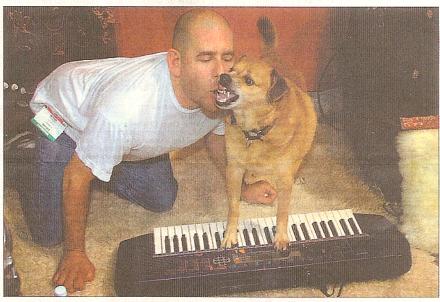
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Photographs by Geraliner Wikking Lot Appeter:
HOWLING SUCCESS: Dog trainer Steve Brooks and his band, K9 Fusion, offer a soundtrack of the canine life, featuring
Brooks' dog, Sven, on the keyboard and vocals. Brooks is one of the exhibitors at SuperZoo, an expo for pet suppliers.

## Pampered Pets Have Collared the Market

The pet-care industry is flourishing because animal lovers haven't curbed their spending.

By Elizabeth Kelly

If the fur and feather-boa canopy beds, lemon rosemary chicken dinners and enameled jewelry on display at the Ana-heim Convention Center are any indication, pets are living as well - if not better - than

their humans.
Americans shelled out

nearly \$30 billion on pet care last year, more than double what they spent a decade ago, boosting an industry that has shown remarkable resistance during the economic slump, If during the economic slump. If people are spending less on themselves, the trend doesn't extend to their dogs, cats and fish. And some of what's avallable for feathered friends is downright deluxe.

cownight deluxe.
"Don't tell anyone," whispered a vendor hawking allnatural bath products at SuperZoo, the 53rd annual pet
industry trade show, "but I
use the shampoo and conditioner myself."

More than 450 companies from around the world rented booths at the convention cen-ter this weekend, hoping to impress an expected 9,000 SuperZoo attendees, most of them independent retailers and distributors.

With more than 100 new exhibitors showing up each year, innovation is key. "It's a very entrepreneurial

industry," said Doug Poindex-ter, executive vice president of the World Wide Pet Supply Assn., which is the host of the event. "A lot of these products are the result of a pet owner figuring out something for



FUR IS FLY: es, a toy poodle, models st in dog grooming. pet, seeing people love it

and then deciding to market

Consider bird lover Vickie [See Pets, Page C3]

## Pet-Care Industry Is Not Begging for Business

[Pels, from Page CI]
Canepa, who worked as a stuntwoman before launching her
North Hollywood business, Fetch-it Pets, three years ago. Her bestselling invention: the Polly Wanna Pinata, a colorful bird toy filled with dried fruit,

nuts and seeds.

Canepa was inspired when she saw the reaction of ber sne saw the reaction of per winged pets when she brought a pinata home. "The birds got to it, and they just tore it apart." Canepa introduced the \$8 Polly Wanna last year at SuperZoo, and sales have tripled since then.

She and others been to each.

She and others hope to catch She and others hope to catch the attention of industry giants Petco, which has headquarters in San Diego, and Phoenix-based Petsmart. Petsmart saw revenue increase more than 7% last year to \$2.6 billion, and Pet-co is het on its rival, and Petco is hot on its rival's tail, with 2002 revenue of \$1.4 billion, up 13.5%. "Petsmart and Petco are telling us that even though people are losing their jobs and peo-ple are becoming more careful with their spending, they have not spent less on their pets," said

Vivian Ma, an analyst at CIBC World Markets in New York. Today, cats, dogs and other pets are cherished members of

62% of American households, ac-cording to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Assn., a Greenwich, Conn-based trade group. And although food and veterinary care represent the bulk of pet-care purchases, spending on extras has more than doubled since 2001, from \$97 to \$215 per person annually, according to a study by Unity Marketing, a Stevens, Pa-based research and consuiting firm specializing in luxury markets.

Those extras come in all Greenwich Conn-based trade

Those extras come in all shapes and sizes at SuperZoo.
For the music lovers, dog trainer Steve Brooks from Silver Lake and his band, K9 Fusion, are peddling a CD featuring tunes with Brooks' dog, Sven, on bass,

piano and guttural growl.

Los Gatos, Calif.-based Midknight Creations offers protective sun-shading eyewear — called "doggles" — for the pooch that hangs at the beach. Grand-ma Lucy's of Aliso Viejo accom-



CREATURE COMFORTS: Tammy and Philip Matthews check out the T-shirts for dogs at the I See Spot booth.

modates the health-conscious pet with sugar-, salt- and pre-servative-free meatballs; the firm soon will introduce vegetar-

ian and wheat-free versions.

And at the I See Spot booth: clothes for people, including underwear emblazoned with phrases including "I bite" and "puppy love." The Vernon-based manufacturer also makes dog duds that say, "Does this T-shirt make me look fat?" and "It was the cat, I swear."

Sandy Maroney, the com-pany's owner, said she wanted to get in on the booming pet-care market. "People spend a little bit of money on their pet," she said, and they are happy.