

HUDSON VALLEY

AUGUST 2010 ■ FREE

Life

Horse partners

This duo speaks fluent equine

KICKSTART A NEW CAREER AT 50

HERSHEY, PA IS "THE SWEETEST PLACE ON EARTH"



What's New

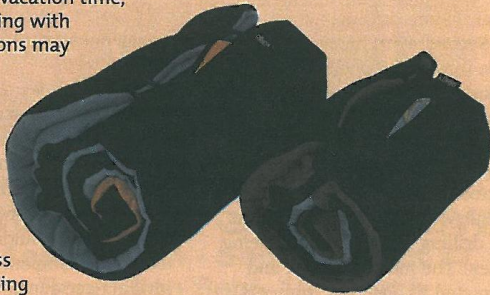
Goods for late summer's canine days

A bed for dogs on the go, beach casual shoes for everywhere, a machine for making homemade confetti, and berry nice H₂O.

Dog days, and nights, too

August is prime vacation time, and those traveling with canine companions may find the Kurgo Wander Bed a good accessory to have along, whether you are doing pet-friendly hotels and motels or full on wilderness camping. According to the company, the Kurgo Wander Bed "creates a stylish home away from home for your four legged travel companion. It is a bed you will be excited to roll out for Fido wherever you may find yourselves." The bed rolls up like a sleeping bag, with a handle for easy transport. It sports a fleece top made of recycled material, and a waterproof bottom. There is even a hidden pocket where you can stash a few items that smell like home. Machine washable.

\$49.99 at kurgostore.com



Not a shred of evidence

You don't have to be a Russian spy to appreciate the handy cross-cut shredder from Staples—it will shred everything from credit cards with no more credit to those pesky bills that keep inundating your mailbox. It can handle up to eight sheets at a time. This light duty shredder does not handle adhesive labels, newsprint, or cardboard, however.

It may go without saying, but the device should not be operated by children. If the authorities are at the door, remember that if the unit has been shredding continuously for more than two minutes, it will trip the motor overheat circuit and you'll need to wait about thirty minutes for the shredder to reset.

In that case, try pretending you're not home. **\$49.99 at Staples.**



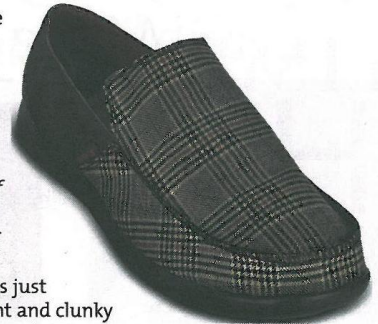
Ugly ducklings

Three years ago, *Slate* magazine characterized the Croc Craze:

"In just a few years, the exquisitely ugly shoes known as 'Crocs' have spread around the world like a Paris Hilton sex tape, giving rise to an epidemic of croc babies and their more egregious counterparts, croc parents."

Back then, the company was just starting to move from bright and clunky but super comfy toward more fashion-oriented footwear that still retained much of the fabled lightness and comfort of the original clogs. Today, the results can be seen in the company's stylish offerings. Our test pair of men's Santa Cruz slip-ons lived up to its Croc heritage while looking exquisitely handsome. Sporting lightweight canvas uppers with casually frayed edging and the patented Croslite insoles, they make for a great all-day shoe if your lifestyle permits. Otherwise you will be anticipating weekends even more than usual. The tiny "circulation nibs" at first felt too much like grit or sand, but by the end of the first day, that sensation went away. This footwear is even more comfortable and airy than my treasured Jack Purcells, and will be my go-to shoe for summer and fall. The Santa Cruz is offered in several solids and fun plaids. — MR

\$49.99 at local shoe and sporting goods retailers.



Metromint gets a pass

We're not big fans of plain bottled water, partly because Americans throw away 2.5 million plastic bottles per hour. And since tap water is equal to or better than most bottled water, it's wasteful when we need sustainable. Still, with the New York State five cent deposit on water bottles taking affect last October, it's likely more bottles will end up being recycled. And Metromint from Soma beverages is water infused with the flavor of mint and berries, hard to get from a tap (though you can throw some mint leaves into a pitcher). We got a sample of the company's latest flavor, goodberrymint water. While the scent is weighted toward berry, in the mouth it's the mint with the heavier tones. It manages to stay refreshing without going over into minty-medicinal, a pleasant midday pick-me-up that contains no sweeteners or caffeine. **Case of 24 16.9oz bottles, \$38 at metromint.com and local retailers.**



If you are a local business, retail store, or craftsperson with an interesting product you'd like us to know about, email us at editor@excitingread.com. Put "local product" in the subject line.