

Pets from page A5



Over at Savanna Reptile and Fish on Middlebelt Road near Seven Mile Road in Livonia, owner Gerry Szeli-ga offers a few ideas for reptile gifts: lizard lounges, fancy cages and hammocks.

Other dog gift ideals

For dogs, soft-sided carriers are going to be very big, Berry said. He also expects pet beds to be popular as well as all kinds of toys, leashes, bowls, treats and grooming supplies. The toys come in all shapes and sizes, including roosters, lions, Easter bunnies, cheeseburgers, dinosaurs, cows and hedgehogs.

There are also items to tie in with the movie "101 Dalmations," including cedar beds, sweaters, pet carriers and rope bones.

A treat for dogs is "Popcorn," a popcorn treat for dogs, which comes in cheese and butter flavors. So while the family is eating popcorn and other snacks, the dog can have safe snack too, Berry said.

Cat Condos

Cats can enjoy condos, cat beds, towers, teepees, window perches, cat teasers, cat tracks and crinkle sacks. Cat tracks are big, according to Berry. The cat can chase a pingpong



STAFF PHOTO BY DILL BRENNER

Christmas for cats: Cats may act like they don't care, but they like holiday gifts too such as catnip, toys and stockings.

ball runs around a circular track.

Pet Supplies Plus has stores in Livonia and Canton Township.

Specialty Pet Supplies is in Plymouth Township.

Parties from page A3



garlands and centerpieces, Bezaire will handpaint linen napkins and wine glasses. He'll also sculpt individual butters or decorate petit fours with each guest's name.

"Guest gifts" are a perfect way to say thank you for coming. Bezaire favors a single rose, a sprig of fresh holly or a beautiful Christmas ornament festively boxed and laid beside a place setting.

For larger parties, let your guests choose from a crystal bowl filled with colorfully wrapped candies or home-made cookies or a basket brimming with small packages of flavored coffee and miniature liqueur bottles. "We love it when there's mints at the door," said Carollo.

Making music

As part of your party's festivities, consider hiring musicians. Many musicians associated with community orchestras play at private parties, especially at Christmas. (We've included the musicians' phone numbers.)

Carl Karoub (313/420-3057), assistant conductor for the Livonia Symphony Orchestra and a member of a string quartet, said: "Even the best CD and the best recordings don't have

the presence of live music. It's a very beautiful gift for your guests."

Karoub's son Michael (313/383-5307), a LSO member who's part of a popular cello and guitar jazz duo in the metropolitan area, enjoys playing for private parties. "It's just more intimate," he said.

D. L. Turner's harp has been making sweet sounds at Plymouth's Mayflower Hotel for 15 years. Turner (313/803-3425) said live music adds a "dynamic dimension to a party."

Put a harp and a flute together and the music becomes heavenly. Robynn Rhodes of Westland (313/722-6206), a flutist, and Lydia Cleaver of Detroit (313/875-6526), a harpist, both associated with the LSO, often play for private parties. Rhodes describes their music as "just flowing in the air."

Story time

Besides music, add personal drama as well as sentiment to your party by asking one of your guests, not a bashful one, to read a selected Christmas story. Or simply kindle the fire, turn the lights down low and have each guest recount a personal Christmas memory.

And don't forget a few Christmas carols. There's nothing like the warmth of a holiday gathering of friends and family to loosen up the



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