan and schedule everything I can so I am not put in a situation where my clients or I are rushed, uneasy, emotional, or

left to make a decision without all of the information needed to make the best of the situation. If the pet is injured or becomes ill during grooming, no matter who is to blame, call the pet owner immediately. If the time you gave the pet owner is not going to work out, call the pet owner immediately. If the price of the groom has to be higher for things like special handling, extra tangles and brush out time, flea treatments, etc., call the pet owner immediately.

Why set yourself up for failure and conflict, both of which are sure to happen if you don't communicate with the pet owner as soon as you should have? I know this seems elementary, but lost customers happen because we surprise them with negative news when they were expecting something enjoyable: picking up their expertly groomed pet.

While I could go on and on with other examples of ways we can use

"active listening" to our advantage, you can certainly use these situations to help you identify dozens of opportunities in your client and staff interactions to make your business successful and give your clients SATISFACTION!

Joe Zuccarello has excelled in the Pet Industry since 1986 and is 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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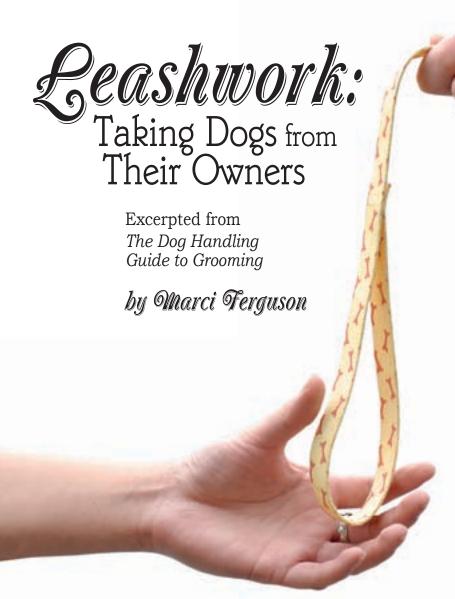
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t is important that you always greet your clients' dogs with great enthusiasm and a pocketful of irresistible treats. (I recommend all-natural dried liver treats.) You want dogs to associate you with wonderful things, and this initial greeting is a great way to start off your relationship, especially when meeting for the first time.

If you are unsure of the dog, don't look at the dog or try to touch him when you approach him. Instead, stand there and talk to the owner. Allow the dog to sniff you while you talk with the owner, keeping your hands at your side. Once the dog

Continued on next page

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has turned away from you, read his body language. You'll be able to tell if he has accepted you or if he hasn't. If he has turned his back to you, he trusts you. If he is hiding behind his owner, he's scared. If he is staring at you and not moving with his mouth closed and the whites of his eyes showing, take notice. He is scared and could snap at you if you reach for him. His body language will reveal to you what he is thinking. What you're looking for

is a dog that is relaxed and unconcerned about you.

If you read that he is not concerned about you, lower your body height (i.e. kneel) and begin talking to him in a soft tone without making direct eye contact (look toward the top of his head just past his ear, turning your head as well), which is less threatening. Toss a treat close to him. After he takes it, toss another one, only a little closer to you. Continue this until you have

him near you, and then ask the owner for the leash. It is always best for the owner to hand you the leash. This makes the dog feel that the owner trusts you and therefore reduces the risk of anything bad happening. If you reach for it, the dog could view it as a threat.

In order to get the dog to come with you, let him watch the owner leave. The majority of the time, he will go with you once he sees them leave!

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On the rare occasion a dog doesn't come to you, turn your head and body a quarter turn away from him, just enough so that you can still see him in your peripheral vision. Kneel and talk to him softly, and encourage him to come to you. Extend a treat by tossing it near him, bringing each succeeding treat a bit closer to you.

If that doesn't work, slowly stand while facing away from him, and slowly take a small backwards step toward him while talking to him softly and reassuring him.

Kneel and turn a quarter turn so that your shoulder is facing him.

Take the hand that is closest to him, and slowly drop it to your side with your palm facing away from him. Wiggle your fingers a bit, and encourage him to come in for the treat. If he doesn't take a step to you, you may have to gently rise, take another small backwards step

It took me approximately 45 minutes, but I was able to get him to accept and trust me. The reason? I approached him with my back facing him, because most dogs don't understand that "body language."

or two toward him, and repeat. Your goal is to get him interested in your hand so that he sniffs it and hopefully eats out of your hand. Once he does, you'll gradually be able to pet him, starting with under his muzzle, then to the side, and then to the top of the head as you feel comfortable.

The reason I emphasized that the palm of your hand needed to be facing away from him is because a dog can recognize a palm if it has been abused or grabbed at in the past. However, he doesn't recognize the back side of your hand as a threat, because he has rarely, if ever, seen that type of "body language." In fact, whenever I pet a dog for the first time or reach into a kennel, I never use my palm out towards them but turn it away from them so that they see the back part of my hand.

Slowly walking backwards toward a dog is a procedure I used

Continued on next page



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when working with a Hurricane Katrina dog from New Orleans. No one was able to get close to him, so I was called. It took me approximately 45 minutes, but I was able to get him to accept and trust me. The reason? I approached him with my back facing him, because most dogs don't understand that "body language." He didn't associate it with a threat, as he did with people approaching him straight on. Whenever you're approaching a questionable dog, just turn your body, as it is much less threatening.

Back to the scenario. Once you have the dog, it is important that you spend a few minutes with him before placing him in a kennel. Enjoy that time as you imprint a positive moment together.

When you feel all has gone well and it's time to place him in a kennel, don't just stuff him in a cage. Instead, allow him to step into it on his own, encouraging him as he begins to step in and praising lavishly once he has. If he hesitates,

don't rush him. Give him some more loving, and guide him in so that he doesn't feel rushed or physically forced into the cage. You may even use treats to guide him in, if necessary. You may have to nudge him so that he has to take a step forward, and then praise him when he takes that step. That is often enough to get him to continue on in. If not, nudge for a second step, etc. Remember that your goal is for him to take that last step in on his own (even if you had to nudge to get it out of him) so that you can praise him and celebrate with him! Finally, give him a small dried liver treat, with permission from his owner, so that he has a positive association with both you and the kennel that he needs to be in before being groomed.

NOTE: If you are in a hurry, place the dog half in the kennel (or even place three legs in!) and encourage him in. You just want to make sure he takes the last step in to consider it "successful." Even

if you still have to nudge a bit, it's alright as long as you praise while he takes the last step!

Making this introduction to the grooming process a positive one will help tremendously in the long run! Most repeat dogs will lead you to where they need to go (e.g. kennels) if their visits to your salon have been a positive one. Taking the time to work with your dogs is the best thing you can do for yourself and for the dogs.

Marci Ferguson is a professional behavioral therapist, master dog trainer, and author of The Dog Handling Guide to Grooming. Her book can be purchased at www.barkleighstore.com



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Getting Down to BUSINESS

BY TERI DIMARINO



The Debate Continues...

icensing is not a four-letter word, although many groomers out there see it as one. The licensing issue has, once again, reared its head in a number of states. Like it or not, we will all have to deal with it eventually, and I would like it to be with me as opposed to against me. With this being said, I'm giving my health articles a brief respite to deal with this important issue within our industry,

which will affect each and every one of us at one time or another.

Initially, the general attitude toward licensing was met with a good deal of animosity, and I believe this was a knee-jerk, fearful reaction toward the unknown. There were many "old timers" who felt threatened by legislation, thinking it was going to dictate how to groom their pets; many new people wondered if their qualifications were complete enough to meet regulations that were being proposed by their state. Times have softened these feelings, and groomers have become more attuned to their professionalism and are much more aware that regulation, in some form, is truly needed.

Most groomers today are realizing that the entire industry is suffering due to the carelessness of a few negligent people. Why does

Continued on next page





it have to take an animal getting injured (or worse) to garner attention for our industry? This is not the kind of attention we want! I think it's safe to say that we all want under-qualified individuals exposed and held responsible for their actions. With this common goal in mind, groomers are daring to use the term "licensing" again and look at it as a potential solution to the problem rather than the enemy of us all!

Certi cation vs. Licensing

Many groomers have expressed their displeasure with licensing, believing that it will dictate and limit their style. Nothing could be further from the truth. While certification through any of the three major certifying organizations — NDGAA (National Dog Groomers Association of America), IPG (International Professional Groomers), and ISCC (International Society of Canine Cosmetology) — focuses on style, breed profile, and technique, they also include safety, sanitation, and health in their workshops and testing.

These certifications are strictly voluntary. As has often been said, "You don't have to be certified to be a good groomer, but you do have to be a good groomer to be certified." Voluntary certification is a feather in the cap of a groomer who goes the extra mile to subject themselves to a set of standards and have their

work scrutinized. This can actually be more nerve-wracking than competition grooming.

State licensing has no desire to dictate how to set a Schnauzer's eyebrows or trim a Poodle topknot. They have little concern for an individual's personal grooming style and flair, but they are focused on safety, sanitation, and the health of both the pet and the groomer. For example, an excellent stylist who can scissor, strip, and clip beautifully may run a very dirty, unsafe, and careless salon; there may be another groomer across town who only knows how to do simple shavedowns but runs a safe, clean, and conscientious business. Which situation is more acceptable? I don't know about you, but I would not leave my pet in a dirty, unreliable salon.

A common proposal is to combine certification and licensing. Once again, this is one of those suggestions that simply will not work as it stands now. Certification, as we mentioned, is a voluntary process, yet a school may graduate a student as a "Certified Groomer." Certified by whom? The school? Is the school properly licensed? What kind of cur-

riculum do they offer? How long is the course, and what kind of experience can the student expect to leave with after their training period? School certification may only certify that the student attended all the classes and completed the course. Many groomers, myself included, who have taken the voluntary certification testing object to being unfairly grouped in with these shallow titles as we have spent a lot of time and money to achieve our voluntary certified groomer credentials. While state certification may sound really good, it is not going to solve any of the big issues that are out there, as there is simply no consistency in their training or curriculums.

Pam Lauritzen, President of the International Society of Canine Cosmetologists, Inc. (ISCC), expresses the feelings of many. "Licensing," says Pam, "can be a benefit to the industry if done properly and a detriment if it is not. How it's written, presented, and how it is represented will make or break the legislation." Pam emphasizes that good involvement from within the styling industry will result in good regulation, but it will be disastrous if we lack

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industry cooperation.

The point Pam makes regarding representation is a very valid one that is shared by all licensing proponents. Many of these bills are unfortunately instigated by the injury of a pet, and many of them are introduced to the legislature backed by veterinarians. While veterinarians should be our professional partners, and many of us work closely with the doctors of the pets we serve, they are not groomers, and obviously we are not veterinarians! Neither, I might add, are animal control officers. Besides, many of the animal control facilities are terribly underfunded, understaffed, and overworked. To put this in their ballpark is not fair to the groomers, the pets, or the animal control officers.

While they may wind up being the people who might conduct our inspections, the regulations should be written and overseen by groomers. It is suggested that a board be appointed to write the regulations and testing, and this board would consist of groomers, teachers, and certifiers, consulting with veterinarians and the general public. This would offer broad input as to the regulations needed while keeping

them realistic from the groomer's point of view.

The other two certification organizations echo Pam Lauritzen's sentiments. Jeff Reynolds, the Executive Director of the *National Dog Groomers Association of America, Inc.*, says, "*NDGAA* is a supporter of licensing in any state... if it is done properly. It's got to be written and headed up by groomers in order for it to be effective."

Hayley Keyes, President of *International Professional Groomers, Inc.*, believes that licensing will help our industry, as it can be a tool for the groomer as well as the customer. "It will help our professional image and add consistency to our industry, but it has to be fairly written," adds Keyes. "It must be governed by groomers."

The Groomer's Licensing Founders Committee

About fifteen years ago, the late Sally Liddick spearheaded a committee called the *Groomer's Licensing Founders Committee (GLFC)*. This committee, headed by Kathy Rose with help from Greg Crisp of *Double K*, began the arduous task of compiling information from the

certification organizations, schools, and groomers across the country. Focusing on educating the industry to the complex process of licensing, it became an educational experience for them.

The committee communicated with all three of the certification organizations and as many schools as they possibly could before bringing their findings to the groomers. What they determined at that time was that groomers do need to regulate themselves, but this will be an extremely difficult task. While the certification organizations are all doing a fine job of giving the groomers something of real value to hang on their walls and display before their customers, the true issue is education, the schools, and curriculums.

A lack of a common curriculum in schools across the country will be the major roadblock to the process. How can you license a skill when there is no standardization in the teaching process? The lack of a standard will be the block that will keep proper licensing from happening. How can they regulate something when there is no standard?

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Continued on next page



The common cry throughout the industry is that groomers need to regulate themselves, but the raw truth is that the industry cannot financially sustain this position at the current time. The big fear is that it will be regulated by the veterinarians. While our relationship with veterinarians is generally a symbiotic one, we are not doctors and they are not hairdressers. Period!

There are so many personal idiosyncrasies within our industry that only pet groomers totally understand. Animal control officers would be next in line to do the deed. While these people may be the ones to enforce licensing and regulation, it should be the groomers who write the guidelines. It has been suggested that the health departments or the cosmetology board write the testing and supervise the regulation and licensing. Once again, these departments miss the mark by not knowing our business.

As previously mentioned, county animal control officers might become the "monitors" of the licensing, but fees will have to be attached to the process in order for it to be self-sustaining. The suggestion of having an inspection team of groomers would be difficult to fill, as there may not be enough available

and qualified individuals to inspect and regulate an entire industry within a given state. Animal controls are financially strapped enough with many states pulling in their mandated funding for shelters, and things are going to get even tighter for them, making the groomer licensing issue a heavy burden.

Individual vs. Facility

Another huge discrepancy is that many of these bills are, at the very best, vague on whether it is the individual or the salon that is getting licensed. A bill currently in the California Senate lists requirements for individual licensing but then states that any violations in the facility shall be fined. Who gets fined? What if the licensed groomer does not own the salon and has no control over the maintenance of salon equipment or the keeping of records in that salon? The salon could be owned by a non-groomer who, therefore, is not required to be licensed. According to this bill, the bathers in the salon must be licensed, carry insurance, and keep records on all the pets coming in for service, just like the licensed groomers.

Also, any groomer or bather must be at least 18 years of age (for cosmetology it is 17), and they must have completed 10th grade or its equivalent (9th grade for cosmetology). Many talented groomers were not the best students in school. It is the classic "left brain/right brain" or "creative vs. logic." The kinder, gentler, more talented groomers are the more creative people who tend not to do as well in traditional schooling. Groomers are, for the most part, visual learners, and these stipulations are going to leave a lot of talented, caring, and otherwise well-qualified people out in the cold.

One part of this bill that really bothers me is the total ban on all cage drying. While we all have heard the horror stories of tragic accidents in grooming salons and other facilities that use this method of drying, to do away with this drying technique will surely increase the injury level in many salons. Pets that are too old or fragile to tolerate hand drying will leave salons even more tired and worn out than before. Dogs or cats that are too aggressive for the hand drying method will now

Continued on Page 44





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have to endure this procedure that they already hate. The possibility of accidents to the pets and the groomers will increase as these already unwilling participants will now have to be forced to tolerate a process they despise. This is not the way good groomers like to form relationships with the pets in their care.

Like any piece of equipment, a cage dryer is only as good as the operator. We cannot allow the mistakes of a few to weigh down the masses. These careless groomers are in the minority! Will it be best to totally outlaw these important pieces of equipment with their temperature controls, timers, and other safety measures? Do we just blindly hope that a groomer will not simply turn a hot dryer onto an aggressive, caged animal? Or do we educate on the proper maintenance and use of these machines?

The goal of nearly every professional groomer is to complete the grooming task with as little aggravation as possible to the pet and to themselves, to get the pet home to his family as soon as we can, and to make them look (and feel) good. Properly using the tools available to us help us help the pets!

What Can We Do

We all know what we don't want. That's the easy part. To go into that now is rhetorical and is not going to solve anything. For lack of knowing what to do, many groomers feel the need to express, in negative ways, what they don't like about a bill or law. Once again, we already know what the problems are. We need solutions! We need input! Constructive "here is how to solve the problem" participation. We need every professional pet stylist and salon owner to take a look at their individual state's pending legislation and make sure that one of these bills is not sitting quietly in the shadows, waiting to be passed into law, unnoticed. If this happens, it is too late!

IPG currently has voluntary certification for salons. This test quizzes the salon owner, bather, or groomer on safety, sanitation, health, and practical issues that are unique to the grooming industry. ISCC has their Pet Care DermaTec Program, which focuses on skin and coat but also concentrates on safety, sanitation, and health. While I am still poring over these tests, I feel that licensing the salons might

be the best way to start the whole process, as this would help pave the way toward individual licensing. Hair salons have a facility license, and then the individuals have to pass testing for their personal licenses. To license the facility will help the groomers "gear up" for individual licensing and will also give the customers an idea of just how clean and professional their pets' salon really is.

Once again, we need your input. You can contact me at teri@bar-kleigh.com. The other organizations mentioned here are more than willing to help you on your professional journey in voluntary certification. Having any of these certifications is sure to help you if the state ever comes knocking on your door... and one day they will!

Licensing is going to happen... with you or without you. The choice is yours.

International Professional Groomers, Inc. - http://www.ipgicmg.com International Society of Canine Cosmetology - http://www.petstylist.com/ISCC/ISCCMain.htm

National Dog Groomers Association of America - http://www.nationaldoggroomers.com

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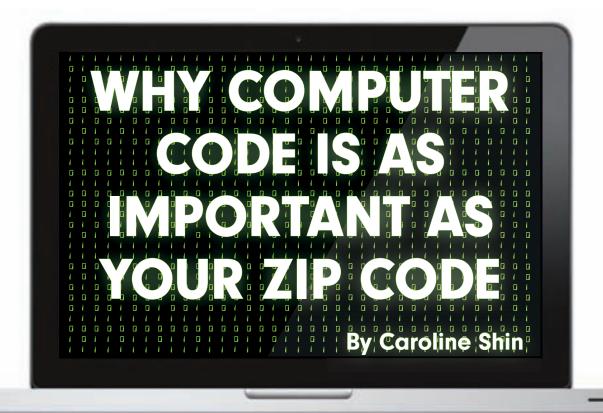






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Although developed with somewhat grander plans, it hasn't taken too long for the Internet to become the go-to place for reconnecting with high school sweethearts, for finding a bargain, and for men to get to far-flung places without asking for directions. For the small business owner, however, it's the ultimate place to connect with your customers and turbo-charge your business.



Imagine, if you will, instead of just trying to attract the eye of a customer with a striking store front or a shiny new mobile van, you're placing that store front in their homes, on their computers, and in their pockets, ready to get their attention whenever they're in the mood to find it. The Internet is that store front, a virtual, ever-present one that requires no permits to update and no window-cleaner to make it shine. Here are three simple ways to leverage the Internet in your favor.

YOUR OWN WEBSITE

Would you consider opening a grooming store with no physical address? Or operate as a mobile

Continued on page 48

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Creating a website used to be complex, expensive, required coding experience, and preferably some degree of graphic design skill. If you didn't have this ability, it would have cost a small fortune to hire an experienced coder to do it for you. These days, it's easy, it's cheap – and sometimes it's even free.

groomer with no physical van? The Internet mirrors our physical world, and without your own website, you're turning away new customers because they don't know about you, as well as making it hard for existing customers to reach out to you.

Creating a website used to be complex, expensive, required coding experience, and preferably some degree of graphic design skill. If you didn't have this ability, it would have cost a small fortune to hire an experienced coder to do it for you. These days, it's easy, it's cheap – and sometimes it's even free. All you have to do is nail in place a virtual sign – a URL, and you're in business.

Your first stop is to buy yourself a domain name, a simple clickand-choose service provided by the likes of *GoDaddy* and *Register.com*. Then you have to build your site, often possible by yourself by simply editing existing templates or by using software like *Dreamweaver* and *WordPress*. If this seems too daunting, simply hire a contractor, just like you would when building your store – only there's no dealing with city codes, and you're far less likely to get paint on your clothes.

Once you've got the practical side of web building out of the way, get creative. Flood your site with attractive pictures, and create a space to receive feedback from your customers.

HOW TO GET STARTED

To create and host a website for free or for a nominal monthly fee, visit *Weebly.com*, *Vistaprint.com*, or

Yola.com. Do you have a lot to say? Why not consider creating a blog and using a popular blog site like Wordpress.com or Tumblr.com?

Your existing customers will often visit your website to look up your contact details and hours. Make sure you include this information upfront on your website. Consider offering online booking for your customers or publishing glowing customer reviews on your website.

When you are ready to announce your website to the world, follow instructions from *GoDaddy* or *Register.com* to point your DNS (Domain Name Server) to where your website is hosted.

A FACEBOOK PAGE

Facebook is like a huge house party where all your friends, customers, and relatives come to play. There are different rooms, keeping your loud aunts away from your customers, but you can roam around and mingle, talk, gossip, and share photos. You can even have two personas: the real you and another that you put on just for your business.

Continued on page 50

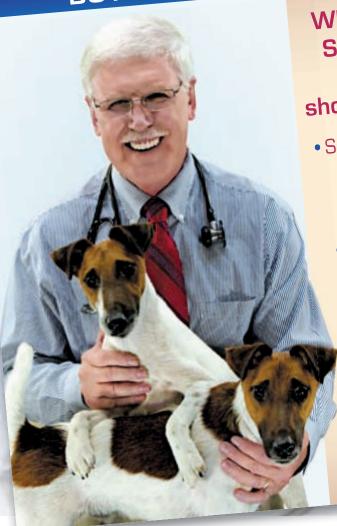




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Upload more pictures and start writing short *Facebook* posts to keep it updated. If you have a smartphone, download the *Facebook* app to easily upload pictures. Short and sweet posts are the ones that are read. Proud of a groom you just completed? Post a picture and comment.

Ask loyal customers to share their positive testimonials both on your *Facebook* business page and their *Facebook* wall for all their

Remember to tell everyone to "Like" your Facebook page. Put up a sign by your register to let customers know, and if you send email reminders, add a note that you're now on Facebook.

friends to see. Referral gold!

Remember to tell everyone to "Like" your *Facebook* page. Put up a sign by your register to let customers know, and if you send email reminders, add a note that you're now on *Facebook*. Once your customers like your *Facebook* page, your posts appear on their own *Facebook* wall.

When you write for your *Face-book* business page, post as the business and not your personal persona. Click on the top right arrow and select "Use *Facebook* as" your business page.

GOOGLE ADWORDS

Want to make sure you're getting your money's worth with ads? Google Adwords is Google's main advertising product, offering highly targeted pay-per-click advertising at a very low cost, and it's turned the newspaper industry on its head.

The service comes with many advantages. First, you have full control over who can see your ad. This could mean you target your ad via geography, aiming at those

Continued on next page

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within a 10-mile radius from your business, for example. Then you can incorporate the use of "keywords," the search criteria people use when searching for products or services (e.g. "dog grooming," "dog haircut," etc.)

You then decide your budget: Google charges only if the user typing in those keywords lives within your pre-set geographical area and clicks on your ad. You can decide the maximum amount you want to spend on a click and the daily limit.

Additionally, *Google* hosts a small auction to determine whose ads are shown and in what order. If there are other people bidding for the same keywords, they show the ads for businesses that have a higher cap on what they're willing to "pay per click." They slowly increase the dollar price to see who is willing to pay that much.

HOW TO GET STARTED

Go to adwords.google.com and signup for an account. Once you're in Adwords, create a New Campaign. Fill out the form. If you're not sure what to fill out, take a best shot at what you think your costper-click limit should be. I would recommend a value between \$1.50 and \$2.50.

Check in weekly to see how many clicks you're receiving and to edit your ad settings. Perhaps try new ad copy or increase your bid, and let the changes run for a week to see if your performances have improved.

It may take some time to set up and optimize, but once you do, your ads should run without a lot of maintenance. Imagine new customers finding out about your business as you sleep!

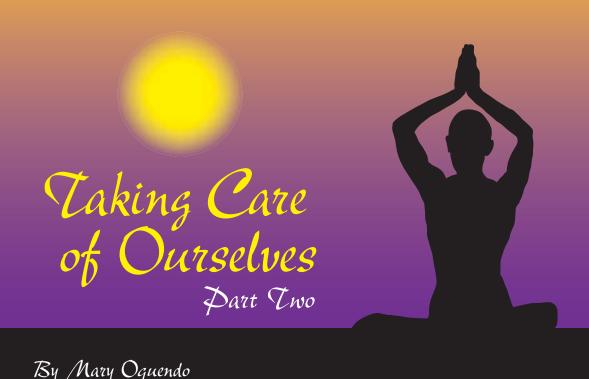
You can also advertise on Facebook. Similar to Google Adwords, you define your geographical audience. Instead of keywords, you define "interests" people have selected – such as pets.

While some of this information may sound daunting, consider the Internet to be your own hassle-free marketing department. Just following these details step-by-step will ultimately give you a presence and a reach way beyond your bricks and mortar store.

Caroline Shin is the co-founder of Store Vantage, a cloud-based appointment system that brings customers back again and again by keeping in touch with them after they leave. Caroline is passionate about customer service and has spent the bulk of her career working for companies, small and large, that embrace technology to deliver excellent customer experience. She is also the owner of Spot Pet Care, a pet grooming store in Northern California.







hat would happen to your car if you never had an oil change or tune-up? I imagine it wouldn't run well and would eventually stop working altogether. The same thing happens to us when we do not schedule regular maintenance for ourselves.

The human body is an amazing piece of machinery with the ability to heal itself when its structure and energy channels are in alignment. Preventive care and Eastern philosophies recognize that energy needs to flow freely throughout our bodies. While there is a time and place for drugs and surgeries, we are fortunate that there are many alternatives to chose from to minimize, complement, or even prevent their need.

Acupuncture aids your body in healing itself naturally by inserting needles, applying heat, and electrical stimulation at pressure points along blocked energy meridians. (The human body contains seven major energy centers called chakras and hundreds of minor energy centers located throughout the body called meridians.) Acupuncture

stimulates the nervous system and internal organs to correct imbalances and open up blocked energy channels. It can aid in many of the issues groomers face such as respiratory disorders, joint issues, neurological and muscular concerns, as well as reducing tension and stress.

Acupressure is similar to acupuncture except that it applies pressure to the meridian points with either fingers or wands. It is non-invasive. The wands are made from crystal stones with a point at one end and rounded tip at the other.

Chiropractors focus on the musculoskeletal and nervous systems. The doctor manually applies a controlled force called an adjustment into an affected joint. Regular chiropractic visits will reduce the likelihood of injury due to repetitive stress (e.g. scissoring and brushing),

improper lifting of heavy objects (e.g. 120-pound Labradors), and restrictive movements (e.g. standing in one place around a grooming table). The doctor will also discuss beneficial nutrition and lifestyle changes.

Massage is not a luxury but a necessity. It will improve weak muscle tone and enhance immunity by stimulating the lymph flow. Lymph flow is the body's natural defense system. It increases circulation and relaxes tired, overused muscles. Massage releases endorphins (your body's natural painkillers) and reduces spasms and cramps. It will give you greater energy and better joint flexibility. In addition, it will improve sleep and aid concentration.

Meditation is the ability to quiet your mind to recuperate from everyday stress. An article by Colin Allen in *Psychology Today* (April 2003) states, "The brain waves of meditators show why they're healthier. Neuroscientists have found that meditators shift their brain activity to different areas of the cortex—brain waves in the stress-prone

Continued on next page

right frontal cortex move to the calmer left frontal cortex. [...] They were calmer and happier..."

Meditation decreases the respiratory rate and lowers oxygen consumption. It improves concentration and creativity while decreasing muscle tension and pain. Meditation aids in visualizing our potential. It brings the body, mind, and spirit into harmony. I make the time to meditate at least three times a week. In the beginning, I relied heavily on guided meditation CDs.

A Reiki practitioner channels the universal life force energy that surrounds and flows through all of us into a subject. It works on three planes - the physical, emotional, and spiritual. While it is spiritual in nature and accepted by all religions, it is not religious. It reduces stress and promotes relaxation and mental clarity. It relieves pain, improves circulation, and shortens healing times. It is used to treat body imbalances and blocked energy channels. It is used in major hospitals.

Stretching both before and after work reduces the risk of injury and prevents soreness while strengthening muscles and improving flexibility. It also improves circulation, balance, and cardiovascular health. Healthy muscles reduce the risk of pulls or tears, distraction ruptures (usually caused by quick movement or change of direction), or compression tears (caused by direct impact).

Yoga is over 5,000 years old, and its intention is to bring the body and mind together. The three principles involve exercise, breathing, and meditation. Exercise acts on the glandular system to increase its efficiency. Breathing control techniques are taught to improve the function of both the body and mind. The two together prepare the body and mind for meditation. Yoga increases the range of motion in joints and improves their lubrication. It helps with balance, strength, and endurance. It stretches and limbers

muscles, ligaments, and tendons.

So how do you find a qualified, knowledgeable, trained practitioner? Start with word of mouth. Ask your friends and colleagues to recommend a licensed acupressurist, acupuncturist, masseuse, or chiropractor. Health clubs, continuing education programs, and gyms will offer classes in stretching and

yoga. New age shops will offer alternative therapies such as Reiki and meditation or offer resources to find practitioners. Chris Sertzel of www. pawsitiveeducationaltraining.com has a free webinar on meditation and stretching.

Find what works for you and keep that engine of yours purring and on the road for years to come.





The Poodle, whether toy, miniature, or standard variety, requires extensive grooming for upkeep and a skilled stylist to scissor the specific trims required in the *AKC* show ring. With that said, the average Poodle that we find on our grooming tables sports styles quite different than those seen at the shows. First, it is just too much coat for the average client to maintain. Second, the majority of our regular Poodle clients just don't like the show ring styles.

Because of the nature of a correct Poodle coat, the styling choices are limitless and can at times be quite confusing to both the client and the professional groomer. How many times do we hear our clients use the term "poodle cut"? What exactly is a poodle cut? A lamb trim, a puppy trim, a clown trim, Dutch,

Desi, and countless other styles come to mind.

For this article, we will discuss a very generic pet puppy trim, also sometimes referred to as a lamb or sporting trim, depending on the length. This is what I like to think of as the most common Poodle trim done in my salon or the bread and butter trim of Poodles. The length will depend upon the individual client, their brushing skills, frequency of appointments, and pocketbook.

The goal for this trim is to create a style that looks natural, as if it grew that way without broken lines. Keeping in tune with the breed standard, the profile should depict an elegant, squarely built dog. A well-sprung rib means there is evidence of a waist. A level topline that gracefully blends upward, starting

at the withers (or just behind for a fuller trim), into a long and graceful neck is important. The legs should be parallel posts in the front, placed well under the dog with a well-laid back shoulder. The rear legs, when viewed from the back, should also appear parallel. A knee should be evident when viewed from the side.

As with all styling, a good groom begins with a good prep. Thorough bathing with a clarifying shampoo followed by conditioning is essential. Squeeze excess water from the coat and then blow dry the coat straight until completely dry.

I usually begin with the bladework:

FIG. 1: Using a 10, 15, 30, or 40 blade, clip the feet to just over the metacarpal pad and below the wrist.

Continued on next page











While holding the leg coat firmly down against the foot, create a cuff with either clippers or scissors.

With clippers, use a 40 blade downwards to create the cuff by removing the excess coat below your hand around the foot. With scissors (FIG. 2), scissor around the foot below your hand to create the cuff. Either way, you must tidy up the cuff afterward while the dog is standing.

Using a 10 or 15 blade, clip against the coat growth, forming a "U" on the throat. The blade length will depend upon the sensitivity of the dog. It may be necessary to clip with the coat growth on very light-skinned or sensitive dogs. Although the length of the "U" will vary on the individual dog's conformation, one method would be to stop where the dog's nose would reach if it were brought down against his chest or a little longer than the length of his muzzle.

FIG. 3: Clip the cheeks from the outside corner of the eye to the ear, making sure to clip the "ventilation" strip (the area just in front of the ear). The blade length and whether you clip with or against the coat growth will depend upon the sensitivity of the dog.

Clip an inverted "V" at the base of the tail. For a low tail set, place this "V" higher on the back than you would for a correct tail set; place it a bit closer to the base for a high tail set. A very shortly docked tail should also have the "V" placed close to the croup to help give the illusion of a longer tail. Using straight shears, clean up the edges of the "V" for a "beveled" transition onto the back.

FIG. 4: Using straight shears, set a level top line. Stop well behind the withers in order to create a smooth transition from the loin and back into the crest of the neck. Scissor the top of the back and then the sides. There should be a slight waist. Create the rear angulation from the back part of the hind legs

first. Using curved shears, scissor a curved line from the point of rump to just behind the knee and well above the hock. Do not move on to the front of the rear legs until you have set your lines on the back of the rear legs.

Using curved shears, make a small inverted "V" in the undercarriage to help create a tuck-up. Place the "V" at or just forward of the male genitals, or if a female, where they would be if she had them. Another method for tuck-up placement is to slightly lift the rear leg, bending the dog's knee. Approximately where the knee hits the undercarriage is where the tuck-up should be. The tuck-up placement can vary depending upon the length of the dog's loin. By creating the tuck-up forward on the undercarriage and clipping the coat close on the back of the rear thigh, the dog's body length will appear shorter.

FIG. 5: Scissor the inside of the rear leg while holding it up and just slightly outward. Follow the natural outline of the dog. Make sure to create a subtle bend in the knee.

The rear leg should follow the natural outline of the dog's leg, showing a slight bend in the knee. The lines on the back of the rear leg and the lines on the front of the rear leg should follow each other in parallel lines. Scissor either a slightly rounded or straight line (style preference determines this) from the point of the rump to the croup, meeting at the "V" of the tail base. The lower part of the leg should look like a rounded, upsidedown pyramid.

When viewed from the rear, the legs should look parallel. The inside of the rear leg should be parallel to the outside of the rear leg.

Comb the tail coat toward the tip of the tail, twist, and slightly trim the end of the tail coat.

FIG. 6: Holding the tail up, comb the tail coat downward toward

Continued on page 56

the base and "cuff" the tail. Finally comb the tail coat outward and tidy the remaining coat to form a ball.

FIG. 7: Shape the front part of

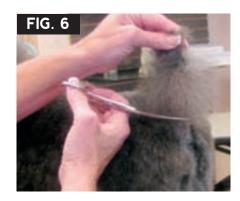
FIG. 7: Shape the front part of the jacket with long curved shears. Starting at the tuck-up, scissor forward around the front leg and between the front legs. For this modified puppy trim, there should not be the appearance of a jacket but a continuation of the entire

body coat.

Create the shoulder placement at a 90-degree angle.

Continue shaping the front part of the jacket and chest area. Make sure not to leave too much coat between the front legs or below the breast bone. Create a slightly rounded ribcage and flanks, being careful not to make the dog look

Continued on page 58













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- 8. Your hairdresser doesn't give you a sanitary trim.
- 7. Your hairdresser doesn't clean your ears.
- 6. Your hairdresser doesn't remove the boogies from your eyes.
- You sit still for your hairdresser.
- 4. Your haircut doesn't include a manicure or pedicure.
- 3. Your hairdresser only washes and cuts the hair on your head.
- 2. You don't bite or scratch your hairdresser.
- 1. The likelihood of you pooping on the hairdresser is pretty slim.

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FIG. 8: Using straight and curved shears, blend the level back into the crest and neck to form an unbroken line to the top knot. The topline should appear continuous without breaks. Tidy this part of the top line after you have created the top knot.

FIG. 9: Slightly lift the front leg and scissor the leg to form a cylinder. When scissoring the inside of the front leg, be careful not to create a "keyhole" appearance where the space between the front legs is wider at the top than at the bottom.

Comb the topknot upward and outward so that it stands up. For a floppy top knot, it may be necessary to use a body-building spray such as *Thick and Thicker*. Be sure to protect the eyes when spraying.

FIG 10: Holding your shears at a 45-degree angle from the foreface, trim straight across the front.

FIG. 11: Scissor from the corner of the eye along the cheek and across

the ear to form a rectangular box.

FIG. 12: With curved shears, round the edges of the rectangular box to create a rounded topknot that has a slight overhang over the eyes and curves gracefully into the crest.

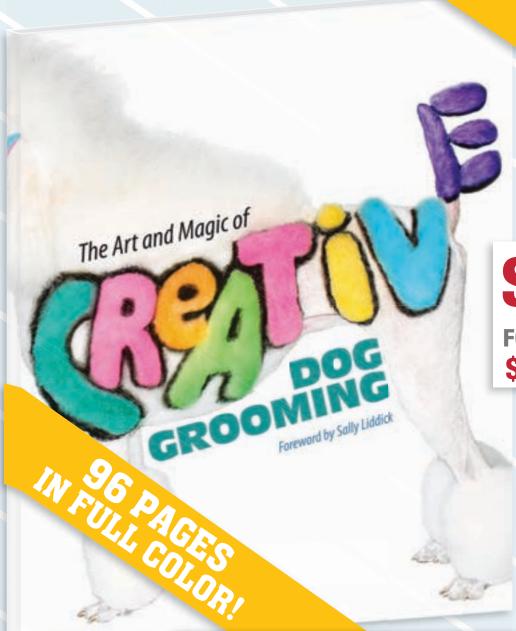
With long curved shears, "tighten" the sides of the neck and blend into the shoulder.

This trim can be "blocked" in with snap-on combs, using a shorter comb for the body than the legs, followed by a scissor finish. As professionals, it is our job to be familiar with the breeds we are grooming so we can properly advise our clients. The most important aspect is to respect the breed standard and create a proper Poodle breed profile, even if the trim is short. To help you understand the Poodle and how they are built under the coat, the Poodle Club of America has an illustrated breed standard available for download on their website: www.poodleclubofamerica.org.









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



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New Product News



Purely Products' Pet CFL Light Bulb

Purely Products' Pet CFL Light Bulb has a built-in ionizer that cleans the air by generating negative ions to attract positively charged airborne allergens like smoke, mold spores, dust and pet dander. These irritants bond with the negative ions from the Pet CFL and become too heavy to remain airborne, leaving the air in your home or salon cleaner and healthier to breathe. Pet CFLs can also help ease allergy symptoms, Asthma and other respiratory conditions that can be aggravated by indoor air pollution. Purely Products Pet CFL bulbs are available in a variety of wattages with a starting MSRP of \$9.99. For more information, request Reader service Card #8880.

Anytime Leave in Moisturizer with UV Protection



Bio-Groom offers

Anytime Leave in Moisturizer to protect and care for the health of a pet's skin and coat. This breakthrough formula contains special conditioners and UV protection that can be used on a daily basis. Anytime absorbs quickly to leave skin and coat silky smooth. The product is a great brushing aid that works equally well on short and long hair breeds. Anytime prevents tangles, is

non-sticky, non-greasy, and is essential for dry, dull coats. *Anytime* contains conditioners Pro Vitamin B, Vitamin E, Chamomile, UV Protection, Hydrolyzed Protein, and elegant baby powder fragrance. The product is available in 12 oz. spray bottles. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #8879.*

Planet Dog's Healing Shampoo

Planet Dog's new Healing Shampoo is specifically formulated to relieve dry, itchy and irritated skin. It calms and soothes the skin and is an effective treatment for skin allergies, eczema and hot spots. Healing Shampoo also includes naturally derived ingredients from coconut and is pH balanced with coconut oil and eucalyptus. Planet Dog refers to it as their "medicated" shampoo due to chloroxylenol (PCX), a highly effective and anti-microbial active ingredient that helps treat common skin irritations. The shampoo is sold in 16-ounce and one gallon recyclable containers. For more information, request Reader Service Card #8811.



123Pet Announces New Computer Option



123Pet is proud to announce that they are now offering a fantastic new computer option for hardware users. As a company in the technology industry, it's our duty to stay current and offer our customers the

best quality products. The new computer that we offer is the *HP Pro 3400 MT PC*. It comes with an *Intel i5-2300* quad-core processor and 8GB of DDR3 RAM, ensuring that for single use or on a network, this computer will continually perform at fast speeds. And with a 500GB hard drive, users won't be at a loss for space at any time. The *HP Pro 3400 MT* comes loaded with *Windows 7 Professional*, a keyboard and a mouse, and has ten USB ports, and one serial port to provide enough compatibility for all the devices that users require for running a business. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #8805*.

Earth Heart Inc. Announces Buzz Guard



Earth Heart Inc. announces Buzz Guard, an all natural mist to improve a dog's comfort during outdoor activities. Buzz Guard contains pure essential oils and neem seed oil to safely and effectively help improve a dog's comfort when walking, camping, hiking, or boating. Made in the USA, packaged in BPA-free recyclable spray bottles, the family-friendly product can be used with puppies as young as

eight weeks old. *Buzz Guard* is easy to use, has a light, fresh scent and leaves no oily residue on clothing or fur. *For more information, request Reader Service Card #8754.*

ABN Ear Cure



Apple Blossom Naturals, a provider in natural pet remedies, announces the debut of their new 100% natural ear infection cure for dogs. ABN EAR CURE treats all ear infections: bacterial, viral and fungal without the vet visit or prescription. ABN EAR CURE also contains probiotics. The introduction of beneficial bacteria coupled with natural anti-viral, anti-bacterial and anti-fungal ingredients allows the solution to cure the infection as well as prevent

future infections. Other important specifications include: just 3-4 drops in the ear 1-3 times a day, results in as little as 24 hours, de-waxes, no side-effects, people tested, can be used on other skin irritations and infections. For more information, request Reader Service Card #8883.



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Pet Grooming Salon For Sale. Seattle Area. 10 years Established. \$300k+ Gross Sales. Great Location: Boeing Engineering Community. Health Forces Sale. Photos & Financials Avail. \$75,000. (206) 235-0797.

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