

Radio duo focuses on pet problems

"Ask the Vet" airs
Thursdays on WVOX

By Amy Faith Lionheart

Paula Young and Dr. Marcus Suppo aren't your typical radio commentators. You won't hear about what's going on in the Middle East, Washington D.C. or even the Queen City. There is no political discourse, celebrity gossip or sports trivia. Don't bother calling unless, of course, you have a question about a pet or wild animal. Every Thursday they get to discuss their views on nature and science on "Ask the Vet," a one-of-a-kind weekly show about animals on New Rochelle's WVOX 1460 AM and WRTN 93.5 FM.

Young, a licensed wildlife rehabilitator, has been working with animals since she was a kid. Growing up in South America, she always had a special place in her heart for animals. "A lot of the time we would be in jungle areas and I became accustomed to spending the day in areas where there were a lot of monkeys, turtles, lizards, snakes and birds."

A graduate of the City College of New York, Young spent much of her early career as an aspiring actress and model, then working for Mayor Rudy Giuliani in the public affairs department. "I would leave meetings and go rescue crows that had fallen into buckets," said Young. "I did everything I could to help animals, including volunteering at every Humane Society in the area."

Her journey began about six years ago, when Young and her son moved from New York City to Harrison. "I bought a home with about an acre of land with lots of trees and a stream in the back and I transformed it into a Club Med for animals." She began to take in every sick animal that she could, and nurse them back to health.

Then, just over four years ago, while sitting outside Café Mozart in Mamaroneck with her dog (a Pomeranian) and a friend, Young saw "this extremely handsome guy walking past."

Innocently flirting, Young said "I bet you can't identify him." The man (Suppo) identified the dog right away. "What a dummy I was, because that's when he told me that he was a veterinarian," Young said with gleam.

The two became really good friends and, since Suppo had just opened his practice, Young decided to help him (she painted a Saint Bernard on the entrance to the clinic). In return, he helped her with the wildlife. It was then that Suppo and Young decided to start a radio show about pets.

Sponsored by Sally Sherman Foods, the quirky show has been on the air for over a year. Suppo and Young pick a different topic to discuss each week. Guests have included Ed Martin, director of the Harts-



Above, Stephanie Siegel, office manager and groomer, prepares the operating room while Dr. Marcus Suppo, right, prepares a shelter cat for a neutering surgery at the Mamaroneck Animal Hospital.



Left, Paula Young with a 3-toed eastern box turtle who's missing a leg, left, and a small northeastern box turtle.

Standard Star file photos

Agenda

THURSDAY, APRIL 24

New Rochelle City Council, regular legislative meeting, 8 p.m., City Hall, 515 North Ave.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

Board of Education, Committee of the Whole, 7:30 p.m., City Hall, 515 North Ave.

Westchester County Rent Guidelines Board, meeting, 7 p.m., Division of Housing, 75 South Broadway, White Plains.

Correction

Incorrect information was published last week regarding the New Rochelle Democratic City Committee's Victory Brunch. The brunch will be Sunday, May 4, at the VIP Club, 600 Davenport Ave., New Rochelle. For reservations or further information, call Dorothy Allen at 636-1024.

dale Pet Cemetery and Crematory.

Suppo, owner of the Mamaroneck Animal Hospital on Boston Post Road, didn't set out to be a vet. "I had designed myself to be a lawyer." With a bachelor's degree in political science, from Washington College on the eastern shore of Maryland, Suppo was set to begin law school at Johns Hopkins University when he decided to apply to veterinary school.

Suppo, a Staten Island native, was no stranger to animals. "I grew up with nine dogs and several horses, goats, sheep, outdoor cats and rabbits."

A graduate of Ross University on the island of St. Kitts in the British West Indies, Suppo did his clinicals at the University of Missouri and quickly decided to open his own practice. Since then, Suppo has become an advocate for animals, helping owners to see the big picture about their pets.

Specializing in medicine and sur-

gery, Suppo works with about 25-30 animals a day on everything from wellness issues to boarding and vaccines. He remains on call 24 hours a day. "I wake up every morning happy to put in 10, 15 or 20 hours and do what I do. It's a part of my life."

Being a vet, Suppo said, "You see a lot of things day in and day out." Examples include a Yellow Lab that ate a video cassette and men who come in crying about their animals.

"I've had people tell me that they didn't cry for their mother, like they did for their pet. There is a real bond formed between animals and humans."

Suppo added that it is important to know that pets require a lot of time and care.

"If you treat a dog like a person they are going to treat you like you are a dog. They are perpetual children: they don't ever grow up, having a pet is a lifelong commitment," he said.