

TV Show Aims To Educate, Entertain Dog Owners

A Hollywood stuntwoman and the daughter of a famed musician team up to host "Faithful Friends."

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Photos courtesy of Melissa Ash From the lush, sloping hillsides in Bonsall, Calif., a new TV show is in production that aims to educate pet owners with advice from veterinarians as well as entertain with celebrity guest appearances. Hosted by a stuntwoman and the 9-year-old daughter of a rock star, the dog-loving duo will cover different themes each episode from taking in new pets to caring for senior animals.

Host Wanda Goldberg, wife of retired professional wrestler Bill Goldberg, has plenty of experience working in front of the camera, but this production steers her into new territory.

"I have a load of experience in TV and movies," she said. "However, I always avoid the camera rather than looking at it because I'm a stuntwoman. I was typically doubling someone else so I was never meant to look at the camera. My husband is absolutely delighted because I was jumping off 90-foot waterfalls and totaling off cars, whereas now I'm a little bit safer."

Goldberg grew up on a farm in Canada and said there has never been a time in her life when she didn't have a pet. That remains true today as she currently has a horse, a miniature horse, four dogs, two cats, and two chickens.

"It's a dream come true," Goldberg said of working on "Faithful Friends." "It's the core of my being to be around pets – plain and simple. I can't live any other way ... My husband does not allow me to go to the humane society unattended anymore. I can't help myself, I will come home with something."

Goldberg's co-host, 9-year-old Electra Mustaine is the daughter of Dave Mustaine, singer and guitarist for metal band Megadeth and former member of Metallica. Electra Mustaine hosts a segment of "Faithful Friends" entitled "Itty Bitty Buddy," where she'll discuss proper care of small animals such as ferrets, chinchillas, and guinea pigs.

While filming a segment on hedgehogs, the two quickly became acquainted with the unpredictability that comes with mixing animals and television production.

"Electra and I are doing the Itty bitty Buddy segment together and I'm holding this hedgehog," she explains. "I finish with the very first intro line and all of a sudden I can feel him moving. I look down and I've got poop all down [my hand], and I'm still smiling and there's more poop coming – and more and more and more. And poor Electra is now seeing all of this poop in my hand and she's looking, but still keeping her composure and when they say cut, I'm like 'anyone have a paper towel?'"

Animals abound on the set, which is located on the property of Executive Producer Tony Loiacono. Dog, cats, horses and small critters can be seen lounging while getting plenty of attention from the cast and crew. Many of the animals appearing on-screen are either Loiacono's or those of his friends and family, he noted.

The crew is filming 13 half-hour episodes and they are currently midway through production. The syndicated show will air weekly nationwide beginning in early 2008. Loiacono said the show will air in approximately 70 percent of U.S. markets on NBC, ABC, CBS, FOX affiliates. Doctors Foster and Smith are the primary sponsors and supporters of "Faithful Friends."

-Heidi Hatch, Associate News Editor for DogChannel.com