

best of cary

stairs under responsible supervision, you may never want to leave. YMCA took second place and Gold's Gym won third.

PET GROOMING — PetSmart, 2430 Walnut St., Cary. For most of us busy folks, gone are the days of cold, harried baths in the backyard with the garden hose. Most of the time, the results were less than desirable, and you end up wetter than your pet. For a warmer, more professional experience, you turned most to PetSmart. A three-way tie for second place went to Preston Animal Hospital, Decadent Dogs and Mayfair Animal Hospital for place to get your doggie's 'do' without the big to-do.

VET — Chatham Animal Hospital, 105 Oceana Place, Cary. For most of us, our pets are part of the family. Whether they've got a simple skin infection or a life-threatening emergency, they need their own doctor who can diagnose them quickly and effectively. You need one that cares. For that, you gave Chatham Animal Hospital high marks. Dr.

David Krakowski and his team have been there to serve those needs for 26 years. There were lots of other favorites in this category: Northwoods Animal Hospital of Cary and the brand-new Morrisville Cat Hospital.

CONSIGNMENT — My Girlfriend's Closet, 104 W. Chatham St., Apex. What's more fun than trading clothes with your girlfriends? Getting access to hundreds of strangers' beautiful clothes for reasonable prices, that's what. "A consignment boutique for the simply chic," is how this year's winner describes itself. Located in an historical house built in 1904, this shop's clothes are spread out in rooms in such a charming way it has to be seen to be believed. Second and third place are a mom's dream trying to get rid of clothes that don't fit or finding new ones that do: Once Upon a Child and Kid to Kid.

GIFTS FOR MEN — REI, 255 Crossroads Blvd., Cary. Men get a bad rap in this arena. (Or should we say wrap?) Usually the victims of bad ties or boring socks on Father's Days and birthdays, men are speaking up: We want something better! You chose REI to fill this

need. It's full of elusive man-stuff that men crave: gadgets and gadgets for camping, hiking or just about any outdoor sport that suits his fancy. Second-place winner Dicks Sporting Goods will also put a smile on his face, as well as the male heaven also known as Best Buy, which took third.

GIFTS FOR WOMEN — Nirveli Day Spa, 1003 High House Road, No. 104, Cary. Despite popular opinion, women are relatively easy to please in this area. Chocolate, flowers and jewelry are nice, but most gals just crave a little pampering. Congratulations to Nirveli Day Spa, which offers all of the above and more. Coming out with glowing skin and beautiful nails doesn't hurt either. Swagger won second place for its "gifts with attitude," like monogrammed shot glasses (yeah!), and Jared took third for its reasonably-priced jewelry.

FURNITURE — Streets of London, 928 W. Chatham St., Cary. This is quite an achievement for this antiques store, which just opened its doors last fall. British owner Gillian Zonruiter fashioned a stunning showroom out of an old karaoke bar and garnered quite the fan base for her beautiful antiques, most of which are shipped straight from her homeland of Eng-

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It's somehow fitting that area churches — including Good Hope Baptist Church — were collectively named the Best Place to Get Married and the Place Where Singles Meet.

READER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY CHRIS FLORIO

land. Coopers won second place in this category and Nowell's nabbed third.

BUY JEWELRY — This was a three-way tie. Streets of London, 928 W. Chatham St.,

Cary (which also sells designer amber necklaces, bracelets and rings); JM Edwards, 1137 Kildaire Farm Road, Cary; and Finks, 1105 Walnut St., Cary. We guess, like with jewelry, we just couldn't make up our mind which one

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we liked the best. So let's go to them all!

MAKE JEWELRY — Beadazzled, 107 W. Chatham St., Cary. This fun and funky space invites, "Come bead with us!" and offers classes for serious jewelry makers or open studio space for kids, girlfriends, and whoever has the need to bead. Pick from their selection of glass, crystal, sterling silver and countless other notions and make your own masterpiece. When in doubt, ask a friendly staff member for help.

PLACE TO GET MARRIED — "In your church" was the most answered for this category. A few votes also went to Cary Chapel & Gardens, the all-inclusive wedding spot for ceremonies and licenses, and Prestonwood Country Club.

WHERE SINGLES MEET — "Church!" was the number one answer. But wherever you meet your sweetie, just make sure you have a good story for the grandchildren.

GIFT FOR CHILD — Science Safari, 1255 Kildaire Farm Road, Cary. This science and nature toy store is the favorite with parents

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