PIR Group Members Receive Honors from Pet Product News

Pet Industry Retailers, a networking group of independent retail store owners, is pleased to recognize 3 of its members as finalists of Pet Product News Retailer of the Year.

Sept. 4, 2008 - PIRLog -- Three members of the 400+ Pet Industry Retailers (PIR) Group, a peer network for independent retailers in the pet industry, were named as Runners-Up for Pet Product News International’s coveted Retailer of the Year award. Canine Creek Dog Wash & Pet Boutique in Tehachapi, CA; The Pet Shoppe in Shrewsbury, PA; and Well Bred in Chester, NJ all received honors. Pet Product News (PPN) created the Retailer of the Year award 12 years ago to highlight retailers in the pet industry who demonstrate excellence in several areas including industry impact, community service, innovative marketing, employee training and the promotion of companion animals and pet adoptions. There were over 200 applicants this year from which 12 finalists were chosen.

Susie Atherton, owner of Canine Creek, was recognized for creating the PIR group, among other achievements. Consequently, she, along with her fellow PIR members, credits the group for much of her success. “I started the group in 2005 to provide an easy and effective way for independent pet retailers, across the USA and worldwide, to network with other business owners, discuss products and vendors, exchange merchandise, share business ideas, and provide moral support to one another,” said Atherton. “The knowledge I have gained from the other members of this group has been indispensable in the growth of my business. Whenever I have a question about the industry, there are 400 other people who own businesses similar to mine who are just an email away.”

Through this network of shared knowledge, PIR helps smaller independent pet business owners remain competitive with bigger national chain stores. Members are expected to actively participate in discussions when they have valuable information to share. The members of PIR share their insight and experiences with each other so that all members can maximize the potential of their small businesses. Additionally, PIR is able to leverage special discount offers for its members from wholesalers due to its large number of retail members. PIR is currently working to secure other benefits for its members such as group health insurance, better rates for credit card processing and discounts on store supplies.

“Being a member of PIR has definitely helped me grow my business,” said Patti of Well Bred. “Although my store has been open for some time, my involvement with PIR over the past few years has enabled me to grow in areas where I had less experience. I am very thankful to be part of this group.”

Through networking, idea exchange and peer support, the Pet Industry Retailers group hopes to make a positive impact not only in the success of their members’ businesses, but also the lives of the members themselves. “Sometimes you just need a sympathetic ear when you have had a tough day,” says Atherton. “In a small business, you sometimes don’t have the luxury to lean over to a co-worker and vent about your frustrations. We’ve all been there and it helps to know that you’re not alone, even if you are a sole proprietor with no local peers to talk to.”

To learn more about the Pet Industry Retailers group, visit www.petindustryretailers.org.

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Pet Industry Retailers (PIR) is a peer networking group of independent retailers in the pet industry.

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