

“Faithful Friends” Educates on Pet Bird Care

Animal Planet show focuses on pet care.

By Rachael Brugger

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Wanda Goldberg hosts "Faithful Friends," premiering Sunday, April 13, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. on Animal Planet.
Courtesy "Faithful Friends"

A family-friendly, variety show will be added to Animal Planet's Sunday morning line-up. "Faithful Friends," a 30-minute show hosted by Wanda Goldberg, features celebrity interviews, questions from pet owners, veterinary experts and segments presenting basic pet care information.

The show's third episode, which airs April 27, 2008, focuses on pet birds. Board-certified bird specialist and BIRD TALK contributing author Laurie Hess, DVM, offers expert advice for keeping a pet bird.

As a veterinarian who works closely with pet owners to teach them about proper pet care and a regular on a cable television show, Hess said she felt no apprehension in front of the camera and talked with Goldberg as she would with one of her clients. During the episode she stressed the importance of providing good nutrition for pet birds and practicing preventative medicine.

"People with birds don't bring birds to into the vet until they are really sick," she said. "One thing I emphasize is bringing them into the vet regularly, like a cat or dog."

In addition to week three's pet bird episode, "Faithful Friends" runs for 13 weeks and touches on subjects like care for fish and horses, as well as behavior, travel, nutrition and more. Parrot owner Marc Marrone, Martha Stewart's pet guru, makes several appearances throughout the series. Also, one week's "Itty Bitty Buddy" segment touches on pet bird care basics.

"In many homes, pets are valued members of the family, and pet owners are concerned about providing their animals a happy, healthful, long life," said Tony Loiacono, executive producer for the show. "So we created an engaging television series that not only features celebrities who dearly love animals, but provides helpful answers to common pet concerns."

Addressing those pet concerns on the show are BirdChannel.com partners Dr. Race Foster and Dr. Marty Smith, the show's on-site veterinarians who appear in a weekly question and answer segment. As founders of the largest cataloger and online pet product company, they carry the reputation of providing extensive veterinary advice and information at DrsFosterSmith.com and PetEducation.com. The doctors said they are excited to take their experience to a television audience.

"Over the years, Dr. Foster and I have amassed a wealth of veterinarian knowledge on numerous animals," Smith said. "Additionally, we have many experts at Doctors Foster and Smith who we draw qualified information from, and pass that knowledge on to viewers."

"Faithful Friends" premieres Animal Planet Sunday, April 13, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. For more information about the show, visit www.faithfulfriends.tv.