
Teen is working like a dog

Cathie Coward, the Hamilton Spectator

Young entrepreneur's pet services business has over 200 clients

ROSIE-ANN GROVER
The Hamilton Spectator

(Apr 10, 2010)

Who: Haley Luckanuck, owner of Spoiled Rotten Pet Services

What: Pet sitting and dog walking, with additional services such as ear and teeth cleaning or nail trimming.

Where: West Hamilton, Waterdown, Flamborough, Dundas and Burlington

Since: July 2009

Contact: 905-541-6450 or spoiledrottenpetservices.ca

She's not yet 16 and Haley Luckanuck's career is already going to the dogs.

The Waterdown High School student is more than your average bubbly teenager with sparkly eye makeup.

She is the Flamborough Chamber of Commerce 2010 Young Entrepreneur of the Year for her brain child, Spoiled Rotten Pet Services.

"To be a dog walker, you have to sweat and deal with drool on you in the summer and then have five layers on in the winter," she says. "A lot of people couldn't do it, I don't think."

Her canine-coddling company is creating a buzz. In less than a year, she already has five employees. Her friends are pleading for summer jobs.

"We've taken off. I have over 200 clients now. I'm working all day, every day," she says, and points at a day calendar filled with appointments.

She sold her first franchise for more than \$10,000.

It all began with a \$500 loan from the Bank of Mom.

She plastered her area with pink flyers and waited.

The family car is wrapped in a logo but since she can't yet drive, Luckanuck relies on relatives for a ride to clients' homes.

Andrea Twiss was in Pet Smart when a woman recommended Luckanuck's services.

For less than \$10 a week, she could have the teenager go to her home and let Fenway, her Boston terrier, outside to do his business.

"It was a no-brainer," she says.

The quick visits are a big relief to Twiss -- and her dog, of course.

The Spoiled Rotten phone line now rings all hours of the night, with people needing to switch or add arrangements. Other services include off-leash group hikes and treatment for special needs animals. (Some have three legs.)

"I've experienced a lot more than a typical 15-year-old has," Luckanuck says of being a business owner.

School officials have approved her full-time business operation as her co-op placement.

"I have no social life. But it's a risk I'm willing to take. I have a horse to take care of," said Luckanuck, explaining she uses her wages to board the animal.

While certified in SPCA animal handling and a member of Guide Dogs and All Canadian Pet Services Network, she is eyeing business college courses and toying with the idea of attending school to train animals.

Luckanuck helped rescue scores of Louisiana dogs left homeless by Hurricane Katrina.

"I have no fear," she says.

"Dogs are like humans. If you show fear, they know it."

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