

HOT Stuff

NEW PRODUCTS FOR YOUR DOG, CAT, BIRD OR LIZARD

Let me take you on a red-carpet tour of the recent Pet Expo '08 at the San Diego Convention Center. The largest of its kind in the United States, the Expo filled the entire center — an area more than 12 football fields in size. More than 800 manufacturers were there.

As I walked through the show, I wondered, "Is there anything left to invent for pets?" At every corner, there was something new that made your right brain scream, "Say it isn't so." Here was a pop-up game of basketball for your parakeet. Over there was the freeze-dried doggie yogurt from New Zealand. You're tempted to try it yourself, but you restrain yourself. After all, you must watch the diet (yours, not the dogs). A giant lizard, at least 20 pounds, appears on the back of a vendor. His booth features a display of beautifully decorated boxes filled with freeze-dried crickets.

As I turn each corner, it becomes quite apparent that the business to be in now is pet food. Healthy, organic, freeze-dried, raw, human-grade, holistic made-in-America pet food. Food is available for calming, energizing, lubricating joints, treating canine obesity diabetes, and tartar (fang) control. Last — but not least — some of these foods may contain a healthy dose of hempseed oil for Bongo's antioxidant supply. That was our story in the '60s and we're sticking to it!

As I previewed, oh, maybe 1,000 items, the impact of a 45-billion-dollar business resonated front and center. Our cats, birds, dogs and yes, even lizards, have come into their own. This is big business. The impact is overwhelming. Is there nothing we won't do for — or because of — our pets? Many of these products came to



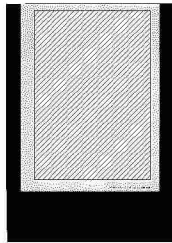
COURTESY DEXAS.COM



ABOVE: Collapsible Popware feeder and bowl from dexas.com are designed to travel. BELOW: Adjustable, foldable flipo.com pet beds in small and large sizes come with washable covers.



COURTESY FLIPO.COM





COURTESY AQUAVISTAINC.COM

Wall-mounted **Aquavista**
500 aquariums hang
like living art – from
Aquavistainc.com

fruition and invention by a pet owner:

Max had a terrible accident in the car; his owner asked, why isn't there a safety belt for dogs? Heidi loves kisses, but her breath could stop a freight train; her owner dreamed up doggy mints. An owner felt guilty leaving Rowdy when he biked; he invented a way he could take along his buddy.

A few outstanding new products:

Cyclist? Get a Pet Cruiser. This device attaches to your handlebar, and weighs less than 5 pounds. One or two small dogs can ride with comfort and enjoy the scenery. Hot new colors and designs are available for the stylish cyclist. Around \$80 or \$90.

Craig was excited about moving into his first apartment. It was very small, but it was his. As he led Stinger (a Jack Russell) into his new home, he realized he had to accommodate the dog and there might be a space challenge. The solution: A pet Murphy bed. Yep, it exists — a fold-down, space-saving comfy alternative to traditional pet beds. It is environmentally friendly (tree-farmed rubber wood) finished with hardwoods to complement your décor, and a four-inch fleece mattress is included. This product would be great for an RV, cruiser or small condo. About \$280.

Both products are available at www.midnightpass.com.

Ruth Regina spent 12 years with "The Jackie Gleason Show." (Anyone under 40 needs to Google this one.)

She is an eighth-generation wig maker who saw a need. Why should every stylish woman get extensions and not her sidekick, Peony? Wiggles Dog Wigs come in all styles and colors. It's important to be ready for that yappy hour invite. Norman Cousins said laughter's the great secret for longevity. I would say this might give you a good start. www.wigglesdogwigs.com 305/395-6216.

JUNE TRIVIA

The expression "three-dog night" originated with the Eskimos and means a night so cold you have to bed down with three dogs to keep warm. ■



Sandie Lampe and Schmooser

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