

# Groomer To Groomer

"The Grooming Industry's Trade Magazine"

www.groomertogroomer.com

Vol. 27 Ed. 3 April/May 2008

**7 Lessons I Learned  
from Cesar Millan**

**Groomer  
Has It**

**New Animal Planet  
Reality Show**

**Veronica  
Frosch**

**Wins andis  
Best in Show**

**The  
Benefits  
of Health Saving  
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**First Aid  
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## Sally's Desk *by Sally Liddick*



Sally Liddick



Gwen Shelly

*Breyer's Ice Cream...  
Leaving Burbank and  
Dinner with Jay*

## Dear Groomers,

*Breyer's Ice Cream...* leaving Burbank... and dinner with Jay. What could those three phrases have in common? Well, lots, it would seem. They contain fragments of business wisdom that I think you ought to know.

Recently, I was eating dinner at Gwen's house, as I often do. We are next door neighbors now, having built our homes side by side. *Breyer's* ice cream was offered for dessert. I am not sure if it is a national brand but it certainly has had a quality over the years that we enjoy in the North East. It's vanilla ice cream is laced with real vanilla beans and has boasted the ingredients of cream, sugar, real vanilla beans and not much else for many years.

*Breyer's* has maintained a standard of excellence since I was a kid. While other ice cream companies "garbage their recipes" with fillers, and stabilizers, you could count on *Breyer's* to be the real thing.

Gwen's husband Bruce, an ice cream aficionado, stated, "It isn't like it used to be! It's terrible!" I thought he had to be kidding. *Breyer's* is *Breyer's*. They wouldn't change it. It is the real deal. Expensive, yes. Changed, no. I had to see for myself.

When I dug out a spoonful, the change was evident from the start. It was fluffy. What? *Breyer's* fluffy? Never. It was always heavy and creamy. I tasted it. It was awful in my estimate. It actually had a chewy texture of some added stabilizing ingredient. Not at all the luxurious flavor of *Breyer's*. I was so disappointed. Will I buy it again? No.

So what is the moral? Never cheapen up. Raise prices if you must, but don't give an inferior product (or service) to compete. Price is not why your clients seek you out.

### Leaving Burbank...

If there was a hotel that was home away from home, it was the *Burbank Airport Hilton* where we have held *Groom & Kennel Expo* for the past thirteen years. Unlike any hotel I have ever visited, the staff were like family. It was the best run hotel in the universe according to my estimate. We hugged the staff when we saw them every year. And most had been there for years, and years. They were like family to us and each other. This group was empowered to make things happen.

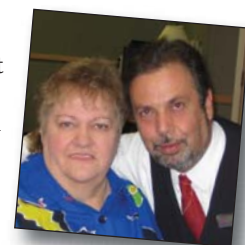
Richard, head of engineering, even surprised me years ago by putting in permanent hot and cold water outlets in the freight receiving area where we put our grooming salon for the contestants. We enjoyed his handiwork every year. He knew what a hassle it was for us and just went ahead and improved this for us.

The staff would keep us stocked in fresh strawberries during our show because we were from Pennsylvania and just loved those fresh berries in February.

Javier, the bell captain, took care of my every need. From timely faxes and packages, cabs, show tickets, to rental scooters. He was my "Go To Guy."

Kurt Farmer, our Convention Service Manager, anticipated and planned our

*Continued page 62*



Sally and Javier



Gwen, Kurt and Sally



# VERONICA FROSCH..... STARTS 2008 WITH A HUGE BEST IN SHOW WIN AT WORLD CUP GROOMING GAMES

BY KATHY HOSLER

"There's nothing that compares to this feeling," bubbles an enthusiastic Veronica Frosch as she hugs *Paris*, the beautiful Black Standard Poodle she had just taken *Best In Show* with at the 2008 *Groom and Kennel Expo* in Burbank, California.

"It's the thrill of doing the groom, and the goal of getting it to turn out perfect! It's unbelievable!"

Veronica Frosch is no stranger to the competition ring – or to the winner's circle.

Veronica owns and operates *The Paw Shoppe* in Coon Rapids, Minnesota. She has been grooming

since 1991 and started competing about ten years ago.

"For a long time, I would enter grooming contests and I would do pretty well," recalls Veronica. "But I never seemed to be able to win one. I used to call myself 'The Second Place Queen'."

Those days are long gone for Veronica. She now has many very impressive wins to her credit. As a result of her many victories, Veronica earned the right to be a member of *Groom Team USA* – and – in 2007 she was the second highest point getter.

"I am striving to equal or better that this year," says Veronica enthusiastically. "I hope to make the traveling *Groom Team* in 2008."

Competing takes lots of work and planning. First you have to decide on which competitions you want to enter. Then you need to find the right dog. Entering lots of grooming contests often means that you won't have enough of your own dogs and will have to make arrangements to borrow one.

*Paris*, the stunning Black Standard Poodle that Veronica entered in

*Continued on page 54*

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44/20

Photo by Udo Kreisner



Delise Knight from Bardel Bows, brushing out a model dog.

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Barkleigh Productions, Inc. recently held their annual *Groom and Kennel Expo* at the Burbank Airport Marriot in Burbank, CA. Almost 2000 groomers, trainers, veterinarians, bathers and other pet care professionals arrived to take in this ever-growing trade show, grooming contests, and pet care related seminars. The trade show was filled to the max with 94 booths, with a waiting list of exhibitors.

Thursday included the *Brusher Bather Certificate Program* with Teri DiMarino, and *Animal Behavior*

*Conference* with Pia Silvani. Additional seminars were: *Pampering Pets... And Getting Paid For It!* with Lola Michelin, *Add-On Services: Money In Minutes* with Judy Bremer-Taxman, *Mobile Grooming Success* with Jay Scruggs and *Terrier Grooming With Nancy Kallenbach - Han.*

Friday topics were: *Business Reality Check* with Teri DiMarino, *Designing Your Facility For The Future* with Scott Learned, *Everyday Creative Grooming* with Dawn Omboy, *Playtime: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly* with Pia Silvani and *You... and*

Continued on page 10

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## Groom and Kennel Review Continued from page 8

*An Ungroomed Dog with IPG.*

Weekend speakers included: Dawn Omboy, Pia Silvani, Judy Bremer-Taxman, Jay Scruggs, Steve Appelbaum, Audrey Ulrich, Lisa Vella, Scott Learned, and Chuck Simons.

The *Oster Grooming Theater* presented the topics of: *Beyond the Groom Room, Follow Up and Follow Through!, Talking Tools...And Fun With Follicle, Grooming 101, Shears and Scissoring, Portuguese Water Dogs and Double Coated Hair Balls.*

Friday was the beginning of the three-day trade show. Exhibitors offered show specials and demonstrations to attendees. *LAMBERT KAY Sporting Breeds* and *PETEDGE Super Model Dog* drew competitors and spectators into the Contest Arena. *IJA* Judges included: Judy Bremer-Taxman, Judy Breton, Teri DiMarino, Jarbas Godoy, Karin and

Udo Kretschmer, Dawn Omboy, Marea Tully, Joey Villani, Gan We and Director Kathy Rose. Multiple all day and evening seminars ran concurrently.

Saturday's grooming contests included the *44/20 Mixed and Other Purebreds* and *HANVEY SPECIALTY ENGINEERING Poodle Tournaments*. *ANDIS COMPANY* gave \$3000.00 in prize money at the *Best In Show Awards* for the *World Cup Grooming Games*. The winner was Veronica Frosch from *The Paw Shoppe* in Coon Rapids, MN. Level 2 winner was Nicole Baltes and Level 1 winner was Ellen Meyer.

Sunday featured multiple seminars, the *NATURE'S SPECIALTIES Winners Circle Class* and *BARKLEIGH Creative Styling Contest*. The champion of the *Winners Circle Class* was Veronica Frosch. She is now in the running for a jackpot of over \$30,000.00. The first contestant who wins three *Winners Circle* classes, at major *IJA* world events, will win the *Triple Crown*



Photo by Udo Kretschmer

**Attendee wins big at Groom and Kennel Expo's Silent Auction!**

*Jackpot!*

The *Creative Styling Contest* winner was Missy Gullett, with her "Captain Jack" entry. Missy works at *Missy's Pampered Pet Spa* in Palm Desert, CA.

For more information on *Barkleigh's next Groom and Kennel*

Continued on page 12

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Groom and Kennel Review  
*Continued from page 10*

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### Groom and Kennel 07 Contest Results

#### Andis

##### World Cup Grooming Games

Veronica Frosch, Level 3, Nicole Baltes,  
Level 2, Ellen Meyer, Level 1

#### Nature's Specialties

**Winner's Circle Champion IJA Open -**  
Veronica Frosch

#### Barkleigh Creative

##### Styling Contest

Missy Gullett "Captain Jack", Sandra  
Hartness "Strut Your Stuff"  
Deanise Stoops "Heart Throb"

#### PetEdge Super Model Dog

Olga Zabelinskaya, Veronica Frosch,  
Tammy Colbert

#### PetEdge Super Model Dog Creative

**Styling Winner -** Lindell Naito-Zieg



*Deana Mazurkiewicz competes in the  
PetEdge Super Model Dog Contest.*

#### Hanvey Specialty

##### Engineering Poodle Class

LEVEL 3: Jackie Boulton,  
Olga Zabelinskaya, Veronica Frosch  
LEVEL 2 BIC-Randae Bither, T-Chihiro  
Saito, P-Randae Bither, D-Randae Bither  
LEVEL 1: BIC-Sandra Hartness,  
T-Sandra Hartness, P-Ellen Meyer,  
D-Sandra Hartness

##### Lambert Kay Sporting Class

LEVEL 3: Deanise Stoops,  
Miranda Stonebraker,  
Deana Mazurkiewicz  
LEVEL 2: BIC-Carol Hoover,  
P-Carol Hoover, D-Randae Binter  
LEVEL 1: BIC-Ellen Meyer, T-Ellen Meyer,  
P-Ellen Meyer, D-Kathy Kim

##### Procoast Terrier Class

LEVEL 3: Kumi Tachikake,  
Tammy Colbert, Olga Zabelinskaya  
LEVEL 2: BIC-Nicole Baltes,  
D-Nicole Baltes  
LEVEL 1: BIC-Irene Miyashiro, T-Irene  
Miyashiro, P-Corie Serviolo, D-Lisa Jury

##### 44/20 Mixed and Other Purebreds Class

LEVEL 3: Tammy Colbert,  
Kumi Tachikake, Miranda Stonebraker  
LEVEL 2 BIC-Nicole Baltes, T-Nicole  
Baltes, P- Nicole Baltes, D-Carol Hoover  
LEVEL 1 BIC-Ellen Meyer, T-Crystal  
Campos, P-Ellen Meyer, D-Jessica Cave

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# First Aid Basics

## for the Grooming Professional

### Part I

By **Dr. Boyd Harrell**  
and **Sheryl Spangler**

**As groomers,** you are responsible for the well being of the pet while they are in your care. Would you know what to do if the pet had a first aid or health issue while they are in your salon? Here are some basic tips to keep you calm and in control should you encounter some of these situations during the course of your grooming day.

*Continued on page 16*

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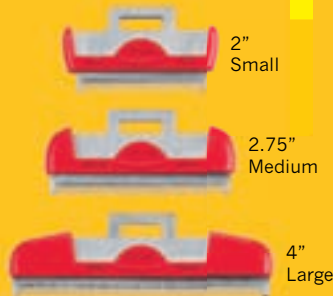
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### Panting

Have you ever wondered why your dog or cat client is panting and whether that's normal or cause for concern? Breathing rates vary with weight of the dog, being anywhere from 10 to 30 breaths per minute while at rest. Normal panting may cause a heart rate of up to 200 pants per minute. Normal cat respiratory rate is 20 to 30 breaths per minute and up to 300 pants per minute.

Cats rarely pant unless they are severely distressed or frightened. Panting in the cat should not last more than a few minutes at a time. Cats are not very effective at breathing through their mouths or at panting, so extended panting can lead to severe or respiratory stress. The grooming process can be ex-

“It's important to keep in mind that since dogs and cats have a higher body temperature, the bath water should be a little cooler than we would like it ...”

tremely stressful for cats, so, if you have a cat in your care who is panting excessively, call the owner to come and pick up the cat as soon as possible. Cats should always be kept in their box or carrier and as far away from the dogs as practical.

### Normal Temperature

Dogs and cats have higher body temperatures than people and normal temperatures can vary from one

pet to another depending on size, age and breed. Normal temperatures for the dog range from 100.5 to 102.8 with smaller dogs typically having normal temperatures in the higher end of the range. Normal temperatures in the cat run from 100.5 to 102.5°F. It's important to keep in mind that since dogs and cats have a higher body temperature, the bath water should be a little cooler than we would like it – lukewarm bath water is probably good.

### Checking for Proper Circulation

If you suspect that a pet is overly stressed during the grooming process, it is important to check circulation as a starting point. Circulation can be assessed by a technique known as *capillary refill time*.

Lift the pet's upper lip and note the color of the gums which should ordinarily be bright pink. The gums are also most typically moist. Pale

Continued on page 17

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dry gums may be a sign of shock. We can get a good indication of the heart's ability to maintain proper circulation by lightly pressing on the gums or inner lip causing the color to blanch out. As the pressure is taken away, color should almost immediately return. If the dog or cat's circulation is normal, the color should return in less than two seconds. Any longer duration is an indication of poor circulation and possible impending shock.

### Checking for Dehydration

One way to check for dehydration in dogs and cats is to assess the elasticity of the skin. This is done by grasping the skin over the shoulders and pulling it up to form a tent and then releasing it. A normal hydrated dog or cat has

“One way to check for dehydration in dogs and cats is to assess the elasticity of the skin.”

good elasticity in the skin which quickly returns to its normal position. If it does not return to normal position quickly or

especially if it stays in an elevated or tented position, dehydration is a likely cause.

Older animals tend to lose elasticity in their skin making this evaluation much more difficult. If the animal has enough dehydration to cause the skin to tent then veterinary care is advised. Intravenous fluids may be indicated and can be lifesaving.

Continued on page 18

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### Bleeding Control

Most bleeding wounds encountered in the grooming salon are likely to be superficial and relatively minor. Applying direct pressure is generally the best way to control these types of bleeding wounds. Applying direct and light pressure, just enough to stop the bleeding, for five consecutive minutes will control most superficial bleeding. Using gauze pads over the bleeding wound is the first recommended choice; however a clean cotton cloth or towel will also work.

If the bleeding is controlled for only the time when you have a gauze pad in direct contact with the wound then making a bandage by wrapping the wound with gauze is indicated. Be careful not to wrap the wound too tightly. A wound that is

**“Bleeding is rarely a significant issue with an abrasion and typically mild pressure for a short period of time will control and end the bleeding.”**

wrapped too tight may cause swelling on the side of the wound farthest from the heart and if circulation is severely impaired, the oxygen and nutrient starved tissue may later die.

If you see blood that is pulsing or spurting, then an artery may have been severed. Arterial wounds can result in very rapid blood loss and the pressure applied to these kinds of wounds may need to be greater and deeper than for a superficial wound. One way to control

this kind of bleeding on an extremity is to apply a tourniquet. Extreme caution is advised if applying a tourniquet.

Tourniquets only work on the extremities and there is a simple rule that when followed will always help you apply the tourniquet in the right place. Tourniquets are always to be placed between the heart and the area of bleeding – a simple rule that works every time!

The tourniquet should be tightened only enough to stop the bleeding and should be loosened every 5 to 10 minutes. A tourniquet that is applied too tightly may completely shut off the blood supply and cause the limb below the area where the tourniquet has been applied to later die from lack of oxygen.

### Abrasions

Skin abrasions or scrapes are commonly encountered in grooming salons. An abrasion is dark red and

*Continued on page 20*

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First Aid Basics for the Grooming Professional - Part I  
Continued from page 18

bruised looking and may even have some superficial bleeding. Bleeding is rarely a significant issue with an abrasion and typically mild pressure for a short period of time will control and end the bleeding. If the area of the skin that is abraded also has hair that has not been scraped

away, it is a good idea to clip the hair away with a #40 blade. Applying a water-soluble lubricant such as KY jelly prior to clipping is very helpful to keep hairs out of the wound. When the clipping is complete, the hairs and the lubricant are easily flushed away with warm water. In some cases simply flushing the wound with water may provide adequate cleaning.

If necessary, a mild soap or shampoo may be gently applied with gloved fingers followed by generous rinsing. Do not use gauze or any other abrasive material on an already traumatized area of skin. The abrasion may now be patted dry or simply allowed to air dry followed by a light application of antibiotic ointment. If there is significant redness and the abrasion is very superficial, then a light application of hydrocortisone ointment can be very soothing. A follow-up exam by a veterinarian is recommended.

**Part 2 of this article will cover the topics of allergies, breathing problems and choking.**

Sheryl Spangler and Dr. Boyd Harrell are strategic business coaches and co-founders of Pet Pros Business Coaching, LLC. Sheryl currently owns a grooming school in the Seattle, Washington area, is a pet consultant with Oxyfresh.com and speaks nationally on groomer health and business topics. Dr. Harrell is a former multi-veterinary practice owner, an international speaker and a pet health advisor for Oxyfresh.com.

They are formally trained in life, leadership, health and business coaching and hold advanced certifications in "The Model of Human Behavior," the model of how people interact and what does and does not motivate them. In addition, they are certified in the "Strategic Mindset Process" coaching model helping business owners to develop entrepreneurial habits to drive their success. They can be reached at info@PetProsBusinessCoaching.com or by calling (866) 388-3578.

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Jackie has won or placed in numerous competitions and has been honored with several distinguished awards. She has won the *Cardinal Crystal Achievement Award for Best International Groomer* (2005, 2006), *Intergroom International Groomer of the Year* (1993, 2003, 2006, 2007), and has won two of the three times needed in the *Winner's Circle Tournament* for the coveted *Triple Crown Jackpot* which now stands at \$30,000.



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# PetQuest 2008

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*PetQuest 2008* will be held July 10th -13th at *The Drawbridge Inn* in Fort Mitchell, Kentucky, near Cincinnati, Ohio.

This show will include seminars and grooming events by top industry professionals. A few of the seminars offered are: John and Vivian Nash on *Breed Profiles* and *Grooming By Coat Type*; cat grooming, training and Todd Shelly educating on health insurance programs.

An *Animal Behavior Conference* with Pia Silvani will also be featured. Pia is the Director of Training and Behavior at *St. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center* in Madison, New Jersey. She has contributed to many published books and has restructured the training curriculum for over 500 *PetSmart* stores.

The event will include grooming demonstrations by

various top pet stylists, as well as numerous exhibitors with retail products available. *PetQuest* expects over 80 booths.

The *International Judges Association* sanctioned contests will include: Poodle, Mixed and Other Breeds, Terrier, Sporting and Model Dog. The newest trend in competing is the *Super Model Dog Contest*, where contestants do profile grooming on a yarn model dog. These contests are quickly becoming the latest craze all over the world!

An added new twist will be ***The Pet Boutique & Spa Show*** in conjunction with *PetQuest 2008*. This trade show will feature products and equipment for upscale retailers and service facilities, adding dozens of additional booths to the show.

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1-Groomers Usage Survey, October 2002  
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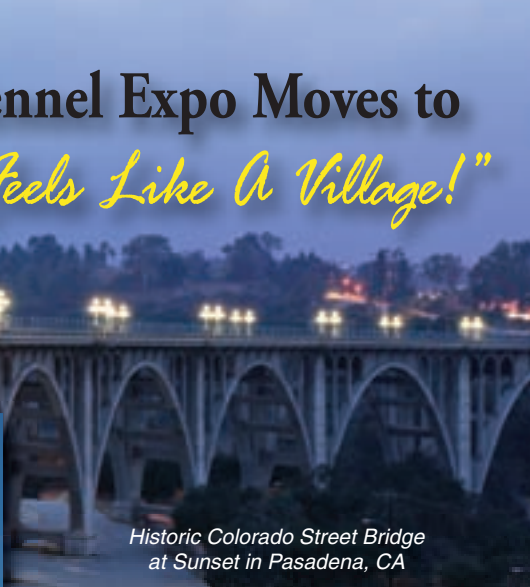
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quarters by foot, starting in *Old Pasadena*, then up to *One Colorado*, over to the *Playhouse District* and finally to tree-lined *South Lake Avenue*.

*Groom and Kennel Expo* will be held at the *Pasadena Conference Center*. Attendees can stay at the *Hilton Pasadena*, which boasts modern convenience with a retro flair. *Groom and Kennel Expo* will be held February 12 – 15th, 2009, featuring a trade show, grooming contests, seminars and Barkleigh's new **Pet Boutique and Spa Expo**, which will be held in conjunction with the event. For more information, contact Barkleigh Productions at (717) 691-3388 or e-mail [info@barkleigh.com](mailto:info@barkleigh.com). Request Reader Service Card #4783.



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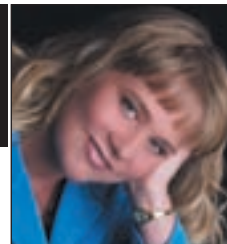
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# Chris Pawlosky's Grooming Tips



## Trouble Spots

What areas of a scissored dog do many of you struggle with? The first is how much hair to leave on the underline of a dog. It really is very clear in most breed standards. The standard reads something like: the chest reaches to the elbow or the outline of the dog's coat should follow the natural lines of the dog.

If the dog is described to have chest to the elbow, leaving the coat lower than the elbow would distort the outline of many breeds, so cut off the coat. If the dog has a shallow chest then leave the coat to fill in to the elbow to create an illusion of its correct breed profile.

Use the breed standard's description to guide you in choosing

the dog's body substance and tuck-up shape. Poodles with their well sprung ribs should have a balanced and symmetrical outline. For a thin narrow ribbed Poodle, leave more hair to fill in for lack rib spring. If the

Poodle is overweight or round-ribbed, take more hair off. But the coat should hang past the elbows, just fuller or shorter on the ribs. The only exception is if a dog has too much leg

*Continued on page 26*

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Chris Pawlosky's  
Grooming Tips  
*Continued from page 25*

for its breed standard's proportions.

Another area is the tuck up or loin of many breeds. I always tell groomers to think of a bald dog and visualize their tuck up. Just because a dog has a coat does not change the tuck up area. You just need to follow its natural line and clean it up. The

only time you change the tuck up placement is if the dog is too short or long backed or if a breed's standard describes the area and the dog does not conform to its standard.

Poodles with their muscular loin should reflect their breed standard. But if this area is too long or saggy you will cut it tighter and move it forward. No dog should appear to have a waist when viewed from above.

Armpits are another problem area. Like Poodles, many breeds

call for straight front legs. Start by keeping the dog's legs on the ground with the dog standing naturally. Scissor nice straight lines all around the leg. Once you have your lines set, then pick up the leg and follow your lines through the armpits. But never change the straight line already set, continue it.

Bowing or hollowing the inside of the back legs can also be a problem for many. I do not want to count how many breed standards call for rear assembly straight and parallel. If you always start scissoring just above the inside, thickest part of the thigh muscle and think straight you should be okay. Remember, whether you use scissors or comb attachments, you must finish your straight line to the table. Block in the entire leg, and then soften your edges.

Hoping these are helpful hints,

*Chris*



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# 7 Lessons I Learned

From **Cesar Millan**

By Wes Murph

My heart was beating a mile a minute. My palms were clammy and a bead of cold sweat ran down the center of my back. Tuesday, December 18th is a day that I'll never forget and rightfully so. Here's why...

Cesar Millan was on his way to my grooming salon to film an episode of *The Dog Whisperer*. Before I share with you how the day went, I first want to tell you how it almost never happened.

*Continued on page 30*

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## 7 Lessons I Learned from Cesar Millan

Continued from page 28

Sometime in November 2007, I decided to write a letter to Cesar Millan.

I figured I could get Cesar's attention if I offered to groom some of his 'boot camp' dogs for free. So I plugged away at my computer, trying to craft a letter that would compel Cesar to call me.

Several hours later, as I was putting the finishing touches on the letter, I realized that my wife's color printer didn't work.

"Honey, your printer is out of ink," I said.

"Yes. It's been like that for a while. I have to get some more," my wife responded.

Instead of bagging everything right there, I asked Gen if she wanted to walk to Kinko's to help me print this letter.

"Ok," she said. And off we headed.

Once we got to Kinko's I sat at workstation #2 and started typing. For some reason the computer was acting up.

At that moment, just as my negative voice started telling me to 'forget the whole project', a nice Kinko's employee walked over and helped me out.

A few minutes later, with letter in hand, Gen and I started our walk home. But... twenty-five yards from our front door, I noticed several typos in my letter. Kinko's was a couple of miles in the other direction and I didn't feel like walking back. That's when my 'negative voice' started in again.

Mr. Negative said, "Cesar's not going to read your letter. Who are you kidding? Why would he want to come to your little salon?" Thank goodness for my wonderful wife Gen. She always encourages me and is great at getting me to ignore

my negative voice. Sensing my frustration, Gen offered to drive back to Kinko's, fix the typos, reprint my letter and mail it.

SWEET!

You'll never believe what happened next...

Several weeks later my phone rang. It was a lady asking me if I'd be interested in having *The Dog Whisperer* filmed at my salon. I almost hung up since I swore it was an old college buddy playing a joke. Before I could say anything, the lady said that they were looking to film on Tuesday, December 18th and could I fit them into my schedule?

"Could I fit Cesar Millan in?" I thought.

"I'd crawl over broken glass, on hands and knees for a chance to meet Cesar," my thoughts continued.

I stuttered a response like, "ssss. ssss. Ssssure."

A month later, on the morning

Continued on page 32

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7 Lessons I Learned from Cesar Millan  
Continued from page 30

of December 18th, I was as nervous as a canary in a pack of alley cats. For good reason – I was about to be on national TV.

At around 8 AM my staff arrived, followed at 9 by Cesar's crew. My clients and their "chomp monsters" came at 10. After an AM set up, Cesar's crew headed out for lunch. It was about that time that...

*Drum roll please.*

Cesar Millan rolled up in his Dog Whisperer RV.

After parking the behemoth, the RV's door opened and out popped a posse of Cesar's dogs. Big Daddy was there. Cesar's Chinese Crested named Louis was there, too. The whole time, Cesar wore a gray hooded sweatshirt and avoided contact with strangers. From what I learned later, Cesar started wearing

a disguise to avoid attracting a crowd of autograph seekers.

Cesar then loaded his pups back into the RV and whisked into an Indian restaurant for a quick bite to eat. As soon as lunch was over, the filming began.

The director put a mic on me and placed me on a wooden stool. Live cameras watched my every move while bright lights lit up my salon.

All of a sudden, Cesar sat in front of me and asked his famous line...

"How can I help you?"

I explained that from time to time I get a few "snap dragons" and could he help turn these "chomp monsters" into docile pups.

The rest of the day was a blur.

Cesar and I spent four hours on three dogs. We both love to talk and were gabbing so fast the director asked us to slow down since the cameramen couldn't load film fast enough. As the day went on, several

priceless lessons stuck with me. Many had more to do with life than dogs.

Here they are in no particular order...

**1. Think Calm-Assertive Energy.** In my opinion, Cesar's gift is his calm, assertive nature. Let's face it, energy is how the world takes us. Animals feel this too. Cesar's energy reminded me of a cross between Mr. Miyagi (from *Karate Kid*) and Ben Kenobi (from *Star Wars*). Both characters were positive, calm and poised. Cesar radiated all of these.

**2. Exercise, Exercise, Exercise.** Let's face it, all of us could use more exercise. The key here is keeping the heart rate up for a set period of time. If we exercise regularly, it's amazing how many of our problems melt away. Our pets are the same way.

Continued on page 34

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# Money from Heaven for Groomers

**By Deb Disney-Nusbaum**

As groomers, we are always looking for ways to boost our income without adding extra work or cost. I've recently fallen in love with a great program for groomers, from NuVet Labs, one of the older companies in the pet supplements industry. (They've

been around more than twelve years.)

Actually, NuVet's program is quite clever. They don't require us to sell anything or invest any money, which got my attention. It's so easy. NuVet Labs sends us free samples of their product to hand out to our customers whose dogs and cats have skin and coat problems, allergies, arthritis and

joint problems, etc.

In exchange, they pay us approximately 50% of the retail price each and every time these customers order. Not only does this boost our bottom line, but in most cases the improvement to the pet's health is dramatic.

The product itself is a natural, human-grade supplement. This product is so pure, it's actually manufactured in a pharmaceutical environment, meeting and exceeding GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) as defined by the FDA (for humans), which is virtually unheard of in the pet industry.

It took NuVet Labs eight years to develop this unique product, which is only distributed through veterinarians and pet professionals, like us. It is not available in pet stores, which is another plus.

Initially, veterinarians and show dog breeders were selected to distribute the products because they are the most finicky and educated regarding the health needs, nutrition and costs spent on their animals.

Groomers were then added to the list because we have first-hand access (no pun intended) to so many dog and cat problems, especially skin and coat, allergy, arthritis and joint problems, etc.

So far, more than twenty-thousand groomers, vets and breeders across the country are already in the program. Many earn \$1,500 to \$2,500 every month, for no work beyond handing out the samples.

To learn more about their Groomers Program, call NuVet Labs at 1-800-474-7044. Request Reader Service Card #2903.

*Deb Disney-Nusbaum, the owner of Aldemar Weimaraners, has been a groomer and a breeder of award winning Weimaraners for more than 25 years.*

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7 Lessons I Learned from Cesar Millan  
Continued from page 32

**3. Let's Dance!** When two people dance there has to be rhythm and flow. Plus, there is a start and a finish. Otherwise, the dance looks and feels awful.

Grooming has a lot in common with dancing. Let me explain... A dog should be groomed using a smooth process from start to finish. Rushing through a grooming is like dancing out of rhythm. Dogs can sense this and it can trigger their misbehavior. Remember to groom as you would dance. Stay in rhythm. Keep a flow. And never step on your partner's toes.

**4. Forget the past.** We all have a tendency to carry the past with us. Quite frankly, it's hard to let go. But - it's essential to move forward

and forget the past especially if we want to grow.

Dogs can sense our negative past which has an effect on their response to us. Let's just let it go.

**5. Don't Worry About South Park.** At some point, Cesar and I started talking about *South Park*. As I'm sure you know *South Park* did a skit on Cesar. I asked Cesar how he handled this and being judged on a daily basis. Cesar's reply nearly knocked me over.

Cesar said, "I don't live in this world."

My translation on this is that Cesar is focused on his goals and isn't concerned with anyone's opinion, especially when it's negative. We can all learn from this!

**6. How To Get On Oprah's Couch.** I asked Cesar how he was able to get on Oprah's couch? After

all, once you make 'the couch' you can practically write your own ticket. Cesar said, "I told my wife years ago that I would make it to Oprah's couch. I worked hard and made it happen."

What I took from this is that to be successful it takes razor sharp focus and years of 'making it happen'. Cesar never got distracted and knew a long time ago he would be successful.

**7. 25 Years To Success.** Near the end of the day, Cesar was signing a lot of autographs and taking pictures with my staff. One of my employees made a comment about Cesar's elegant handwriting. I made a joke to Cesar that his handwriting is so good because he signs so many big checks.

Cesar's response to my joke was priceless.

"Wes. I've trained dogs for 30 years. You've only heard about me for 5. The other 25, I was nearly broke," Cesar said.

He added, "The money comes only after you add value to a lot of people."

Here's what I took from this...

Success doesn't happen overnight. The rags to riches stories that we all read about, take years and in some cases decades to happen.

Cesar is proof of this.

Wes Murph can be contacted at [wes@studlypooch.com](mailto:wes@studlypooch.com)

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# The Benefits of Health Saving Accounts

Part of a Series  
By Todd Shelly



When I started researching types of health insurance, my immediate impression of *Health Savings Accounts (HSA)* was that they were a type of “lesser” alternative to the other more comprehensive insurance options. I knew little about them other than they were designed to reduce the number of uninsured.

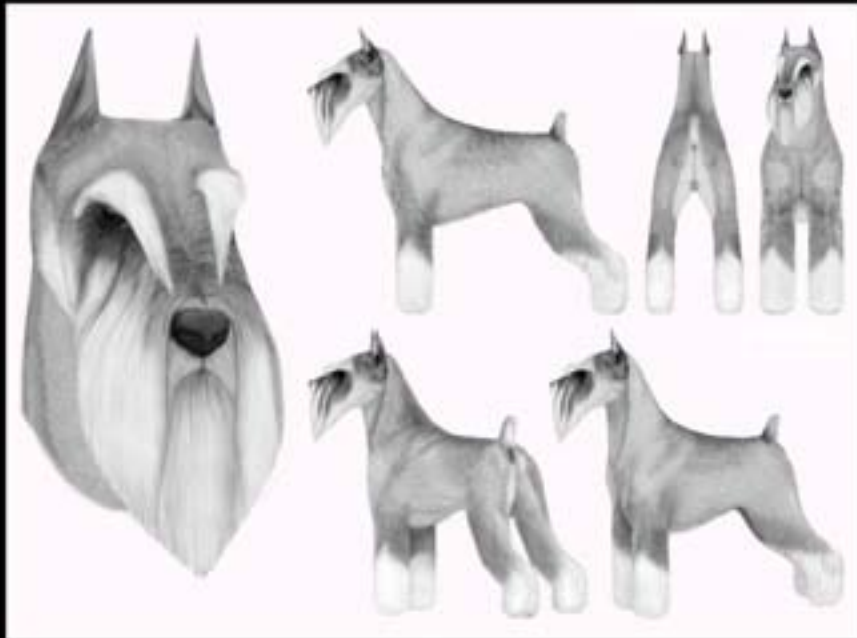
After researching it in more detail, I learned that they can often be the best option. This could be exciting news for those that stand to benefit the most (younger, healthy people who have the potential to deposit money into a savings account over several years without having to withdraw much for medical expenses). If you are not in that group,

it is at the very least, a viable option to consider. The simple definition of an *HSA* is that it is a special account owned by an individual used to pay for current and future medical expenses.

You must be covered by a *Catastrophic* or *High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)* to be able to

*Continued on page 38*

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## Health Saving Accounts

*Continued from page 36*

take advantage of HSAs. An HDHP generally costs less than what traditional health care coverage costs, so the money that you save on insurance can therefore be put into the *Health Savings Account*. HDHPs were covered in the March issue of *Groomer to Groomer*. An updated and expanded version of that article can be found on [groomertogroomer.com](http://groomertogroomer.com).

HSAs were created by the *Bush Administration* to be a possible solution to the growing health care crisis. Because their creation is relatively new and continues to be a political issue, the laws and intricacies of the plan will probably continue to change slightly. However, most, if not all, of the changes that have been made to the HSA have benefited the consumer.

Consumers can sign up for HSAs with banks, credit unions, insurance companies and other approved companies. Your employer may also set up a plan for employees as well. After the HDHP expense, there are no additional fees for setting up a HSA.

*Health Savings Accounts* are an alternative to traditional health insurance; it is a savings product that offers a different way for consumers to pay for their health care.

HSAs enable you to pay for current health expenses and save for future qualified medical and retiree health expenses on a tax-free basis. The HSA replaced the *Medical Savings Account (MSA)* a few years ago. Confusion over the two is quite common. The most important difference is that a MSA required the consumer to use all the money deposited in the savings account each year, whereas the HSA does not have that drawback.

There are no income limits on who can contribute to an HSA. Aside from the requirement to be covered by an HDHP, there are few restrictions for eligibility in an HSA. An individual cannot be covered by other health insurance, be enrolled in *Medicare* or be claimed on someone else's tax return to be able to start or contribute to the HSA. However, if life circumstances change for an individual who had an HSA in a way that

*Continued on next page*

**“HSAs enable you to pay for current health expenses and save for future qualified medical and retiree health expenses on a tax-free basis.”**

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## Health Saving Accounts

*Continued from page 38*

would make him ineligible to contribute, the money is still available for future use or for use as a type of retirement account (more on that later).

Contributions to a *HSA* can be made by the employer, individual or both. If the contribution is made by the employer, the amount is excluded from income and wages. *Self-employed* and *S-Corporation* shareholders are generally not considered employees and cannot receive an "employer" contribution. However, they can take the "employee" tax deductions. Employer contributions can be made by a salary reduction arrangement through a cafeteria or 125 plan (these plans will be discussed in an upcoming issue of *Groomer to Groomer* and archived on [groomertogroomer.com](http://groomertogroomer.com) when they become available).

Your personal contributions offer you an "above-the-line" deduction. An "above-the-line" deduction allows you to reduce

your taxable income by the amount you contribute to your *HSA*. You do not have to itemize your deductions to benefit. Contributions can also be made to your *HSA* by others (e.g., relatives). However, you receive the benefit of the tax deduction.

The total amount that can be contributed, and therefore deducted, is \$2,850 for self-only coverage and \$5,650 for family coverage. These are the current amounts that were set in 2007. They will adjust upward for inflation. The consumer can determine when the money is deposited and the amounts that are deposited. The most common method of deposits is to have a set amount deducted from the paycheck and deposited into the account each pay period. However, the flexibility is there that allows a groomer to perhaps deposit less during the slow time early in the year, then make up for it during the busier months.

The distribution of the money from the *HSA* is tax-free if taken for anything that is considered a qualified

*Continued on page 40*

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Health Saving Accounts  
Continued from page 39

medical expense. You own and you control the money in your HSA. Decisions on how to spend the money are made by you without relying on a third party or a health insurer. You will also decide what types of investments to make with the money in the account in order to make it grow. It is your sole responsibility to keep track of the amounts deposited and spent from your account, just like a normal savings or checking account.

It is difficult to provide a definitive list of "qualified medical expenses." A partial list is provided in IRS Pub 502 (available at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)). There have been thousands of cases involving the many nuances of what constitutes "medical care." A determination of whether an expense is for "medical care" is based on all the relevant facts and circumstances. To be an expense for medical care, the expense has to be primarily for the prevention or alleviation of a physical or mental defect or illness. The determination often hangs on the word "primarily."

If you are still covered by your

HDHP and have not met your policy deductible, you will be responsible for 100% of the amount agreed to be paid by your insurance policy to the physician. Your physician may ask you to pay for the services provided before you leave the office. If your HSA custodian has provided you with a checkbook or debit card, you can pay your physician directly from the account. If the custodian does not offer these features, you can pay the physician with your own money and reimburse yourself for the expense from the account after your visit.

If your physician does not ask for payment at the time of service, the physician will probably submit a claim to your insurance company, and the insurance company will apply any discounts based on their contract with the physician. You should then receive an "Explanation of Benefits" from your insurance plan stating how much the negotiated payment amount is, and that you are responsible for 100% of this negotiated amount. If you have not already made any payment to the physician for the services provided, the physician may then send you a bill for payment.

Continued on next page

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## Health Saving Accounts

*Continued from page 40*

Amounts contributed to an *HSA* belong to the account holder and are completely portable. Funds in the account can grow tax-free through investment earnings, just like an *IRA*. You can invest the funds in your *HSA*. The same types of investments permitted for *IRAs* are allowed for *HSAs*, including stocks, bonds, mutual funds and certificates of deposit.

Once funds are deposited into the *HSA*, the account can be used to pay for qualified medical expenses tax-free, even if you no longer have *HDHP* coverage. The funds in your account roll over automatically each year and remain indefinitely until used. There is no time limit on using the funds.

To encourage saving for health expenses after retirement, individuals age 55 and older are allowed to make additional catch-up contributions to their *HSAs*. Once an individual enrolls in *Medicare* they are no longer eligible to contribute to their *HSA*.

After the age of 65, you can continue to use your account tax-free for out-of-pocket health expenses. When you enroll in *Medicare*, you can use your account to pay *Medicare* premiums, deductibles, co-pays, and co-insurance under any part of *Medicare*. If you have retiree health benefits through your former employer, you can also use your account to pay for your share of retiree medical insurance premiums.

Once you turn age 65, you can also use your account to pay for things other than medical expenses. If used for other expenses, the amount withdrawn will be taxable as income but will not be subject to any other penalties. Individuals under age 65 who use their accounts for non-medical expenses must pay income tax and a 10% penalty on the amount withdrawn.

Overall, an *HSA* gives consumers control over their money, the services they receive and the providers they use. It goes a long way towards removing the worry of losing health insurance due to a change in jobs or life status. The tax benefits and structure of the plan allows it to function almost like an *IRA*.

One final note: after researching many hours on-line and interviewing several people for this article, I

felt like I was “spinning my wheels” trying to get good direct answers and information. Thankfully, I stumbled upon the *US Treasury* site that gave me more good information on one site than all the other research combined. The web address is [www.ustreas.gov/offices/public-affairs/hsa/](http://www.ustreas.gov/offices/public-affairs/hsa/). Much of the information in this article was used, with permission, from that site. That link can also be found on [groomertogroomer.com](http://groomertogroomer.com).

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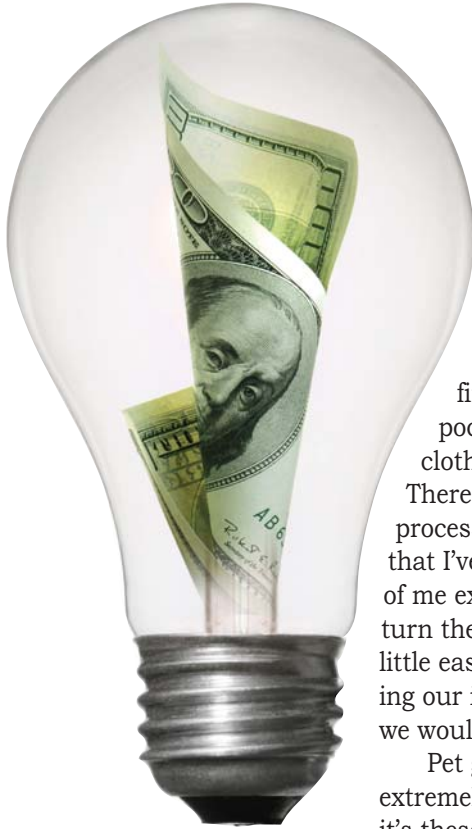


# Getting Down to BUSINESS

By Teri DiMarino



## THE "SILENT PARTNER"



I am all for making money. Capitalism is a good thing. It's the American way. I've always been a bit of an entrepreneur and I find comfort in having money in my pocket. I like it! I like to eat, be clothed and kept warm and dry. There's nothing wrong with that thought process. It is, after all, why I work. Now that I've gotten the "money monger" side of me exposed and out in the open, let's turn the topic to how we can make life a little easier for ourselves by easily increasing our income. I think this is something we would all like to do.

Pet groomers, for the most part, are an extremely artistic and emotional group and it's these attributes that make us good at what we do. But many of the people that

are blessed with these qualities come up short in the business/practical category. Please do not be insulted by this statement. There are "exceptional exceptions" that excel at both. But, let's face it; we all know of at least one outstanding pet stylist who has trouble balancing a checkbook, much less running a business.

I like to make money and I endeavor to make doing business as easy on myself as possible. Grooming dogs is tough work. If I can enlist the help of a "silent partner" to help me out, I'll jump at the opportunity. By "silent partner" I am referring to retail. I know that many salons are not set up for retail but just as many are.

While a good number of salons are taking advantage of the "boutique and spa"

*Continued on next page*

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Getting Down To Business  
*Continued from page 42*

rage, there are still some salon owners who feel that retail is an albatross and they don't want any part of it. They feel that every time somebody wants to buy a toy, they will be pulled away from their tables to ring up what amounts to a menial sale. These people are, obviously, not looking at what is really a very big picture.

The fact of the matter is that a well maintained retail area can pay a bunch of the fixed bills in your salon. Wouldn't it be nice not to have to depend on grooming to pay that electric or water bill? And think about covering your rent from a source other than Poodles and Golden Retrievers! A retail section need not be large or elaborate. The products carried do not necessarily need to be full product lines containing every item a particular com-


“**...WELL SET-UP RETAIL SELLS ITSELF. ...IT DOES HAVE TO BE ATTRACTIVE, WELL MERCHANDISED AND CLEAN!**”

pany makes. It would be foolish to start a retail section carrying products that may not sell. It will spoil the selling experience for the salon owner thereby putting a bad taste for retail in the salon owner's mouth.

In my opinion, well set-up retail sells itself. It doesn't have to be big and bothersome but it does have to be attractive, well merchandised and


*Continued on page 44*

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## Getting Down To Business

Continued from page 43

clean! You can't sell from an empty shelf! An efficient retailing salon keeps it simple by using what they sell and selling what they use. Let's face it, it's easy to sell something you believe in.

You don't have to start out big. As a matter of fact, if retailing is new to you I suggest you don't! Take it easy and sell stuff that you know about and already incorporate into your daily salon routine. For example, many salons perform simple dental care / teeth brushing on pets. There are "companion products" that will help the customer maintain the pets' dental health at home. Many groomers already use these products in their salons and making these same products available to the pet owner will not only benefit the pet but, our income as well.

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Tear staining has long been a major groomers' nuisance. We have to answer the throngs of questions posed to us by the Maltese or Bichon owner on why *Fluffy* has eye stains and how do they get rid of them. We all know that daily care is necessary in order for tear stain to be eradicated but, once the pet is out of the salon, it is out of our control. There are now very effective tear stain products that can, and should, be made available to the owner of the white dog. These products virtually sell themselves! They also make us look good, as we were the ones who helped solve *Fluffy's* problem.

The customers may also want to know what cologne you used on *Fluffy* the last time she was there, as they really loved it. Talk about a simple sale! You don't have to carry tons of different products either. Remember what I said earlier: use what you sell and you'll sell what you use.

Eventually, you can add some simple grooming aids. You already use a wonderful brush-out spray. Now you can make it available to your customer along with some of the brushes you use on a daily basis. All these things make our jobs simpler and they will make the customers' daily care of their pets much easier as well.

I always liked selling nail trimmers. The owners think they can easily perform this task at home and the trimmers would

pay for themselves in one or two home-trimmings, saving themselves "tons" of money in the overall scope of things. (You can tell that these people have no concept of how trying this task can actually be.) I like to ask them if they want a jar of styptic powder along with those trimmers. Their enthusiasm turns to apprehension about the purchase, but they buy both items anyway.

They go home, trim one nail and *Precious* screams and pulls away. Alas, they have trimmed back too far and have to break out the styptic. They now have a screaming, non-cooperative dog and a scenario that, in their mind, resembles nothing short of the *Psycho* shower scene, garnished with styptic stains. And we all know how that stuff does stain! The trimmers go into a drawer; never to be seen again. Next month they are calling us to make an appointment for a nail trimming. I have kept the client and made a sale, as well as a good point. They appreciate me and my talents!

These are just a few examples of how we can benefit from a small retail section in our salons. If the customer can't buy it from you, they will buy it somewhere else. That "somewhere else" may also have a grooming department where the employees are anxious to help steer the client to anything they might feel the pet needs. You stand the chance of losing much more than a sale. You could lose the customer.



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# Wonders of Grooming...



## Accidents

By Bonnie Wonders

**P**eople aren't the only ones privy to screwing up royally. Some of the predicaments that dogs get themselves into are just beyond even me. Some customers bring in dogs that I can't imagine how they survived their traumas.

I have been grooming a Yellow Lab for about ten years now that, as a puppy, had a fondness for an electric heater. He chewed through the cord while it was still plugged

into the electric outlet. This left him with a face full (or not so full as it was) of singed hair, burnt lips and a set of ears that were devoid of hair on the tips. He also lost the hair on the tip of his tail. The most gruesome part though, was his tongue. Where the cord actually came in contact with it, was on the side, and therefore burnt the entire half of his tongue away.

Right before the owner's eyes,

the dog got zapped, smoked and sort of passed out. They ran the animal immediately to the vet and he miraculously survived the ordeal. The only way you'd know anything strange ever happened to him was to see his tongue now. It has all grown back with the exception of a "C" shaped section on the side of it about the size of a silver dollar. When he pants, it freaks people

*Continued on page 46*

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## Accidents

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out. He also barks with a lisp, but you get used to it. (Okay, okay, just kidding about the lisping bark thing!)

Last year, this same dog tried chewing a hair dryer cord in half and got buzzed once again, although it wasn't nearly as disastrous. He was only briefly "stunned" as his owner put it. Lindy says the dog always attempts to chew on electrical cords when they're plugged in. Makes for quite a problem around their house, she says. It HAS stopped the dog's incessant barking and hyperactivity though. Apparently, the voltage has made him a much more subdued creature. Lynda told me they're finally getting accustomed to living in the dark, and on the plus side, it cuts down tremendously on their electric bills!

Apparently, not to be outdone by a big dog, the tiniest of the breeds have to have their day too. Take for instance the pint sized Pit Bull.....

Last week, Debbie brought in her semi-new Yorkie for grooming. She had wanted one of these dogs for more than 15 years, but

had a Poodle that had been given to her "way back when." The Poodle wasn't fond of other dogs at all, so Debbie hadn't been able to even think of adding another canine to her household.

A few years ago, the Poodle had to be put down and Debbie was extremely distraught over it. Several months passed and she decided she was ready to find herself a Yorkshire Terrier. This woman scoured the Internet and bookstores for every piece of information she could find on the breed. She talked to many breeders and checked on several potential puppy prospects. She called me almost weekly for months asking if I had heard about any puppies locally for sale. She went "hither and yon," in search of a new dog. She was so excited when she finally found the "Perfect Muffin."

Debbie brought the Yorkie in for me to fawn over when he was about 12 weeks old. He was so tiny and the perfect picture of a happy, healthy, absolutely darling specimen of the breed. I groomed him and he was a champ. He was the perfect little gentleman. He had that wild hair though all over his face that is usually very frustrating for the owner until it grows long enough to do any-

thing much with, when the owner has their heart set on the classic Yorkie look.

Muffin is now a tad over a year old and Deb has been waiting anxiously for his hair to reach the floor. She's been SO anticipating tying up that topknot in bows and ribbons. She meticulously combs that dog several times a day, taking the utmost of care so as not to break any hairs of his coat. Every month Debbie got more and more excited as we were getting ever so much closer to being able to get that topknot tied into just one band instead of having to use them at two different lengths.

Muffin's appointment was last Tuesday. It had finally gotten really cold here and Debbie walked in with Muffin "Mummified" in a quilt. "Hey, Deb. How's it going?" I asked, smiling at her.

She dug into the recesses of the quilt tucked under her arm and produced a dog that looked

*Continued on next page*

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## Accidents

Continued from page 46

reminiscent of a Chinese Crested on one side of its head. "Look," was all she said, thrusting the dog into mid-air at arm's length. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I glanced at Deb and didn't know whether the look on her face was due to her being about to burst into tears or go into hysterical fits of laughter. Thank God, it was laughter that came out next.

Muffin looked happy as a clam, his stub of a tail wagging furiously. Apparently, no one had told him that he looked like a bad interpretation of the *Phantom*. More than half of his beard was missing along with the vast majority of hair on the right side of his face. His topknot was cut down as if it had been razored off and there was a small narrow scab on his scalp.

"WHAT HAPPENED?" I burst out as I reached for the dog. "You won't believe it....I couldn't believe

it," Deb was saying. "It all happened so FAST! I didn't know what else to do! I really did think of trying to call you, but there wasn't any time. He was carrying on screaming and squealing like he was dying and he is so small I didn't know if he was really hurt or not," she was explaining between fits of laughter. She was talking so fast and furiously, I was having a hard time keeping up with her. "So WHAT happened already?" I interrupted.

"Well, I have one of those *Swivel Sweepers* and he insists on chasing it around like a wild boar," she explained. I have one of those sweepers, too, and I knew exactly where this conversation was going. If any of you have one, then you know that these little sweepers have brushes not only at the front of the sweeper, but also in the back and sides. I am constantly getting little strings from scatter rugs caught in those brushes and the thing latches onto them like Satan after a Sinner. You practically need a Jaws of Life Tool to get it free. The saving grace on them is that the sweeper does shut itself off right away when it gets entangled.

"So Muffin got his face sucked into the brushes and for the life of me, I couldn't get his hair un-

caught," Debbie explained. "There I was with this screaming ball of dog with a sweeper stuck on his face. I had no choice but to cut it off his head," she concluded. "I did nick his scalp a little though with the scissors," she said, looking very saddened. "So....it's up to you to straighten it out," she informed me. I thought I was going to pee myself listening to this story. I could SO picture this whole thing happening.

"You know that we kind of have to shave the other side of his head and face to start all over again, right?" I asked. Debbie pouted. "I was kind of hoping that you would say you could do something with thinning shears and sort of *blend* it in," she said. I rolled my eyes at her. I think she got my drift without me ever uttering a word. "I s-e-e," she said, backing out the door.

Naturally, every time I have turned my little sweeper on since that day, just GUESS whose dog has now decided he has to chase after it. I swear, if he gets his face sucked into it I'll have the foresight to get a picture before I start whacking away at it. It ought to be worth SOMETHING to those *Swivel* people.....

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By Susan Thixton

Strategies to build and retain a solid customer base in your pet business.

Once upon a time in the pet business industry, a good location and/or years of experience in your field would just about guarantee you customers. That fairy tale is no longer true. Today – with more competition entering into the pet industry by record numbers – including corporate competition – it is the relationship between the business and the customer that builds and sustains a solid customer base.

Relationship  
Relationship  
Relationship

*Continued on next page*

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REQUEST READER SERVICE CARD #4853

Relationship, Relationship,  
Relationship  
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According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the definition of *relationship* is “the relation connecting or binding participants in a relationship; a state of affairs existing between those having relations or dealing.”

Expanding on this definition – think about the relationship you have with a close friend and the relationship you have with a very casual friend. With the close friend you have ongoing contact – daily or weekly contact, month after month, year after year. Both sides of the relationship understand and appreciate the importance of staying in touch. However, on the other side of the coin - with the casual friend it’s sort of hit and miss – no regular contact – and no one loses any sleep

if the relationship continues or fades away.

With your pet business – if you are interested in keeping a tight hold on existing customers and attracting new ones through the front door – you need a business style close relationship with them. A relationship with an attachment to each other – the business doesn’t think lightly of the customer, and the customer feels a bond to the business (they won’t be so quick to leave and try the new place down the road). A casual business relationship with your customers could be a death sentence – there is no attachment to your business and in the blink of an eye they are gone.

A casual relationship would be if you only had contact with customers when they did business with you – often times leaving them with the feeling they are a pet owner with a wallet attached. They feel your business only cares about their money and there is no real connection between you. Please keep in mind, it is far easier and far less ex-

pensive to keep the customers you have (and get new ones from referrals) than it is to find new customers to replace the ones you’ve lost.

Just as a close personal relationship requires on-going contact – so does a business close relationship. Surveys of customers performed by large corporations have shown that for a business to have a solid connection with its customers – there needs to be 52 contacts per year. I’m not quite a believer in that you need to have contact with your customers once a week – the point however is that contact is necessary. Below are some suggestions to build your relationship into many contacts a year.

Newsletters. One of the simplest and quickest ways to start a relationship with your customers is through a monthly newsletter. Your newsletter can provide educational articles on pet care, seasonal advice

Continued on page 50

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REQUEST READER SERVICE #4856

and news, and of course explain and promote a service or product each month. You have the option of sending the newsletter via the US Postal Service or, more economically, email.

I suggest making the newsletter informative but personal. Remember, you are building a relationship. Share some stories of your own pets or your family. Give your customers a feeling of who you are. Another approach would be to write the newsletter from a pet and addressed to the customer's pet. Or you could be the ghost writer for an article each month from a pet mascot of your business. *Fido's* review of the new Herbal Shampoo or *Fluffy* shares her thoughts on a brand new type of cat litter.

You have lots of pet care knowledge that your customers would love to learn from. Share that. There are many sites on the Internet that will provide you with free articles to re-print into your newsletters. Google the search 'free articles' and you will find many web-sites that offer free content for your newsletter.

Another option for ideas to write about is called *Google Alerts*. You can type in any subject (pets, pet food, pet care, and so on), and Google will send you a daily email of all articles and blog entries on the subject. You'll probably get more ideas than you need. I also offer pet businesses a similar service, providing free articles for a sideline passion of mine – pet food. Feel free to send me an email (*Susan@PetProChampions.com*) and I will send you the information.

Your newsletter could have a *Pet of the Month* – featuring one of your customer's pets. This is a sure favorite – every customer is going to want to have their pet featured. You could help out a local shelter and promote a dog or cat that needs a home. And your newsletter could promote my next relationship building idea...

Parties or Get-togethers.

Another top relationship building activity is a monthly (or quarterly) get together at your facility. The get together can be just for fun, educational, or holiday related. Invite a guest speaker – a related pet busi-

Continued on next page

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REQUEST READER SERVICE CARD #4857

## Relationship, Relationship, Relationship

Continued from page 50

ness owner such as a pet massage therapist, a holistic veterinarian, a pet nutritionist, a pet photographer – the possibilities are endless. These get together parties provide your customers with opportunities to learn and socialize with the very same people that care for their pet. Customers consider them an opportunity for ‘face time’ with caretakers that a busy work day typically does not allow for.

**Postcards.** Postcards offer you the potential for deeper relationship building, plus allow you to promote specials and upcoming events. The Internet will provide you with tons of free clip art photos – better yet – share with customers you are in need of pet pictures for

your postcards. What pet owner doesn't want to tell all their friends about their dog or cat being the kennel's poster child of the month! More relationship building.

**Thank You Notes.** This one simple step means a great deal to customers. With a brand new customer, I'd suggest sending a thank you note and perhaps a discount coupon for the next visit. You could also send a 'How'd we do' questionnaire (which is discussed later in this article) along with the thank you.

**Voicemail Broadcasts.** A relatively new tool in business marketing and customer relationship is voicemail broadcasts. For a very nominal fee, companies will send out one message to your entire customer base – directly to their voicemail. Your message could promote a sale, a reminder of an upcoming event, or perhaps share some news pertinent to pet care.

The message can come from the business owner – or many of the voicemail broadcasting companies have sound-alike actors and for a small fee will send your message from a sound alike celebrity. Another *Google* search for 'voicemail broadcast' will provide you with a slew of companies providing this service.

The above options do work, and I hope you implement all of them into your business. But there is one area of your business that often times gets ignored as a customer retention/attraction area. That is your lobby.

My pet business (which sold in 2003) began in 1984 as just a training facility. When each obedience class graduated, I took a Polaroid photo (long before digital cameras) of the owner and their dog. The photos were posted on a cork bulletin board – with only a couple of months of graduates photos displayed at a time. I noticed as each new class came for their first lesson,

Continued on page 52

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## Relationship, Relationship, Relationship

Continued from page 51

everyone gravitated to the pictures. I took the hint and put back all the graduates pictures. By the time I sold the business, all four walls of my 30 foot by 30 foot training room was covered from floor to ceiling in pictures, with hundreds of extras placed in photo albums.

I'm not telling you to get this carried away, but, I will share a very important point: When a potential customer came in my business and saw thousands of these photos on the wall, they were always impressed. The photos were picture testimonials and even though the only words with the photos were the owner name and dog name, they spoke volumes. They provided the potential customer with the idea that 'if so many other pet owners have brought their dog to this place, then this must be the place!' Without me *selling*, the pictures *sold* every potential customer that walked through the door.

Somehow, somehow, display customer photos and testimonials

Ask what your customers want from your business and listen to what they are telling you.

in your lobby – as many of them as you can. Provide testimonials (with photos) on your website – front and center – not tucked away on a side page. Provide testimonials in your brochures. Words *tell*, but testimonials *sell*. And testimonials prove you have a relationship with your customers.

One more technique...ask what your customers want from your business and listen to what they are telling you. As a professional, you know what your customer's pet needs are and you know what products or services that will meet those needs. BUT – that might not be exactly what your customer wants. One of the quickest ways to lose a customer is to make them feel unimportant and ignored.

Continued on next page

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## Relationship, Relationship, Relationship

Continued from page 52

Newsletters, parties, and postcards help, but if your business is not providing what your customers actually want from you – they will find a pet business that does. On one of those postcard mailings, send out a short questionnaire. Ask your customers what new products or services you can provide – ask what they don't like about your business – ask what they do like about your business. This is valuable information – listen to what they are telling you. Show your customers their opinions matter to you – show your customers they matter to you.

To close, in case anyone reading this is saying that's too much work or I've got all the customers I need, I don't have to go to that effort. I would like to explain to you just how important every single cus-

tomers actually is to your business. Let's say the average customer your business has, visits your business once a month for an annual total of 12 days. At a simple \$25.00 per day, this average customer spends \$300.00 per year at your facility. Using 10 years, the LCV (Lifetime Customer Value) is \$3,000.00. Lose just one customer and you are losing \$3,000.00 over the next 10 years.

But, it's far more than that, surveys have shown that the average customer has the ability to influence 50 potential customers. Let's say former customer Jane Doe leaves your business for the pet business down the road and she gets the royal treatment from the new business that leaves her feeling appreciated and connected to the new business. Jane Doe tells all her family, friends, and co-workers how wonderful the new kennel or groomer or daycare treats her and her pet. That one lost customer

could then cost your business \$150,000.00 over 10 years (LCV \$3,000. X 50 of Jane Doe's family and friends). I hope that \$150,000.00 has your attention.

Building a relationship, a close relationship, with your customers can make the difference between a pet business that excels and a pet business that struggles. It can be a little time consuming at the beginning, but in no time at all you will notice the shift to better, more faithful customers and be reaping the financial rewards from it.

*Susan Thixton is President of Pet Pro Champions, a coaching and mentoring firm specific to independent pet professionals. This article is a short example of the innovative business building techniques she coaches her clients with in her Success Building Monthly Newsletter. To subscribe or find further information, please visit her website at [www.PetProChampions.com](http://www.PetProChampions.com).*

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Veronica Frosch  
Continued from page 6

the *World Cup Games*, was a borrowed dog. Veronica had never seen *Paris* before the competition, only a picture of her.

"When I am using a borrowed dog, often the first really good look I get of it is when I have it in the bathtub prepping it for the contest," says Veronica. "I examine the dog's body structure when it is wet. That helps me decide how I am going to trim it."

Veronica prepped *Paris*, entered the contest ring, and soon the *Hanvey Poodle Tournament* was underway.

Concentrating only on her dog, Veronica sculpted curves and angles - transforming *Paris* into the dog she had envisioned when she was wet.

When 'scissors down' was called, Veronica began to feel butterflies dance in her stomach. She had done her best. Now it was for the judges to decide.

The *World Cup Grooming Games* is one of the world's toughest competitions. It is a *Groom Team USA*

sanctioned event that draws the top groomers from all over the world. The winners are selected by a panel of highly knowledgeable industry experts from the *IJA (International Judges Association)*.

In *IJA* events, the judges inspect each contestant's dog and it is photographed before the competition. At the end of the competition, each dog is thoroughly examined by the judges and once again photographed. The judges can actually compare the before and after photos during their decision making process.

While their grooms were being evaluated by the judges, Veronica and the other contestants must have felt as if they were under a microscope.

"I get the most nervous after the competition ends and the judges begin to go over the dogs," says Veronica. "It's really nerve-wracking for me, wondering if they will find a few hairs out of place, or a snarl I missed."

The butterflies in Veronica's stomach were having a contest of their own, dancing a jitterbug while Veronica anxiously awaited the judge's decisions.

Amid thunderous applause and

cheers, Veronica's name was announced as the winner of the *Poodle Tournament*. Veronica was thrilled and breathed a huge sigh of relief.

But, she had little time to relax - the *Best In Show Competition* was next.

The winners of the *Hanvey Specialty Engineering Poodle Tournament*, *Procoast Terrier Tournament*, *44/20 Mixed and Other Purebreds Tournament*, and the *Lambert-Kay Sporting Breed Tournament* now went head to head as they advanced to the *Best In Show*.

The judge's panel had four amazingly groomed dogs before them yet only one could become the *Best In Show*. The judges made their decision, lifted the gleaming trophy from its place of honor, and presented it to a beaming Veronica and *Paris*.

"I was really stunned when they announced my name as the *Andis Best In Show* winner," Veronica said.

Continued on next page

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Veronica Frosch  
Continued from page 54

"It didn't seem real for a moment. After it sank in, it was all I could do to keep from crying.

"Competitions like the *World Cup Games* are really amazing," Veronica said after her tremendous win. "I can't thank *Barkleigh* and *Andis* and the other sponsors enough for putting on these great competitions. They invest a lot of time, money and work. It's really awesome that they do that."

The *Andis Company* has been sponsoring grooming competitions since their inception.

Marea Tully, International Grooming Consultant for the *Andis Company*, explains why *Andis* sponsors grooming competitions:

"Grooming competitions are very important to our industry," says Ms. Tully. "We want these

talented groomers to be able to showcase their work. By sponsoring competitions, *Andis* helps reward groomers and make it worth their while to be the best that they can be."

Sponsors like *Andis* are always listening to groomers and getting input from them. In fact, that is how some of the new *Andis* products came into being. The clippers with built in lights, tiny trimmers for detail work, and clippers with a non-slip grip, have all come from groomer needs and requests.

Many advancements in our industry are a direct result of groomer ideas and suggestions to manufacturers at grooming competitions and seminars like *Barkleigh's Groom and Kennel Expo*.

Winning *Best In Show* honors at the 2008 *Groom and Kennel Expo* in Burbank, California, had to make Veronica feel like she was walking on air.

However, even as she was still glowing from her fantastic accomplishment – she had to prepare herself for another competition.

Veronica had also entered the *Winners Circle Tournament*. That's the competition with the incredible,

ever increasing *Triple Crown Jackpot*.

Once again she was in the contest preparation salon and once again she was bathing and examining the structure of another borrowed dog – a black Miniature Poodle named *Jack*.

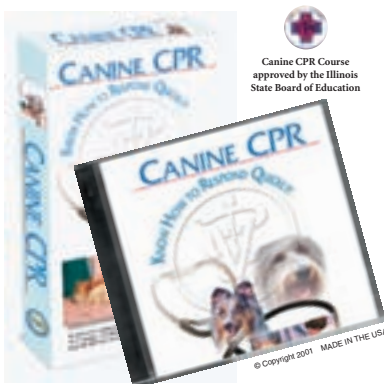
Could Veronica win both the *Hanvey Poodle Tournament* and the *Andis Best In Show* competition - and then be victorious in the *Winners Circle* competition too?

Would this *Groom and Kennel Expo* be unlike any other for her?

Let's just say that there was no stopping Veronica that weekend. She swept the competition, and expertly demonstrated the grooming skills that she had honed to perfection.

Looks like 2008 is going to be a banner year for the talented, hard working Veronica Frosch!

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The advertisement is for the 'JAMAICA GRAND CAYMAN' event, held from Jan. 17-22, 09. The title is in large, colorful letters. Below the title, it says 'Miami to Jamaica ... and Grand Cayman'. The central image is a cartoon dog wearing a red bow and holding a microphone. To the right, there is a photo of Sarah Wilson, a woman with long hair, and text describing her as a co-author of several books and articles on training and behavior, a lecturer, and a pet care consultant. She holds a Masters in Psychology from Lesley University and is a popular instructor who focuses on building the pet pro and trainer's skills and confidence. She can be found at www.mysmartpuppy.com. At the bottom, it says 'Barkleigh Productions, Inc. 970 West Trindle Road • Mechanicsburg, PA 17055 www.barkleigh.com • info@barkleigh.com'. The number 'J826' is visible in the bottom left corner of the ad.

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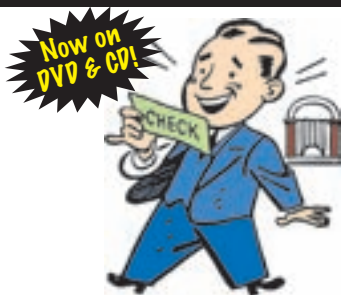
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## New Jersey

### Intergroom

4/11/2008 – 4/13/2008

Somerset NJ

(781) 326-3376 • intergroom@msn.com

## Nevada

### SuperZoo

9/9/2008 – 9/11/2008

Las Vegas NV

www.wvpsa.com

## New York

### Pet Fashion Week

8/23/2008 – 8/24/2008

New York NY

(401) 331-5073 • petfashionweek.com

## Pennsylvania

### Groom Expo 2008

9/11/2008 – 9/14/2008

Hershey PA

(717) 691-3388 • info@barkleigh.com

www.groomexpo.com

## Rhode Island

### 28th Annual New England Pet Grooming Professionals Fall Holiday Festival

10/31/2008 – 11/2/2008

Warwick RI

(413) 268-3426 • lclaf@comcast.net

www.nepgp.com

## South Carolina

### NDGAA Carolina Groomfest

5/31/2008 – 6/1/2008

Columbia SC

(724) 962-2711

ndga@nationaldoggroomers.com

### Intl. Assoc. of Canine Professionals Annual Conference

6/5/2008 – 6/8/2008

Hutto TX

(407) 469-7127 • iacp@mindspring.com

## SHOW DATES AT A GLANCE

# 2008

July 10 – 13, 2008

### PetQuest

Animal Behavior Conf.  
Pet Boutique & Spa Expo  
Ft. Mitchell, KY  
(Cincinnati, OH Area)

September 11 – 14, 2008

### Groom Expo

Animal Behavior Conf.  
Hershey, PA

# 2009

January 17 – 22, 2009

### Cruise to Jamaica

Carnival Destiny  
Miami to Jamaica

### New Location!

February 12 – 15, 2009

**Groom and Kennel Expo**  
Pet Boutique & Spa Expo  
Pasadena, CA

September 17 – 20, 2009

### Groom Expo

Animal Behavior Conf.  
Hershey, PA

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# Animal Planet Premieres New Reality Show...



Animal Planet enters the world of doggie style with the premiere of its new competition series, *GROOMER HAS IT*. Hosted by Emmy award-winning actor and singer Jai Rodriguez (“*Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*”), *GROOMER HAS IT* sniffs out 12 of America’s most devout dog groomers to compete against each other in a test of desire, creativity and affinity for animals as they clip, scissor and shampoo their way through a series of challenges that will crown only one as “Groomer of the Year.”

The contestants will be put through their paces to see who can turn the shaggiest pooch into a beautiful, prancing pup beginning Saturday, April 12, at 9 PM (ET/PT).



These self-proclaimed best groomers will live together in a swanky Los Angeles loft dubbed the “Dog House,” work elbow-to-elbow in one salon; and face grooming challenges that range from styling pups for their runway debut to grooming some of the most exotic dog breeds to making adoptable pups look their fetchingly best for new homes. After each challenge, Jai and an outspoken panel of judges, including esteemed veterinarian Dr. Karen Halligan, champion dog handler, Xavier Santiago, and leading U.S. grooming expert Joey Villani will decide which contestant does not make the cut. The grand prize winner will receive a cash prize of \$50,000, a mobile grooming salon from *Wag’n Tails Mobile Grooming* and the title of “Groomer of the Year” – three prizes totaling \$125,000 that could jump-start the groomers’ careers and change their lives. Each of these groomers thinks he/she has what it takes to be top dog in this competition, but in reality, only one... *GROOMER HAS IT*.

Joey Villani is a leading U.S. expert in grooming and began his remarkable career apprenticing for industry visionary, John Nash. Having trained thousands of groomers as a top instructor for Mr. Nash’s schools, in 1998, Joey became president, director and owner of the *Nash Academy of Animal Arts in New Jersey*. In addition to his three decades of grooming experience and impressive teaching career, Joey is an *IJA (International Judges Association)* registered judge and has been nominated four times for the *Cardinal Crystal Achievement Award* for excellence in dog grooming show judging. Joey tells it like it is, and when impressed, he offers a giant grin and his trademark, “That’s it, baby!”

## BIO-GROOM EAR CARE DISPLAY

Bio-Groom is offering a new *Ear Care Display* with the three top selling ear care products: *Ear Care* (Ear Cleaner and Ear Wax Remover), *Ear Fresh - Astringent Ear Powder* and *Ear Mite Treatment*.



*Ear Care* is a veterinary preparation, fortified with Boric and Salicylic Acid. *Bio-Groom Ear Fresh* helps keep ears dry and reduce odors. Excellent for hand stripping. *Ear Mite Treatment* is a lotion containing Pyrethrins, nature’s own safe insecticide, and Aloe Vera for sensitive skin. It effectively kills ear mites and ear ticks, plus aids in the removal of earwax. For information on the new *Ear Care Display*, Request Reader Service Card #4577.

## GROOMER’S MALL CONTINUES TO EXPAND

*The Groomer’s Mall* continues to expand its quality product offerings. The latest additions are *Stazko’s* line of conditioning sprays, luxury shampoos, and complimentary colognes; *Professional Pet Products (PPP) AromaCare* shampoos including the *Citrus Flea Defense with Citronella Oil*; and *Skunk-Off Odoricide®* shampoo from *Thornell*. At *The Groomer’s Mall* they listen to the voice of their customers and continue to add more products based on their experienced input and the feedback they receive. *The Groomer’s Mall - Premium Service, Great Prices* - is located at [www.groomersmall.com](http://www.groomersmall.com). Request Reader Service Card #4796.



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## Sally's Desk Continued from page 5

show like no one I have ever met before or since. Besides that, he adored Gwen and I, and a lot of our exhibitors. He always looked forward to seeing Teri DiMarino's dog, *Parker*. Kurt would go through the hall singing and whistling. He just loved our event and crew.

Danny, the shipments guy, took care of our packages and never lost a one over the years. He was Gwen's buddy and saw to it that everything was present and accounted for. Unlike most hotels.

Every department in the *Burbank Airport Hilton* went beyond the call of duty for us. Even though we were quickly outgrowing the facility, I had determined to stay as long as the staff remained. I just couldn't leave that great hotel.

But low and behold the hotel was sold. It became another national brand. And things changed. Pre-planning was difficult. Renovations began. Many of the staff left. If they didn't leave, most were clearly unhappy. Suddenly I noticed them looking over their shoulders suspiciously. Things didn't happen like in the past. There was friction between staffers. We

couldn't get straight answers.

We couldn't get a contract for the next year, but they didn't say why. They just kept putting me off. They removed meeting rooms in a remodeling but never told us about it. We didn't even get strawberries as in the past. It was a nightmare! In one year, they tumbled from the top of the heap, to the bottom in my estimation.

Because of this, we had to go looking for other space. Voila. *Pasadena Conference Center*. Great people. Great destination. Even the old staffers at the *Hilton* said it was a good choice and that they will be coming to see us there. It was time to move since we had outgrown the space and it would have taken something like this to make me move, but I was so sorry to see the old Hotel being taken over with a new philosophy of micro-management.

*The moral to this story?* Don't micro-manage. Empower your employees to solve problems and embrace your clients as if they are their own. It means a lot to the client. It wasn't Barron Hilton that made us feel at home.... It was his empowered employees.

### Dining with Jay...

One evening after the show, Gwen and I wanted something other than hotel food. A new *Panda Express* had opened across the street from the hotel. We got in line and picked out our oriental fare from the cafeteria line. It was very good. We found a table in the small interior and began eating.

A man in jeans walked by me carrying a tray. Something made me follow him to his table. Perhaps I just always notice folks. I am a writer and tend to observe. He was ordinary from the back, so there was no reason my eyes followed him. He sat his tray down and slid into the seat as he arranged his plastic silverware. He was dining with two other men.

His shoes were a little worn and greasy. His jeans, though not dirty exactly, needed laundered. His blue denim shirt was also worn and not fresh. His hair was a little tussled, like a mechanic who was under his car all day. The hair. Something about the hair. The gray hair with black streak in the front. It was Jay Leno.

"Gwen, Jay Leno is sitting there," I whispered. "Noooooo...." She stated as she turned to stare right at the man. She



Jay Leno

stared and stared like a stupid tourist. No one else in the fast food joint had noticed.

Gwen was observing his clothes. Not the usual "Jay Late Show" style.

"I don't think it's him," she said. "Maybe it's a double."

"Gwen...look at the hair!" I said emphatically. Why would Jay Leno need a guy to go to *Panda Express* to look like him in greasy clothes. Jay, I knew, had an antique car collection and worked on his own vehicles. His garage was in Burbank as is his TV studio.

Jay ate... and we ate. Gwen stared. I didn't. Eventually, others began to notice and soon a man brought his son over for a photo. Jay obliged albeit without enthusiasm. I noticed how tired he looked. And when he stood, his back was bent. Jay, I would say has groomer's back, or some such auto mechanic version thereof. When Gwen and I went outside, I mentioned about Jay to some of the groomers sitting outside. They had noticed, too.

*And what is the moral to this story?* Well, not really anything, I guess. Except, if you are Jay Leno, and you go to *Panda Express*, wear a baseball cap to cover the hair. I don't think anyone would have noticed him if he had. At least he got his meal finished before fans began visiting.

### Meeting Wes...

At Burbank this year, I met a guy who is really excited about this industry. He wrote the article "*What's Wrong with the Grooming Industry*" and is on the cover of this issue with his article about Cesar Milan.

Wes Murph is just happy to be here with us. He wants to write, groom and change the industry for the better. He is all smiles as he talks about his move from *Corporate America* to *Grooming America*. He is not trying to make waves or enemies.

Little did he know when he suggested licensing that he was walking into a mine field of opinion, and the explosions began when *Groomer to Groomer* hit the streets (er, grooming salons). We got a plethora of responses that we are going to hold for the next issue. Hold onto your hat, Wes. It can be a little rough out there!

So, I hope this column was fun, thought provoking, and you got a bit of business wisdom, too. See you next year in Pasadena. We will have some new and exciting things for you. We are looking forward to our new beginning in California.

God bless you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sally". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

A DVD cover for "How to be a Card Shark! Make Money Carding &amp; Bathing". The cover features a woman, Judy Bremer-Taxman, smiling. Text on the cover includes "Taped live at GROOM EXPO", "Featuring: Judy Bremer-Taxman", "This DVD shows you all the tips and tricks you need to have the upper hand when it comes to making money carding. Make your clients and their pets feel like they hit the 'Jack Pot.'", "DVD #1570 • \$49.00", and "Order online at www.barkleigh.com or call (717) 691-3388".

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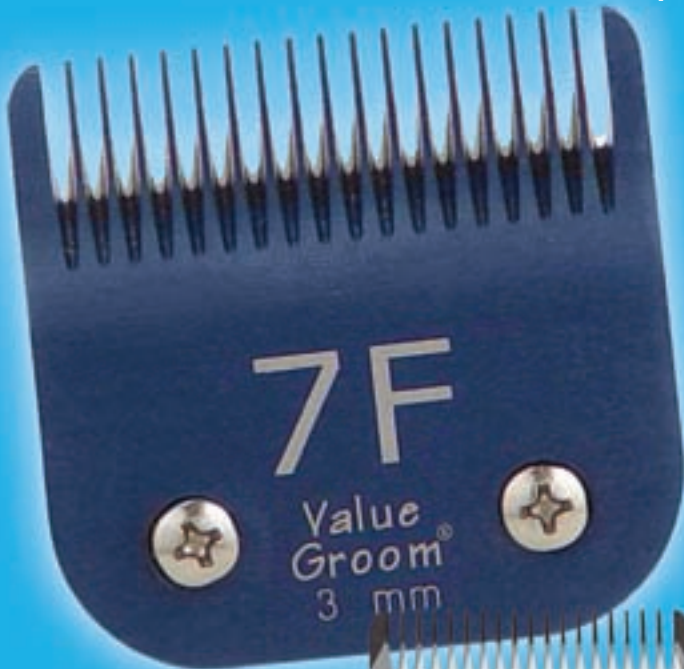
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Please Note: Changing out a cutter is not intended to replace re-sharpening.

In some cases replacing cutters on badly dulled or worn out blades may not help.



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