



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Legacy Business Registry Case Report

HEARING DATE: JUNE 6, 2018

1650 Mission St.
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San Francisco,
CA 94103-2479

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415.558.6377

****The following report provides staff recommendations for two (2) legacy business application.****

Filing Date: May 9, 2018
Case No.: 2018-007311LBR
Business Name: VIP Grooming SF Inc.
Business Address: 4299 24th Street and 1734 Church Street
Zoning: NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial Cluster)
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 6505/048 and 6632/007
Applicant: Lancy Woo, Owner
4299 24th Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
Nominated By: Supervisor Jeff Sheehy, District 8
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

VIP Grooming is a 34-year-old dog grooming business located in Noe Valley (two locations). The current owner, Lancy Woo, is the third owner and is a nationally significant person for her role in the historic Right to Marriage Supreme Court Case (Woo vs. Lockyer).

In 1976, Coralee Crawford, a devoted animal lover, first rented the location at 4299 24th Street in San Francisco from Boulthwood Properties and started caring for neighborhood pets. She officially registered her business and opened as VIP GROOMING in October of 1984. She sold the business 8 years later to Susan Stanich-Giaquinto who continued the legacy of providing top quality grooming services. In 1996, Susan's top groomer, Lancy Woo, took over the business with fellow dog groomer and owner of Dunk'n Dogs, Jim Starkey.

Woo has spent the last 18 years serving the dogs of Noe Valley with excellent care and grew the business to include one full-time bather and four full-time groomers. In 2014, Woo incorporated the business as VIP GROOMING SF Inc. and in March of 2016 opened a second location with self-wash tubs, also in Noe Valley, as VIP Scrub Club. VIP GROOMING SF Inc. now employs 10 people between the two shops and provides services for some 2,000 dogs in the Bay Area.

The business has two locations. The first location is the southeast corner of 24th Street and Douglass Street in Noe Valley. The second location is 1734 Church Street located on the west side of Church between 29th

Street and Day Street, also in Noe Valley. Both locations are within a NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial Cluster) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1984.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, VIP Grooming qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. VIP Grooming has operated continuously in San Francisco for 34 years.
 - ii. VIP Grooming has contributed to the history and identity of San Francisco by serving as a dog grooming salon.
 - iii. VIP Grooming is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.
3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*
Yes, the business is associated with the art form of dog grooming.
 4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Persons

The business is owned by a significant local person, Lancy Woo. In 2004, Woo became the face of marriage equality when she and her partner, Christy Chung, entered into a legal battle for same-sex marriage. Woo and Chung, as well as nine other same-sex couples who wished to marry, were represented by the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the ACLU and Lambda Legal. Woo was asked to be the named plaintiff due to being known as a successful local business owner, beloved community member and a dedicated family woman. The Supreme Court case, *Woo v. Lockyer*, was monumental to the progress of LGBT rights in California, and her continued advocacy has solidified her significance to this movement.

Architecture

The Victorian Stick or Stick Eastman style mixed-use building, constructed pre-1900, is a contributor to the California Register-eligible Diamond & Elizabeth Streets Historic District identified by the Planning Department as part of a reconnaissance survey of Noe Valley and the period of significant is 1875-1915.

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No, however, the property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status of "A" (Historic Resource Present) as a contributor to the California Register-eligible Diamond & Elizabeth Streets Historic District.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes, the business has been cited in several publications:

- Voted Best of Bay in 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014 and 2017
- Won Bay Woof's Best of Bay in 2014, San Francisco A-list in 2014 and Bay Area Reporter Best of Gays in 2011.
- VIP Grooming has been sighted in articles relating to Lancy Woo in The Bay Area Reporter in March of 2006 and in the San Francisco Examiner on Jan 2000. Also Woo was quoted in the 1998 January issue of Frontiers News Magazine in an article named Puppy Love which focused on the gay community and their obsession with their pets.
- VIP Grooming and VIP Scrub Club were featured in articles in the Noe Valley Voice in the July/August 2016 issue and in the February 2018 issue.
- VIP Scrub Club was featured in a video for DogTV.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 4299 24th Street
- 1734 Church Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Mission to provide the best and most thorough dog grooming services available in a fun and loving environment
- Open-plan interior
- Free-roaming policy

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Tubs and grooming tables
- Large storefront windows that allow dogs to look out and passers-by to look in
- Free first-time bath to any newly adopted dog program
- Staff training that includes procedure and technique, understanding animal behavior and mastering dog handling and control

Filing Date: May 9, 2018
Case No.: 2018-007306LBR
Business Name: The Animal Company
Business Address: 1307 Castro Street
Zoning: 24th Street-Noe Valley NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District)
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 6507/015
Applicant: Rick and Ellen French, Owners
1301 Castro Street
San Francisco, CA 94114
Nominated By: Supervisor Jeff Sheehy, District 8
Staff Contact: Shelley Caltagirone - (415) 558-6625
shelley.caltagirone@sfgov.org
Reviewed By: Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

The Animal Company is a 42-year-old small, neighborhood pet store located in Noe Valley. The store was founded by Gary Thompson and Victor Biancholli. In the beginning, The Animal Company was a full line pet store. They sold tropical fish and birds along with the products to maintain these animals.

Rick and Ellen French have been in the pet industry for over 40 years. Rick worked for a manufacturer and a distributor before becoming a retailer. Ellen began her career in Berkeley where she started Your Basic Bird in 1974 (still extant). They also owned Grand Central Aquarium and Bird in Oakland, but were forced to close in 1991 after the Loma Prieta earthquake and East Bay Hills Fire. Rick returned to the distribution business and Ellen dedicated her time to expanding her bird breeding program and raising two children. They housed over 50 pairs of different varieties of parrots on their property in the Oakland Hills and sold them to Bay Area pet stores. Gary at The Animal Company became one of Ellen's biggest clients.

In 2001, after 25 years and the passing of Victor, Gary Thompson offered Rick and Ellen the opportunity to buy The Animal Company, which they did. Having been in the pet business for many years, they looked forward to molding the store to fit their own vision while maintaining the original character. It was decided to put the emphasis on what they knew best: exotic birds. The hobby of keeping tropical fish began to wane, and they eventually stopped selling fish. The exotic bird and pet supply space became dominant. The Animal Company also carries a large variety of supplies for all the dogs and cats in Noe Valley and the surrounding neighborhoods. After 35 years at the original location, The Animal Company moved two blocks down the street to 1307 Castro Street at 24th Street in the heart of Noe Valley.

The business is located on the east side of Castro Street between 24th Street and Jersey Street in Noe Valley. The property is within the 24th Street-Noe Valley NCD (Neighborhood Commercial District) Zoning District and a 40-X Height and Bulk District.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Review Criteria

8. *When was business founded?*

The business was founded in 1976.

9. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, The Animal Company qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- iv. The Animal Company has operated continuously in San Francisco for 42 years.
- v. The Animal Company has contributed to the history and identity of San Francisco by serving as a pet store specializing in the sale of birds.
- vi. The Animal Company is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the organization.

10. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes, the business is associated with aviculture.

11. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

Architecture

The building at 1305-1307 Castro Street is identified by the Planning Department as Category A ("Historic Resource Present") with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. It is located within the Eligible 24th Street Commercial Corridor Historic District. The 24th Street historic district is known for its early history as the commercial corridor for the Noe Valley streetcar suburb. Generally the 24th Street historic district features a range of one- to three-story buildings that have ground floor commercial storefronts that were constructed either originally as part of the building, or were later alterations made to residential buildings. As the street became more and more commercialized, early residences were modified to accommodate a retail space on the ground floor. Contributors to the historic district are mixed residential and commercial buildings constructed sometime between the 1880s, when the first residential properties were constructed along 24th Street, up until the 1920s, representing the last significant commercial infill along the street. The historic district contains a wide variety of popular architectural styles from the turn of the twentieth century including, Victorian, Queen Anne, Edwardian and Period Revival.

12. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No, however, the property has a Planning Department Historic Resource status of "A" (Historic Resource Present) as a contributor to the California Register-eligible 24th Street Commercial Corridor Historic District.

13. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

14. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes, the business has been cited in several publications:

- The Animal Company was featured in the Los Angeles Times in 2010 regarding the store's opposition to a proposed ban by city officials on sales of almost all pets, including birds, hamsters, rats and other small mammals. The proposed ban ran into extensive opposition from a number of pet stores and animal lovers, and was never passed.
- In 2016, The Animal Company was listed as #4 by Time Out in a list of the top 10 best pet stores in San Francisco.

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business

Location(s) associated with the business:

- 1307 Castro Street

Recommended by Applicant

- Large selection of food and supplies for all kinds of pets
- Highly-trained employees
- Low-cost grooming services
- Low-cost DNA gender analysis service

Additional Recommended by Staff

- Stained glass window of birds made from a local artist
- Pictures of tropical birds on the walls
- Original wood tongue and groove flooring



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No.

HEARING DATE: JUNE 6, 2018

Case No.: 2018-007311LBR
Business Name: VIP Grooming SF Inc.
Business Address: 4299 24th Street and 1734 Church Street
Zoning: NC-1 (Neighborhood Commercial Cluster)
40-X Height and Bulk District
Block/Lot: 6505/048 and 6632/007
Applicant: Lancy Woo, Owner
4299 24th Street
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Nominated By: Supervisor Jeff Sheehy, District 8
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ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR VIP GROOMING CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 4299 24TH STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 6505/048) AND 1734 CHURCH STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 6632-007.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on June 6, 2018, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby recommends that VIP Grooming qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for VIP Grooming.

Location(s):

- 4299 24th Street
- 1734 Church Street

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- *Mission to provide the best and most thorough dog grooming services available in a fun and loving environment*
- *Open-plan interior*
- *Free-roaming policy*
- *Tubs and grooming tables*
- *Large storefront windows that allow dogs to look out and passers-by to look in*
- *Free first-time bath to any newly adopted dog program*
- *Staff training that includes procedure and technique, understanding animal behavior and mastering dog handling and control*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission** hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2018-00007311LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on June 6, 2018.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED:



SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Historic Preservation Commission Draft Resolution No.

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Reviewed By: Tim Frye - (415) 575-6822
tim.frye@sfgov.org

ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR THE ANIMAL COMPANY CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 1307 CASTRO STREET, (BLOCK/LOT 6507/015).

WHEREAS, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

WHEREAS, the subject business has contributed to the City's history and identity; and

WHEREAS, the subject business is committed to maintaining the traditions that define the business; and

WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on June 6, 2018, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends** that The Animal Company qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated for 30 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby** recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for The Animal Company.

Location(s):

- *1307 Castro Street*

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- *Large selection of food and supplies for all kinds of pets*
- *Highly-trained employees*
- *Low-cost grooming services*
- *Low-cost DNA gender analysis service*
- *Stained glass window of birds made from a local artist*
- *Pictures of tropical birds on the walls*
- *Original wood tongue and groove flooring*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations** are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the **Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs** its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2018-00007306LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on June 6, 2018.

Jonas P. Ionin
Commission Secretary

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED:

**Legacy
Business
Registry**

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2017-18-040
Business Name: VIP Grooming SF Inc.
Business Address: 4299 24th Street and 1734 Church Street
District: District 8
Applicant: Lancy Woo, Owner
Nomination Date: April 28, 2018
Nominated By: Supervisor Jeff Sheehy

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? ☒ Yes ☐ No

4299 24th Street from 1984 to Present (34 years)
1734 Church Street from 2016 to Present (2 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? ☒ Yes ☐ No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? ☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTES: VIP Grooming on 24th Street and VIP Scrub Club on Church Street have the same Employer Identification Number, same business name (VIP Grooming SF Inc.), same ownership and same business model (dog grooming). Per the Legacy Business Registry Rules and Regulations, both locations will be included on the Registry.

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: May 9, 2018

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 8



City and County of San Francisco

JEFF SHEEHY

April 28, 2018

Re: Nomination of VIP Grooming SF for the Legacy Business Registry

Dear Director Regina Dick-Endrizzi,

I am writing to nominate **VIP Grooming SF** for the Legacy Business Registry. VIP Grooming first opened in 1984 and as each groomer/owner retired they handed down the business to their head groomer creating a true legacy of excellence in dog grooming. In addition, current owner Lancy Woo, a born and bred San Franciscan, holds historical significant within the LGBT community and the city of San Francisco as the original named claimant in the 2004 Right To Marry cases (Woo vs. Lockyer). Ms. Woo spent years in and out of court rooms fighting for the right to marry her partner of 16 years and for the rights for all LGBTQ people.

I believe that VIP Groomers, the LGBTQ, and the larger Noe Valley community would benefit from becoming part of San Francisco's Legacy Business Registry.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Sheehy". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing "J" and a cursive "Sheehy".

Jeff Sheehy
Member, San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
VIP Grooming		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Lancy Woo		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
4299 24th St. San Francisco, CA 94114		415 282 1393
		EMAIL:
		vipgroomingsf@gmail.com
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.vipgroomingsf.com	https://www.facebook.com/V	https://www.yelp.com/biz/vip

APPLICANT'S NAME		
Lancy Woo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE		
Owner		
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:		TELEPHONE:
975 Girard St. San Francisco		415-595-0172
		EMAIL:
		lancywoo@gmail.com

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
1007273	C3681943

OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
4299 24th Street, San Francisco, CA	94114	11/1/1984
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	11/1/1984 - present	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
1734 Church St, San Francisco CA	94131	Start: 4/1/2016 End: present

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete; and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- ☒ I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- ☒ I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- ☒ I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- ☒ I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- ☒ I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- ☒ I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- ☒ I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Lancy Woo


5/4/2018

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

5/4/2018



VIP GROOMING SF INC

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

At 4299 24th Street, a block west of Noe Valley's bustling commercial corridor, sits an unassuming multi-paned storefront. With its paucity of obvious signage and lackluster facade, one could easily walk right by the storefront at the corner of Douglas and 24th and never give it a thought. But if you happen to be one of the many dog owners in Noe Valley you don't need signs or flash to know that this is home to one of the longest lasting and most beloved dog grooming salons in the city. If you also happen to be a member of the LGBT community you probably know that the owner of that business, in addition to providing loving and exceptional dog grooming services, has spent years in and out of the courts fighting for your right to marry.

Due to the fact that VIP GROOMING has a 34-year legacy of excellence in dog grooming, and that the current owner, Lancy Woo, was the named claimant in the historic Right to Marriage Supreme Court case. We believe that VIP GROOMING deserves to be considered for the distinction of being designated a Legacy Business.

In 1976, Coralee Crawford, a devoted animal lover, first rented the location at 4299 24th Street in San Francisco from Boulwood Properties and started caring for neighborhood pets. She officially registered her business and opened as VIP GROOMING in October of 1984. She sold the business 8 years later to Susan Stanich-Giaquinto who continued the legacy of providing top quality grooming services. In 1996, Susan's top groomer, Lancy Woo, took over the business with fellow dog groomer and owner of Dunk'n Dogs, Jim Starkey.

Lancy Woo was born and raised in the heart of San Francisco. She has always been drawn to animals and even as a young child remembers wanting to be around them as much as possible. She always felt very connected with animals and able to easily relate to them. At 16, a guidance counselor at her school help her get a job at an East Bay pet store and dog grooming shop where she worked and trained for the next 10 years. In addition to being a WWPSA (Western Word Pet Supply Association) certified dog groomer, Lancy has taken numerous workshops and courses to advance her skills.

When the opportunity to purchase VIP came along, she jumped at it going into business with best friend (and former boss) Jim Starkey. Four years later, Woo bought out Starkey so he could pursue veterinary school. Woo spent the next 18 years serving the dogs of Noe Valley with excellent care and grew the business to include one full-time bather and four full-time

groomers. In 2014, Woo incorporated the business as VIP GROOMING SF Inc. and in March of 2016 opened a second location with self-wash tubs, also in Noe Valley, as VIP Scrub Club. VIP GROOMING SF Inc. now employs 10 people between the two shops and provides services for some 2,000 dogs in the Bay Area.

The VIP Scrub Club is located at 1734 Church Street. Scrub Club features five raised self-serve tubs, a separate dry room with dog-friendly dryers, a variety of breed and skin-type specific shampoos, friendly staff, on-site nail trimming, full grooming services and a lounge area where one can have coffee and socialize with other furry friends. It is a fun, clean, dog-oriented environment where the dog-loving community can connect, share resources, swap stories, and care for their dogs.

Over the years, Lancy honed her skills and takes pride in being the best at what she does. To connect with and care for animals is a great joy for Lancy, and she feels grateful to be able to do what she loves every day. She takes immense pride in what she does and what she has created at VIP GROOMING.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

VIP GROOMING has not ceased operations in San Francisco since it officially began operations in October 1984.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

The business does not satisfy the definition of a family-owned business, which may be defined as any business in which two or more family members are involved and the majority of ownership or control lies within a family. At VIP, however, we operate as a family and consider the business to be a family business. Lancy Woo treats her employees with respect and kindness and generosity, and expects hard work and dedication in exchange. Over the years, many clients and their dogs have become like family as well. VIP employees strive to quickly know each animal, their tendencies, needs, likes, dislikes, etc. We treat each animal with the love and respect that we afford our own pets and enjoy watching them grow and develop throughout the years.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

The ownership history of VIP Grooming is as follows:

1984 to 1992	Coralee Crawford
1992 to 1996	Susan Stanich-Giaquinto
1996 to 2000	Lancy Woo and Jim Starkey
2000 to Present	Lancy Woo

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Documentation verifying the business has been operating for 30+ years has been included in this Legacy application.

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The building at 4299 24th Street is listed by the Planning Department as Category A ("Historic Resource Present") with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. The building is a possible contributor to the Eligible Diamond & Elizabeth Streets Historic District, which has a period of significance from 1875 to 1915. The eligible district was identified by the Planning Department as part of a reconnaissance survey of Noe Valley.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

As the neighborhood has changed from working class to young professional families, and as businesses have come and gone due to the shifting economy, the corner of 24th and Douglass has remained a beloved pet service institution. Noe Valley is one of the most pet friendly neighborhoods in the city, and the excellent service provided by VIP GROOMING over the past three decades has been instrumental in that development.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

VIP Grooming has provided free nail trims for local dog-related events such as Strut Your Mutt and Pet Pride Day, and has donated to the FIDO 500 to raise money for Wonder Dog, which was started by VIP GROOMING to raise money for Rocket Dog. In 2006, Lancy Woo was named the Community Grand Marshal of the Gay Pride parade, one of the most celebrated events in San Francisco.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

VIP GROOMING has been voted Best of Bay, which is regarded as the people's choice in the Bay Area, 5 times in past 10 years: in 2007, 2010, 2011, 2014 and 2017. In addition, it has won Bay

Woof's Beast of Bay in 2014, San Francisco A-list in 2014 and Bay Area Reporter Best of Gays in 2011.

VIP Grooming has been sighted in articles relating to Lancy Woo in The Bay Area Reporter in March of 2006 and in the San Francisco Examiner on Jan 2000. Also Woo was quoted in the 1998 January issue of Frontiers News Magazine in an article named Puppy Love which focused on the gay community and their obsession with their pets.

VIP Grooming and VIP Scrub Club were featured in articles in the Noe Valley Voice in the July/August 2016 issue and in the February 2018 issue. In addition, VIP Scrub Club was featured in a video for DogTV.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

In 2004, owner Lancy Woo became the face of marriage equality when she and her partner, Christy Chung, entered into a legal battle for same-sex marriage. Woo and Chung, as well as nine other same-sex couples who wished to marry, were represented by the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the ACLU and Lambda Legal. The Supreme Court case, *Woo v. Lockyer*, was monumental to the progress of LGBT rights in California, and her continued advocacy has solidified her significance to this movement.

Woo was asked to be the named plaintiff due to being known as a successful local business owner, beloved community member and a dedicated family woman. This was not a simple task to take on. It meant countless hours being insulted by strangers in courtrooms. To those close to her, it was clear the fight was taking its toll but Woo never let it affect her work or her dedication to her clients. Compassion for animals and humans is one of the things that is most noticeable about Lancy and, for her, fighting for their rights is both a necessity and a privilege.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

VIP Grooming has always taken an interest in the community not just by engaging with its customers but also by contributing to many community fundraisers and events. VIP donates annually to local school auctions for Little Bear School, St. Phillip School, Children's Day School, Alvarado School, St. Paul's School and Glenridge Cooperative Nursery School. VIP also donates to the Police Activities League (PAL), the Nihonmachi Street Fair and API (Asia Pacific Islanders Gay and Lesbian community) events annually. VIP is an active member of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professional Association (NVMPA) as well as the SPCA, ASPCA and the ACLU.

VIP Grooming has also created a legacy of care, compassion and contribution. Even after selling VIP, Coralee Crawford continued to work with animals and was recognized for her devoted support of many animal foundations. In the 1980s when San Francisco was hit hard by the AIDS crises, The PAWS (Pets Are Wonderful Service) Project was born when the AIDS Foundation realized that many of their recipients were struggling with the ability to feed and care for their beloved pets while in the throes of illness. Stanich and Woo both spent countless volunteer

hours with The PAWS Project, providing grooming services for those who had fallen victim to AIDS and other devastating illnesses. Lancy has trained members of Compassion without Borders for free so they could properly care for and groom the frightened and often fragile animals they rescue from other countries. Also, all guide dogs receive services for 1/2 off.

VIP Scrub Club provides a free first-time bath to any newly adopted dog and has started an annual fund raising event to benefit a selected rescue organization each year. After opening VIP Scrub Club, we had the space to start hosting a few of our own events in order to create community, thank our customers and raise money for rescue organizations. For Howl-O-Ween, we started a Church Street Pet Parade which has quickly become a neighborhood favorite, and we just celebrated our second Valendog Day Pawty. Our Sit, Stay, Play, fund raising event raised \$1,500 for Rocket Dog Rescue last year.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

Noe Valley is predominantly residential, graced with Victorian and Edwardian homes that were built in the early 20th Century after the 1906 earthquake. This neighborhood once housed an Irish immigrant working class and is now home to many young professional families and their pets. VIP GROOMING has evolved with the changing neighborhood and can attribute its success to its ability to listen to the community and provide services specific to each individual's needs.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

The building is a possible contributor to the Eligible Diamond & Elizabeth Streets Historic District, which has a period of significance from 1875 to 1915. Built in 1900, this turn of the century building is referred to as a Victorian Stick or Stick Eastman style dwelling. These buildings have long, thin pieces of wood called "sticks" applied to the surface, especially at corners. These sticks are meant to be both decorative and expressive of the underlying wood frame structure. In the late 1800s, these decorative elements became numerous and elaborate. As a matter of fact, San Francisco has the greatest concentration of Stick- and Stick Eastlake-style homes in the world. In this case, you can see that the Stick style was enhanced with some more elaborate bands or ornamentation that are more indicative of the Queen Anne style which was becoming increasingly popular at this time. The jutting window bays and internal window seats were also indicative of the time and this architectural style.

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

The longevity that VIP GROOMING enjoys, and the consistency of its small and loyal staff, allows the services it provides to be highly individualized for each and every client. VIP GROOMING has always put client satisfaction, safety and comfort at the top of its priorities, and the kind of one-on-one care that they provide to the pets could not be accomplished by a larger store or chain.

Lancy Woo is in one of her shops 4-5 days a week, 8-10 hours per day because she loves what she does and she loves where she does it. She is intimately connected and committed to her clients, her community and her craft. In this day and age of big, impersonal corporations and formulaic retail experiences, this dedication and connection is rare and worthy of preservation. The dogs of Noe Valley deserve a business run by a present and approachable owner whose self-interest is their wellbeing.

The staff at VIP GROOMING has been there for families through generations of pets; when they lose their beloved dog, and then again when they come in with their new puppy. We cry with them, we reminisce with them and then we revel in their new joy. Without this neighborhood institution, families would be left without the familiar faces at the corner of 24th and Douglass, and their beloved pets would be without the comfort of their safe, friendly and familiar salon.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

All of who Lancy Woo is, what she has done and what she stands for has gone into the development of VIP GROOMING and is in no small way responsible for its success. We call it “the Way of the Woo,” and it represents not just an unwavering dedication to excellence and craft but also to the development of a deep compassion for the world around you and the animal in front of you. Animals connect with Lancy in a profound and beautiful way which makes the grooming process more enjoyable for them. The outcome is a happier, healthier more huggable pup, and who wouldn’t want that?

VIP GROOMING’s mission is to provide the best and most thorough dog grooming services available in a fun and loving environment. At the dog grooming shop, all dogs get the works. There is just no other way to do it right. This includes, shampooing every dog TWICE, cleaning ears, expressing anal glands, conditioning the coat, trimming and dremeling nails, drying and brushing, removing mats if needed, tending to any sores or irritations, trimming pad hair, and then grooming (if required).

The groomers not only perform all these tasks but simultaneously work on teaching each dog to stay calm, sit still and enjoy the process. The groomers attempt to provide an enjoyable bath even while having to perform often unpleasant tasks like cleaning out ear infections and expressing anal glands. All of this requires skill, technique and zenlike energy.

In addition, at VIP we understand that every dog is unique. In order to best serve each dog we tailor the treatment to his or her specific needs; choosing the most beneficial combination of shampoos and conditioners and the best techniques for drying and grooming.

When the dogs are not being washed, dried or groomed, they wander around freely, playing with the other dogs, receiving treats and lapping up water, getting pats on the head and belly scratches, leaving nose prints on our window and sometimes barking up a storm. It is a loud,

lively, playful environment. The shop is one completely open space so that all procedures can be viewed at all times and the dogs never feels isolated. It is truly a lively and inviting place for dogs.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

VIP GROOMING is proud to be a dog grooming business with such an extensive history in Noe Valley and we hope to continue that legacy for years to come. We know every pet is a VIP (Very Important Pet) to someone and deserves to be treated with the utmost care and love. Lancy is dedicated to passing on her knowledge and ability to the next generation of VIP Groomers. Just like she honed her skills under the tutelage of the VIP owner before her, she has spent a decade perfecting the skills of the dedicated groomers under her, as well as imparting them with “The Way of the Woo.” VIP GROOMING is dedicated to building and growing this craft because we believe that a legacy is not just something that gets passed on but it should evolve and improve along the way.

At VIP, staff training is not just about procedure and technique, but also about understanding animal behavior and mastering dog handling and control. Lancy personally trains all of her staff, and everybody at VIP is constantly learning and growing, perfecting their skills and techniques. Lancy has successfully trained many employees (past and present) to be complete in bathing, drying, brushing, clipping and scissoring. Everyone knows how to safely handle and work with all dogs from geriatrics to puppies, large breeds to small breeds, high energy to slow moving by utilizing calming and controlling techniques.

Dog grooming is an art form. This really is a business where you have to love the animals and love the work because it is so physically demanding and emotionally challenging. To be effective and connect with the animal you must come from your heart, always keep your cool and never lose your sense of aesthetic.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

VIP Grooming has two inset cast-iron tubs with a stainless steel backing and tile adornment for dog bathing on the back wall and two banks of kennels on the east wall. Since we are a free roam shop, many of the dogs enjoy sitting in the window seats inset under the bay windows, and passers-by enjoy seeing their furry noses pressed up to the glass as they look out to the streets. The space houses four grooming tables, multiple drying units and several multi-drawer metal cabinets to hold the many scissors, clippers, brushes and other tools of the trade. A specially designed curved 1/2 wall with a gate at the west end separates the lobby

from the work space and serves to keep the dogs contained while they are waiting for their services.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

VIP GROOMING has been a dog grooming business since it was founded in 1984.

BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

RENEW BY DATE
05-31-2016

EXPIRATION DATE
06-30-2016

FY 2015-16

BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER 1007273	LOCATION ID 1054638-02-161
TRADE NAME (DBA) VIP SCRUB CLUB	BUSINESS LOCATION 1734 CHURCH ST
OWNERSHIP VIP GROOMING SF INC	TAXPAYER SIGNATURE

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
OFFICE OF THE TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR

VIP GROOMING SF INC
4299 24TH STREET
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94114


José Cisneros
Treasurer


David Augustine
Tax Collector

Read reverse side. To update addresses or to close a business, go to www.sftreasurer.org/accountupdate.

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO - OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR				EXPIRATION DATE
BUSINESS TAX REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE				12-31-96
ACCOUNT NO.	LOC.	CLASS	CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION	FEE PAID
300197	001	07	OTHERS BUSINESSES	\$37.50
BUSINESS NAME			BUSINESS LOCATION	
VIP GROOMING			4299 24TH ST	

OWNERSHIP **STARKEY JAMES H & WONG LANCY**

DBA **VIP GROOMING**

MAILING ADDRESS **4299 24TH ST**

CITY - STATE **SAN FRANCISCO CA 94114**

DATE ISSUED: **11-22-96**

Richard A. Sullivan

RICHARD A. SULLIVAN

TAX COLLECTOR

MUST BE POSTED CONSPICUOUSLY AT THE BUSINESS LOCATION

READ REVERSE SIDE. NOTIFY THE TAX COLLECTOR IN WRITING OF ANY CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OR ADDRESS - P.O. BOX 7425, SAN FRANCISCO, 94120 - 7425

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO - OFFICE OF THE TAX COLLECTOR				RENEW BY DATE	EXPIRATION DATE
BUSINESS TAX REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE				10-31-2000	12-31-2000
CERTIFICATE NO.	LOC.	CLASS	CLASSIFICATION DESCRIPTION	FEE PAID	
340026	001	07	OTHERS BUSINESSES	\$37.50	
BUSINESS NAME			BUSINESS LOCATION		
VIP GROOMING			4299 24TH ST		

OWNERSHIP **WOO LANCY**

DBA **VIP GROOMING**

MAILING ADDRESS **4299 24TH ST**

CITY - STATE **SAN FRANCISCO CA 94114**

TAXPAYER SIGNATURE: _____

DATE ISSUED: **10-24-2000**

George W. Putris

GEORGE W. PUTRIS

TAX ADMINISTRATOR

MUST BE POSTED CONSPICUOUSLY AT THE BUSINESS LOCATION

READ REVERSE SIDE. NOTIFY THE TAX COLLECTOR IN WRITING OF ANY CHANGE IN OWNERSHIP OR ADDRESS - P.O. BOX 7425, SAN FRANCISCO, 94120 - 7425

BOULTWOOD PROPERTIES

Miss Coralee Crawford
4299 - 24th Street
San Francisco
California 94114

January 27th, 1984

Dear Miss Crawford,

Today, the property in which you have your store has been sold, and this office represents the new owners, and will be managing the property from this date on.

Obviously, rents due on February 1st and thereafter will be due to this office. Please make the checks payable to Boulwood Properties, your cancelled check will be your receipt, and mail them to us in the enclosed envelope.

A study of commercial property along 24th Street, shows that such property is being leased at somewhat over \$1.00 per square foot and in certain instances for smaller space, well over \$1.00 per square foot.

Therefore we have no alternative other than to increase your rent effective March 1st 1984 to \$520.00 per month.

We are sorry this increase is necessary, but the building does not, and still will not pay for itself, and it was bought by the new owner's for investment.

We also note that we are holding a \$150.00 security deposit, and a \$50.00 cleaning fee.

Yours truly



Sydney Boulwood
Property Manager.

Enc.

PURCHASE AGREEMENT

This Agreement ("Agreement") is made this 19th day of November 1996, By and between Susan Stanich Giaquinto (hereinafter, the "Seller") and James Starkey and Lancy Woo (hereinafter, the "Buyers"). This business is a sole proprietorship of which Susan Stanich Giaquinto has sole ownership.

Whereas, Seller desires to sell and Buyers desire to purchase all of the assets of Seller other than its cash, receivables, and prepaid expenses upon the terms hereinafter set forth:

Now, Therefore, in consideration of the premises, appurtenances, and the mutual covenants herein contained, the parties hereto, intending to be legally bound hereby, agree as follows:

1. BASIC TERMS OF TRANSACTION

1.1 Sale of Assets. Seller hereby agrees to sell, transfer, assign and deliver to Buyers on the Closing Date (as hereinafter defined), and Buyers hereby agrees to purchase from Seller, free and clear of all liens, security interests, charges and encumbrances, all of the Seller's assets, listed on attached Exhibits A and B, of every kind, nature and description and whenever situated, tangible and intangible, but not limited to: machinery and equipment (including, but not limited to those items set forth on Exhibit A); inventory (including, but not limited to, the raw materials, work in process, finished goods and supplies set forth on Exhibit B); trade secrets, know-how, trade names, trademarks, logos, rights, choices in action, records, and all rights, to the exclusion of "Seller", the name "VIP GROOMING", either alone or in conjunction with other words. Collectively all the aforementioned assets hereinafter shall be referred to as the "Acquired Assets".

1.2 Purchase Price and Payment Schedule. Buyer agrees to pay Seller Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00) according to the following schedule:

- A) Twenty Thousand Dollars (20,00.00) on November 25, 1996
- B) Remaining balance (20,000.00) by January 15, 1998
- C) No interest will accrue during the period of sale (November 25, 1996 - January 15, 1998)
- D) Buyers will be pay Seller the balance of \$20,000 over 12 months in quarterly payments of up to \$5,000. First payment due April 15, 1997. Second payment due July 15, 1997. Third payment due October 15, 1997. Finally payment January 15, 1998.
- E) Penalty: any balance owed after January 15, 1998 will be subjected to a 5% interest.

1.3 Transition. Seller agrees to work for Buyer for a period of six (6) weeks as a transition period. During the transition period Seller shall be compensated by direct commission of Fifty percent of fees which accrue from Sellers work product, *plus all profits (over expenses) for 6 weeks, Nov 19, 1996 thru Dec. 31, 1996, to be deducted from remaining balance as described in paragraph 1.2, (B)*



3. ADDITIONAL COVENANTS AND UNDERTAKINGS

3.1 Bulk Sales Law. Buyers and Sellers agree to waive compliance with any laws relating to bulk sales and bulk transfers applicable to the transaction contemplated by this AGREEMENT, and in consideration of such waiver Seller agrees to defend and indemnify Buyers against and hold them harmless from any and all loss liability, damage or expense (including all reasonable costs and expenses, including attorneys' fees) arising out of or resulting from such non-compliance.

3.2 Change of Name. Buyer has the right to the use of the name of "VIP Grooming" or any other trade name used in connection with the Seller's business.

3.3 Further Assurances and Assistance. Buyers and Sellers agree that each will execute and deliver to the other any and all documents in addition to those expressly provided for herein that may be necessary or appropriate to effect the provisions of the Agreement.

4. THE CLOSING

4.1 Time and Place of Closing. The transfers and deliveries to be made pursuant to this Agreement shall take place at the Closing at 4299 24th Street, VIP Grooming, or such other place, time and/or date as Seller and Buyers agree upon in writing (the "Closing Date"), and shall be deemed to be effective as of the beginning of business on the closing Date.

5. REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES OF SELLER

As an inducement to Buyers to enter into this Agreement and consummate the transactions contemplated herein, Seller represents and warrants to Buyers as follows:

5.1 Title to Property. Seller has, and at the Closing, Buyers will be vested with good and marketable title to all of the Acquired Assets free and clear of any liens, security interests, claims, charges, restrictions, easements or other encumbrances.

5.2 Books and Records. The books and records of Seller are in all material respects correct and complete, and have been maintained in accordance with sound business practices.

5.3 Litigation. there is no litigation, proceeding or governmental investigation existing or pending, or any order, injunction or decree, outstanding, against Seller with respect to its assets or business.

5.4 Inventories. The Seller's inventory or raw materials, work in process and finished goods being transferred hereto is in good and usable condition.

5.5 customer Lists. Seller shall provide buyers with complete and accurate listing of all customers of the Seller.

5.6 Authorization of Agreement. This Agreement has been duly and validly executed and delivered by Seller and constitutes the valid, binding and enforceable obligation of Seller. Seller has the right, power, legal capacity and authority to enter into and perform its obligations under this Agreement,

and no consent of any third party is necessary with respect thereto. the execution and delivery of this Agreement by Seller, the consummation of the transaction herein contemplated, and the performance of fulfillment of and compliance with the terms and conditions hereof by Seller do not and will not conflict with, or result in a breach of, or constitute a default under any agreement or instrument to which Seller is a party or by which it is bound, or result in the creation or imposition of any lien, charge or encumbrance against any of the Acquired Assets.

5.7 Continuing Accuracy. Each representation and warranty made by Seller in this Agreement or pursuant hereto shall continue to be true and correct at the time of the Closing as though such representation or warranty is being made again at and as such time.

6. SURVIVAL OF REPRESENTATIONS AND WARRANTIES: INDEMNIFICATION

6.1 Survival. the parties hereto agree that the representations and warranties contained in this agreement or in any documents, certificate, instrument or Exhibit delivered in connection here with shall survive the Closing and continue to be binding regardless of any investigation made at any time by the parties.

6.2 Indemnification. the Seller shall indemnify Buyers against and hold them harmless from: any and all liabilities, obligations, losses and deficiencies resulting from or arising out of any inaccuracy in or breach of any representation or warranty made by Seller in this Agreement or pursuant hereto, or from any non-fulfillment or breach or default in the performance by Seller of any of the covenants made by Seller herein, and any and all costs and expenses (including reasonable attorney's fees) relating to foregoing.

7. ADDITIONAL COVENANTS OF THE SELLER

7.1 Access to Information. During the period between the dates hereof and the Closing Date ("Interim Period"), Buyers or their representatives may make such investigation of the Acquired Assets as buyers may reasonably request, provided that such visits to inspect and investigate the Acquired Assets.

7.2 Safeguarding Inventories, Etc. Seller shall use its best efforts to preserve the inventory, work in process and raw material.

8. CONDITIONS PRECEDENT TO OBLIGATIONS TO CONSUMMATE THE TRANSACTIONS

8.1 Conditions Precedent to Obligations of Buyers. The obligations of Buyers to consummate the Closing as provided in Section 4 of this Agreement is subject to the fulfillment, at or prior to the Closing Date, of each of the following conditions.

8.1.1 All representations and warranties of Seller contained herein shall be true at and as of the Closing date with the same effect as though such representations and warranties are made at and as of such

time, Seller shall have performed and complied with all obligations, covenants and conditions required by this Agreement.

8.1.2 Buyers shall not have learned of any fact or condition with respect to the Acquired Assets which is materially at variance with one or more of the representations or warranties of seller set forth in this Agreement or which in Buyers' reasonable opinion materially and adversely affects such Acquired assets.

8.1.3 Seller shall have obtained all consents and approvals which may necessary to complete the transaction contemplated herein.

8.1.4 There shall not be any actual or threatened action, proceeding or investigation which, in the reasonable judgment of buyers, is directed toward challenging, restraining, prohibiting or invalidating the transaction contemplated herein or which, in the reasonable judgment of Buyers may affect the right of Buyers to own, operate or control after the consummation of the transaction contemplated herein any of the Acquired Assets.

9. MISCELLANEOUS

9.1 Finder's Fees. None.

9.2 Expenses. Buyers shall bear and pay all of their own expenses incident to the transaction contemplated by this Agreement, and Seller shall bear and pay all of their own expenses incident to the transaction contemplated by this Agreement. Such expenses include, with out limiting the generality thereof, legal fees, accounting fees, and costs of public document certificates.

9.3 Amendment. At any time prior to the closing, Seller and Buyers, may amend or modify this Agreement in such manner as they may mutually agree upon provided such amendment or modification is set forth in a writing executed by both parities with the same formality as this Agreement has been executed.

9.5 Exhibits. All Exhibits to this Agreement are constituted an integral part of this Agreement as if fully rewritten herein.

9.6 Execution in Counterparts. This Agreement may be executed in two or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which together shall constitute one and the same document.

9.7 Entire Agreement. This Agreement and the documents to be delivered herder constitute the entire understanding and agreement between the parties hereto concerning the subject matter hereof. All negotiations between the parties hereto are merged into this Agreement, and there are no representations, warranties, covenants, understandings or agreements, oral or otherwise, in relation there to between the parties other than those incorporated herein or to be delivered herder. Nothing expressed or implied in this Agreement is intended or shall be construed so as to grant or confer on any person, firm or corporation other than the parties hereto any rights or privileges herder.


9.8 Noncompetition Agreement by Seller. In connections with the sale to Buyers of the goodwill of the VIP Grooming Business assets described in Paragraph 1.1, above , Seller shall not, either directly or indirectly, carry on or engage in as owner, manager, operator, employee, or other participant, the business of pet grooming services in San Francisco County, California for a period of one year. If Seller breaches the foregoing obligation not to compete, Seller shall pay to Buyers as liquidated damages the sum of \$1,000 per month for the period in with Seller continues to breach the obligation not to compete. Seller and Buyers agree that the amount stated as liquidated damages is reasonable under the circumstances existing at the time that this Agreement was executed.

9.9 Governing Law. this Agreement shall in all respects be interpreted and construed in accordance with and governed by the laws of the State of California.

9.10 Binding Effect. This Agreement and all of the provisions hereof shall be binding upon and insure to benefit of the parties hereto and their respective successors and assigns, provided, however that neither party hereto may make any assignment of this Agreement or any interest herein without the prior written consent of the other party hereto.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have caused this Agreement to be executed by their duly authorized officers as of **November 19, 1996.**

Seller:

 Date: 12/10/96
Susan Stanich

Buyers:

 Date: 12/12/96
James Starkey

 Date: 12/10/96
Lancy Woo

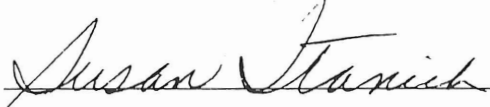
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Seller:

 Date: 12/10/96
Susan Stanich

Buyers:

 Date: 12/12/96
James Starkey

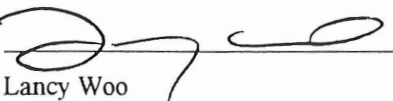
 Date: 12/10/96
Lancy Woo

EXHIBIT A
"ACQUIRED ASSETS"

- 1.) 5 Oster Cage Dryers (1 / 1 year old, 2 / 3 year old, 1 / 4 year old, 1 / over 5 years old)
- 2.) 1 Standing Dryer (over 5 years old)
- 3.) 2 Hydraulic Tables (1 / 1 year old, 1 / 5 year old)
- 4.) 1 Standard Table (2 years old)
- 5.) 4 Large Kennels
- 6.) 4 Medium Kennels
- 7.) 5 Small Kennels
- 8.) 1 Vari Kennel
- 9.) 1 Microwave (5 years old)
- 10.) 1 Metro Air Dryer (6 years old)
- 11.) 1 Fan
- 12.) 2 Wicker chairs (1 years old, \$150 each) (*Bought Dec. '95*)
- 13.) 1 Shop Vac

EXHIBIT B

"VIP Grooming"

Customer List



The Noe Valley Voice - February 1987

MORE Books to Read

...the books with the chosen ... at the Noe Valley Library, 251 ... (between Castro and Diamond) ... check them out 10 a.m. to noon ... 6 p.m. on Tuesdays, 1 to 6 p.m. ... on Wednesdays, and 1 to 6 p.m., Thursday ... on Saturdays (phone: 285-2789).

Children's Fiction
Jesse Bear: What Will You Wear? — Nancy ...
Up and Down With Owl and Owl — Kay ...
For Not Sleep — Susanna Grate (illustrated) — ...
Auntie A. Peace Story — Margaret Mahy (illustrated) — ...
Counting to 10 — A Good African ...
Story — M. Corley (illustrated) (10 and up).

Children's Nonfiction
A Pigeon is Born — Hildegarde Fraser Nagel ...
From Foothills Highway: The Story of the ...
Reindeer (Paw Print) — Gail Gibbons (illustrated) — ...
David Decides About Thanksgiving — A ...
Midwestern Story for Children and an ...
Information Guide for Parents — Susan ...
Booklet
Food: A Simple, Delicious Experience — D.C. ...
Spices (9 and up)
People, Jobs, and Families: Answers to ...
Questions Your Preschooler Asks — Lisa ...
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Early mention of VIP Grooming



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The Noe Valley Voice - April 1990

The Noe Valley Voice - April 1990

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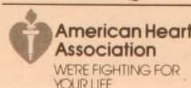
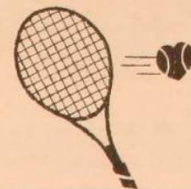
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Noe Valley's Most Popular

The Animal Company

SO, WHAT ELSE IS NEW? According to Mission Station's new police captain, Michael Hebel, Noe Valleyers are still harping about two neighborhood nuisances. "Most of the complaints we receive relate to either parking or litter," Hebel says.

Though he took over the helm just three months ago (former Mission captain Michael Brush was promoted to commander), Hebel is no stranger to the neighborhood. He lives in Diamond Heights (since 1980), and shops Downtown Noe Valley, and therefore has first-hand experience with the treacherous "Bell Market Bottleneck" on 24th. A San Francisco police officer since 1986, he is also a lawyer and holds a master's degree in criminology.

Says Hebel: "People are fed up with cars blocking the sidewalks, so we are stepping up our enforcement and citing vehicles who either park on or across the sidewalk. Our rule of thumb is whether a blind person or a person restricted to a wheelchair can navigate the sidewalk without having to go into the street."

Hebel's command is also stepping up efforts to remove abandoned cars and tow vehicles owned by "scrofflaws," those who have 30 or more unpaid parking tickets (for an expired registration and five or more unpaid parking tickets).

He's aware that every parking space counts in San Francisco. "Parking becomes a real problem when there are 450,000 cars registered in a city that has approximately 300,000 legal parking spaces, and I think that we are going to need local legislation to limit the number of cars registered in San Francisco and eventually limit the number of vehicles that can be owned by any one individual. I would also encourage those who are lucky enough to have a garage to use it."

As a show of good faith, Hebel has given 24th Street's "beat cop," Luis Penillo, a bicycle to use on her patrol. Since Penillo's bike patrol is the first in the city, Hebel says, police brass will be watching closely to see if the practice should be recycled to other neighborhoods.

AMAZINGLY, PARKING WAS NO PROBLEM at Bell Market for close to a week in mid

and now for the RUMORS behind the news BY MAZOOK



This suspenseful fruit stand was one of the casualties during the redevelopment of a Mission Station parking lot last month. But don't fret, neighborhood owners—the produce was donated to Open Hand, a non-profit food delivery service, a few days after the shooting. (Photo by Mazook)

Cutter, and Bell's car-carrying shoppers were treated to free valet parking, courtesy of the Flying Dutchmen hired by Columbia Pictures (Lorimar's parent company).

Unfortunately for Bell, the store's customers were too intimidated to just drive into a movie set, even with the lure of valet parking. "Our business dropped significantly (over 25 percent) over the four days they were filming," Bell manager Stan Lars said.

Also, residents living on Elizabeth Street were less than thrilled to see their precious parking spots monopolized by the TV show's cavalcade of mobile homes, sound trucks, and snack vans.

But most locals had the "Am I an over-reaction yet?" attitude, and vied for roadside seats when two Hollywood stunts—a nasty shootout and a car crash into a fruit stand—were staged in the lot. (The real-life fruits and vegetables, by the way, were donated to the same charity as the produce from the Bell Market stand.)

"Noe Valley is a lovely little place," he added. "The shops across 24th Street—all the little stores—were great, and we were able to use local people as atmosphere and background actors."

Perry said he was surprised at the number of autograph-seekers who descended on rock musician/actor Helm (famous for the Band/Cyndi Lauper's Dancin' (1) as director Matt Clark, who's also a character actor, with Jeremiah Johnson and the Bear of the North to his credit).

"A lot of the neighbors would come back day after day and watch for three-hour films," he said.

Perry and company may be returning the neighborhood themselves. "Our whole crew got hooked on Spinelli's coffee," he said.

VIP GROOMING
4299 24th Street









VIP SCRUB CLUB
1734 Church Street

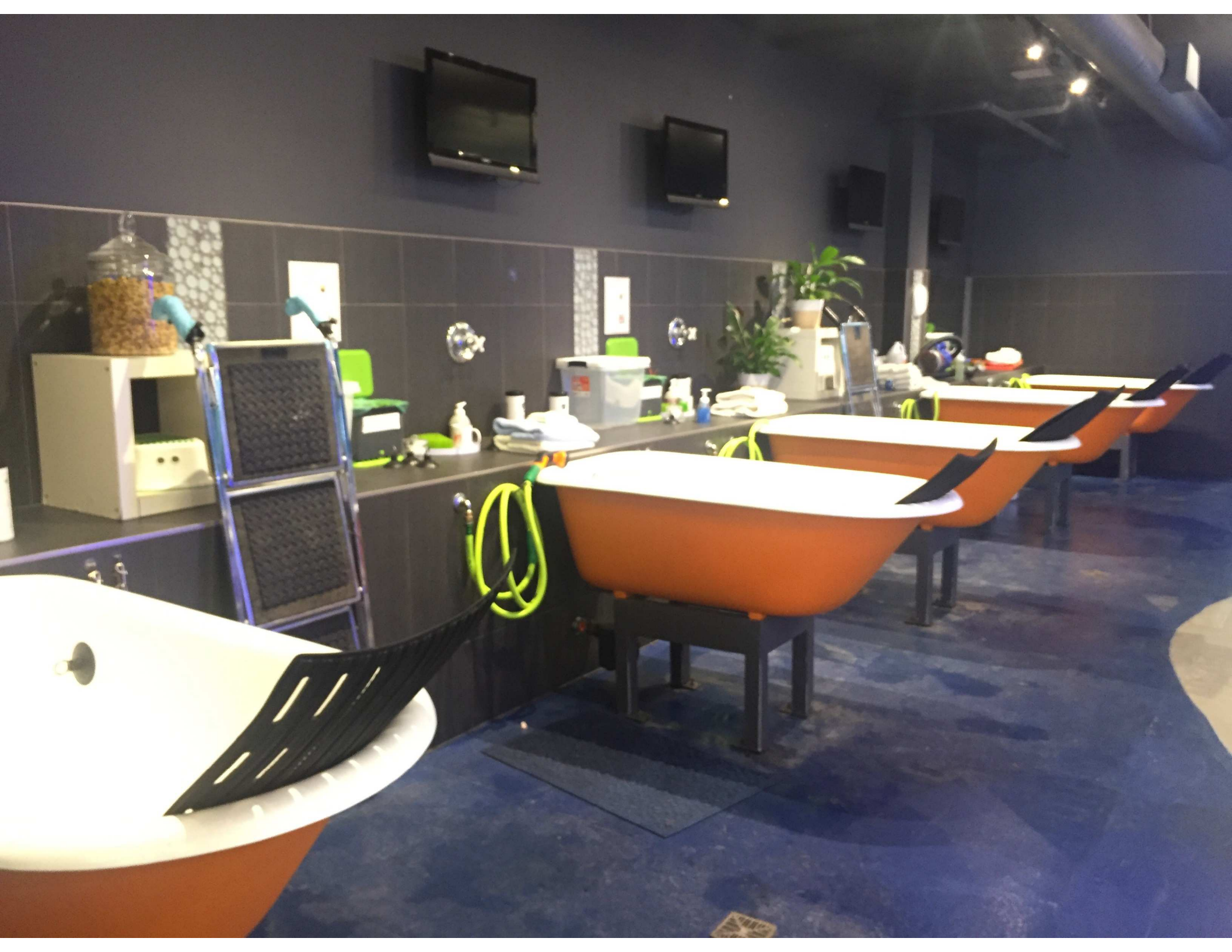




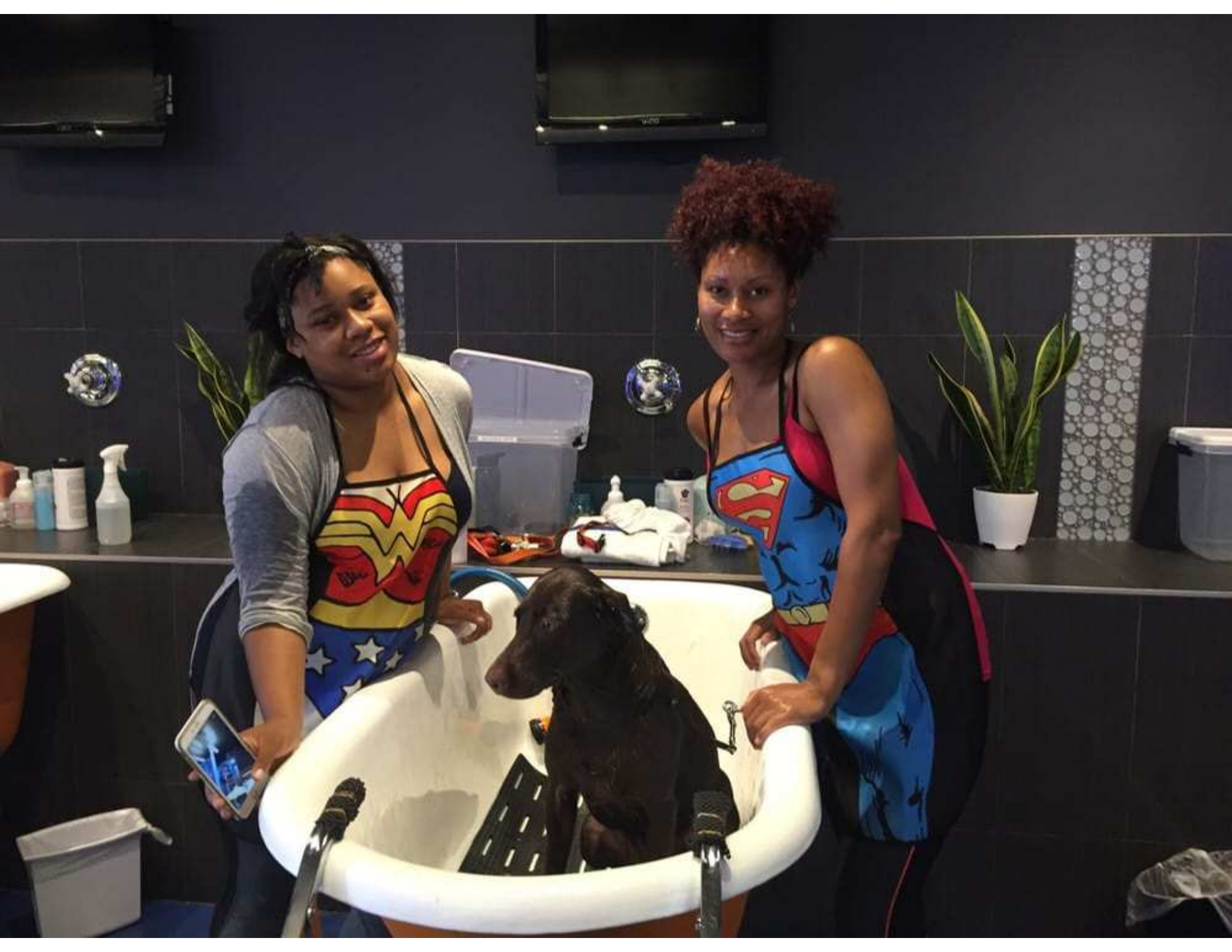


















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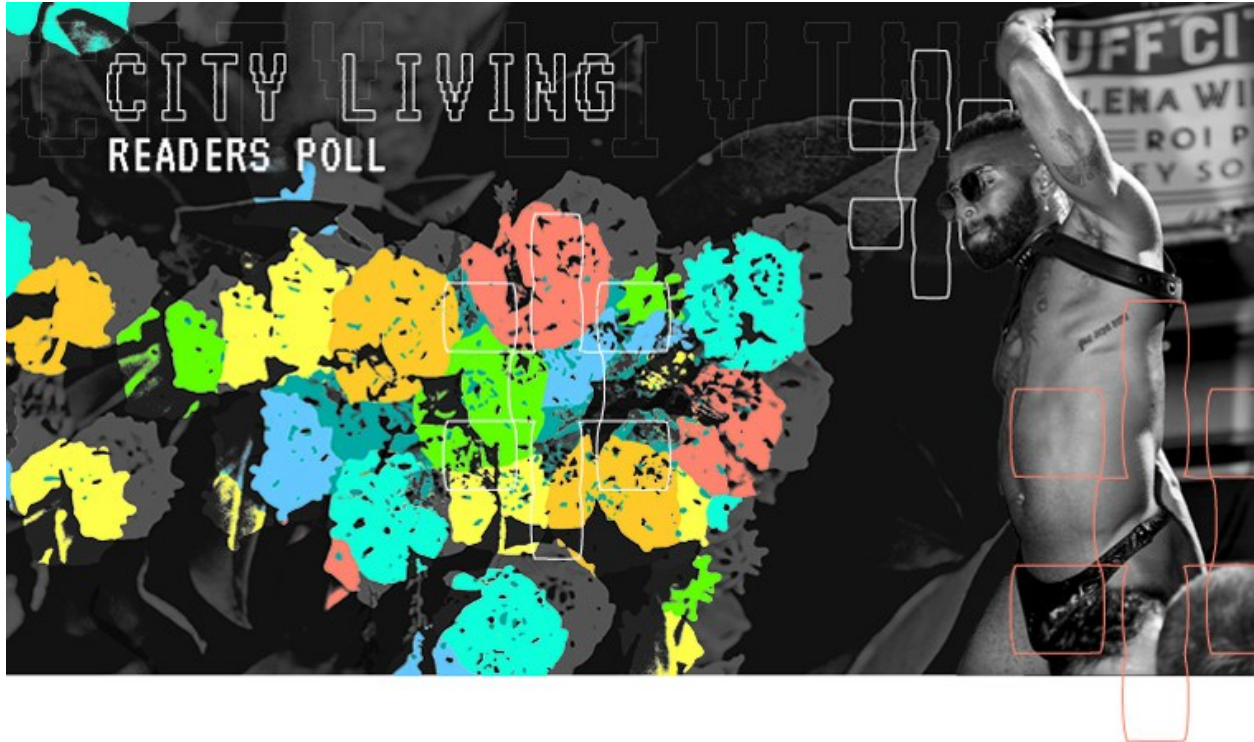
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A reveler at Folsom Street Fair, voted Best Street Fair. Photo by Gwen Park

BEST OF THE BAY 2016: CITY LIVING WINNERS

Our readers' picks for Best Street Fair, Best Bike Repair, Best Tailor, Best Gym, Best Pet Groomers, Best Plumber, and more

By Marke B.

October 20, 2016

48 Hills is proud to host the SF Bay Guardian Best of the Bay 2016. For more Best of the Bay 2016 categories, including Food and Drink, Arts and Entertainment, and Shopping, [please click here](#).

BEST OF THE BAY 2016: CITY LIVING

BEST PET GROOMING

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CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION



Lancy Woo & Christy Chung

In honor of your great honor in being awarded the 2006 Community Grand Marshal Award for the San Francisco Pride celebration. We are enormously grateful for all you are doing to stand your ground and fight for full marriage equality for all. Don't give up until that marriage certificate is final!

**June 24, 2006
San Francisco, California**

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Carole Migden' and the signature on the right is another person's name, possibly a senator.

Carole Migden

Assembly

CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Cristy Chung and Lancy Woo

Advocates for Marriage Equality

In honor of your fierce leadership and dedication to fighting for justice, human rights, and the well being of Asian American Pacific Islander women and girls. On the occasion of being honored at the National Asian American Women Forum's 10th Anniversary Dinner and Award Celebration, I salute you on behalf of the California State Assembly. Congratulations.

September 16, 2006



Mark Ridley-Thomas

MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Assemblymember, 48th District



CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

Lancy Woo

Community Grand Marshal 2006

Congratulations and Happy Pride Day! I join you as together we "Commemorate. Educate. Liberate. Celebrate!" Your presence at the 2006 Pride Celebration Weekend is special and adds greatly to the richness of the event. Have fun, be safe, and enjoy the experience!



A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Mark Leno".

MARK LENO
Assemblyman, 13th District
June 24, 2006

STORE TREK

Store Trek is a regular Voice column profiling new stores in Noe Valley. This month, we spotlight a dog wash and pet store on Church Street, within a block of the dog run at Upper Noe Recreation Center.

VIP SCRUB CLUB
1734 Church Street near Day Street
415-970-2231
<https://vipscrubclub.com/>

The canine customers at VIP Scrub Club may be experiencing a sense of déjà vu, particularly if they used to be bathed at the former occupant of this scent-sational storefront on Church Street in outer Noe Valley.

For five years, the space had been known as K9 Scrub Club, until it closed its doors last November. After experiencing several personal tragedies, the owners decided to decamp for the East Coast, leaving the confines of their business largely intact.

Having befriended K9's owners, long-time dog groomer Lancy Woo, who owns VIP Grooming on 24th Street, and her fiancée, Sage Cotton, decided to take over the dog-washing business.

"They left all their stuff. We sort of re-arranged it," says Woo.

The couple decided to keep the blue-and-orange color scheme and the layout of the five cast-iron tubs. In the back can be found a drying room with wall-mounted dryers and towels for use.

The main change the women made was to relocate the check-in desk to a few feet directly ahead of the front doors. In its place, on the left-hand side of the entrance area, can now be found a doggie play area decked out with a teepee-covered bed, tunnel, and toys to keep canine customers busy while they wait for their baths.

As for their human companions, they will find a free self-serve coffee bar, several chairs, and a picnic table with benches for their use.

On the wall to the right of the entrance



VIP Scrub Club owners and their dogs Sage Cotton (left) with Milo and Lancy Woo with Charlie.
Photo by Pamela Gerard

is shelving featuring toys, accessories, and snacks for sale. The shop carries Wiley's jerky in several flavors, \$12 to \$14 per 4 oz. bag, from the San Francisco-based EcoPawz, which sources its ingredients from local farms.

"They use products not being used for human consumption and turn it into really yummy jerky and snacks for dogs," says Cotton. "It is all organic and cuts of meat we would normally throw away."

For now, the cost of a bath runs \$25 with the tubs made available on a first-come basis. VIP Scrub Club also offers discounted packages, with six baths priced at \$120. A 12-bath pack costs \$210, while the 24-bath package runs \$360. There are no size limits for the dogs, and two dogs can be washed together for \$50.

Each bath includes shampoo, conditioner, face wash, ear and eye wipe, and towels, plus a free dog treat. Shampoos come in a range of scents, from tropical passion and citrus blossom to jasmine, lavender, or pomegranate.

The facility also carries four types of specialty shampoos that are wheat- and gluten-free. Several of the higher-end

shampoos cost extra, from \$5 to \$10 per bath.

"We wanted to make the best products available for use in self-serve. This is all high-end shampoos and conditioners used by professionals," says Woo, who 18 years ago opened VIP Grooming at 4299 24th St.

VIP Scrub Club opened in late April and has been trying to get the word out to dog owners they once again have an option in Noe Valley to wash their four-legged friends. They also have rolled out a full-service washing option and, at some point, may also add grooming services on-site.

The VIP Lickity-Split WeWash service is by appointment only and includes two shampoos, one to remove dirt and a second to clarify the skin and hair, a conditioner, face wash, and either a towel or blow dry. For small- to medium-sized shorthaired dogs, the cost is \$40 for a 30-minute appointment and \$50 for a 45-minute appointment. Larger dogs cost \$60 to \$80, depending on the breed, for a 60-minute session.

The women envision using the space to host various events, from wine tastings

and dog-friendly game nights to adoption days, as well as bringing in pet masseuses and psychics. For Mother's Day they offered "Mom-Mosas" and have also held special "Sunday Funday" specials where washers are treated to a glass of wine.

"We are into creating community," says Cotton, who has been handling administrative duties at VIP Grooming but does not have an ownership stake in the business.

The women met six years ago and are currently planning their wedding. It will be a particularly poignant day for Woo: Her last name was initially attached to the California lawsuit filed in 2004 seeking the right to marry for same-sex couples.

The case later became known as In Re Marriage Cases when Woo and her former partner, Cristy Chung, announced in 2006 they had decided to separate.

"I was the lead plaintiff in the marriage case," notes Woo, who is excited that she and Cotton "are finally getting married."

The couple had pushed off setting a date for their ceremony while prepping to open VIP Scrub Club. Not only had they wanted to co-own a business together, they were also interested in finding less-taxing work for Woo, who has been a dog groomer for more than three decades.

The job is very physical, and though Woo continues to be in good shape, she is turning 50 this year and looking to transition more of the workload to her employees.

"I thought opening a self-wash would be kind of fun and a little less physical," says Woo. "Groomers can get carpal tunnel and bad backs. They don't last very long."

Cotton, who is also turning 50, adds, "When this came up, it seemed a good fit. You can see how there would be wear and tear on her body moving forward."

Building the dog-washing business back up has gone "a little slower than we'd like," admits Cotton, but "a lot of people have been inquiring and finding out we are open."

VIP Scrub Club is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thursdays through Mondays.

—Matthew S. Bajko

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THE NOE VALLEY VOICE

New Pet Store Raises Hackles on 24th Street

L.A.-Based Company Seeks to
Take Over Radio Shack Spot

By Matthew S. Bajko

A campaign is under way to prevent a chain of pet stores based in Los Angeles County from opening its first northern California outlet on 24th Street, where the former Radio Shack had been..

Healthy Spot announced last fall that it wanted to move into the vacant storefront at 4049 24th St. But at a community meeting it held in the space in late November, the company was largely met with howls of protest from the owners of local pet stores and their customers. The opposition mobilized 40 people within hours of learning about the meeting in order to raise a string of objections.

“The only people there in favor of it were from Healthy Spot,” said Rick French, who with his wife co-owns the Animal Company on Castro Street not far from where Healthy Spot wants to open.

Added Ellen French, “They were sur-



Signing Up Support: Animal Company co-owner Rick French tallies the signatures lining up against a “big box” retail competitor in Noe Valley.
Photo by Pamela Gerard

prised at the response.”

Since then, a petition opposing the chain store has netted more than 1,000 signatures, and businesses throughout Noe Valley have posted signs seeking help to keep Healthy Spot from securing the permits it needs to open its doors.

According to the company’s website, it has a dozen locations in southern California; thus, it falls under San Francisco’s formula retail ordinance. Any business with 11 or more locations in the United

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Noe Valley May Be Key for Successor To Ed Lee

District 8 Supervisor Race
Heats Up June Election

By Matthew S. Bajko

The fates of candidates running to be the city’s District 8 supervisor and the next mayor could be decided by Noe Valley voters this June.

The neighborhood consistently has some of the highest voter turnout in the city and could play a spoiler role in the two special elections for the local offices on the June 5 primary ballot. The two high-profile supervisor candidates have been campaigning in Noe Valley for months, while a prominent resident is a leading contender for Room 200 at City Hall.

The sudden death in December of former Mayor Ed Lee triggered the special election to serve out the remainder of his term. Former District 8 Supervisor Mark Leno, who has also served in both the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

Rock Journalist Rides the Radio Waves

From Shelling Shrimp to
Rolling Stone Stardom

By Tim Simmers

After a screening last month of the new Grateful Dead documentary *Long Strange Trip*, rock journalist and author Ben Fong-Torres kicked off a Q&A with filmmaker Amir Bar-Lev and Grateful Dead guitarist Bob Weir.

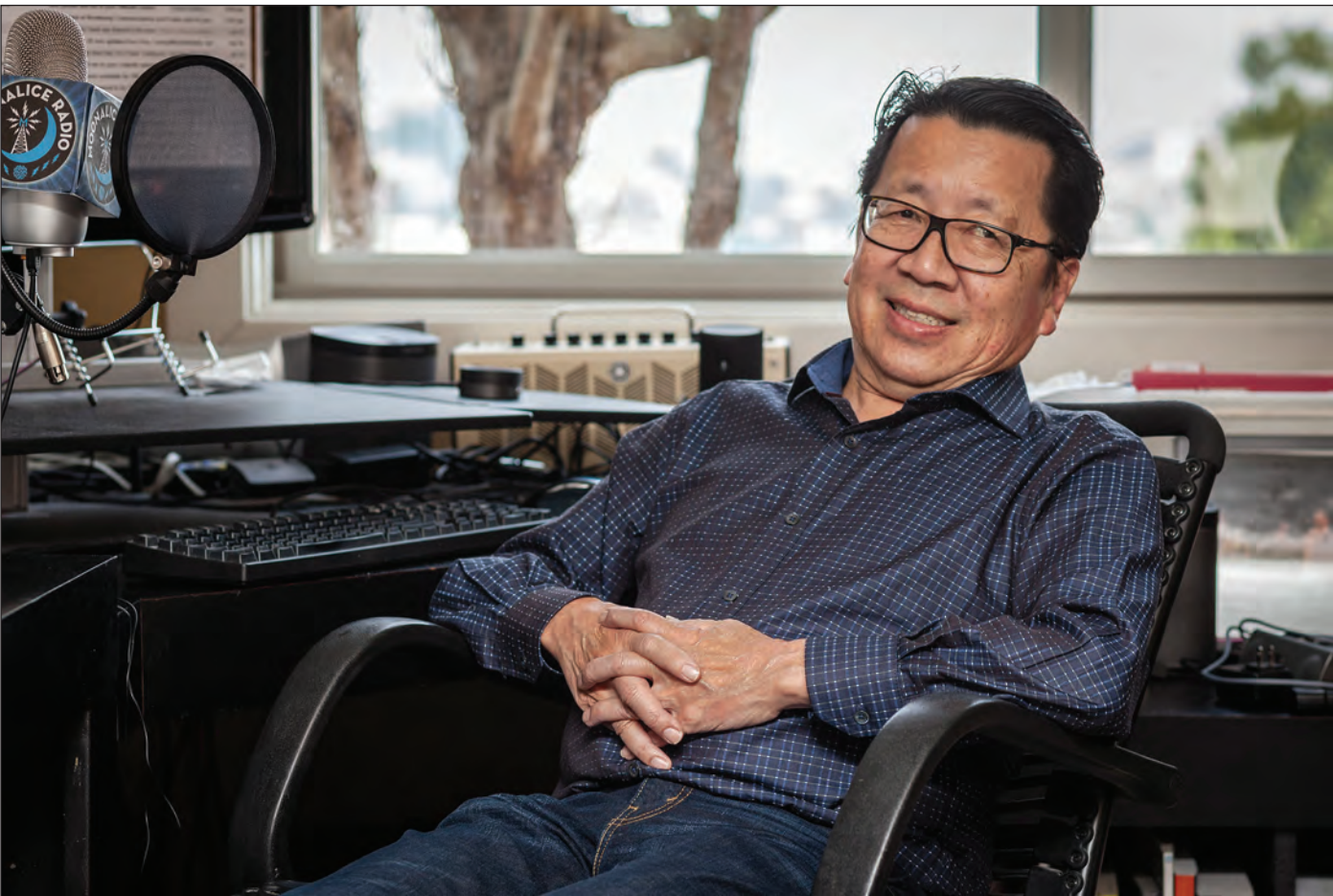
The impact of psychedelic drugs on the Dead’s music and how the band reflected the zeitgeist of the 1960s became prime topics.

It was familiar territory for Noe Valley resident Fong-Torres, the longtime *Rolling Stone* magazine journalist and editor. He’s frequently asked to moderate such panels, or deliver a keynote speech at happenings involving music.

As one of the first staff writers at the pioneering magazine, Fong-Torres penned some 400 articles about rock and its legends, and is revered around the ’60s and ’70s music scene. It was at the once-counterculture bible that his articles appeared alongside those of legendary writers such as Hunter S. Thompson and Tom Wolfe.

“I never had a hankering to be a rock journalist,” said Fong-Torres, 73, who has lived near the top of Castro Street for 32 years. “There was no such thing as a rock journalist then,” he laughed.

In a new film documentary on *Rolling Stone*, Fong-Torres appears as a young reporter banging on an ancient black typewriter, attending meetings, and talking on the phone at the office of the magazine launched in 1967 in San Francisco.



Ben Fong-Torres, in his home studio on Castro Street, still leans toward rock music after a long strange trip through its intimate beginnings.
Photo by Art Bodner

For more than a decade, Fong-Torres conducted interviews and wrote cover stories running many thousands of words. His personal favorites included articles on Bob Dylan, Ray Charles, Marvin Gaye, and Tina Turner.

The experience inspired books like his memoir *The Rice Room, Not Fade Away: A Backstage Pass to 20 Years of Rock & Roll*, and *Hickory Wind*, his gripping tale of country rock legend Gram Parsons. As a DJ at iconic KSAN radio during the ’70s, he occupied another front-row seat—for the soaring rock scene in San

Francisco and elsewhere around the country.

Fong-Torres grew up in Oakland in a family that owned a Chinese restaurant. He waited tables and worked in the kitchen, where he cut his teeth wrapping won tons, shelling prawns, and peeling snow peas. Though he was in his mid-20s, he didn’t tell his parents he worked for a rock magazine. They heard about it from the parents of his friends, and weren’t pleased.

“As a younger person, I felt inept, partly because I was raised in a Chinese

restaurant family,” he said. “I was working all the time, didn’t go out with friends, didn’t stay after school for activities, and didn’t have a regular American social life.” Sometimes he asked his friends questions just so he didn’t have to talk. He learned to listen, and that led him to reporting.

Rock assignments soon took him on the road. He traveled to Reno to write about Creedence Clearwater Revival, and interviewed young Joni Mitchell at her

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

New Pet Store Faces Opposition

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

States is considered a “formula” retailer by the city and must seek approval from the city’s planning commission in order to open.

Although there are no restrictions against a chain store opening along Noe Valley’s main business corridor, as evidenced by the Whole Foods grocery store and a number of national bank branches, residents and business leaders have vocally opposed other formula retailers along 24th Street. The concerns range from preserving the commercial area’s unique appeal to the negative impact such businesses could have on mom-and-pop shops, which are already struggling to afford high lease prices while competing against the growth of online retailing.

In the case of Healthy Spot, the owners of four pet-based businesses in Noe Valley are concerned that the chain will undercut them on prices and force them out of business.

Pet Supplies Abundant

“There is no need” for Healthy Spot to open in Noe Valley, said Animal Company co-owner Ellen French, as “nothing they sell we don’t already provide.”

Added her husband, Rick French, “It spoils Noe Valley’s uniqueness of having a small business community.”

The Frenches have owned their business for 17 years, having purchased it from the original owner, who had operated the store for 25 years. Ellen French estimated that 95 percent of the other local merchants she has approached support their position opposing Healthy Spot.

“No one wants a chain store here,” she said, adding that most people would prefer to see a hardware store go into the vacant storefront.

The couple have a sign posted by their store’s cash register about the fight over the proposed pet store with a headline that reads “Keep Noe Valley Businesses LOCAL.” They said they first learned about Healthy Spot’s plans from customers a few days prior to the community meeting.

“They are trying to weasel their way in,” said Rick French about the lack of outreach Healthy Spot representatives did with local merchants.

Longtime dog groomer Lancy Woo—who owns VIP Grooming on 24th Street a few blocks away from where Healthy Spot wants to open, and her fiancée, Sage Cotton, who co-owns with her VIP Scrub Club on Church Street—also only learned about the proposed chain store a day prior to the meeting. They too argue that there is no need for another pet business in the



Healthy Spot CEO Andrew Kim fields questions from neighbors and merchants at a community meeting at the Radio Shack space in late November. Photo courtesy Dave Emanuel

area, noting that within one mile of the proposed store are nearly a dozen pet stores and grooming businesses.

“Another pet store or grooming shop, we don’t need that,” said Cotton.

Added Woo, “It is hard enough to make a living as a small business owner as it is” in San Francisco, without having to directly compete against a chain store.

Petition Launched

For the last two decades, Woo has owned the pet grooming business at the corner of 24th Street and Douglass, which first opened 35 years ago. Two years ago, the couple took over the other location, vacated by a previous pet-washing business.

“I think people, particularly in Noe Valley, support small businesses. Our customers get angry when they learn a chain store wants to come in,” said Cotton. “When that happens, the lease prices go up and the quality of service goes down. It makes it harder for small businesses to exist, and when they pull out it means even more vacancies.”

That sentiment is born out by the petition Cotton created on Change.org opposing Healthy Spot <https://www.change.org/p/keep-noe-valley-businesses-local-break-the-chain>.

In it she wrote, “It appears they picked this location in order to drive out our independent, small businesses with unfair advantages and pricing in order to encroach on the customer bases we’ve spent years building and supporting.”

The petition had 981 signatures as of mid-January, with many adding notes of their own explaining why they believed the city’s planning commission should deny Healthy Spot’s permit.

“I do support our neighborhood commercial mix that prioritizes local and individual businesses—AND we already have adequate services for our pets in the neighborhood,” wrote Helen Loeser.

Stephanie Levin wrote, “Box stores do not belong in our neighborhood. If you want a neighborhood, you need small, independent locally owned businesses, not big box stores. Keep big box stores OUT of the neighborhoods, including Noe Valley. Put a small hardware store, shoe repair, something people need.”

Customers of the Noe Valley Pet Company on Church Street have also been expressing their opposition to Healthy Spot, according to an employee of the store. Owners Celia Sack and Paula Harris, who were out of town and did not respond to an emailed interview request by the *Voice*’s press deadline, have hung paper copies of the petition opposing the chain store by the front door of their shop for people to sign.

Healthy Spot Touts Nutrition

The *Voice* contacted Sierra Enticknap, the community marketing manager for Healthy Spot, seeking to interview Andrew Kim and Mark Boonark, who co-founded the company in 2008. After an initial reply that she would find someone within the company for the interview, Enticknap did not respond to follow-up emails by press time.

According to the company’s bio it posted on its website, the business partners launched Healthy Spot 10 years ago in response to a pet food recall. In doing so, they contend they “removed the guesswork” on the part of the pet owners “by assuring that every stocked product meets a stringent pre-selection criteria for premium quality of ingredients, and quality in procurement and manufacturing.”

The company claims to carry only pet products that are “organic, natural, raw and or eco-friendly and made with responsible manufactured practices.” In addition to its retail offerings and the full-service grooming it provides at all of its locations, Healthy Spot also offers day-care services at several of its stores.

“Healthy Spot is committed to inspire healthy pet lifestyles by creating authentic experiences and fostering community, one pet at a time,” claims the company.

Taylor Jordan, a consultant with Light-house Public Affairs who is working with Healthy Spot on its permit request and public relations, told the *Voice* that since the company filed its application with the planning department in mid-December, it probably would not have its hearing scheduled before the planning commission until sometime around May or June.

Opponents in Noe Valley expressed confidence that they would be able to convince the planning commissioners to vote against granting a permit to Healthy Spot. But they also stressed they weren’t viewing such an outcome as guaranteed.

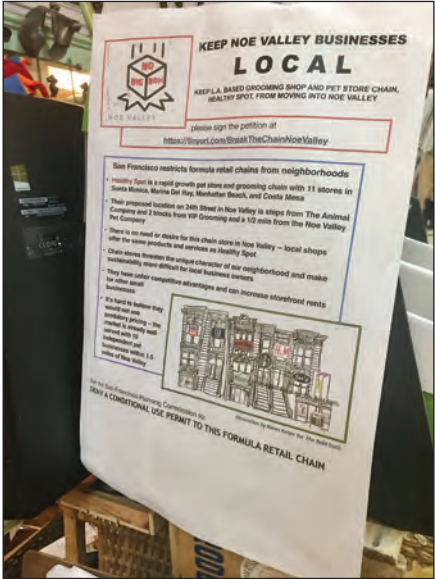
“I am pretty confident they will vote no, but it is not something I am being complacent about,” noted Rick French.

Cotton also believes Noe Valley’s pet businesses have a good argument to make before the oversight body.

“But I am not taking anything for granted. They have a lot of money as a big-box store owner, as evidenced by the lobbying group they have employed,” she said. “I feel confident our city officials won’t be swayed by those tactics. I plan to make sure the community knows what is going on and the planning commission knows what the community wants.”

Despite their opposition to Healthy Spot in Noe Valley, both couples noted they are not against seeing the company open elsewhere in the city where there aren’t already established pet stores, such as in the newer residential districts in Mission Bay, the Dogpatch, and along central Market Street.

“There are plenty of places for them to go in the city,” said Rick French. ■



A sign posted near the Animal Company’s cash register pleads “Keep Noe Valley Businesses LOCAL.” Photo by Pamela Gerard

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ACLU of Southern
California

FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY IN MASSACHUSETTS AND HOPE CALIFORNIA COURTS AND LEGISLATURE MOVE QUICKLY TO END MARRIAGE DISCRIMINATION IN CALIFORNIA

AUTHOR

[ACLU of Southern California \(/en/biographies/aclu-southern-california\)](/en/biographies/aclu-southern-california)

MAY 17, 2004

LOS ANGELES - As hundreds of same-sex couples in Massachusetts become the first in the country to obtain marriage licenses pursuant to a ruling by a state supreme court, lesbian and gay couples in California fervently hope that the legislature and courts will move quickly to end marriage discrimination in California as well.

"We are thrilled for the couples who have fought so hard to achieve this remarkable victory for equality in Massachusetts," said Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, the first same-sex couple to be married in California after San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom and San Francisco Assessor Mabel Teng authorized the issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples in February of this year. "Fifty-one years ago when we began our life together, we couldn't have imagined this day would come, and yet even now, it is long overdue," said Lyon and Martin. "As we celebrate today with the couples in Massachusetts, we are keenly aware that lesbian and gay couples in California do not yet have a secure right to marry in our own state."

Lyon, 79, and Martin, 83, have been together for more than fifty-one years. They were married in California on February 12, 2004.

California Attorney General Bill Lockyer has asked the California Supreme Court to invalidate their marriage and that of the more than 4,000 other same-sex couples who obtained marriage licenses in San Francisco.

On March 12, less than 24 hours after the California Supreme Court order issued an order directing San Francisco to stop issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples, Lancy Woo and Christy Chung, a lesbian couple who have been together for sixteen years and have a five year old daughter, filed a lawsuit seeking the right to marry. The lawsuit asserts that excluding lesbian and gay people from marriage violates the California Constitution.

"Like the many other lesbian and gay couples who love and commit to each other, we understand the deep desire on the part of same-sex couples in Massachusetts to secure respect and equality for their relationships," said Woo and Chung. "It is out of that desire that we have committed to be part of the lawsuit here in California that is challenging marriage discrimination and seeking to end the inequality faced by lesbian and gay couples in this state once and for all."

Woo and Chung, as well as nine other same-sex couples who wish to marry, are represented by the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the ACLU, and Lambda Legal. Equality California, the statewide advocacy group for LGBT people, and Our Family Coalition, a Bay Area advocacy group for same-sex parents and their children, are also plaintiffs in the case.

Equality California is also the organizational sponsor of AB 1967, Assemblyman Mark Leno's Marriage License Non-Discrimination Act, which would amend the California marriage statutes to permit same-sex couples to marry. On April 20, 2004, in an historic 8 to 3 vote, AB 1967 was voted favorably out of the Assembly Judiciary

Committee, marking the first time such a bill has received a favorable committee vote in any state legislature in the country.

On May 12, 2004, the Assembly Appropriations Committee placed the bill in suspense, pending the committee's review of a UCLA study showing that permitting same-sex couples to marry will save the state millions of dollars annually. "We are inspired by the tremendous courage of same-sex couples in Massachusetts, who refused to accept anything less than full equality and dignity for their families," said Kate Kendell, executive director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights. "We will not rest until we achieve the same safety, dignity, and protection for our families here."

"California couples deserve the same rights currently enjoyed by the people of Massachusetts," said Martha Matthews, Bohnett Attorney with the ACLU of Southern California. "Loving couples throughout the state should be allowed to fulfill their commitment to each other regardless of sexual orientation."

In addition to defending the City and County of San Francisco against the Attorney General's lawsuit challenging the City's authority to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples, City Attorney Dennis Herrera has also filed a direct challenge to the exclusion of same-sex couples from marriage. That lawsuit has been consolidated with *Woo v. Lockyer* and is now proceeding in San Francisco Superior Court. On May 25, the California Supreme Court will hear oral argument in the Attorney General's lawsuit. City attorney Terry Stewart will argue on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco on that date.

For more information about the case and marriage equality visit www.nclrights.org (<http://www.nclrights.org>), www.acnlu-sc.org (<http://www.acnlu-sc.org>), and www.eqca.org (<http://www.eqca.org>).

<https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/s-f-gay-marriages-head-to-court-judge-will-2662344.php>

SFGATE

S.F. gay marriages head to court / Judge will begin hearing arguments Wednesday on constitutionality of California's ban on same-sex unions

By **Bob Egelko**

Published 4:00 am, Tuesday, December 21, 2004



Chronicle / Lacy Atkins

Photo: LACY ATKINS

Cristy Chung center, gives Olivia a kiss as she and partner Lancy Woo read a story to her as Olivia goes to bed, Sunday Dec. 19, 2004, in San Francisco. Lancy Woo and Cristy Chung are lead plaintiffs in the same-sex marriage case. I'm writing a side story to main legal story about the 12 couples who are plaintiffs in the case. Please photograph Lancy and Cristy and their daughter Olivia. LACY ATKINS/SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

S.F. gay marriages head to court / Judge will begin hearing arguments Wednesday on constitutionality of California's ban on same-sex unions.

The San Francisco judge who tackles the constitutionality of California's ban on same-sex marriage Wednesday will have to sift through competing claims of tradition, history, prejudice and equal rights.

Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer must also try to fathom the fundamental policy of a state that, when it comes to gay rights, has been a bundle of contradictions.

Kramer will hear arguments in a hearing starting Wednesday morning on whether the law that defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman violates anti-discrimination and privacy rules in the state Constitution.

The judge has given no indication of his views, but says he hopes to decide the case on the basis of legal arguments, without having to weigh evidence about the potential effects of same-sex marriage on society. That hasn't stopped two conservative groups from asking Kramer to consider authorities who assert that children and families would suffer if gays and lesbians were allowed to wed.

The hearing comes 10 months after Mayor Gavin Newsom's order that allowed nearly 4,000 same-sex couples to marry at San Francisco City Hall. The state Supreme Court halted the marriages after a month and invalidated them in August, ruling that Newsom had exceeded his authority.

That ruling did not address the constitutionality of the marriage law, an issue that is likely to work its way from Kramer's court back to the state's high court within a year.

The controversy reached the national stage before Newsom's decree -- Massachusetts' high court had already overturned that state's marriage law, going a step beyond previous rulings in Hawaii and Vermont, and President Bush had indicated support for a constitutional amendment that would outlaw same-sex marriage nationwide.

But as the first U.S. city to invite same-sex couples to marry, San Francisco brought home the reality -- or the threat -- of a new form of family relationship to millions of Americans. The highly visible City Hall weddings, and San Francisco's libertine reputation, helped to fuel the successful campaigns for anti-gay-marriage amendments in 11 states last month, including Ohio, where turnout for the ballot measure may have tipped the crucial state to Bush.

If Kramer, or an appellate court later on, overturns the California law, opponents of same-sex marriage have made it clear that they will go back to the ballot with a constitutional amendment. That's what happened in Oregon, where a trial judge's ruling that found that state's marriage law discriminatory was nullified by the voters on Nov. 2.

Opinion polls indicate that a majority of Californians favors equal rights for gays and lesbians but opposes same-sex marriage -- an apparent contradiction also visible in the laws that Kramer must consider in his ruling.

As of Jan. 1, the state will have the nation's most far-reaching domestic partner law, extending nearly all the rights of married couples to thousands of same-sex partners and to some unmarried heterosexual couples older than 62. The law reflects legislative support for the state's strong and highly visible gay-rights movement, which enjoyed political success as early as 1978 when California voters rejected a ban on homosexual teachers.

But when the subject is marriage, California has been indistinguishable from other states. The state's first ban on same-sex marriage, drafted to clear up an ambiguity in the law, breezed through a Democratic-controlled Legislature in 1977 and was signed by Democratic Gov. Jerry Brown; a ballot measure to reaffirm the law and prohibit recognition of same-sex marriages from other states, Proposition 22, was handily approved by voters in 2000.

The court case is proceeding without Newsom, whose legal role in the dispute was ended by the state Supreme Court decision. His mantle has been picked up by City Attorney Dennis Herrera, who filed suit proclaiming the city's interest in marriage equality. The suit is being heard along with constitutional challenges by same-sex couples in San Francisco -- including some who were married at City Hall -- and Los Angeles.

The plaintiffs' central argument is that the marriage law discriminates on the basis of sex and sexual orientation, both protected categories under the California Constitution.

They cite a 1948 California Supreme Court ruling -- the nation's first to strike down a law banning interracial marriage -- that declared the "freedom to join in marriage with the person of one's choice."

"The fundamental right to decide whether and whom to marry extends to each of us," said Chief Deputy City Attorney Therese Stewart in court papers. "There is no constitutional exception to liberty for gay and lesbian citizens."

Defenders of the state law reject any comparison to interracial marriage and say the current statutes were motivated not by bigotry against gays and lesbians but by the state's legitimate interest in preserving the historic definition of marriage.

"The common understanding of marriage as between a man and a woman predates the founding of this state or nation, and is deeply rooted in our history and traditions," Attorney General Bill Lockyer's office said in written arguments. "There simply is no deeply rooted tradition of same-sex marriage in California or in any other state."

The current definition of marriage "has transcended religion, culture and time, and is the hallmark of every major civilization," said the Alliance Defense Fund, prompting a volley of rebuttals from gay-rights lawyers about biblically sanctioned polygamy and diverse cultural practices.

Lockyer, a Democrat with eyes on the 2006 governor's race, is trying to harmonize his support for equal rights of gays and lesbians with his defense of traditional marriage. His courtroom allies are religious conservatives who want the law upheld for another reason: In their view, the purpose of marriage is childbearing, and children fare best with straight, married parents.

"In endorsing same-sex marriage, law and government will be making a powerful statement: Our government no longer believes children deserve mothers and fathers," Liberty Counsel, representing the Campaign for California Families, said in a court filing.

"No same-sex couple, regardless of how much they love a child or how good they are at parenting, can provide a child the benefits of his or her own biological parents," declared the Alliance Defense Fund, whose client is the Proposition 22 Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Their opponents say those arguments run counter to California's official policy of equality for same-sex couples -- including, in the domestic partner law, equal rights in adoption, inheritance and child support.

State law "unambiguously supports parenting by lesbian and gay people," said the National Center for Lesbian Rights and Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund in arguments on behalf of the San Francisco couples. Denying marriage to those couples merely hurts their children and does nothing to protect children in other families, the lawyers wrote.

As for Lockyer's argument that the state can promote equality of domestic partners while reserving marriage for opposite-sex couples, Stewart, the city's lawyer, commented, "At this point in our history, it really should go without saying that separate is not equal."

Case No. S _____

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF CALIFORNIA

In re MARRIAGE CASES

Judicial Council Coordination Proceeding No. 4365
No. A110451

LANCY WOO, et al.,
Plaintiffs-Petitioners and Respondents,
v.

BILL LOCKYER, et al.,
Defendants-Respondents and Appellants.

After a Decision of the Court of Appeal
First Appellate District, Division Three
Consolidated on Appeal with
Case Nos. A110449, A110450, A110463, A110651, A110652
San Francisco Superior Court Case Nos. 504038, JCCP4365
Honorable Richard A. Kramer, Judge

PETITION FOR REVIEW

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Additional Counsel Listed on Next Page

LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND EDUCATION FUND, INC.
ACLU FOUNDATION OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
ACLU FOUNDATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
LAW OFFICE OF DAVID C. CODELL

*Attorneys for Plaintiffs-Petitioners and Respondents in No. A110451
Joshua Rymer and Tim Frazer, et al.*

REAL FAMILIES,

Much of the press coverage since San Francisco's historic flood of same-sex marriages has focused on the legal efforts to gain marriage equality. The photos on these pages remind us of the simple yet profound stories behind this struggle—real people making real commitments to their spouses and children.

CHUNG-WOO FAMILY

Lancy Woo (left) and Cristy Chung, pictured here with their five-year-old daughter, Olivia, have been together for 16 years. "It's for both legal reasons and love and commitment that marriage is important to us," says Cristy. "I'm a stay-at-home mom, and there are so many ways where legally our family isn't protected. And it's also about love, because we're always saying we want to spend the rest of our lives together. I want to tell the world."



GINA ORTEGA

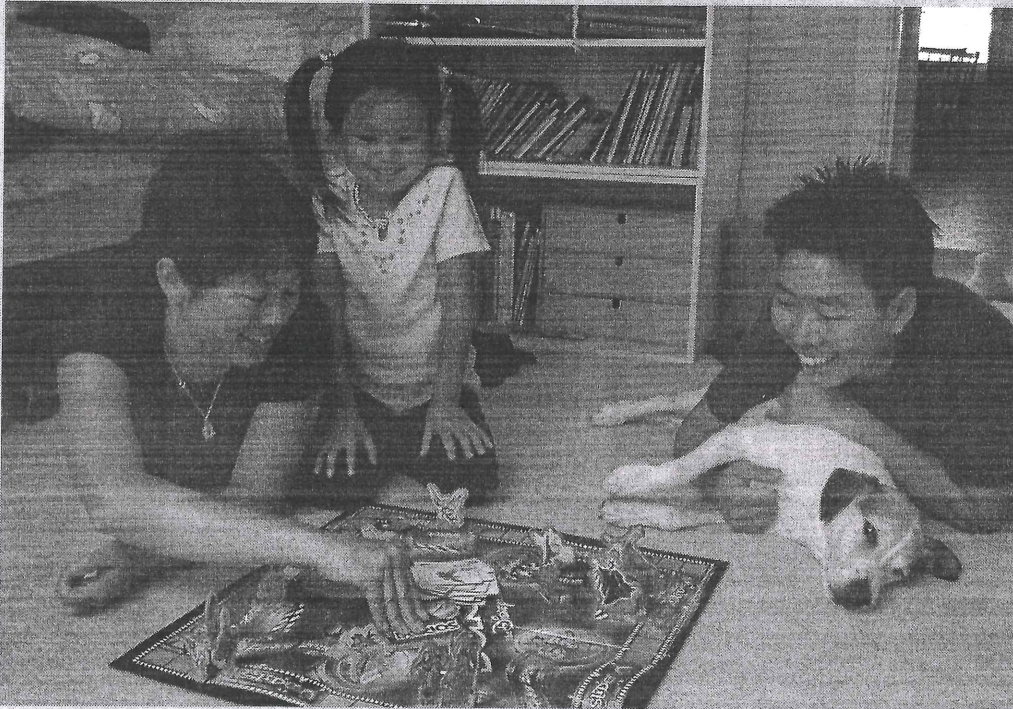


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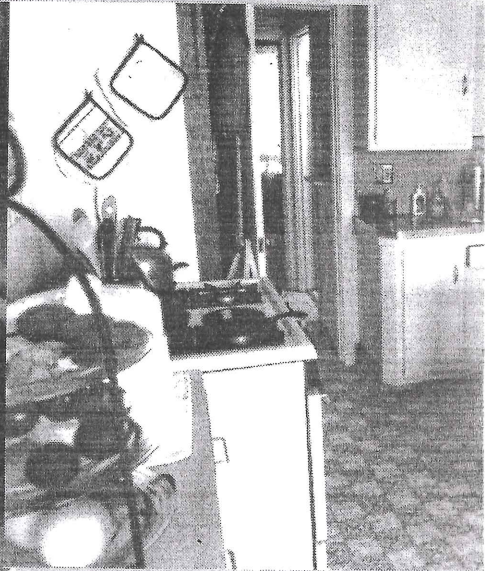
At their home in San Francisco, Lancy and Cristy relax



REAL MARRIAGES



GINA ORTEGA



Cristy and Lancy make a snack of macaroni dog they're babysitting, looking on. "I had to a since we weren't married," says Lancy. "We're adds Cristy.

In their living room, Lancy plays a game with Olivia. "We do so much for the community," says Cristy, "supporting public schools, Lancy is a small business owner, we're on the parent advisory council... we do so much, and people don't support us as an equal family. It really hurts me." Both women are actively involved in doing volunteer work at their daughter's elementary school.

ADAMS AND BAKER FAMILY



Art Adams and Devin Baker, pictured at their home

gettyimages

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Boards

Sign in



Plaintiffs Christy Chung (L) and her partner Lancy Woo (C) of San Francisco, and Corey Davis (R) listen to proceedings during a hearing before the state First District Court of Appeal 10 July 2006 in San Francisco, California. The court was hearing oral arguments in six cases involving the constitutionality of the California marriage statute. AFP PHOTO/POOL/Eric Risberg

We've got more to

1 of 1



</> EMBED

LICENSE

This letter of recommendation is written as support for the San Francisco pet grooming business called VIP Grooming, to support their application for legacy status with the city of San Francisco.

I have known the current owner Lancy Woo since 1997 but I became aware of the business VIP Groomers soon after I became a resident and purchased my home here in 1985.

At that time it was my good fortune to have been directed to this stable and excellent resource by friends who lived in Diamond Heights and Noe Valley Neighborhoods. Soon after I was settled, I adopted a dog and they have been my constant companions ever since. Lancy had the good fortune of meeting me and my last four Portuguese pups almost immediately upon her arrival at VIP.

It has been my distinct pleasure to have been a continuous client of Lancy and VIP Groomers since that time. San Francisco's obvious appreciation and policies supporting it's resident with pets is but one small reason that I am so very proud to call it my home. I do hope the city will make me prouder by honoring this business with a well deserved and appropriate status as a "Legacy business".

It has now been over 33 years since I arrived and my beloved Tank, and Nena, followed by Buster and Bunny have all been well serviced clients at VIP Grooming. It is my intent to continue owning dogs and to continue using VIP.

They are a stable anchor business serving pet owner from every neighborhood of SF but most especially the Mission, Noe Valley, Diamond Height, Castro and Upper Market areas of the city. .

Sincerely,
Kenneth W. Pearce,

A grateful homeowner at [REDACTED] [Clayton Street](#), at this City by the Bay.

May 2, 2018

Office of Small Business
Attn: Legacy Business Registration Application
City Hall, Room 110
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place
San Francisco, 94102

RE: Letter of Support
VIP Grooming in Noe Valley

Dear Committee:

I have been a homeowner in Noe Valley since 1999. During the last 20 years I've seen restaurants, clothing stores, shoe stores, and grocery stores, come and go, but the character of our neighborhood and village-feel has been unchanged for many of these changes. However, I cannot say the same for the small shop where I have my dog's groomed.

It would be hard to imagine Noe Valley without *VIP Grooming*, inclusive of their newer, local shop the *VIP Scrub Club*. Seeing Lancy grooming a dog in the window is a familiar image in both shops. Residents and tourists alike take photos of dogs being groomed by an artist in action. Local preschoolers, also, stop at the window daily to watch Lancy groom. This image captures an essence of Noe Valley. In terms of business model, Lancy has trained a small team of bathers and groomers, so the dogs are treated with respect and tenderness, and the grooming has signature touches representing quality that makes a VIP-groom identifiable and admired at the local dog parks. Both shops now have others that rotate in the coveted window spot, and that's progress in making a small business sustainable.

While *VIP Grooming* focuses on grooming services, Lancy and her Family recognized an additional need or business opportunity for families with dogs, inspiring them to open the *VIP Scrub Club*. The *VIP Scrub Club* offers grooming, but adds other services, such as retail and self-wash, which encourage people to come in, browse, and chat. The *VIP Scrub Club* is involved with the local community, hosting events and partnering with other businesses and organizations as much as possible. The store works with local shelters, donating grooming and hosting adoption events. *VIP Scrub Club* also puts on creatively themed events that both do good and offer a fun outlet for their canine and human customers.

The rescue organization where I am a board member is forever grateful to Lancy and her generous, giving spirit. When Compassion Without Borders, based in Santa Rosa, CA since 2004, began direct adoptions in 2017, I asked Lancy if she could train me on grooming techniques, so I could help the dogs. I volunteered at the *VIP Scrub Club* for six months. Not only did Lancy teach me some solid, basic skills in grooming mixed breed dogs, but she donated much of the equipment needed. Thanks to Lancy and *VIP*,

I now spend a full day a week grooming the homeless dogs (and love every moment of it). Groomed dogs feel and look their best, and find homes much more quickly than before!

San Francisco, referred to as the "dog capital of the nation," relies on small businesses like VIP Grooming to take the very best care of our beloved pets. And let's remember that we have more dogs in San Francisco than children, so valuing a small business that takes care of our dogs, makes great sense for San Francisco. I can't imagine taking my dogs anywhere but to VIP Grooming, and this commitment began with the special care that Lancy provided to Max in 2000. When Max became demented and couldn't tolerate the stress of being groomed during regular hours, Lancy stayed late and groomed Max at night. I've had many dogs since Max, and now understand that Max's story is not unique, but a part of VIP's philosophy and commitment to grooming with the health of the pet top-of-mind.

While dog grooming as a service is not vulnerable to the online powerhouses, like Amazon, our quaint village feel is always vulnerable to large box stores wanting a piece of the treasure chest. If Legacy Status provides protection from unwanted threats and recognition of the sweat and hard work required to build a small business that provides good old-fashioned customer service and local commitment, then I can't recommend VIP Grooming highly enough for this honor.

Thank you for considering this Letter or Support.

Very best regards,
Lauren

Lauren Meyers
[REDACTED] 25th Street
San Francisco, CA 94114



Board Member and President
Compassion Without Borders
1130 Butler Ave
Santa Rosa, CA 95407

I started working at VIP Grooming 16 years ago, when I was 19. I had no prior experience in the grooming field nor in managing a business. Lancy was my mentor for 5 years. She taught me as much as she could about the art of grooming and how to run a business with heart. I am now a well respected groomer in the Portland metro area where I live and have had my own business for 6 years now.

I learned many things at VIP but one of the first things that struck me was the strong sense of community. Lancy was always happy to help out, especially with the LGBTQ community, both with her work with PAWS and simply by working with individuals she knew needed help caring for their dogs properly. Her devotion to the surrounding community was made obvious by the love and support they always showed her.

Because the business had been in the same location for so many years many people had been bringing their dogs there for decades. This deepens the feeling of family and community that the customers had for VIP and Lancy. When I worked there I would often see our customers while running daily errands. They would be happy to see me and would introduce me to their children. They appreciated the heart with which Lancy ran the business.

Lancy's dedication to the business and the art of grooming is profound. She taught me all she could about running a grooming business and to see and appreciate the art in grooming. This idea is lost on many in the industry, but not Lancy. She is a true master of her craft. She has put in countless hours teaching others these skills simply to know the art will continue.

I owe so much to Lancy and the experience I gained at VIP. Her dedication continues to inspire me to this day. The presence of VIP affects many people in the surrounding area. I hope VIP is there to share their love and inclusive spirit for many years to come.

Jessica Spyker
Owner The Dog Shop
Vancouver WA
info@dogshopnw.com



SAN FRANCISCO

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS

CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
MARK FARRELL, MAYOR

OFFICE OF SMALL BUSINESS
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR

Legacy Business Registry

Application Review Sheet

Application No.: LBR-2017-18-039
Business Name: The Animal Company
Business Address: 1307 Castro Street
District: District 8
Applicant: Rick and Ellen French, Owners
Nomination Date: April 28, 2018
Nominated By: Supervisor Jeff Sheehy

CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? ☒ Yes ☐ No

4298 24th Street from 1976 to 2011 (35 years)
1307 Castro Street from 2011 to Present (7 years)

CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? ☒ Yes ☐ No

CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? ☒ Yes ☐ No

NOTES: NA

DELIVERY DATE TO HPC: May 9, 2018

Richard Kurylo
Manager, Legacy Business Program



Member, Board of Supervisors
District 8



City and County of San Francisco

JEFF SHEEHY

April 28th, 2018

Re: Nomination of The Animal Company

Dear Director Regina Dick Endrizzi:

I'm writing to nominate **The Animal Company** for the Legacy Business Registry. Since 1976, The Animal Company has served animal lovers from all over the Bay Area and has been a hallmark in the Noe Valley community. Rick and Ellen French are the owners of The Animal Company, making them the oldest operating pet store in the City and County of San Francisco.

I strongly believe this business would benefit greatly from being a part of San Francisco's Legacy Business Registry, and I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Sheehy". The signature is stylized with a large, looped "J" and a cursive "Sheehy".

Jeff Sheehy
Member, San Francisco Board of Supervisors

Section One:

Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
THE ANIMAL COMPANY		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
RICK FRENCH ELLEN FRENCH		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	
1307 CASTRO ST.	(415) 647-8755	
	EMAIL:	
	THEANIMALCOMPANYSF@GMAIL.COM	
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
THEANIMALCOMPANY.NET		THEANIMALCOMPANY
APPLICANT'S NAME		
RICK & ELLEN FRENCH		<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE		
OWNER		
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	
5926 ALHAMBRA AV. OAKLAND, CA 94611	(510) 339-8198	
	EMAIL:	
	FRENCHCONN2000@HOTMAIL.COM	
SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:		SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0404248		
OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff		
NAME OF NOMINATOR:		DATE OF NOMINATION:

Section Two:

Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
4298 24th ST.	94114	JANUARY 1976
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	1976 - 2011	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
1307 CASTRO ST.	94114	Start: JULY-2011 End: PRESENT

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start: End:

Section Three:

Disclosure Statement.

San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- ☒ I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- ☒ I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- ☒ I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- ☒ I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- ☒ I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- ☒ I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- ☒ I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Rick French 4/23/18

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

THE ANIMAL COMPANY

Section 4: Written Historical Narrative

CRITERION 1

a. Provide a short history of the business from the date the business opened in San Francisco to the present day, including the ownership history. For businesses with multiple locations, include the history of the original location in San Francisco (including whether it was the business's founding and or headquartered location) and the opening dates and locations of all other locations.

The Animal Company first opened in 1976 as a small neighborhood pet store providing pets and supplies to the Noe Valley community. Two business partners from the competitive men's fashion industry, Gary Thompson and Victor Biancholli, decided to make a career change based on their love of animals. They opened The Animal Company in a small space at 4298 24th street at the corner of Douglas and 24th streets. A pet store in Noe Valley was a perfect fit for the neighborhood.

In the beginning, The Animal Company was a full line pet store. They sold tropical fish and birds along with the products to maintain these animals. Their commitment to the well-being of each pet sold was always present.

The little neighborhood pet store on the corner didn't change much in its first 25 years. It served the community and became a familiar fixture in Noe Valley. In those years, the store built a reputation of good service and high-quality products. Rick French was one of the first sales reps to call on Gary and Victor. He made weekly visits to write orders to refill the shelves with product. Early on, a connection was established.

Rick and Ellen French have been in the pet industry for over 40 years. Rick worked for a manufacturer and a distributor before becoming a retailer. Ellen began her career in Berkeley where she started Your Basic Bird in 1974. The store still exists today. After selling Your Basic Bird, they opened a successful tropical fish and bird store in Oakland called Grand Central Aquarium and Bird on Grand Avenue. They outgrew that space and moved to a much larger space on Piedmont Avenue. After the disastrous Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 followed by the East Bay Hills Fire in 1991, the store was forced to close. Rick returned to the distribution business and was the top salesperson for Central Garden and Pet in Northern California. During that period, Ellen dedicated her time to expanding her bird breeding program and raising two children. They housed over 50 pairs of different varieties of parrots on their property in the Oakland Hills. Ellen would hand raise the babies and sell them to Bay Area pet stores. Gary at The Animal Company became one of Ellen's biggest clients. The connection came full circle.

In 2001, after 25 years and the passing of Victor, Gary Thompson felt it was time to pass the torch. Rick and Ellen were offered the opportunity to buy The Animal Company and they went for it. Having been in the pet business for many years, they looked forward to molding the store

to fit their own vision while maintaining the original character. It was decided to put the emphasis on what they knew best: exotic birds. The hobby of keeping tropical fish began to wane, and they eventually stopped selling fish. The exotic bird and pet supply space became dominant. Everything else about the store remained the same. It was the perfect mix.

As time went on, the business climate began to change. Competition was no longer another small store across town, it was the "big box" retailers. Soon after, the Internet became the biggest challenge to mom-and-pop shops like The Animal Company. We needed a better exposure. After 35 years at the original location, The Animal Company moved two blocks down the street to 1307 Castro Street at 24th Street in the heart of Noe Valley. The new space has tall ceilings and a bright atmosphere.

The Animal Company today specializes in birds, high-quality pet products and excellent customer service. This has become the store's niche. Back in the 1970s, there were many stores where one could purchase an exotic bird. The story is quite different today. As bird breeders got older and started to retire, the supply of exotic birds dwindled significantly. Because we had our own breeding program in place, we had more access to birds than practically anyone else. Today, we are one of just a few stores that sell birds. As such, people travel from all over the state as well as Oregon and Nevada to purchase birds from us.

Aviculture promotes the domestic breeding of exotic and endangered species. Even before 1992 and the ban of imported birds, Ellen and Rick were advocates of domestic breeding. Even when birds were imported legally, there was a great deal of inhumane treatment and many died in transit. This was justified by the importers by the tremendous profits they were able to make on the remaining birds. For that reason and many others, we were very happy when the importation was banded. Unfortunately, that increased the amount of smuggling. Bird smugglers, by their very nature, are horrible individuals, motivated by a quick buck who brought the birds in with reckless disregard for their comfort or safety. Thankfully, that seems to be greatly diminished at this time.

Deforestation and human encroachment destroyed many natural habitats for birds. Responsible domestic breeding helps to repopulate those species that are threatened in their habitat. In several cases, there are birds such as the Great Green Macaw and Cuban Parrots that are more plentiful domestically than in their native land. Most of our original breeding stock came from older untamed birds that were imported and too wild to ever make good pets. Domestic breeding gave these birds a good life in a clean facility and the ability to procreate and provide enthusiastic aviculturists with good companions.

We are bird lovers. We are breeders and rescuers of birds. Because birds live many years, sometimes situations arise that force the owners to relinquish them. We have always helped the owners of these birds find a new home. All of our birds are domestically bred and hand raised. As such, the birds are healthy and friendly and make wonderful companions. We take pride in helping families choose the right pet bird for them.

The Animal Company also carries a large variety of supplies for all the dogs and cats in Noe Valley and the surrounding neighborhoods. For decades, consumers purchased products for their pets in a feed or grocery store. With the advancement of nutritional needs for pets, higher quality premium pet foods became more readily available to the public. The website petfoodadvisor.com gives an independent analysis of hundreds of dog and cat foods. They also have notifications of any recalls. This is an invaluable resource that The Animal Company uses to ensure it sells only the best products available.

While catering to the needs of all the dogs and cats in the neighborhood has always been a big part of the business, The Animal Company has never sold dogs or cats. Interested buyers are referred to local shelters, the SPCA, Milo Foundation, Grateful Dog Rescue and Rocket Dog Rescue.

The Animal Company is the little neighborhood store that has prospered for nearly 44 years. The core values of caring, kindness and good old-fashioned customer service still remain.

b. Describe any circumstances that required the business to cease operations in San Francisco for more than six months?

The Animal Company has been in continuous operation since it first opened for business in 1976.

c. Is the business a family-owned business? If so, give the generational history of the business.

A family-owned business may be defined as any business in which two or more family members are involved and the majority of ownership or control lies within a family. By that definition, The Animal Company did not begin as a family-owned business, but developed into one when it was purchased by Rick and Ellen French.

d. Describe the ownership history when the business ownership is not the original owner or a family-owned business.

The ownership history of the Animal Company is as follows:

1976 to 2001:	Gary Thompson and Victor Biancoulli
2001 to Present:	Rick and Ellen French

e. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30 years, the applicant will need to provide documentation of the existence of the business prior to current ownership to verify it has been in operation for 30+ years. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

Documentation demonstrating the existence of the business for 30+ years is provided in the Legacy application.

f. Note any other special features of the business location, such as, if the property associated with the business is listed on a local, state, or federal historic resources registry.

The building at 1305-1307 Castro Street is identified by the Planning Department as Category A ("Historic Resource Present") with regard to the California Environmental Quality Act. It is located within the Eligible 24th Street Commercial Corridor Historic District. The 24th Street historic district is known for its early history as the commercial corridor for the Noe Valley streetcar suburb. Generally the 24th Street historic district features a range of one to three story buildings that have ground floor commercial storefronts that were constructed either originally as part of the building, or were later alterations made to residential buildings. As the street became more and more commercialized, early residences were modified to accommodate a retail space on the ground floor. Contributors to the historic district are mixed residential and commercial buildings constructed sometime between the 1880s, when the first residential properties were constructed along 24th Street, up until the 1920s, representing the last significant commercial infill along the street. The historic district contains a wide variety of popular architectural styles from the turn of the twentieth century including, Victorian, Queen Anne, Edwardian and Period Revival.

CRITERION 2

a. Describe the business's contribution to the history and/or identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco.

The Animal Company offers a variety of exotic birds. They are lovingly raised with the healthiest diets in a clean and conscientiously maintained environment. Socialization of the birds is very important part of their upbringing. Because we offer healthy, well cared for birds, many people travel great distances to come to The Animal Company. When you walk into our store it is warm and inviting and a place where people like to hang out. Throughout the day, moms and dads bring in their little ones to see the birds. School trips are planned during the year so that students can come and ask questions about the birds. Some of the older students come in after school and on weekends to hold and socialize the birds. It is a great experience for everyone. Small independent stores like ours are the heart of San Francisco and we are proud to be part of that legacy.

b. Is the business (or has been) associated with significant events in the neighborhood, the city, or the business industry?

We are members of the Noe Valley Merchants and Professional Association. We were awarded a Certificate of Honor from that association several years ago. We take part in Small Business Week every May, and holiday lighting of the storefront adds to the festive atmosphere in Noe Valley. Also, in December, Rick becomes "Santa Rick." A professional photographer takes

pictures of families with their pets. It is great fun for everyone. These photos are given as a “thank you” to our clients. Included in the Legacy application are some of these pictures.

c. Has the business ever been referenced in an historical context? Such as in a business trade publication, media, or historical documents?

The Animal Company was featured in the Los Angeles Times in 2010 regarding the store’s opposition to a proposed ban by city officials on sales of almost all pets, including birds, hamsters, rats and other small mammals. The proposed ban ran into extensive opposition from a number of pet stores and animal lovers, and was never passed.

In 2016, The Animal Company was listed as #4 by Time Out in a list of the top 10 best pet stores in San Francisco.

d. Is the business associated with a significant or historical person?

The Animal Company is not associated with a significant or historical person.

e. How does the business demonstrate its commitment to the community?

During the summers, we hire teenagers, often the children of our customers. Last summer we had two young women, each 16 years old, who worked for us for several months. One of them, Cassy, was here the summer before as well. Additionally, on Fridays we have a young man, Ben, who volunteers his time by holding the birds. We have retired people who come in the store to play with the birds. One woman, Barbara Colten, comes in at least 5 days a week for several hours at a time. She says that it is the best part of her day. She has been doing this for two years.

Whenever there is an auction or other fund-raising event, The Animal Company always participates. We donate every year to St. Phillips School and Alvarado schools. We also donate food and supplies to Rocket Dog Rescue on a regular basis. The Animal Company is a donation center for Pets for The Homeless. This organization helps the homeless with food and supplies. Pets are Wonderful Support (PAWS) has been a partner for over 20 years with The Animal Company, helping the less fortunate care for their pets.

f. Provide a description of the community the business serves.

We have very loyal customers who have been coming for many years that live in Noe Valley. They stop by to pick up their weekly dog and cat supplies and to say hello. My employees are well liked in the neighborhood and have made customers feel welcome. Not a week goes by when people don’t comment on how kind our employees are and how knowledgeable they are. All are trained to help customers with the needs of their pets. Over the years, we have forged friendships that I hope will last a lifetime. We are the oldest pet store in San Francisco. Because we are one of the only shops in northern California that specializes in a variety of birds, people

come from all over San Francisco, the East Bay and Contra Costa County, Marin County, South City, San Jose, Campbell, and as far south as Fresno and Bakersfield. Most of the people come from recommendations from their friends and others from our 5-star Yelp reviews.

g. Is the business associated with a culturally significant building/structure/site/object/interior?

The building at 1305-1307 Castro Street is a Category A building ("Historic Resource Present").

h. How would the community be diminished if the business were to be sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

There is a pet store chain, The Healthy Spot, trying to come into Noe Valley from Southern California. They are reputed to be predatory in nature and take over neighborhoods and absorb other people's customers. We have been fighting this battle for 6 months. On June 21, 2018, there will be a hearing before the Planning Commission to determine if they are granted a conditional use permit to open in Noe Valley. While we always knew that our customers were fond of us, this threat to our well-being has made us realize just how loyal these people are. We have collected approximately 3,000 signatures and 400 letters that we have given to the Planning Commission in support of our store and against chain from coming in. Our customers have told us that they would be devastated if we were to lose our store.

CRITERION 3

a. Describe the business and the essential features that define its character.

We carry a large selection food and supplies for all kinds of pets. We only carry the top brands, and our employees are well versed in the differences between the brands so that they could help customers make a good choice. Our product selection has grown since the store was purchased 18 years ago, while still having the same variety as in the beginning.

Our employees are fully educated in the products that we sell, and in the care required to own a pet. Liz Dimas, who has been with us for 17 years, is well loved in the community for her kindness and knowledge of these pets. Liz is bilingual. Her Spanish speaking is a great asset to the Hispanic and Latino community. She will sit and talk with someone for an hour or more so they fully understand all that is necessary to give their pet a good and safe home. Lauren Siegel is our hand-feeder and expert at what she does. She also will share her vast knowledge with the customers. Ed Dang has been with us 7 years and does a fabulous job of feeding all the adult birds and keeping the store clean. We just hired Alissa St. Hope, a young college student, as his helper so she will learn the trade from an expert. Kelly Bullock, a student at Mills College, is being trained as a hand feeder as well as other duties necessary to running a small retail business.

Our low-cost grooming services are provided every Sunday and Monday. We recommend that domesticated birds should have their wings clipped twice a year. This will protect them from accidents such as flying into a window or escaping into the wild. Birds' nails should be clipped on a regular basis also. This should be done about 4 times a year or when they become uncomfortable to hold. Nails that are allowed to grow too long run the risk of getting caught on objects.

The Animal Company provides a low-cost DNA gender analysis service. Most birds are not sexually dimorphic. This means that one cannot tell the sex by appearance only. Our sexing service is done most days. This is a simple procedure that involves clipping the tip of a single toenail and getting a small drop of blood. We send that sample to the Animal Genetics Lab in Florida. Results usually take about one week.

b. How does the business demonstrate a commitment to maintaining the historical traditions that define the business, and which of these traditions should not be changed in order to retain the businesses historical character? (e.g., business model, goods and services, craft, culinary, or art forms)

The Animal Company occupies space in a building built in 1900 in the Italianate Style. The ground floor was originally a grocery store and butcher shop. There are two apartments located on the second floor. This design is very similar to many others in the 24th street corridor. Looking up at the front of the building, one can see the typical bay windows facing the street. Over 40 years ago, the store front was divided into two spaces. Both spaces have had several different businesses, e.g., restaurants, children's store and a book store. The street level entrances remain very typical of the time. Ceramic tile surrounds the front windows and doorways.

c. How has the business demonstrated a commitment to maintaining the special physical features that define the business? Describe any special exterior and interior physical characteristics of the space occupied by the business (e.g. signage, murals, architectural details, neon signs, etc.).

There is a beautiful stained-glass window of birds made from a local artist. The store has pictures of tropical birds on the walls and we strive to make it a warm and inviting place to visit. Merchandise is displayed in an old school fashion as much as possible. The original wood tongue and groove flooring is shabby but adds to the charm of the space. A closer look will reveal some of the changes made over the years. A closet behind the check stand has what remains of a staircase. There are four steps going nowhere. At one time there was a backyard. That space was enclosed for an office space. The former outside wall, with lapboard siding, is now an interior wall. The overall space takes your mind back to a time gone by. From time to time a person will stop by just to look around and say, "I remember when ..."

Rick and Ellen French are proud to be part of the San Francisco small business community. It is a community that gives the city charm. Small neighborhoods like Noe Valley strive to maintain

that small town feel while living in a large urban environment. Store lined streets with apartments above creates a special atmosphere. There is that special feeling missing when multi story complexes take over. We can live in the present without losing our past. The Animal Company is that little pet store that is reminiscent of days gone by while bringing up to date products and old fashion service to the community.

d. When the current ownership is not the original owner and has owned the business for less than 30years; the applicant will need to provide documentation that demonstrates the current owner has maintained the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms. Please use the list of supplemental documents and/or materials as a guide to help demonstrate the existence of the business prior to current ownership.

The Animal Company has been a pet store since it was founded in 1976.

FY 2017-18

BUSINESS REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE

RENEW BY DATE

05-31-2018

EXPIRATION DATE

06-30-2018

BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER

0404248

LOCATION ID

0404248-01-001

TRADE NAME (DBA)

THE ANIMAL COMPANY

BUSINESS LOCATION

1307 CASTRO ST

BUSINESS

RODERICK ELLEN FRENCH

THIRD PARTY TAX COLLECTOR




PARKING TAX

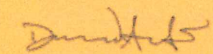


TRANSIENT OCCUPANCY TAX

RODERICK ELLEN FRENCH
1307 CASTRO ST
SAN FRANCISCO CA 94114-3620

**CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO
OFFICE OF THE TREASURER & TAX COLLECTOR**


José Cisneros
Treasurer


David Augustine
Tax Collector

POST CLEARLY VISIBLE AT THIS BUSINESS LOCATION

The Animal Company



Google recommends using Chrome
Try a fast, secure browser with updates built in

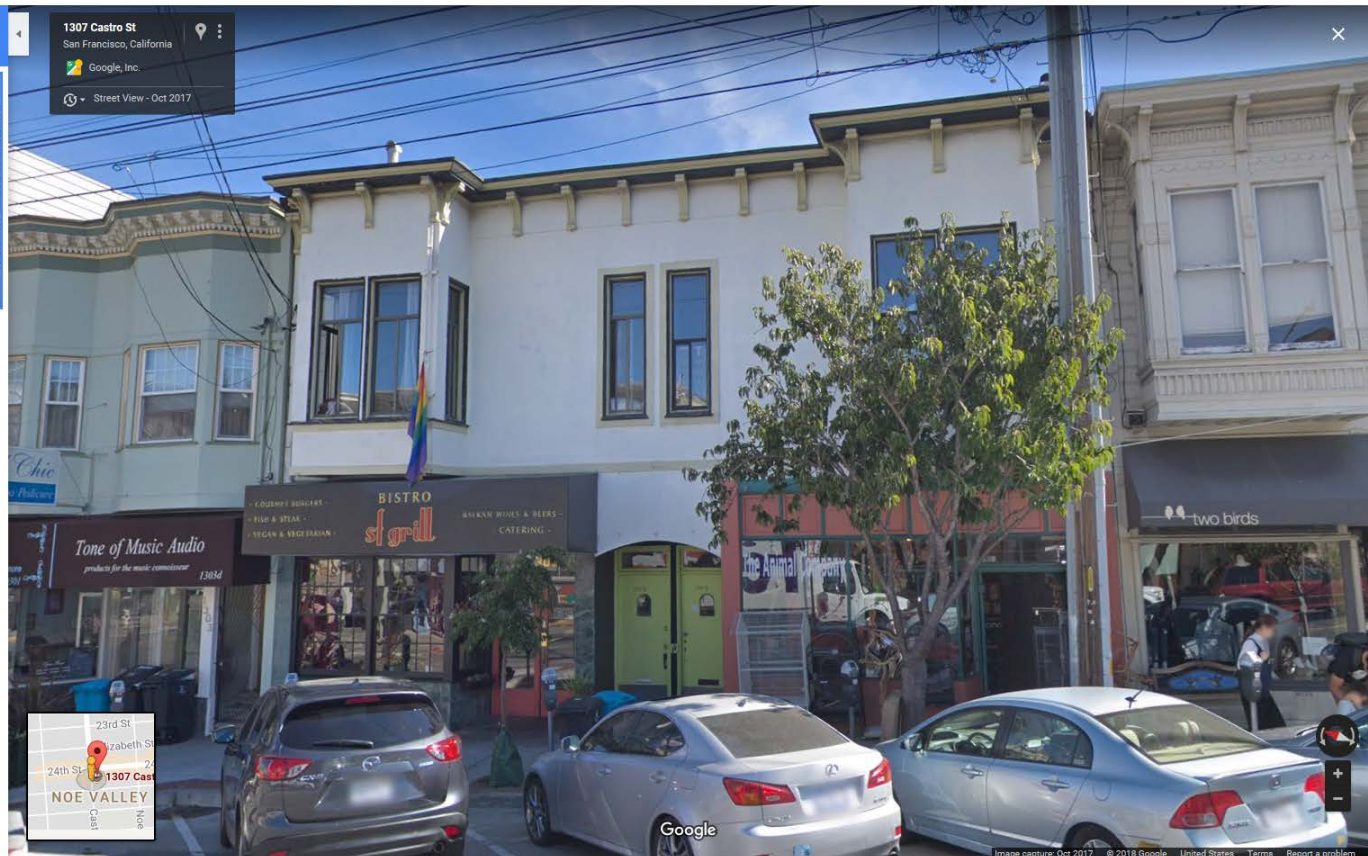
NO THANKS

YES

1307 Castro St



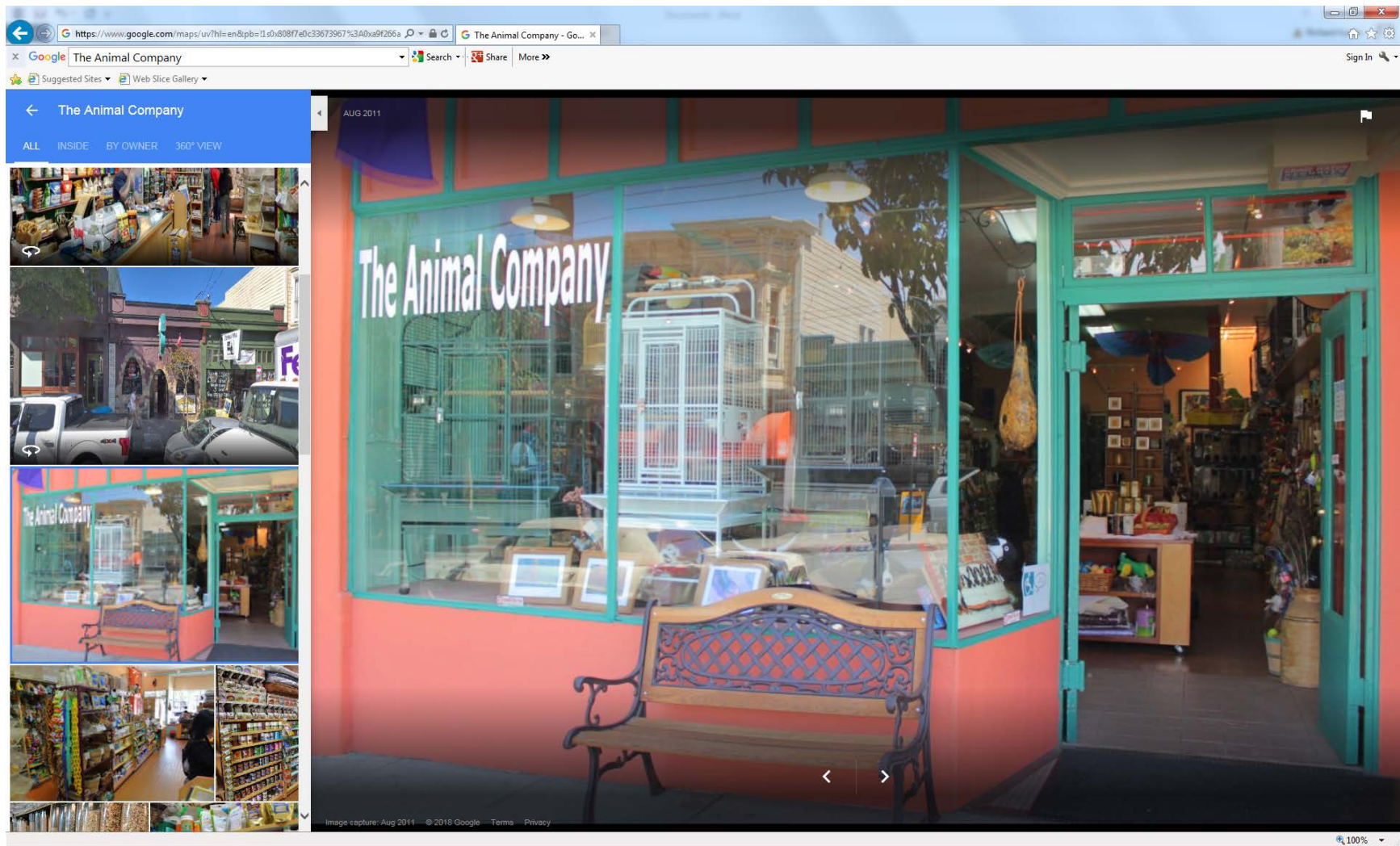
1307 Castro St
San Francisco, California
Google, Inc.
Street View - Oct 2017



Google

Image capture: Oct 2017 © 2018 Google United States Terms Report a problem

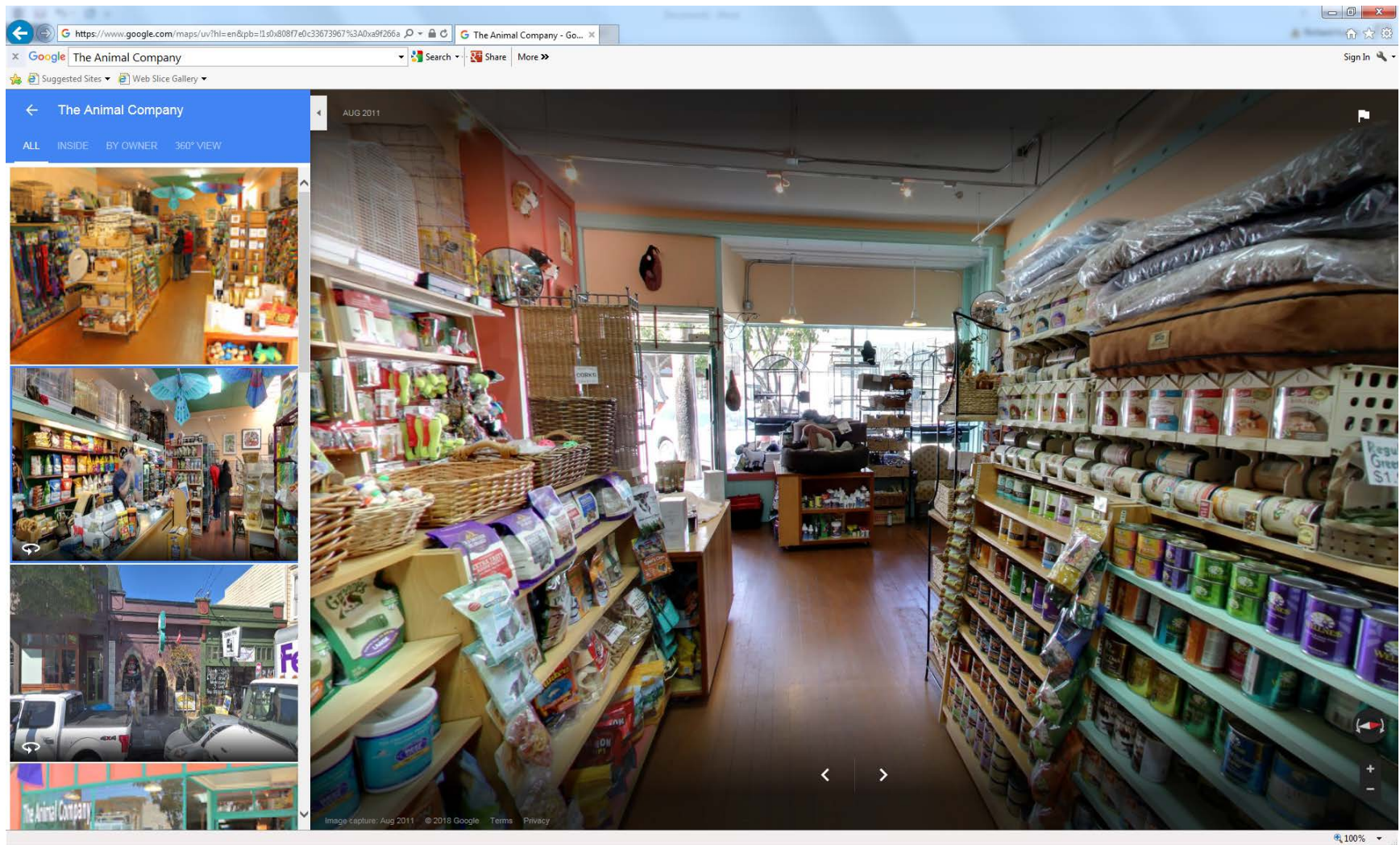
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The Animal Company



CHIMP WATCH







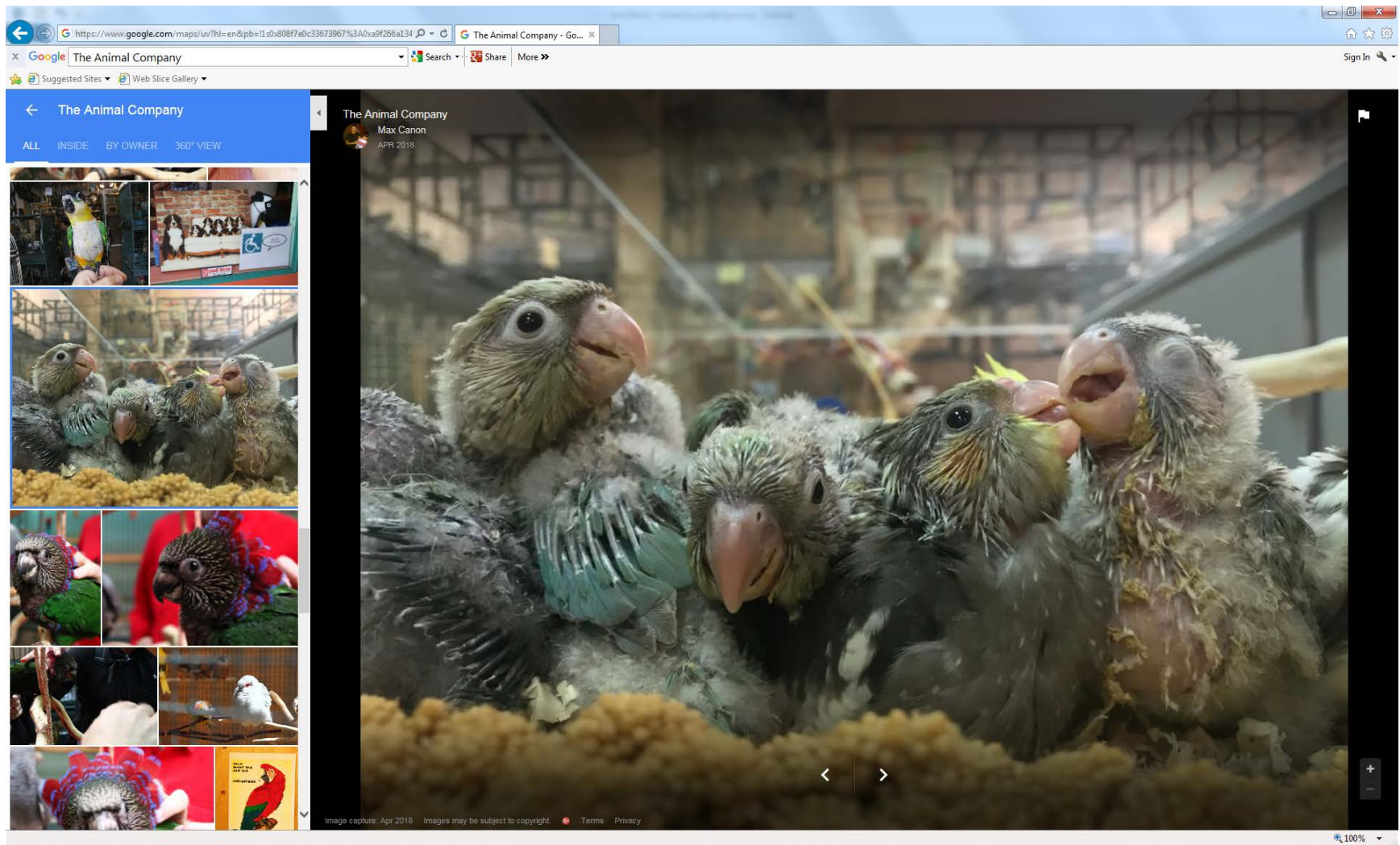














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Columbia

LET
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"Siri," whose gender at five weeks still remained a mystery, went home to her new family in mid-January. She--or he--may want to attend Alvarado School someday.

Photo by Sally Smith

A Lovebird's Story

By Heather World

Siri is in love. While lovebirds across Noe Valley share dinner and kisses this Valentine's Day, she will be standing on one foot and making a chewing sound.

That's because Siri, a recent resident of the Animal Company on 24th Street, is a true lovebird, the kind with beak and feathers, and when she moves her beak back and forth and chews softly while standing on one leg, she's telling her new "mom," Leslie Zwemer, that she's happy.

"She bonded to my husband immediately, but she goes to me, too," says Zwemer, noting that Siri has displayed other signs of affection, such as nuzzling her hair.

Zwemer, who teaches kindergarten at Alvarado School on Douglass Street, spent a month's worth of lunch breaks visiting her little lovebird at the pet store and waiting until she was big enough to move to her new home in mid-January.

Or *his* new home. Zwemer doesn't know Siri's sex, but she's paid the Animal Company the \$30 fee to send a drop of blood from the bird's foot to Davis for DNA testing.

But Siri is more than just a pretty (peach) face. She's also a lot of work.

"It's not something you just put in a cage and it looks pretty in your living room," says Zwemer, who cuts fruit, boils eggs, and shells peas because lovebirds must eat soft, fresh food in addition to seed. Occasionally, she has to clean the entire birdcage in her bathtub.

A smaller cousin to the parrot, lovebirds are smart and can understand language, though they don't speak. They can even be toilet-trained, says Zwemer. Full-grown, they are about five to seven inches long, usually with a green body and a colorful head. Siri's body is mostly bright apple-green.

Some people buy lovebirds in pairs, but those birds may not stand on one foot in their owner's company.

"A pair won't bond to people," Zwemer points out. That's because the two lovebirds are smitten with each other.

For now, Zwemer and her husband are focused on keeping Siri's 50 grams of weight stable or growing. She was a small bird to begin with and birds can lose up to one-third of their weight when they leave their siblings.

"Birds can die quickly if they lose weight," Zwemer says. If her weight dips, Siri will have to go back to the pet store and live with other birds who will stimulate her and make her eat.

Rick French, owner of the Animal Company, says caring for a lovebird isn't dramatically different from caring for any bird. "They're really nothing unusual," he says.

They are somewhat rare these days, however. Not many people are breeding lovebirds at the moment, so he doesn't get many in the store. When they do come in, they are young--about two weeks old--and need hand-feeding, which is standard for birds in the store. They can live to be 12 to 15 years old, he says.

"It's a good starter bird for someone who has never had a bird," he says. "They're cute and real personable."

There is no Valentine's Day rush on lovebirds as there are on rabbits at Easter, but French discourages potential customers from buying birds impulsively any time of the year.

"You get a feel for people and whether or not they're interested in getting a pet for a long time," he says. A detailed discussion of bird care can dissuade the impulse buyer.

Not all impulses are bad, though. Zwemer got her first bird when her husband found an escaped parakeet while walking home wondering what he should get his wife for her birthday that day. Mana lived with them for eight years.

After Mana came Lully, Zwemer's adored first lovebird.

"The bird was so bonded to us," she says. "My husband could hold him in his hand and roll him over and pet his stomach. That's really rare for a bird to have that much trust."

Zwemer was devastated when Lully died last year. Her kindergarten class comforted her with letters, and one girl made a bird's nest with eggs.

"They knew, and they were so compassionate," she says.

She has sent an e-card to those students, now in first grade, to thank them and introduce them to Siri.

"For those first-graders, it's learning about loving and losing," she says.

For her current crop of kindergartners, Zwemer has screened a video about Siri and the care of a bird. She even took individual students to meet the bird when she was still at the store.

Now that's true love.

Los Angeles Times

Fur and feathers fly as San Francisco weighs ban on pet sales

What began as a proposal to ban sales of dogs and cats quickly grew to include birds, hamsters, rats and other small mammals. Shelters and rescue groups could still offer adoptions.

July 25, 2010 | By Maria L. La Ganga, Los Angeles Times

Reporting from San Francisco — Here in the land of animal companions and their faithful guardians — do not call them pets and owners — a battle is raging over just what it means to be creature-friendly.

In true San Francisco fashion, city officials are considering a ban on sales of almost all pets. If the prohibition passes, it would mean no cats for sale here, no dogs, no hamsters, no rats, no guinea pigs, no macaws, no parakeets, no cockatiels, no finches. If Junior wanted a snake, Mom could probably still buy him one within the city's precious 47 square miles. But forget about those mice for Drago's dinner.

The proposal started out small: prohibit commerce in cats and dogs as a way to discourage puppy mills and kitten factories. South Lake Tahoe and [West Hollywood](#) passed such laws within the last 18 months; in Texas, Austin and El Paso are considering similar ones.

But this being San Francisco, the discussion didn't stop there.

After multiple meetings of the Animal Control & Welfare Commission and hours of impassioned testimony — peppered with the word "symbolic" — the narrow proposition blossomed to include most creatures great and small. The commission is set to vote on a ban in August. If it passes, the Board of Supervisors will weigh in.

Jennifer Grafelman, general manager of the Animal Connection pet store and an enthusiastic rat breeder, says she hates puppy mills. But the proposal "has so easily snowballed into small animals and birds. ... Where's it going to end? Reptiles and fish could be next."

But Rebecca Katz, head of San Francisco's animal control department, says the prohibition could help solve one of her shelter's biggest little problems: Hamsters, she curtail such deaths.

Humans on both sides of the pet-sales debate cloak their arguments in terms of what's best for the critters involved. The pro-pet-store faction launched a group called Protect Our Precious Animals. But the issue really bubbles up at the nexus of lives and livelihoods.

Nationally, pets are a \$40-billion to \$45-billion-a-year business, and trade groups have gotten involved in the fight. The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council has a plea on its website "urging those who support the right to have pets" to contact San Francisco officials "in opposition to this blatant anti-pet proposal."

Even Fox News pundit Bill O'Reilly has joined the fray. San Franciscans, he blustered recently, are "kooks!" "Insane!" The proposal is "fascistic!" "You're basically taking away people's freedoms for this kind of far-left vision of Nirvana!"

This tempest in a water bowl began in April, when Philip Gerrie, backyard beekeeper and member of the animal commission, suggested that San Francisco go the way of West Hollywood and South Lake Tahoe.

Although the city has only one store that regularly sells puppies and about half a dozen that sell any animals or birds, Gerrie said, "large pet stores were considering moving into the city that do sell puppies." A ban on puppy sales, he thought, was "preemptive" and "doable."

But at the April animal commission meeting, the discussion turned to other animals that are euthanized, Gerrie said, "and that's when we started thinking about what we call the smalls — hamsters, rats, guinea pigs, chinchillas, mice, five little furry things sold in pet stores."

The matter came up again in May and June when bird activist Elizabeth Young begged commission members to add her feathered friends to the list of protected species.

"Birds are extremely intelligent and emotional," Young, a volunteer with Mickaboo Companion Bird Rescue, told the panel. "All kept birds, no matter what kind, suffer horribly when not taken care of well."

In July, a couple dozen heated speakers from both sides piped up during the meeting, which stretched to four hours, "but it felt like five," Gerrie said.

Rick French, owner of the Animal Company in the swank Noe Valley neighborhood, said that during the meeting he rattled off a list of obscure San Francisco laws he'd found on the Internet. It's illegal here "to wipe your windshield with dirty underwear...you can add to those, pet stores without pets."

"It didn't go over too well," said French, who sells pet supplies and birds and is a cofounder of Protect Our Precious Animals.

The actual proposal has yet to be written, Gerrie said, and he's a little cagey about just how far he plans to push the prohibition.

But this is his thinking so far: Cats and dogs would be out because of puppy mills and kitten factories. Birds would be out because of "their sensitivity and inappropriateness as pets; they are wild animals." Hamsters, mice, rats, chinchillas and guinea pigs would be out because of high euthanasia rates. Sales of bunnies and chicks were axed in San Francisco more than 30 years ago; you can thank Easter excesses and pint-sized attention spans for that.

That would pretty much leave the least cuddly creatures on pet store shelves — reptiles, amphibians, fish. The bottom line: If you want anything furry or feathered, go to a shelter or rescue group and adopt.

Wayne Pacelle, president of the Humane Society of the United States, said he is "not aware" of any other jurisdiction considering such a widespread ban. And he's not sold on the San Francisco effort.

"I think the best thing would be to start with [banning] the sale of dogs and cats from these pet stores," he said. With a broader ban, "I think you attract a set of additional opponents that sink an otherwise achievable goal."

French, the longtime retailer, says he does not believe that banning animal sales would keep abandoned creatures out of harm's way. What he does know is that it would imperil his business.

"If I don't have a bird to sell," said French, "I don't sell a cage. I don't sell bird toys. I don't sell seed. But it's about freedom of choice. If someone wants a bird, they'll go to Berkeley. This will solve none of the problems the commission sees."

maria.laganga@latimes.com

<https://www.timeout.com/san-francisco/shopping/the-best-pet-stores-in-san-francisco>



The best pet stores in San Francisco

Take your four-legged friend on a tour of the best pet shops across San Francisco for toys, treats and more

By Aiden Arata

Posted: Tuesday June 21 2016



Photograph: Courtesy Mission Critter

Bay Area pets have it good: between the temperate weather, the parks, and the cosmopolitan tastes of SF dwellers, it's no wonder the city is home to a bevy of pet stores devoted to pampered animals. With passionate staff and tantalizing goodies to peruse, pet shopping can be more fulfilling than your basic errands (move over, fancy grocery stores). Plus, these spots welcome furry friends who like to pick out their own swag, turning a routine litter run into an outing with your best friend. The Bay's alternative roots shine through in these neighborhood establishments, where you'll find organic catnip, raw dog treats, and other bespoke treasures that you won't see in a chain store (it's easy for both you and your dog to eat vegetarian in this city). There's even something for those of us whose furry friends are, well, not so furry—bird and reptile experts ensure your best friend gets the care they deserve. If you're looking for treats, training aids and so much more, San Francisco's best pet stores have you covered.

4. The Animal Company



Photograph: Courtesy the Animal Company

Stepping into the Animal Company and the first thing you'll notice is noise. Chirping, cooing, cawing: San Francisco's oldest pet store specializes in birds. This includes sales, boarding and grooming for domestic breeds, though curious window shoppers are welcome to stop in just for a meet-and-greet. In addition to the cacophony of feathered friends, you might hear one or both co-owners—who have over four decades of experience in the pet biz—chirping about their day with a customer. (When we visited, we overheard regulars discussing human health and relationships in addition to the standard animal fare—that, in our opinion, is devoted customer service.) This store may be for the birds, but other pets aren't left out: the front section offers a selection of fare for dogs, cats and other small animals

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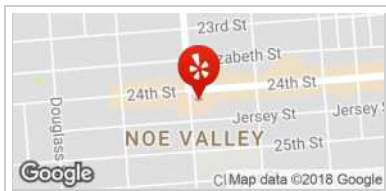
The Animal Company ✓ Claimed



83 reviews

[Details](#)

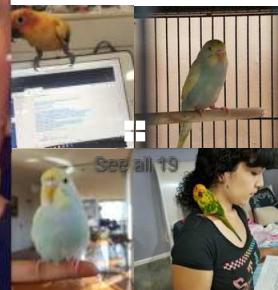
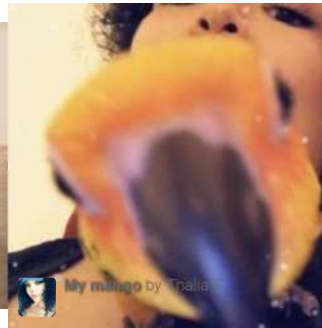
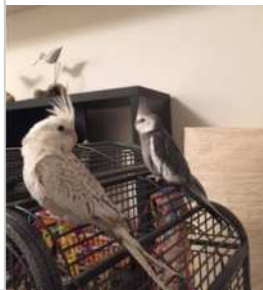
Pet Groomers, Bird Shops

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b/t 24th St & Jersey St
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"We can't thank Ellen, [Rick](#) and their staff enough for all of their good advice and kindness over the last 7 months." in 19 reviews



"[Ellen](#) then also came and sat with us and answered even more questions and gave us cage ideas/suggestions." in 16 reviews



"Tweetie is a [Green Cheek Conure](#) with high personality, I travel a lot and this has been my go-to place for all my avian needs, seed, boarding e I've never been disappointed." in 2 reviews

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Thalia F.
San Jose, CA

★★★★★ 5/2/2018

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[Edit business info](#)

Julia P.
First to review

From the business

Being a neighborhood mom and pop pet store, we cater to our customers needs and wants. Along with offering a variety of supplies for dogs, cats, small animals, reptiles and fish, we ...

[Learn more about The Animal Company](#)

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The Animal Connection

★★★★★ 196 reviews

There's fish, birds and reptiles also.

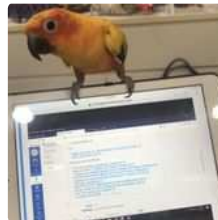
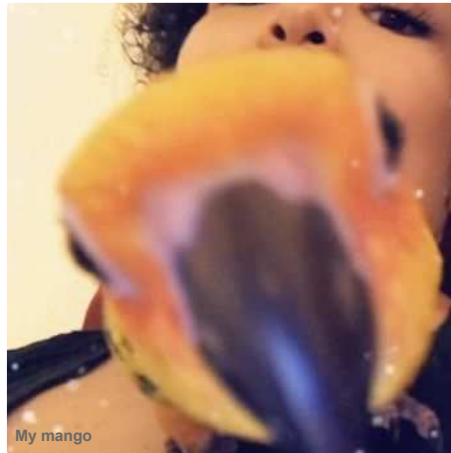
Noe Valley Pet Company

★★★★★ 98 reviews



0 friends
5 reviews
4 photos

The animal Company is amazing you walk in and the birds a very well taken care of. The staff is really friendly and the owners are friendly. I came in and they greeted me kindly, they asked what i was looking for and i told them a sun conure, they had 4 available and the girl who helped me was very friendly and asked me which one i wanted to meet first. After I chose she took me to the back room, sat me down with a towel on my lap(in case of bird poop) and she let me hold my bird. I instantly loved him and I guess the feeling was mutual because my husband tried to hold him and the conure gave him a warning squawk since that day 10/20/17 mango and I have been inseparable, he's the sweetest bird every and has never bitten anyone he meets but he always would rather be on my shoulder than spend time with someone else.



Comment from Rick F. of The Animal Company
Business Owner

5/4/2018 · So glad that he makes you so happy, thanks...TACO



Nick B.
Oakland, CA
9 friends
8 reviews
1 photo



4/23/2018

Awesome healthy birds, excellent staff, great advice, and fair prices. Thank you for making my experience easier and enjoyable. The finches are beautiful.



Comment from Rick F. of The Animal Company
Business Owner

5/4/2018 · Thank you so much. We love to hear when we make people happy!!!



Taryn T.
San Francisco, CA
12 friends



3/10/2018 · Updated review

This is still my all-time favorite pet store! I bought another white face pearl cockatiel from here a few years ago, and



Food price is definitely reasonable (and there is a frequent buyer card that gives you \$10 off non-food goods after each \$100 premium food purchase).



Mission Critter

39 reviews

A great selection of dog and cat stuff.

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Near Me

[Pet Grooming Near Me](#)

3 reviews
 1 photo



both my boy and girl are doing great. I bring them in every quarter (on a Sunday/Monday 12-4pm) for their "mani/pedi" (i.e. wing/nail trim). It's now \$10 per cockatiel, but that's a great deal considering some other places charge double that for a small bird. I also highly recommend getting their house-brand seed mixes. Both my cockatiels love that, and I like to mix it in with zupreem pellets (85% pellets:15% seed), along with a side dish of fresh fruits/veggies (but NO avocado!!). Rick, Ellen, and their staff are wonderful and really know a lot about animals and how to handle them. All their baby birds are hand-fed and always super healthy, clean, and sweet. Highly recommend :)!



★★★★★ 4/20/2014 • Previous review

Great pet store that specializes in birds. I bought a baby cockatiel from here and he's very healthy/ happy. They offer ~\$30 DNA tests for baby birds and ~\$5 grooming for birds on Sundays/Mondays. I've gotten both services for my cockatiel and can't complain. The staff is extremely knowledgeable and can answer any questions you might have. They do get busy so don't be afraid to grab a staff member and tell them what you need. Their food and toy selections are also extensive. They also sell dog/cat food, etc., but its primary focus is on our feathered friends :). [Read less](#)



Olga Maria B.
 San Francisco, CA
 0 friends
 1 review

★★★★★ 1/11/2018

For sure they love the animals.
 When I arrived in San Francisco I wanted a pet, I ran in to this oasis of kindness, they love animals, they take care of by calling them by name. They don't sell you animal if they are not sure you will take it seriously.
 Tweetie is a Green Cheek Conure with high personality, I travel a lot and this has been my go-to place for all my avian needs, seed, boarding e I've never been disappointed.
 Friendly and knowledgeable employees .
 Thanks to Animal company from Tweetie and I



Liz K.
 Santa Clara, CA
 0 friends
 31 reviews
 11 photos

★★★★★ 12/20/2017

I had been fantasizing and researching caiques. This store is very caring. Rick and Ellen are the BEST! I got my dream bird. I didn't have all the materials to have him home right away. Ellen allowed us to put a down payment to hold Charlie just for us!!! We picked him up a week later and we are very happy. One word of advice, some of the breeders clip wings so short my bird falls like a rock to the floor. If you want your fid to be flighted, you may want to



ask beforehand. Great place!! Thinking of another caique soon and I'll comeback here first!!!!



Evelyn S.
San Francisco, CA
32 friends
7 reviews
11 photos

★★★★★ 12/17/2017

I stopped by looking for Halo cat food but they had one can left and it's the only brand that doesn't make my Siamese cat sick. Fussy Cats was recommended and she LOVED it!

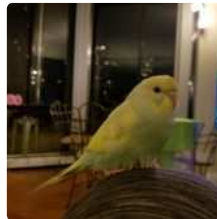
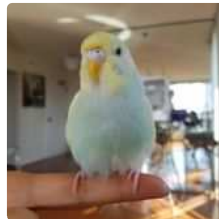
I will definitely be back soon to stock up. The staff was warm, friendly and helpful. Thank you!



Kathleen C.
Santa Rosa, CA
334 friends
7 reviews
4 photos

★★★★★ 12/13/2017

I got the sweetest, most tame han-fed budgie from here. She is an absolute angel and came to me in perfect health! The staff are great and answer any questions you may have. I would definitely recommend getting your pet bird from here if you can!



[See all photos from Kathleen C. for The Animal Company](#)



Comment from Rick F. of The Animal Company
Business Owner

12/13/2017 · Thank you so much for your kind words. We are happy that your bird is what you wanted



Elizabeth C.
San Francisco, CA
3 friends
38 reviews
5 photos

★★★★★ 9/18/2017

I only have great things to say about this shop. I have frequented The Animal Company over the last couple years for dog treats, but recently made the decision to purchase a bird. The staff were very helpful and helped me pick out a species (Princess of Wales Parakeet) that met my wants and needs. They allowed me to handle her several times before making the decision to purchase her. They also helped me pick out the right size cage, gave me



recommendations for toys, and made a special mix (they have bulk bins of bird foods) just for her.

I was going on vacation for a week, and the staff offered to keep her until I returned. Once I returned, she had a small injury to her foot, and again they offered to keep her until she was fully healed. They obviously care so much for their birds and want to ensure a smooth transition for both pet and owner.

This will be my first bird, and I'm confident I'll be able to take care of her due to help and advice from The Animal Company. I received such personal service, which is rare nowadays. Thanks!



Amy B.
San Francisco, CA
👤 1 friend
★ 10 reviews

★★★★★ 6/4/2017

I LOVE this place. Everyone who works here is so nice, friendly, helpful, and knowledgeable. They clearly love these animals and have a lot of experience with them. I'm a new bird owner of a baby green cheek conure and I'm definitely spoiling my little bird with lots of toys, playtops, good quality food, etc. I get everything I need at this store and the staff is wonderful. I'm in there weekly getting supplies and just visiting the beautiful birds in there. If you're looking to get a bird, or just need supplies (cage, food, toys, etc) I highly recommend this place!!



Nadine W.
San Francisco, CA
👤 31 friends
★ 3 reviews

★★★★★ 2/5/2017

It was really amazing going there. The birds I got to hold were hand fed and very friendly. I may just even get my first bird here!! I'll probably come back and buy lots of supplies too. The staff was very nice and gave us lots of advice on how to handle the bird and what they're like. Definitely a go to place for birds



Dan C.
San Francisco, CA
👤 129 friends
★ 36 reviews

★★★★★ 7/26/2016

I came here looking for a pet bird since I think the big box stores do not have the same passion for their animals and was very happy when I worked with the knowledgeable and helpful staff. I got a was deciding between a Senegal or African Gray when I came in and they let me hold both types of birds while answering all of my questions. I decided on a Senegal back in May, but have since been back a number of times to get more toys, food, and I always try to see the newcomers. As a result of my frequent visits I will now be getting an African Gray as well.

If you are interested in a new feathered friend, new cage, or new toys then look no further because they have everything you need.

They also offer boarding and are very attentive to your bird while you are out of town even if it is for a month or more.



Matthew T.
Noe Valley, San Francisco, CA
👤 1 friend
★ 10 reviews
📷 6 photos

★★★★★ 6/3/2016

This local pet supply company is a true pet owners dream!

The key point is that the owners and employees Love and understand animals, have been doing this a long time and they also like people!

Yes- you can go in and browse, ask questions and even special order things they might not have.



I can get my hound dogs raw meat meals out of their freezer, of course my compostable poo-bags, tooth paste, furminator and brushes, organic healthy snacks, shampoo...everything I need to keep the hounds healthy and happy.

This is not a trendy boutique with 15 items for sale-

This is a cram-packed, well ordered pet owners market that has the best prices and the kindest approach to retail you can get!!!

Come shop at a store that makes supporting your local small businesses a no-brainer, win win win situation.



Tom M.
Corte Madera, CA
1 friend
19 reviews
3 photos

★★★★★ 12/30/2015

Great local shop with personal attention. While TAC does carry high end pet supplies for dogs, cats, etc, this is a great pet shop for birds especially.

Everyone super helpful and friendly. Encouraged and supported many in-store visits with our new Meyers parrot prior to taking our new baby home in order to promote socialization and ensure a good transition. Super good people you want to support.

They take very good care of their animals and know more about birds than anyone I encountered in seeking our first. They share this knowledge willingly and will get my biz going forward. Thanks guys!



Joyce Q.
San Francisco, CA
140 friends
9 reviews
5 photos

★★★★★ 8/8/2015 · Updated review

Just brought the little girl home yesterday ! Super excited to have her home ! I really have to say that I enjoyed going to animal company because Ellen and Rick and their employees are such nice people. They really care for their birds and wish they go home happy and healthy. They were super nice and gave me some bird food for Bella (my blue front Amazon) and told me to bring her back in a week so they can weight her. Here's a pic of little Bella in the way home



Bella enjoying her new home and toys



★★★★★ 7/11/2015 • Previous review

Really like this place. Everyone there is super friendly. The owners Rick and Ellen are super nice and knowledgeable. I recently purchased a blue front amazon there, still a baby and they encourage me to come visit the baby as much as I can. I love the variety of parrots they have there and the staff there are nice ! I would recommend you to come in and take a look at their parrots and if you are interested in getting one this is the place to go! [Read less](#)



Ron A.
San Francisco, CA
👤 1 friend
★ 52 reviews
📷 2 photos

★★★★★ 6/13/2015

Great Neighborhood Store!
Every time i come in they are friendly and helpful, have a lot of knowledge & experience & will keep coming back.



Austin S.
San Francisco, CA
👤 4 friends
★ 3 reviews

★★★★★ 4/18/2015

The Animal Company is an excellent place to buy a bird. I got my conure there and I am very satisfied. They are very knowledgeable and helpful and very patient.



Trella R.
Oakland, CA
👤 109 friends
★ 21 reviews
📷 8 photos

★★★★★ 3/4/2015

I bring my parrotlet here every few months to get groomed. They do an excellent job of taking care of her and I love that they specialize in birds. Bird grooming is pretty cheap here, and they usually wave the fee if you buy something, which I always end up doing since they have a fantastic selection of bird treats and toys.



Beautiful baby green-winged parakeet for sale at The Animal Company



Seth T.
San Francisco, CA
👤 35 friends
★ 51 reviews
📷 114 photos

★★★★★ 3/1/2015

Extremely helpful and knowledgeable about parakeets. This will be our go place from now on.



Mike M.
San Francisco, CA
0 friends
2 reviews

★★★★★ 7/8/2014

They are incredible at The Animal Company! My caique fell of his perch and was bleeding. Rick suggested I bring him over. He stopped the bleeding and directed me to an avian vet.

My bird and I are very thankful and will continue to shop for all our pet needs (whatever they may be) at The Animal Company.



Honest F.
South San Francisco, CA
2 friends
107 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 6/22/2014

We found this place as we were looking at purchasing a parrot.

When we walked in, they were rather busy, but only after a couple of minutes we were greeted with a welcoming smile. We informed the lady of what type of parrot we were looking for and within minutes we were sitting there picking out the bird we wanted. Granted we've done our research over several weeks. Nonetheless the staff here is the friendliest people I have ever met at a pet store, as I was waiting for my husband and kids I had an opportunity to watch how they interacted with other customers, everyone who walked on was treated like family!

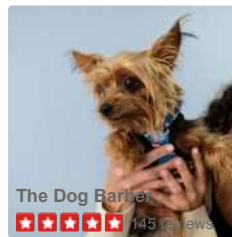
If I can give the 10 Stars I would!

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Best of Yelp San Francisco – Pet Groomers



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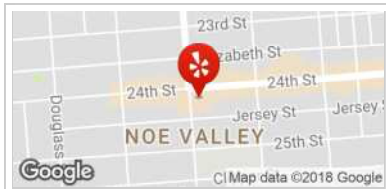
The Animal Company

Claimed

83 reviews

[Details](#)

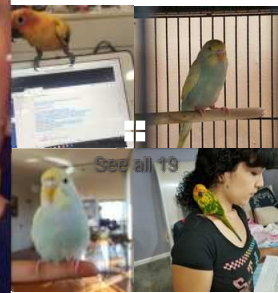
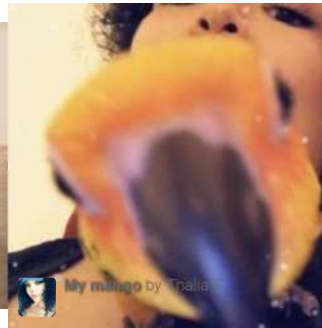
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Lindsay B.
San Francisco, CA



6/1/2014

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[Edit business info](#)**Julia P.**

First to review

From the business

Being a neighborhood mom and pop pet store, we cater to our customers needs and wants. Along with offering a variety of supplies for dogs, cats, small animals, reptiles and fish, we ...

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**The Animal Connection**

★★★★★ 196 reviews

There's fish, birds and reptiles also.

Noe Valley Pet Company

★★★★★ 98 reviews



6 friends
★ 13 reviews
👤 👤

📍 1 check-in

Just went into visit the birds, bought \$3.00 worth of treats for my dog and they gave me a gift bag worth much more than I spent. Great little addition to the neighborhood with really friendly staff.



Melanie M.
San Francisco, CA
👤 0 friends
★ 3 reviews
📷 1 photo

★★★★★ 5/15/2014

If you have a BIRD PHOBIA, read this!

For all my life I have had a phobia about birds; specifically, the flapping wings. No, it wasn't from the movie; and no, I was never traumatized by one. My Aunt has the same phobia, so I chalked it up to being one of those weird genetic things. It was so bad, that I almost did not go to Venice on a trip to Italy because of all the pigeons. In fact, the only way I made it through St. Mark's Square was to close my eyes, plug my ears, and have someone lead me by the arm (slowly) through the mass of birds there. And, I was still nervous!

My partner of over 15 years had two birds, and I never dared to hold them or even TOUCH one of them. I was just too freaked out. Fortunately, they were not free, and stayed in their cages. Then, last November, one of them died (he was a Spectacled Amazon parrot, about 50 years old.). We got a foster cockatiel from Mickaboo to keep the other bird (also a cockatiel) from being so lonely. But they stayed in their cages.

I soon realized that as much as I feared birds, I missed the parrot. I missed the smoochy kisses he would blow every time I walked in the door at the end of a day; I missed his watching crazy antics and goofy behavior.

Enter the Animal Company.

One day while we were visiting the store, Ellen suggested I just try having a bird sit on my arm (I had a coat on), and reassured me he would not fly. With much trepidation, I did - and he didn't. I was so pleased with myself!! It was a huge leap forward to face my fears!

Then she made a brilliant suggestion - why not get a baby parrot? Maybe that would help me get over my phobia (after all, who doesn't love a baby anything?) So we bought a 5 week-old Meyers Parrot. He was so tiny, so helpless and cute. He didn't have wings large enough to flap - and so I held him and became accustomed to the feel of the downy feathers and touched the tiny wings. They told me it was so important to "bond" with him at this time, so I went in 2 - 3 times a week, and pretty soon I couldn't wait to see and hold him.

Well babies grow, and he did too. Eventually, the little wings began to flap as he developed a sense of balance. I started to freak out at first, then just told myself he was "fanning me". It was only a matter of 2 weeks before he was nestling on my chest, sitting on my shoulder, and happily flapping his wings on my finger. Every one of the staff members in the store knew of my phobia, and calmly and patiently coaxed me through the process.

Thanks to Ellen's idea, I can now fully enjoy my little baby boy! Will I still freak out if a pigeon dive bombs me? Probably so. But I am SO much better off and better equipped to deal with my fears and I never thought I would see the day when that happened!

Robby is a beautiful, sweet little parrot and a joyful addition to the household!



Food price is definitely reasonable (and there is a frequent buyer card that gives you \$10 off non-food goods after each \$100 premium food purchase).



Mission Critter
★★★★★ 39 reviews
A great selection of dog and cat stuff.

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THANKS to Rick and Ellen for everything they did to make that happen!!



Pat M.
San Francisco, CA
270 friends
210 reviews
36 photos

★★★★★ 5/5/2014 · Updated review

190 check-ins

Listed in [My Neighborhood](#)

Not much has changed since the last time I wrote a review for them, i.e., they're still awesome. However, seeing the scathing review someone gave them made me want to get on here and reiterate this point. Everyone who works here cares very, very deeply for birds, and not just the ones they sell. We have a derbyan parakeet that we bought from them about 4 years ago, and we routinely bring him in for boarding and grooming (nail trims and wing clips). They've never given him anything but the best care, to the point that he actually enjoys going to stay there when we're out of town. Just a great, great store with very caring, helpful, and nice owners and employees.

★★★★★ 8/1/2012 · Previous review

Wow, I could have sworn I reviewed Animal Company before, but apparently I was wrong. Time to... [Read more](#)



Lynn C.
San Francisco, CA
0 friends
31 reviews

★★★★★ 10/30/2013

They're awesome! We have gotten two birds, a hawk head and a meyers, from this store and have been deeply impressed by their care and professionalism in their treatment of the animals. We also have a conjure that we bought at a Cow Palace bird mart, who gives the other end of what d-bag breeders can do to screw up their animals. (He's fine now, but took a year to coax out of his depression. Yes, birds can get depressed. Poor guy.) Both birds from the Animal Company were lovingly raised, and we always love to go in when we have a minute to see who is new in the shop and get our dose of bird love, and the proprietors are never chuffed if we don't buy something (though we usually find something we need). Really, a lovely place.



Ana M.
San Francisco, CA
17 friends
8 reviews
31 photos

★★★★★ 9/4/2013

Best Pet Shop in the city! I can't thank them enough for their excellent service.

I had an incident with one of my birds this evening. He got startled, flew away and broke two of his feathers. He started screaming and bleeding and I started crying, frantically trying to get a hold of him. I knew it was bad. My first thought was, Oh my God, it's 6 o'clock. The Pet shop is closed! NO! I called them anyway, thank goodness they picked up.

I explained my situation and was given instructions on how to handle him before rushing him over. When I arrived, two of their best employees examined him and gently removed the feathers. They made sure all the pieces were removed and the bleeding had stopped before handing him over to me. They assured me he would be fine, and once more I was given detailed instructions on how to care for him when I got home. I tried to repay them for taking such good care of Louie and for staying after hours, but they wouldn't accept it. They were just glad to see he was ok. This injury, if left untreated, could be fatal. I don't know what I would have done if they hadn't answered. I am so very thankful.

I've bought 2 cockatiels here and I couldn't be happier. The birds here are bred and hand fed, so they are very friendly. On Sundays and Mondays, you can bring your

birds in to have their wings clipped. This service is so great to have because I don't think I could ever do it on my own. I'd get too nervous. Here, they have the experience, the tools and the knowledge to do it right. I love to buy my bird food here because you can ask them to put whatever you want in it. I get the cockatiel house blend with little to no sunflower seeds, since they are very fattening. They add minerals and nutrients to the mix as well. Nothing like the ready to buy bird food you get at other pet stores. Here, they explain what each nutrient does and add them all for you. Great! One less thing for me to worry about! Oh, the millets here are gigantic and are so fresh. My birds love them. If you are interested in buying a bird, come in for a visit. You are able to play with the birds and spend time with them before making a decision. It's awesome!



Daric W.
San Francisco, CA
0 friends
5 reviews

★★★★★ 8/24/2013

The Animal Company is awesome! Even the veterinarians in town speak of it as the best and rave about the owners, Rick and Ellen, as the most dependable, trustworthy, and ethical in the business. Their knowledge of and love for the animals that become our pets is beautiful and moving. My partner and I have been going to the Animal Company for 15 years. They have the largest imaginable selection of toys and treats and supplies for our birds as well as for other animals. We especially enjoy visiting the variety of birds in the store, all of them lovingly cared for. Rick and Ellen and the staff merit our highest recommendation. We are so fortunate to have them in San Francisco!



Anna B.
San Francisco, CA
52 friends
127 reviews
29 photos

★★★★★ 5/27/2013

I used to go to The Animal Company in the '80s when it was up on Douglas. Very happy to see it's going strong, even in a new location. They have always been fabulous with birds and after 20 years, I finally decided it was time to dip a toe in the bird pond again. About two years ago, I found a parakeet in the Tenderloin and he was not tame and obviously lonely. I asked for advice at the Animal Company and walked out with one hand-tamed parakeet baby and one cheaper parakeet just for fun as companions to the wild one. The birds were and are incredibly healthy. The hand-tamed parakeet now flies to me when I snap my fingers and he has no fear of hands at all. He has personality, though, so he's not always at my beck and call, but he's a great bird!

After a recent break-up, we decided that my ex would keep the three parakeets and I would get a new hand-tamed one for myself. The hand-tamed parakeets are about 3X the cost of the "regular" ones but the time and patience saved is worth it. I have had my new bird just about 2 months and he is completely fear-free. He loves to follow me around and sits with me all the time. Very healthy and great personality. He's even started talking a tiny bit.

The woman who helped me choose my bird was so great. She set me up on a chair with a towel and got different birds out for me to hold, including a gorgeous cockatiel baby. 'tiels are too noisy for my little apartment, but after holding a couple of parakeets, it was obvious which one I should get.

One tip, don't choose a parakeet or cockatiel for the color, go strictly by personality. As much as I wanted a yellow and blue or aqua bird, I got a standard blue violet and his personality far outweighs the "less interesting" color.

I have ultimate faith in the birds the Animal Co. carries. Healthy, clean, well-bred, and well-raised. you will get expert advice to make sure you choose the right bird for you.



Heather C.
Pleasant Hill, CA
21 friends
8 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 3/20/2013

Everyone in this shop is incredible. They are helpful and very informed. They made me feel very welcome. I purchased a baby african grey parrot and as I was waiting for him to grow old enough to come home I had the opportunity to get to know the staff better when I would come to visit him. Felt like part of the family. My African Grey is beautiful and very healthy. I would recommend them to everyone! Rick & Ellen are very warm, friendly and eager to share any info that you might need. I also love that when you walk in the door no one is jumping down on you and hovering over you. They give you the space to explore.



Vicki R.
San Leandro, CA
2 friends
25 reviews

★★★★★ 12/7/2012

Was in the city and went to this place for the first time today. It is a really nice bird shop. The bird cages were immaculate, the birds all had clean water, and fresh food including veggies! They also had appropriate toys and seemed very calm, relaxed and content. The staff were holding and interacting with some birds. I asked to hold the most amazing little Cuban Amazon and they got me a towel and some toys for him. They answered a lot of questions, were very nice and not pushy. Also, I got some great toys for my own parrots. I will definitely go back there. And, if I thought I could cope with one more large parrot, I would go back for that amazing little zon.



robin h.
Pacifica, CA
0 friends
14 reviews

★★★★★ 7/29/2012

Well I can't say enough about this gem of a "pet shop". My teenager and I have been plotting and planning to bring a bird into our zoo of a home. For the last couple of weeks we've been reading books and searching the web as to what breed would be best for us. After finding The Animal Company on yelp, we timidly made our way into the shop. After chatting with all the birdies in the back and just kind of hanging out, the gentleman I assume is Rick asked us what he could do for us. I told him our story. we weren't there for instant gratification but were trying to do this the right way.

He quickly turned us over to his wonderful wife who proceeded to spend a good part of the afternoon with us....In The Back Room....

I explained that I had just enjoyed the lovey-dovey Cockatoo baby on the right in the back. My son wanted something bright and flashy. She then took the bird by the horns and actually placed in our hands, babies of both types. It felt like an experience I should be paying for. My heart melted and so did my very cool son's. He now realized that he too enjoyed lovey dovey birds. We also got to peek at a tiny, bald baby Macow in a warmer. That is the one that my son is now pining for.

Important part of this story: my Canine American, Holly also joined us on this mission. The owners were very happy to let her in on all of this. They didn't flinch when Holly wanted to smell the birdies. They even looked up a special kind of collar that Holly likes.

I didn't catch the name of the employee ladies but they were wonderful with us. They shared their experiences, gave advice, didn't mind us barging in our their lunch. I will be back within about a week's time to see if we're any closer to making a choice on our new family member. I feel like we've made a real connection here.

This shop happens to be in one of the nicest neighborhoods in The City. Doesn't matter that parking isn't great. You'll enjoy the walk back to your car. I'll update this soon!

-Robin. Yeah, a bird as well.

update: yep. I'm there a couple times a week now. I am the proud mom of a new baby bird that I cannot take home for

another 3 or 4 months. What a neat group of people.
When they see me coming thru the door, no sooner have I washed my hands and sat down on the park bench, my little baby is placed in my lap.
I can tell that Ellen is raising the babies with love and care.



Renae H.
San Mateo, CA
232 friends
336 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 4/19/2012

Love this place! Even though I recently moved to San Mateo it's well worth the drive whenever my birds need to be groomed.

If you have birds you know that they do not really appreciate having their wings clipped and their nails trimmed, but Rick is so good, it takes him under five minutes a bird to get my three guys all clipped and ready to go. In a flash, they are back in their carrier, slightly pissed off, a little ruffled, but none the worse for wear. And at about \$5 a bird for cockatiels, you can't ask for a better value.

Rick has also been great at giving me a few tips to address a couple behavior problems (my birds are rescues, they have issues), which I definitely appreciate. They also have a nice selection of bird food and toys, all of my birds' favorite toys have been from here. They have a knack for knowing what appeals to our feathery friends. Last time I was here we also picked up a toy and some treats for the dog, which were a hit. Granted, this is a bird store, so the selection of non-bird stuff is not huge, but they have some nice things for furry babies too. I love that everything they stock here seems to have thought behind it. Stuff isn't just there to fill the shelves, it's there because they picked it on purpose. You should definitely check this place out.



Sue K.
Richmond, CA
15 friends
42 reviews
16 photos

★★★★★ 1/13/2012 • Updated review

After 3 month I bought white bellied caique from The Animal Company.
Baby Caique is still doing very well. He never bite us, he is friendly ,and he already knew 'step up' pretty well, so it wasn't hard to teach him.
I can tell how shop person's hand-feeding was very good.

★★★★★ 10/22/2011 • Previous review

I went the shop last Saturday and bought baby White Bellied Caique. The shop people are very nice and friendly. The shop person was hand-feeding the baby caique, so he/she(I didn't check sex yet) is very friendly too. I am so glad that I bought bird from the shop. [Read less](#)



Michael F.
San Francisco, CA
0 friends
50 reviews
4 photos

★★★★★ 1/9/2012 • Updated review

for bird lovers this store is paradise, and for us cat and dog owners it's the nicest store in the City. Well stocked and most importantly the best staff. They know pets and can get any product quickly.

★★★★★ 1/15/2010 • Previous review

Ellen, Rick and staff are most helpful and knowledgeable and obviously really love animals. The... [Read more](#)

Zuri P.

**San Francisco, CA**

👤 24 friends

★ 15 reviews

11/17/2011

This store is definitely for bird-lovers.

They always have at least 15 different parrots and maybe 20 other birds in the back of the shop ranging in all different levels of development.

I grew up with Parrots and Lovebirds so I would really love to own one as an adult but given my living/ financial situation and schedule, I can't really afford one right now. Because I can't actually own one right now, I try to stop in at The Animal Company as much as possible for a little birdie-love. The owners and employees know my face now, as I am here so often, and they ALWAYS give me excellent service (even though they know I most likely won't be buying anything).

Lately, I've been playing with a male, Rose-Crested/ Rosie Cockatoo and I really, really want to take him home with me. He is such an affectionate bird. I've even taken my friends into this place (ones with no prior parrot experience) and have found at least a couple of parrots that are so sweet that even my scared friends can hold them.

I will forever go to this place because I always leave feeling completely in-love and naturally high from all the amazing bonding experiences I've had with the birds (and sometimes even the visiting dogs) here.

GO.

You will NOT be disappointed.

:)

**Ashley S.****Walnut Creek, CA**

👤 0 friends

★ 1 review

★★★★★ 10/17/2011

This is by far the best bird store in the San Francisco Bay area. Unlike other shops in the region that are outrageously priced and lack good customer service, the Animal Company is the polar opposite. This shop is in a cool location, clean, and has a great staff. Rick and Ellen (the owners) are so knowledgeable about birds and really do a great job with their grooming needs. Recently my African Grey had a couple blood feathers, and they helped me get them out. They are honest people who really care about these beautiful creatures. I am so glad that there is such a great shop around where I can take my birds!

**Paula O.****San Francisco, CA**

👤 0 friends

★ 7 reviews

★★★★★ 10/8/2011

I've been going to the Animal Company for years - for both dog and cat products. Rick is wonderful - so friendly and helpful and often gave me a discount on some of my products when I bought a lot of them. Now that they have moved to Castro Street, they are even more convenient for me. And they carry the kind of healthy food that I feed my cats, which I can't get at the bigger pet stores. A wonderful, place with a small town neighborhood feel. Try them out!

**Roy N.****San Francisco, CA**

👤 2439 friends

★ 494 reviews

📷 229 photos

★★★★★ 8/9/2011 · 🔄 Updated review

☰ Listed in [Favorite Bird Stuff](#)

Brought our mitred conure, Petey, here again yesterday to have his beak done. For some reason, his beak has never grown straight, but it sure grows fast...like a toenail! As such, it needs regular care and maintenance from someone who knows what they are doing.

In my opinion, Rick at the Animal Company is one of the premier people in the bay area who has the experience in properly doing a beak. Many bird/pet stores will do wings and nails, but are understandably hesitant when it comes to

doing beaks. Not only is Rick an expert, but their prices are most reasonable too.

Fast Eddie Felsen in the movie, The Hustler, said that anything can be a beautiful thing when it's done well. Watching Rick do his beak reminded me of that line from the movie. His technique is so smooth and confident...the obvious result of years of experience. As a result, even the birds look comfortable when he does it. Taking our loved ones there for a beak job means that we can have it done with confidence and no worries.

The Animal Company in their new location is a great pet store in Noe Valley dedicated to birds with a fine staff who all share a common love for our fine feathered friends.

★★★★★ 6/4/2010 • Previous review

Tried to order Harrison's bird food (certified organic...good stuff!) online the other day through... [Read more](#)



★★★★★ 5/18/2010 • Previous review

Can't believe that I never reviewed this place. Anyway, The Animal Company is a great place...a nice corner pet store with a definite bird focus...my kind of place! The staff is really friendly and I loved their selection of birds and bird supplies.

If I had to pick nits...nit pick...LOL...it would be that the 'new' cages hanging from the ceiling are getting a little rusty. Other than that, I like this store a lot and it is definitely in the top three of my favorite bird stores in the area.

Loved the green parrot there called Lola too. She's not for sale though as she is a biter. Regardless, watching her always makes me happy and I always try to stop by the store every time I'm in the area. The Animal Company is an outstanding place to get a bird or bird supplies. Definitely another heavenly store for bird lovers and that's something to squawk about. [Read less](#)



Shawne B.
San Francisco, CA
0 friends
6 reviews
5 photos

★★★★★ 6/30/2011

So we're a bit obsessed with African Greys and Amazons. We love stopping in and bonding with their birds! The staff has begun to really get to know my boyfriend and I as we drop in whenever we can.

Being a former retail employee, I always am weary being that customer that comes in and doesn't spend any money, wasting their time. However, the staff has never made us feel that way. They're always so friendly and want to give us as much education about the birds as possible. They also really make sure that the birds go to good homes. Everyone that comes in that shop, will bring their birds that they originally bought from The Animal Company. They all look healthy and happy! We have visited many other pet shops, and if you're lucky to handle the bird at the other locations, they're usually too skiddish and not very friendly. The level of care and attention the birds get at the Animal Company is amazing! Their birds, for the most part, are loving and happy!

While we're not at that stage in our life to get a bird yet, we

continue to adore this shop and consider it a gem of Noe valley. My boyfriend and I are so grateful for all they have done for us, from education to parrot bonding! Buying a parrot is a huge commitment. Because many of them live longer than you will! That said, we still want one in our home... One day. When we are ready...we wouldn't think of any other place to pick up our African Grey than the Animal Company.



Lia N.
San Francisco, CA
226 friends
47 reviews
209 photos

★★★★★ 6/2/2011

I get all of my birdy food here and all of there birds for sale look so healthy and happy.



Michelle M.
Brentwood, CA
5 friends
5 reviews

★★★★★ 3/29/2011

We have been going to the Animal Company ever since we moved to San Francisco. They are a fabulous store with very helpful staff. We originally went there to buy supplies for our cat. We usually found what we needed and if we didn't Rick or Ellen would order it for us.

I have always been interested in getting a bird but kept putting it off. Whenever I would go in the store I would spend a good deal of time in the back where they keep the birds. They let me hold the birds even though I said that I was not in the market to buy one. One day I met the cutest Derbyan Parakeet and fell in love. Rick and Ellen guided me through the whole process of bird ownership and were always available to answer any questions I had. They were so helpful and caring. Their birds are well taken care of and well socialized.

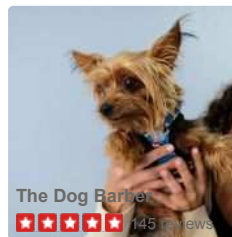
As a bonus they do grooming on most Sundays (stuff you usually have to go to the vet for and pay a lot more for).

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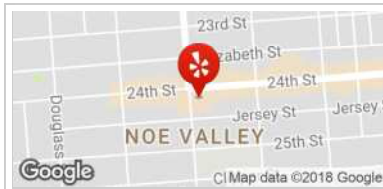
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83 reviews

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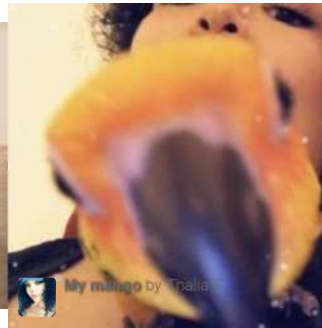
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Noe Valley

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"We can't thank Ellen, [Rick](#) and their staff enough for all of their good advice and kindness over the last 7 months." in 19 reviews



"[Ellen](#) then also came and sat with us and answered even more questions and gave us cage ideas/suggestions." in 16 reviews



"Tweetie is a [Green Cheek Conure](#) with high personality, I travel a lot and this has been my go-to place for all my avian needs, seed, boarding e I've never been disappointed." in 2 reviews

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Crystal C.
San Francisco, CA

★★★★★ 6/27/2010

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Thu	11:00 am - 6:00 pm
Fri	11:00 am - 6:00 pm
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Julia P.
First to review

From the business

Being a neighborhood mom and pop pet store, we cater to our customers needs and wants. Along with offering a variety of supplies for dogs, cats, small animals, reptiles and fish, we ...

[Learn more about The Animal Company](#)

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People also viewed



The Animal Connection

★★★★★ 196 reviews

There's fish, birds and reptiles also.

Noe Valley Pet Company

★★★★★ 98 reviews



110 friends
★ 129 reviews
📷 10 photos

We got our wonderful cockatiel Fruitloop from the Animal Company and the whole process from picking out our beloved pet to bringing her (we think it's a her) home was such an intimate affair. I still remember walking with my bf just to look and bam! We were playing and bonding with our baby bird. We came back every weekend to bond with Fruitloop and Ellen and Rick as well as their staff were very helpful in answering all of our questions.

They also have a great selection on bird food and toy goodies. I always remember to grab a toy for our cockatiel so she never gets bored of the same toys.

If you are looking into buying any kind of bird you won't regret going to the Animal Company. They are healthy, well-adjusted, and tame and more often than not you get to see the process of them growing up, getting their feathers, and personalities taking shape versus getting a grown bird from a chain pet store.



Food price is definitely reasonable (and there is a frequent buyer card that gives you \$10 off non-food goods after each \$100 premium food purchase).



Mission Critter
★★★★★ 39 reviews
A great selection of dog and cat stuff.

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Caitlin F.
San Francisco, CA
👤 2 friends
★ 14 reviews

★★★★★ 3/6/2010

After a bad experience buying my bird at another store, I was so happy to find a nice place to get all my bird supplies. The birds here are so well socialized and treated well. I love stopping by when I can just to play with them. They also have just about everything I need for my bird. They even hooked me up with someone to help me with my bird's behavior problems, which are there thanks to the store I got him from. So, let's see: the staff are nice and they have everything I need.... I don't think I'll be going anywhere else anytime soon.



Ax L.
San Francisco, CA
👤 69 friends
★ 29 reviews
📷 7 photos

★★★★★ 1/25/2010

i simply love love love this pet store! really nice and helpful staff that doesn't try to high pressure you into buying anything.

we have bought a cockatiel bird, 2 bird cages, dog food/toys/treats, cat food treats/toys and tons of various stuff at this store.

they carry a great selection of pet related items and are a bit cheaper than Noe Valley Pets...i will state that The Animal Company is not the cheapest in this city, but hey if ya want cheapo stuff then try Petco or one of the "other" chains....but realize you get what ya pay for.

also the owner always cuts us deals on the items we buy without us asking....they really know how to treat the customer at this store...which is why we've become loyal.

if you are into birds, be sure to check out their awesome selection in the back. they also can do bird sexing for cheaper than a vet.



Annie H.
San Francisco, CA
👤 1 friend
★ 33 reviews
📷 1 photo

★★★★★ 1/21/2010

I've been coming here since a very young age, even purchased one of my first pet's here! The staff are always helpful and friendly, very down-to-earth nice people. They are very friendly to all the pets that come in as well. They have a GREAT selection of all the different kinds of food and a good selection of other supplies. They have an amazing selection in the back of beautiful exotic and domestic birds. I purchased a beautiful Cockatiel there when I was younger, she was a great pet and from a quality breeder. Much better than any bird you would get at Petco. This place is great!



Lauren S.
San Jose, CA
17 friends
143 reviews
6 photos

★★★★★ 1/4/2010

We spent a very long time in this store on Sunday and all I can say is WOW. Everyone there was soooooo helpful! We are seriously considering buying a baby caique yet we haven't been able to find one to actually play with.

They let us play with two and answered ALL of our questions so happily and without rushing us. The first girl that was helping us (I want to say her name was Erica but I think I am wrong, so I'm sorry) actually has two caiques herself so it was great talking to her. Ellen then also came and sat with us and answered even more questions and gave us cage ideas/suggestions. She did not just automatically recommend the most expensive cage she sells either..... yay!

It was so great to not feel rushed or pressured to buy the bird right that moment. They completely understood how big of a commitment it is and I think realized we are taking our time to make that decision.

Really nice people and store. Birds all looked healthy, clean, and well socialized.



Morgan M.
Bellingham, WA
212 friends
422 reviews
127 photos

★★★★★ 12/30/2009

My mini babes are the Mariah Carey of catland. When it comes to the doubleshit twins, they expect nothing but the best or they turn their head and scoff and this gets old.

Do they like the tinsel balls-no. Do they like the catnip mice-no. Do they like the wands-unless you feel like waiving that thing all night or until your arm falls off they wont go near it. The only toy that I've found they like are these rabbit hair mice (I know peta will have my ass for this). With this crazy time of year they've been slightly neglected in the playtime arena so I searched high and low for those stupid mice and could not find them anywhere until I found The Animal Company.

I am completely amazed by all that this store has in stock, from birds to cats there's everything anyone would need you'll find it somewhere on the shelves. I even think they carry merch for lizards but could be wrong. And here's something different for you, in the back I think it's feed of some kind but they're in large bins so you can select however much you need or want rather than over buying. Anyways, back to the twins. I made a beeline to the feline section and found they had an impressive selection of furry toys to rubber ones. As I scoped out the toys I saw the mice, praise jesus. There was a plastic bin and each mouse was sold individually. I was reaching for the mice and kept hearing a crackling sound but nobody was near me, something shifted and I looked up to see a cockatoo (I think?? I'm not too sure on types of birds) just hangin, happily munchin away on a snack.

The doubleshit twins are specific, they don't do black, grey or yellow. It's either pink, blue, green or orange. The Animal Company not only carried red, blue and orange which was close enough for me, but the best part was that the inside of the mice rattled. The second I got home to the anxiously awaiting baddies, I threw a mouse on the floor and they have been going crazy all over the floors since.

There's also a nice selection of cat treats as well, and never trying freeze dried fish (only fish scales that they loved) attempted something new with them and they went nuts for the treats more than they would for catnip.

If you're a pet fiend, you'll find this shop to be very enjoyable because of the variety of food, treats and toys that are reasonably priced plus the staff are approachable, friendly and know their merch.



Roberta J.
Marin County, CA
2 friends
70 reviews

★★★★★ 10/21/2009

They have the best customer service! Last week I stopped by minutes after they closed and they let me in to buy my pet food. It is their great service that keeps me coming back!!



Carlo B.
Concord, CA
1 friend
22 reviews

★★★★★ 8/6/2009 • Updated review

Talk about going the extra mile! After the free vet visit, the vet recommended antibiotics as a precautionary measure. Ellen took Midori for 10 days and gave her the anti-biotics. Then, she even took Midori for the follow-up visit. This is the type of service that you never receive these days. For all your pet needs, look no further than The Animal Company.

★★★★★ 7/19/2009 • Previous review

Focus: Birds

Summary: Good size selection for the space, extremely helpful and knowledgeable staff, decent pricing and good selection of pet supplies.

I've wanted to get a Senegal Parrot for the last few years. I've read that they are a wonderful bird, easy to get along with, beautiful to look at and not very noisy at all. Some can even mimic some words. Well, I've looked high and low for a good pet store that carries them and thank God I stumbled upon The Animal Company.

I called up and told the staff I wanted to ask some questions about their Senegals before making the drive from Concord. They answered all my questions and assured me the birds were well taken care of and well-tempered. As soon as I got to the store, I was shown my bird and taken to a little area where I could get to know it better. I had my four year old son with me and the staff was very friendly to him, even showing him how to pet the bird. They gave my son some stickers as well, very nice. The staff gave me good information about Senegals, but also inquired as to why I wanted this particular bird.

One can tell that the owners really care about their pets and want to see them placed in good homes. After deciding on my pet (it only took a few minutes, she was so sweet) I was then told about the minimum things I would need. The staff wasn't pushy about overdoing the accessories and I was shown the mid-priced cages and told that getting the biggest cage possible wasn't the best for my bird. Again, the staff truly cares about their animals. Within an hour, Midori (that's the name I decided on) and I were on our way home.

The only negative I can say is that the place was extremely busy when I went, but that can be viewed as a very positive sign about the establishment. [Read less](#)



lisah b.
San Francisco, CA
12 friends
1 review

★★★★★ 7/29/2009

My boyfriend and I love the Animal Company! Ellen and Rick, the owners, are now two of our favorite people in San Francisco. We purchased an awesome umbrella cockatoo from them this spring, and we have been weekly visitors ever since. Our bird is completely overwhelmed with delight when she sees Ellen and her staff (her first caretakers).

This store is often busy, and for good reason! The staff is wonderful and will always answer your questions. The store

is packed with pet supplies (which is GREAT), so If you can't find something, you should definitely ask. The store is located in a nice neighborhood in Noe Valley; I never have trouble finding parking.

Once you're a customer at this store, you'll become a dedicated one. Their customers travel in from all over the North, South and East Bays. I've met people there from Livermore, Antioch, Petaluma, Fremont, etc.

I love knowing that I'm supporting a neighborhood pet store with my purchases, not a pet superstore. We can't thank Ellen, Rick and their staff enough for all of their good advice and kindness over the last 7 months.



Dizzy L.
San Francisco, CA
134 friends
121 reviews
31 photos

★★★★★ 7/22/2009

A great pet store. I come here for bird supplies and they are heavy on the bird stuff! They carry quality and safe products. Their seed is live - no dead seed that is so empty and unhealthy for birds. And they really care for their animals! Can do nail trimming on Sundays. Small, neighborhooody and welcoming.



Beach L.
San Francisco, CA
27 friends
233 reviews
67 photos

★★★★★ 5/15/2009

The people here are really nice and knowledgeable! I was dog sitting and the owner showed me what the dog would eat and gave him a free snack.. I would definitely come back here when I get a dog.



Michael M.
San Francisco, CA
217 friends
642 reviews
281 photos

★★★★★ 5/3/2009

Before dinner at Firefly, I went here to pick up some dog shampoo and a few chew toys. Walking in, you will see a LOT of stuff. There is so much, you might not think you can find anything! But never fear ... the very friendly staff will help.

I have never seen fresh dog food, sold in a tub, like the kind you get really cheap ground beef in until today. It must be better than the Pedigree I feed the dog. Lots of options are available, and I am sure you will be guided to what you need for your pet.

They have birds in the back too! I'm not sure if they are for sale, but it looks like from other reviews have said that they clip wings of parakeets, and the like. That would have come in really handy when we had one.

You will find everything you need in this very small space. I plan to go here a lot more and get better dog food than I can get at any old supermarket. Maybe even pick up another parakeet.



David R.
Oakland, CA
34 friends
97 reviews

★★★★★ 2/14/2009

This is what a neighborhood shop should be. Nice people, quality products, and fabulous service.

A little pricey, but it is worth a few extra pennies to support a local shop.

<>

If they are out of something they will happily special order it. And best of all they carry my brand of Large Breed dog food, not something that is easy to find just anywhere.



Janie K.
San Francisco, CA
1 friend
28 reviews
1 photo

★★★★★ 10/12/2008

We've been coming here for 15+ years and they have always been wonderful with our dogs. One time our dog got too excited over a treat and bit one of the owners, so she wasn't exactly thrilled, but who could blame her? Anyway, the next time we stopped by it seemed that all had been forgiven and the service never waned. The old owners were amazing, so when they decided to sell we were a little worried...we really shouldn't have been. The new owners understood how important it was to carry on the reputation, and while the faces may have changed and the fish may have disappeared, this has remained a wonderful family-run pet store. Yes, I can get my dog food elsewhere for a little cheaper, but they are so convenient and always extra friendly and helpful, so they deserve my money. Plus, they always offer to carry the food to my car and hand me a couple treats for the dogs...that's more than worth the extra couple bucks.



Irene L.
Mill Valley, CA
17 friends
13 reviews
11 photos

★★★★★ 9/14/2008

The owners of this store are so caring and compassionate about animals. It shows in everything they do. The first time I stepped into their store, I went in to buy some dog toys and walked out with an African Grey.

What a great place! They provide quality customer service and have a huge selection of pet supplies. They have an extensive selection of healthy and organic food and treats.. Their bird toys are the best selection I've seen anywhere (it makes buying bird toys fun). They also have a nice inventory of dog and cat supplies.. And if they don't have something you're looking for, they'll happily offer to order it for you, if it's possible.

This is such a warm and inviting place to go, that now I find myself going back there, even if I don't need any pet supplies. The Animal Company is a fun place to visit, whether it's to go see the interesting birds they have in the back, see what new toys they have, or to just say hi to Noodle (their sweet Burmese Mountain Dog) who's usually sitting in one of the aisles, looking happy and content.

Parking is surprisingly great every time I've driven over from the Soma district. And there's a nice dog park across the street where my dog loves to go now. There's no need to go anywhere else! Thank you, Ellen and Rick. Keep up the great work!



C P.
San Francisco, CA
99 friends
144 reviews

★★★★★ 10/11/2007

I take my conure here quite often for wing and toe nail clips. Rick is very good at bird grooming, and always gets a kick out of the fact that my little bird plays dead during his time under the clippers. The Animal Company has a great selection of bird toys, and food so they pretty much get all my bird-related business. Also if you make it all the way to the very back of the store, it's almost like a free mini-trip to the zoo with parrots galore.



Len M.
Vallejo, CA
17 friends
44 reviews

★★★★★ 9/6/2007

Listed in [My Neighborhood](#)

1 photo



The Animal Company is by far the BEST pet store for birds in the Bay Area. I have bought three birds from them...so far, and numerous other supplies. They have the widest and most interesting selection of species, and the healthiest birds from any pet store in the area. (This is confirmed by our vet.)

Rick, Ellen, and the rest of the staff treat every customer like their neighbor. The care and love that goes into their store becomes apparent when you see how happy their flock is in the back.

My partner David and I love to go in and visit as often as we can. We bought a selection of cages from them as well, which are of the highest quality.

I can't say enough good things about The Animal Company. They will always be our first choice for our birds.



Galen W.
San Francisco, CA
40 friends
203 reviews
22 photos

★★★★★ 5/16/2007

Nice neighborhood pet store complete with real people, real service, and reasonable prices (they beat the chains on what we get).

A couple of reviews complain about the cramped feeling, the stuff-to-the-gills funky shelves, and the transparentness of the staff. The comments are accurate, but those are pluses for me.

You're getting the genuine small business experience here.Plus, these folks do go out of their way to make sure you get what you need even if they have to order it and trust that you'll come back in three days to pick it up.

It's not PetCo. Fine with me!



chris m.
San Francisco, CA
5 friends
75 reviews

★★★★★ 4/11/2007

My 14 year old feathered friend is from the Animal Company-he comes back here for a manicure every 8-10 weeks and to check out the competition in the back room. I've been tempted to, but haven't yet taken home any of his homies. A friend of mine has two parakeets purchased from this store. They are the cutest, one of them spends hours hanging upside from it's perch, like a vampire bat.



Karen C.
Brisbane, CA
69 friends
14 reviews
5 photos

★★★★★ 3/1/2007

Well I am writing this as a AAA rating for the Animal Conection. This is definitely a Mom and Pop gem. You don't find too many Animal Places left like this anymore. I have always been treated very well indeed and their products, service and birds are just wonderful...Great People, Great Store, very knowledgeable about birds in particular...I was prompted to write this in response to a know ita all gal who must have friends at a nearby business, who wrote a pithy 2 star review. Please ignore the ignorant

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17 other reviews that are not currently recommended ▾

Best of Yelp San Francisco – Pet Groomers