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Your Community

serving hillsborough

MARKETPLACE

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Doggie treats

Dog Days Daycare in Hillsborough is a pooch's paradise

BY MADELEINE JOHNSON

These days, Rover is more than just a newspaper-fetching, slipper-retrieving pet. He's a four-legged part of the family.

No one knows that more than Robin Blair, owner of Dog Days Daycare in Hillsborough.

"The whole reason Dog Days exists is because people in our community treat their animals like a member of the family," she

says. "It's no longer enough for them to stay in a traditional kennel."

Mrs. Blair opened the daycare, which offers grooming and cage-less boarding services, three years ago after working in commercial real estate. When that profession no longer satisfied her, the lifelong animal lover decided to turn her affinity for animals into a full-time job.



Photo by Mary Ellen Zangara

See DOG, Page 2A Lori Ward, left, and Megan Todd love playing with the day care's canine clientele.

Dog Days Daycare Center

908-431-0100

281-283 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough

Open 7 Days a Week

24 Hours a Day

www.dogdaysdaycare.org



- ❖ Cage-free, 24 hour boarding (short & long term) in a home-like environment
- ❖ Staffed around the clock - your dog is never left alone
- ❖ Daycare accommodations for your large or small dog while you work, shop, entertain family & friends at home, or any other reason you'd want your best friend to exercise, play and socialize outside the home
- ❖ Indoor & outdoor play areas
- ❖ Multi-day packages available
- ❖ Multi-dog discounts

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Dog Days Daycare is located in a converted two-family house, where Ms. Blair and employees treat their canine clientele like

royalty. Grooming is performed in a spa-like atmosphere with calming aromas and a handcrafted waterfall, and instructional classes, such as canine

CPR, first aid and obedience training, are offered. Mrs. Blair also plans to add a therapy pool, and eventually, she'd like to install "Web cams" so owners can check on their dogs at any time.

"We want to be a one-stop shop for people who love their dogs," she says.

While grooming and boarding services are a large part of the business, the main purpose of Dog Days is to serve as a day-care center for pet owners who want their dogs to socialize in a safe place, whether during the workday or overnight visits.

"The primary thing that makes us different, as far as I know, is that we staff overnight," Mrs. Blair says. "Most places crate the dogs and leave them overnight, but we're with the dogs 24/7, 365 days a year. If there (are) dogs here, there (are) people here."

Dog Days offers two activity buildings, where dogs are separated according to their play styles. The Dog House offers a low-key environment for quieter dogs that are happy spending their days lounging throughout the facilities, while the 4,000-square-foot Ruff House includes high-activ-

ity adventures for larger, more playful dogs. Additionally, there is a 6,000-square-foot fenced-in yard with grass, toys and a small water park that boasts a pool, waterslide and sprinkler. That's for dogs that just want to "play to their heart's content," Mrs. Blair says.

For pet owners who don't have to time to drop off their dogs, the day care offers Trans-PET-ation, a pickup and drop-off service.

"If mom and dad need to get out early and are rushed in the morning, we'll go pick up the dog whenever they tell us to," Mrs. Blair says. "We'll take them home, too, so they're there to greet their family, but I don't like to do that because you miss out on the reunion. That's the best part."

Ms. Blair conducts a two-part interview process before allowing a dog — which must be either spayed or neutered — to become a part of the Dog Days family. The first interview takes place in the dog's home to make sure he's comfortable with strangers, and the second interview is conducted at Dog Days, where dogs are allowed to roam off-leash and explore the area.

"Since we're a cage-free facility, we screen the dogs to make sure they want to be around other dogs," Mrs. Blair says. "If we're all in agreement, the dog can come stay with us."

The screening costs \$10 per dog and covers both interviews. Day-care rates range from \$20 to \$125, and there is an additional \$25 sleepover rate for dogs that stay overnight. Grooming prices are determined by a dog's temperament, coat type and condition. Trans-PET-ation costs begin at \$10 each way, and there's also a \$20 daycare/Spa Day option available.

For safety purposes and to ensure that each dog receives ample attention, one staff member is assigned for every 10 to 15 dogs. Staff members must love and understand dogs, including their body language and pack mentality, and recognize that the animals are more than pets to their owners.

"They're little furry kids and I want people who treat them like that," Mrs. Blair says.

Dog Days Daycare is located at 281-283 Roycefield Road, Hillsborough. For more information, call 908-431-0100 or visit www.dogday-sdaycare.org.

CryptoQuote

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

OIJEFYKJOK FJ CJIDNKW
LCJ'V AFWDSK FV JI
VRFHND KAFYKJOK IE
IJK'V IBJ. - LIJDCFHJK

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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		6			7	3		
5	2			3			1	7

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ★★

★ Moderate ★★ Challenging
★★★ HOO BOY!

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▼ thought for the day

"It is the customary fate of new truths to begin as heresies and to end as superstitions."

— T.H. Huxley

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