



(United Press International Telephoto)

Girl and Boa

Caprice Curnes, 21, of Kenosha, Wis., holds her pet boa constrictor. The Kenosha city council recently adopted an ordinance banning "wild animals" which would mean that Caprice might have to give up her pet.

Small Pets Create Noise At Big Show

LONDON (UPI) — It sounded like the biggest barnyard in the world.

In the echoing vault of Alexandra Palace exhibition hall were 1,700 raucous chickens, assorted honking geese and ducks, 850 cooing pigeons and the proudly buzzing owners of every one of them.

Cat and horse shows are commonplace, and every dog has his day in the prize ring. This was a show for the little fellows — a giant gathering called the London Championship Show for every kind of small-size pet which otherwise wouldn't have a show to call his own.

"We have 5,500 entries here in all," show secretary Mrs. Patricia Gaskin shouted over the din. "It's an all time record."

The sixth annual London show this month mustered 110 judges for the 1,000-plus categories of "Britain's biggest fur and feather event."

No prize pooch was ever peered at more closely in judging than these 1,192 rabbits, about 2,000 mice and 600 guinea pigs—not to mention pet rats and gerbils and hamsters and chinchillas.

In the mouse section, for instance, Judge Larry Heywood of the National Mouse Club hauled tiny wriggling mice by their tails out of green wooden cages. He flopped each onto his hand or sleeve, peering intently for the tulip-shaped ear, the bulging eye, the kinkless tail and pastel color of a mouse winner.

"Look at those," Heywood said, gesturing with a handful of three gleaming gray mice. "There's nothing to touch those. Those are pearls."

Along one side of the hall were pigeons that looked like hawks, pigeons with ruffs, with pheasant tails, with no beaks: pigeons with helicopter tails in circles over their backs, with permanent-wave feathers, with long trailing feathers on their feet.

Pet owners brought creatures from all over Britain to "The London." Few took it lightly.

"Mouse men mutter of diets of port wine and duck eggs to put the ultimate of shines on the quivering whiskers of their proteges," said an advance statement about the show.

"No cavy (guinea pig) worth its squeak goes on parade without a pre-show shampoo and set, and the long-haired varieties have to be rolled up in paper curlers to protect their silky tresses."

Sure enough, there were the silken guinea pigs, looking like animated mops, rear and sides neatly rolled in curlers fixed with rubber bands.

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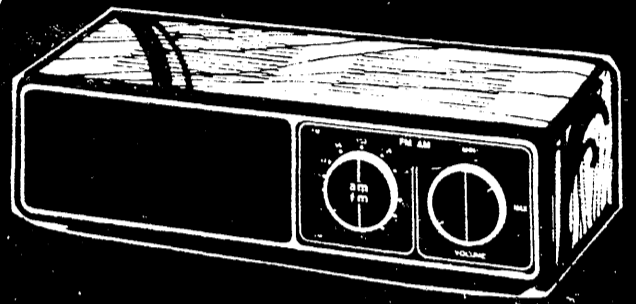
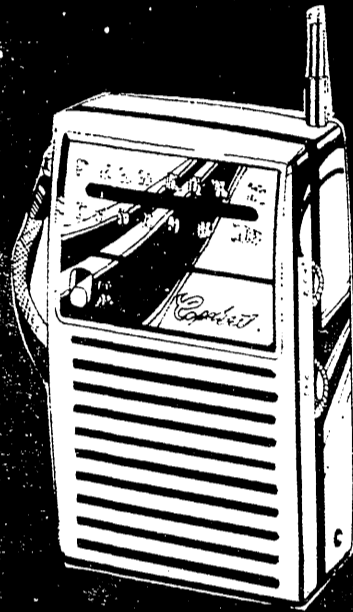
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