



New Itty Bitty Buddy Segments Focus On Small Pets

Faithful Friends, a new Animal Planet series, showcases pets.

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Image courtesy of ©Faithful Friends

This ferret is just one of the many animals that Electra Mustaine got to meet and learn more about while filming the Itty Bitty Buddy segments for Faithful Friends.

See pets in a whole different way starting at 9 a.m. on April 13, 2008 when Animal Planet premieres Faithful Friends, a 30-minute variety program that features questions from everyday pet parents, an Ask the Vet segment, celebrity interviews and an Itty Bitty Buddy feature focusing on small pets.

The Itty Bitty Buddy segments appear in every episode and run about three to four minutes long. These segments are hosted by Electra Mustaine, a 9-year-old animal enthusiast and daughter of musician Dave Mustaine of Metallica and Megadeth. Electra cares for several pets of her own, including dogs, cats, horses and chickens.

Each Itty Bitty Buddy segment focuses on a different animal. Animals showcased include rabbits, ferrets, guinea pigs, gerbils, reptiles, birds and more. Electra brings both charm and a child's point of view to these endearing segments, while discussing the unique needs of small pets.

"The Itty Bitty Buddy segments were so much fun to do," Electra said. "I got to pet, hold and learn about a lot of different animals. Dr. Smith and Dr. Foster taught me things about animals that I never knew about, and I really enjoyed sharing that information on the show. By the end of filming, I wanted to bring all the animals home with me, but my mom and dad wouldn't let me."

The doctors Electra refers to are Dr. Race Foster and Dr. Marty Smith, founders of Doctors Foster and Smith — a catalog and online pet product company which is now celebrating 25 years of service.

In addition to the Itty Bitty Buddy segments, helpful information about small pets is sprinkled throughout the 13-episode series. Wanda Goldberg, wife of actor and pro wrestling superstar Bill Goldberg, hosts the show.

"Over the years, Dr. Foster and I have amassed a wealth of veterinarian knowledge on numerous animals," Dr. Smith said. "Additionally, we have many experts at Doctors Foster and Smith who we draw qualified information from, and pass that knowledge on to viewers. This is something we've been doing online for years, and we're excited to be able to duplicate that service for a television audience."

Some of the celebrities slated to appear with their pets include: Daytona 500 winner Ryan Newman, ESPN's Stuart Scott, Dateline anchor Stone Phillips, Martha Stewart pet commentator Marc Morrone, and Cameron Mathison of Dancing with the Stars. Some celebrities also give voice to colorful cartoon characters that help the program move from one segment to the next.

Rick Holzman, senior vice president, programming and scheduling, Animal Planet said Faithful Friends is a good fit within its weekend morning pet block. "The show does an excellent job of addressing common pet care concerns, providing some very important animal care information in a way that makes it enjoyable to watch and learn."

Faithful Friends was created and executive produced by Tony Loiacono of Heads & Tails Productions. "In many homes, pets are valued members of the family, and pet owners are very concerned about providing their animals a happy, healthful, long life," Loiacono said. "So we created an engaging television series that not only features celebrities that dearly love animals, but also provides helpful answers to common pet concerns."

More information about Faithful Friends can be found at FaithfulFriends.tv.