



Waitress Betsy Maxwell serves Ketzal, a Persian cat, Nicki, a Bichon Friese, and Lyn, a Shitzu, their meal in a crystal dish (\$35 from Groomingtails). Ketzal's dress costs \$30, and Lyn's black and white satin tuxedo costs \$38.

photos by DAN DEAN/staff photographer

A 'dawgone' way to 'pamper' pets

By Charlene Mitchell
special writer

Call it spooky. . . Call it crazy. . . Label it anything you "dawgone" please. As far as some pet owners are concerned, nothing is too costly when it comes to their dog or cat.

Just as fashions for people set trends, the look of the '90s for household pets is starting to become designer oriented. Pet boutiques, usually found in a pet grooming salon, carry everything from silk nightgowns to mink-trimmed winter overcoats.

There are pet umbrellas and rubber boots, rain bonnets, and argyle sweaters, swimwear, Halloween costumes and Santa Claus suits. There are even christening gowns and tuxedos made for pets.

A wedding coming up? No problem, made to order or off-the-rack bride and groom attire is available. And as ridiculous as it may sound, there are even burial clothes for pets whose owners opt for fancy funerals at pet cemeteries.

Abhh . . . What ever happened to the dog or cat who was happy in his birthday suit?

"People like to buy nice things for their pets, especially dog owners," said Marcey Welsberg, owner of Marcey's Groom-A-Pet in Royal Oak. "The big thing now are fancy cuts with lots of bows and ribbons with cute outfits for special occasions. Like when people give a big

party and everyone's all dressed up, they'll have their Bichon Frise in ruffles too!"

FOR LARGER dogs, less frilly clothes are the look, and most cat owners say a glittery collar is enough because the felines tend to get a little irritated when the owner tries to get them to wear clothes.

One of the newest pet pampering centers is Groomingtails in West Bloomfield. The salon caters to pooches who expect nothing but the best. No matter how grubby Fifi may look when she comes in, she leaves fluffed up and fragrant to the hilt!

The owners, David Munson and Jeffrey Juczewicz, both licensed hairdressers, consider grooming dogs a natural extension of their work in the beauty business.

"Doing a dog's hair is certainly a lot different than doing a lady," said Munson. "The dogs don't complain, but they squirm around a lot . . . especially the little dogs which we do a lot of."

It's the owners who are particular about the final touches on their pet's cut and style. One of the more exciting clients was a 100-pound Great Pyrenees who came in for a bath, brush out, pedicure and ear cleaning.

"He got the works!" said Munson, adding that sometimes the large animals aren't as difficult as the little Yorkies.

THERE'S NO limit as to how much you can spend pampering your prized pet. Most basic grooming jobs range between \$10-\$15, but the price goes up for the really fancy styles.

Cats, too, are part of the beauty trend among upscale pet owners. Long haired cats need a lot more grooming than the typical house cat, plus the owners admit that cats keep pretty clean on their own, unlike dogs who often like to get in the dirt, if allowed to play outdoors.

Once your dog or cat is styled, perfumed, and dressed in the latest animal attire, they're ready to have a gourmet dinner served up in genuine crystal, or sterling silver dishes.

No . . . the buck does not stop here.

The food, too, must be the best. A local butcher, confided that one of his best customers is a Bloomfield Township woman who buys freshly ground liver for her cat, and ground sirloin for her two dogs. None of that canned or dried stuff for her pets.

No wonder so many businesses catering to pets are opening up in Metro Detroit. What with the pet motels, boarding schools, training centers and even a psychologist for animals, it kind of makes even a pet owner wonder whether the world is going to the dogs!



Whoopie, a three-month-old Portuguese water dog, sits patiently while being trimmed by stylist Monica Berens at Groomingtails in West Bloomfield.

Comic book parody turns into a 'gold mine'

Leonardo plays a mean one-string base, but his shrewd no-nonsense business approach took the TMNT from screen idols to rock stars.



There's more to the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles' persona than you might think.

They got their start in 1983, when New England artists Kevin Eastman and Peter Laird sketched the turtles as a superhero parody.

As the story goes, the four discarded pet turtles, all named after great Italian Renaissance artists, were dumped in the sewers, where they were transformed into oversized reptiles after being exposed to radioactive material.

Three hundred licensing agreements, a syndicated television cartoon series and feature-length motion picture later, classify the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles as nothing less than a gold mine.

There's TMNT T-shirts, shoelaces, Halloween costumes and the like to entice the good of greenbacks out of parents' wallets. And mega-businesses like Burger King, K mart and Pizza Hut have gotten on the TMNT bandwagon.

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TMNT products rank third behind Barbie and Nintendo. Not bad for a bunch of smart-mouthed turtles who live in sewers.

As for their music, Pizza Hut may have pulled off the coup with its offer of a 10-song cassette, "Coming Out of Their Shells," for \$3.99.

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Within four days of its release, 250,000 copies were sold, representing about \$1 million in sales. Who cares if the pizza they chomped on in their movie came from the competition — Domino's.

Now it's the 40-city rock concert/theatrical production. Rock impresario Steve Leber and creative wiz Bob Bejan are the brains behind the

extravaganza. And while the sewer-dwelling, pizza addicts are detroning the likes of G.I. Joe and Cabbage Patch Kids from the hearts of America's kids, there's word of a movie sequel.

As for the talk show circuit, can you imagine Oprah interviewing Michaelangelo? Awesome, dude.

And while we're on the subject of travel, don't be looking for the boys at the Weslin or other such fancy hotels while in Detroit this week. According to Mich, they have a special motor home with a shoot in the floor that gives them direct access to where they feel most at home, the sewers. They leave the hotels to their roomies.

TRAVELING FROM from one city's sewer system to another does have its downside. Mich admits the troupe was

psychod out about Milwaukee, worrying about "wheels of cheese floating by." No word on what they expect to find in Detroit, but you guys in the pizza delivery business listen up. They do expect to have room service.

The Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles will be at Masonic Auditorium Wednesday-Sunday, Oct. 17-21. Tickets cost \$16.50 and are available at the Masonic box office or TicketMaster outlets. For information, call 832-2222.

Getting tuned by those TMNT

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IF YOU'RE into TMNT, you also know about the evil Shredder. For the uneducated, he's the bad guy. Well, according to Mich, Shredder has been trying to sabotage the rock tour.

"Shredder followed us to New York and rewired our stuff so it would blow up on stage," Mich blurts out. "I think he's going to follow us all over. I think he's jealous because we're making music; I guess because we're taking away the spotlight."

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