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Pet Airways: Where the Fur Flies

Pet-Oriented Airline Will Take Dogs and Cats Airborne, Starting at \$149

By ANDY MILLER and LEE FERRAN - Good Morning America

There's a new airline that has no security lines, no middle seats and flight attendants who even take customers for a walk before they fly. The only catch? You've got to be a dog or a cat -- no humans allowed. Pet Airways will get the fur flying when it begins service as the country's first pet-only airline.

The airline's launch is the culmination of an idea from pet owner Alysa Binder and her husband, Dan Wiesel, after they took their aging Jack Russell, Jack, on a cross-country flight. Like other pets, Jack had to fly in the cargo bay. "We were totally stressed out," Wiesel said. "We didn't know if she was on the flight, didn't know how she was doing."

To avoid that stress in the future, the couple leased a plane, hired veterinary technicians to monitor the animals in flight and started advertising their new airline. Starting at \$149, pet owners can send their furry friends on flights that provide a preboarding walk and bathroom break.

Pet Airways will initially fetch animals from five cities -- New York, Baltimore, Chicago, Denver and Los Angeles. The planes have no seats and no overhead compartments, and are all designed for creature comfort. "Our priority is the pets," Binder said. "It's about the pets."

While Pet Airways may be the newest dog on the block, they face competition with major carriers such as Continental, which moves an average of 500 pets every day.

"We've got dedicated personnel, constant monitoring 24 hours a day, tracking all animals," Continental employee Lisa Schoppa said.

Pet Airways plans to offer a similar program. But for now it'll be busy enough. The airline is booked solid for the next two months as pet owners like Amanda Hickey latch on to the idea of fine flying for her pets.

"I would be a wreck if I had to wait in baggage claim for them to come out at the end," Hickey said.

Antal's Pet Keepsakes



Antal Products the leader in Pet Bereavement, now offers their Pet Keepsakes in three designs and three colors and in new clip strip packaging. These keepsakes are designed to be used as a keepsake for your favorite photo, hair clipping, ashes or other memento. Made of dense stone like polyresin these make a great desk paperweight or can be placed anywhere. A great product for any pet enthusiast and a fun way to make something special...precious.

Service Dogs Can Get Free Eye Exams

The American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists will sponsor the third annual ACVO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam in May.

Thousands of guide dogs, assistance dogs and search and rescue dogs are eligible for free eye exams in the U.S. and Canada.

The goal is to keep the animals working, according to event organizers. Robert Peiffer, DVM, says the exams offer an opportunity to identify health issues before major complications develop.

The doctors will look for retinal disease and early cataracts. They also will check for things that can limit vision later, such as an ingrown hair or anything that can scratch the cornea. Registration begins April 1. To qualify, dogs must be active working dogs certified by a formal training program or organization, or enrolled in a formal training program.

For more information and an online registration form, visit ACVOeyeexam.org. The registration period ends May 16.

- from Veterinary Practice News



Hydrant Happenings

NFDA Family Business Conference

April 12-13, 2010

Phoenix, Arizona
www.nfda.org

American Board of Veterinary Practitioners 15th Annual Symposium

April 15-18, 2010

Denver, CO
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