

At Petcetera, pet lovers snap up varied pet supplies ranging from the traditional catnip and collars to the less likely dog Yarmulkes and stuffed menorahs.

"It grows every single year," said Torea Torry, a saleswoman at the Magazine Street store. "Every single year, people get more involved in Valentine's Day. We have a lot of cute pink things and hearts."

By far the most popular gift, she said, is a stuffed red heart that declares "I love you" when squeezed. On the more costly end of the shopping spectrum are pet outfits with brightly colored bows and frilly dresses that can cost hundreds of dollars, Torry said.

"We have some customers that will just stick with a little heart cookie and then you have some people that go further and they'll spend up to \$200 on their dog," she said.

Although relegating love to dollars and cents is not the most romantic of equations, Streiffer, who opened her store with her husband in 2000, sees her business popularity this time of year as reflecting something positive about society.

"People just love each other and want to make each other happy," she said. •

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Comment By evknjj

Tuesday, February 19, 2008 @ 06:54 AM CST

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