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Sixteen-year-old Haley Luckanuck has found her calling as a dog walker and pet sitter. The former Beamsville resident has expanded her Waterdown-based business to Niagara. Pictured with the teen are Lucky, Scruffy and Nico.

AMANDA STREET/STAFF PHOTO

Spoiling your furry friends

16-year-old expands pet sitting business to Niagara

BY AMANDA STREET
STAFF

Haley Luckanuck would rather put up with a barking dog than a disgruntled human.

The now 16-year-old was miserable working as a waitress when her mom, Teresa, who works as a small business advisor, suggested she open her own business and gave her a \$500 loan. With experience working with animals in the past, through small stints at the Hamilton SPCA and other pet-related businesses, Luckanuck knew she wanted to work four-legged clients.

And so, Spoiled Rotten Pet Services was born. It started with a list of five clients and would quickly evolve to more than 350 in a one-year span.

"In the first week I had five clients, then it grew to 15 and now it has expanded so much that I needed to hire people," said Luckanuck, who plastered her home town of Waterdown and the surrounding area with pink Spoiled Rotten flyers to get the word out. "I was hoping for 10 clients to turn this into a part-time job, I never imagined it would grow to be this big."

The Hamilton-Burlington based business has become so successful, the service has expanded to include Niagara.

Luckanuck, who lived in Beamsville until age 14, sold a franchise of Spoiled Rotten Pets to her former neighbour Deanna Eagles. The local chapter serves Grimsby, Smithville, Lincoln, St. Catharines and Niagara Falls. All inquiries are handled through the main office, in Waterdown.

"I've always had animals and I've always known that I want to work with them," said Luckanuck, working with a few of her clients at a dog park on a recent morning. "It's always been my passion."

The first step in her animal career was at the Hamilton/Burlington SPCA where she worked with animals rescued from Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina. There, she learned how to deal with aggressive dogs. While working at an animal hospital, Luckanuck learned how to administer medication via an IV drip among other skills.

Though she originally set out to open a dog walking business, her services have expanded to include pet sitting, in-home pet boarding, grooming and group trips to the dog park. Her clientele has also expanded to include cats, reptiles, turtles, crabs and horses. Rates range from \$15 for a 30 minute walk to \$125 for a puppy package which includes two 20-minute visits with a walk, playtime, snacks and clean up.

While Luckanuck plans to remain involved with Spoiled Rotten Pets, she has aspirations to assist animals in need once she completes high school in two years.

Luckanuck has already been accepted into the guide dog training program run through Lions Canada in Oakville. She also plans on one day becoming a SPCA officer.

"Dogs make me happy," said Luckanuck, who credits her first dog, a German Shepherd, for her life-long love of animals. "It's a really happy job."

For more information on Spoiled Rotten Pet Services, visit www.spoiledrottenpetservices.ca or call 1-877-867-4616.



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