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ALLSTON BRIGHTON

Bracing for Hurricane Sandy, pet owners stock up on animal food, supplies at Allston shop

Posted by Matt Rocheleau October 29, 2012 02:18 PM

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By Matt Rocheleau, Town Correspondent

Local pet owners made last-minute trips Monday morning and early afternoon to stock up on food and key supplies to care for their beloved animals before it starts raining cats and dogs.

Standing at the checkout counter of the Unleashed by Petco pet supplies store in Allston, 50-year-old neighborhood resident Arthur Laurie said he was buying food for his two cats and three dogs “in case everything goes to pot.”

Hurricane Sandy had just started to pick up steam in Boston as whipping winds brought reports of power outages, downed trees and other damage.

“We want to make sure we have enough food to ride out the storm,” said Laurie, who also owns two guinea pigs, which he said have plenty of food already.

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The scene at pet shops before major storms is similar to the frantic rush for human food and supplies at grocery stores, said an employee at the Allston pet shop, who has also worked in other pet supply stores but asked not to be identified because the worker is not authorized to speak to media.

“People are just coming in for the basics. They’re all here for just a minute because everyone is panicking,” the employee said. “There’s usually people browsing and shopping for longer-term items. They’re not getting Halloween costumes today.”

Pet costumes, displayed front and center at the store’s entrance, had been a hot item during the past week, until the forecasts worsened and the ominous clouds rolled in.

“It’s pretty much the same thing as a grocery store before a blizzard when people buy bread, milk and butter,” the worker said. “People come in here for the basics.”

The worker said the store’s management was considering closing early due to the storm, but had not determined whether it would, as of early afternoon on Monday.

Mark Moosburner, 23, and Marie Wu, 21, stopped in to buy food for a mouse they said they rescued in Wu’s apartment over the weekend.

Her landlord had put a sticky mouse trap underneath their stove. They said they discovered the mouse on Saturday, freed the rodent using vegetable oil and named it “Champion.”

She and Moosburner are hoping the newly-bought food will help lift the spirits of their newly-found friend.

Champion had cozied up to the couple at first, but ever since the hurricane rolled in, they said the mouse has been acting afraid.

“He seems scared,” said Wu. “He’s been hiding in his little box.”

The couple said they planned to relocate Champion from her apartment to his so they could “hunker down during the storm.”



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