

PETS

A DOG'S LIFE

By Jura Koncius

Oscar, the portly dachshund, is catnapping on a brushed cotton dog bed in the media room, where "101 Dalmatians" is the featured flick. Jester, the Jack Russell terrier, prefers jumping on the black vinyl cushions in the office. Latte, Meatloaf and Rocky frolic in the pebbled courtyard.

Just another fun day at Capitol Hill's Dog-Ma, one of several doggie day-care centers that have popped up on the Washington landscape. City Dogs, whose reception area will feature a cedar house facade, is to open Saturday in Adams-Morgan.

Washington is catching on to the '90s national trend of dog digs designed to meet the demand for care and entertainment for the dogs of busy working owners. For a daily charge (usually \$25 to \$30), your schnauzer is treated to all the comforts of home. But should a canine client expect to find a chewed-up sofa and a pile of old shoes in the ideal home away from home? "How to Decorate a Doghouse" is not a class offered in design schools.

"It's all about being practical," says Rebecca Bisgyer, a former corporate marketing executive who opened Dog-Ma last September. "You find out there are very few floor coverings or ground covers that will hold up."

Looks differ across the country. New York Dog Spa and Hotel features industrial chain-link fences and sturdy metal chairs, while San Francisco's Every Dog Has Its Day Care has built a brightly colored doghouse inside its facility. Always There Pet Care in Arlington pro-

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PHOTO BY FRANK JOHNSON—THE WASHINGTON POST

Dog-Ma owner Rebecca Bisgyer with, from left, Katy, Roosevelt and Rocky.



WATCH THIS SPACE . . .

Bamboo artistry expressed in baskets, screens, wall hangings, vessels and other handcrafted items is on display through April 9 at the Japan Information and Culture Center. In his first American show since 1967, nationally recognized Japanese artist Kazuaki Honma—a six-time participant in the prestigious Japan Fine Arts Exhibition—will show his innovative

techniques for bamboo weaving, which he says are inspired by themes of natural beauty "such as the movement of water or clouds and a variety of mental images."

Lafayette Center III, 1155 21st St. NW. Open weekdays, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Free. 202-238-6949.

Original handmade pottery bowls are available for a \$10 donation at the Empty Bowls Supper, an annual benefit for So Others Might Eat (SOME), which takes place

tomorrow at St. Anthony's Church in Falls Church. The bowls are crafted by artists from the Clay Connection, a local arts cooperative. Those who attend can enjoy soup from local chefs and restaurateurs before taking the bowl home. Live music and pottery demonstrations will be performed throughout the event, from 6 to 9 p.m.

3305 Glen Carlyn Rd., Falls Church. Fee: \$10 donation. 703-644-4552.



THE WASHINGTON POST

"Nouveau to Deco: Textiles of the Early 20th Century" opens March 17 at the Baltimore Museum of Art.

The 21-piece exhibit spans the first three decades of the century and includes examples of the popular and distinctive art nouveau and art deco movements of the era.

The works exemplify the transition in styles from the 19th to the 20th century, says textiles curator Anita Jones. "There was so much crossover between artists,



COURTESY IBC
"Playful Fish"
bamboo basket.

HAPPENINGS



PHOTO BY FRANK JOHNSON — THE WASHINGTON POST

Bisgyer on the media-room couch with Adam and Rocky. Below, Adam and Morgan napping in Dog-Ma's office/reception area.



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vides a mauve and teal futon for canine couch potatoes.

Dog-Ma has put a lot of emphasis on style. It has three indoor rooms: the office/reception room with snappy black-and-white vinyl tiles, hand-painted Guatemalan dog mask and a rack for leashes and collars; the cavernous playroom, whose floor is painted with a nonskid periwinkle blue finish; and the TV room, with plush dog beds and a sink-in sofa. Bisgyer chose river pea gravel for the fenced-in yard, and she and her husband raked 74 tons to a three-inch depth. For guests, there's no jumping on the UPS man or they might be sent to one of the dreaded time-out cages.

City Dogs is planning a gym room and more minimalist interiors featuring bright blue and yellow walls, although dogs have very poor color vision, according to City Dogs owner Jennifer McLaughlin.

"At first, I envisioned couches for them to lie on, but this causes marking," she added. "The more things you have out with fabric, the more you have to wash."

Most owners of dog day-care centers agree accessories should be kept to a minimum and plants allowed only up off the floor. Forget rugs.

So what of the ceramic cookie jar labeled "Cat Treats" at Dog-Ma? It's just a cruel human joke. "No, we don't take cats," says Bisgyer. "If we did, I might not be able to give them back."

There may be only one universal dogma in dog decorating.

Says Naresh Jessani, an owner of New York Dog Spa and Hotel, "Everything is going to get peed on."