

When the holidays roll around, who doesn't turn, in some way, into **Martha Stewart? From her craft line that brings a personal touch to traditional gifting to her chic home collections, it seems the Jane of all trades has thought of everything. During her summertime visit to the Valley as the commencement speaker for the University of Phoenix graduation, AFM chatted with the crafting queen.**



AFM: You were the commencement speaker at University of Phoenix. What was some advice you gave the graduates?

MS: It's never too late to achieve. I was 40-years-old when I wrote my first book, *Entertaining*, and I was 50-years-old when I launched my first magazine, *Martha Stewart Living*. When you reach the age 40, you're at an ideal point in life to build on your career or start a new one because you know who you are, what you want, what your passions are, and you have a sense of urgency about your life and career.

AFM: Can you talk about your partnership with Phoenix's very own PetSmart?

MS: We create a lot of products for dogs and cats and, in the future, more pets. Right now, we have hundreds of products. We create dog beds, and we have wonderful feeding dishes, wonderful dog toys and clothing for dogs. We also have costumes for dogs like Halloween costumes, and they're so popular! We also have a very excellent set of grooming tools for dogs, and our cat line has just started in the stores. We like producing practical and useful things for pets. We plan to expand to chickens because backyard animal husbandry is becoming a real big thing. I raise canaries, so I have a whole giant slew of red canaries at my house. We're looking into a lot of different opportunities with exotic animals as well.

AFM: Being quite the cook yourself, what are some of your favorite eateries in the Valley?

MS: Pizzeria Bianco, always. It's so great, and the atmosphere is unbeatable. I also like the health-food restaurant that my dear friend, Andrew Weil, created: True Food Kitchen. It's really great too. So that's where I love to go, True Food Kitchen or Pizzeria Bianco.

AFM: How do you always come up with fresh ideas? Where does your inspiration come from?

MS: The company that I founded [Martha Stewart Living Omnimedia, Inc.] is a company that's devoted to creativity, innovation and originality. We have lots of designers working on lots and lots of different projects. I know we create a lot of products for Home Depot and now PetSmart, which is here in Phoenix, but we also create a tremendous line of craft tools and crafts lines for Michael's and JoAnn Fabrics. We're in about 8,500 different locations across the country, and it's all really about the home—it's what goes on in the home.

AFM: In the home, which is your favorite room?

MS: The kitchen. It's always been the kitchen. I have 21 kitchens—seven in Bedford alone. I use them for photography; I use them for projects; I use them for different reasons for cooking; and I use them for experimentation because we design kitchens. So, in a sense, I kind of live in my kitchen—wherever that is.

AFM: You design kitchens?

MS: Yes, with Home Depot. They're very fabulous. We have a whole appliance line that's spectacular, along with our paint line that's always fun.

AFM: What new product lines can your fans look forward to?

MS: We're working with JCPenney right now on a vast line of products for the home for their new stores. It will be something a lot of women can identify with and a lot of chic products for the modern home life. We're all very excited about that, and I feel like everyone is going to be pleased with the end result.