

NORTHWESTnews

Gina Micciulla used to have a job that many people thought was damn cool. She'd get up early in the morning and go off to the radio station nicknamed "The Beat." There, she entertained Portlanders as one of the morning team known as Gina, Cort and Rebecca.

And then, after 16 years in the industry, her career came to an abrupt end. Gina left radio behind and set off to follow her real love: caring for animals.

THE QUEER PROFIT

by **Marty Davis**

Now, she gets up early every morning and goes off to a job that this person thinks is far cooler than the radio job. Gina still is entertaining Portlanders, but these days her fans are furry, four-footed and fido-ish.

She and business partner Sue Loftesness are the co-owners of Unleash Yourself, a state-of-the-art doggie day care center located on the lower end of Northeast Alberta Street. The facility features more than 4,500 square feet of total doggie utopia.

A "green building," it is equipped with an air-exchange system—no doggie odors here—and a lap-of-luxury, oh-so-comfortable, radiant-water-heated cushy floor. The outdoor play area alone, at 2,100 square feet, is the largest in the Portland area, and—moms and dads, check this out—it's all mud-free.

And when we're talking outdoor play area, folks, we don't mean, "Honey, put the dog in the back yard, please." This place rocks.

It's got loads of live green grass, wading pools, climbing gyms and all the toys you can carry from inside. Even cooler, by the time the dog days of summer roll around, the area will be equipped with a misting system. Lacking only in poolside beverage service, maximum summer comfort for the pampered pooch is guaranteed.

Doggie day care costs about \$20 daily with a "Pooch Punch-card," but the value is immeasurable. In exchange for your dollars you take home a happy and tired yet energized and enriched canine who'll stay content for two to three days—until it's time to repeat the process.

Day care isn't intended for daily use; the dog needs refreshing and resting time in between stays. Two visits a week is considered optimum.

YUPPIE PUPPIES

Pamper your pooch with doggie day care, organic pet food and naturopathic healing alternatives



Gina Micciulla (left) and Sue Loftesness own a state-of-the-art doggie day care center

To enroll and be accepted, your pooch will have to be interviewed and pass a temperament test. All nonaggressive breeds and all sizes are welcome.

However, there'll be no biting or growling, so play nice now, kids. Each pooch gets a locker for "necessaries," including that favorite mommie-smell T-shirt.

From noon to 2 p.m. each day it's quiet time, and anywhere from 10 to 40 dogs are kenneled for a nap. The Big Dog crowd gets plush floor cushions on which to lounge and reflect on the good life.

The dogs never are left unattended in the play area. Unleash Yourself has one handler for every 10 dogs.

For pleasure and sport there's balls, there's jumping games, there's a tube thing to run through—there's open fenced windows facing Alberta Street. There's hugs, there's love, there's stimulation, there's play and frolicking and romping and, oh my god, can it get it better for any dog anywhere?

Check out www.unleashyourself.biz for further details, then call and schedule the interview and temperament test. Your dog already loves you, but trust me, this will elevate you to the highest realm of doggie adoration (and considerably ease your guilt about leaving the little darling all day).



Even though she's off the air, Micciulla still gets great reception

Now that fido/fidette is tired, socialized, happy and hungry, exactly what were you plan-

ning on serving for doggie dinner? Please, don't even be thinking about doggie junk food or sharing your own Lean Cuisine.

Nope, you've got to continue to maintain the well-being of your dog pal by providing quality natural foods, snacks and toys. And the women of Healthy Pets Northwest have gathered all these products in one place for you.

Friends and business partners Julie Cantonwine, Gaia Mather and Brenda Kehau have combined their skills, talents and interests to produce a business dedicated to selling pet foods and snacks containing no animal byproducts or toxic chemicals.

Their mission is to do more than sell pet food. They are in business to educate, heal and promote the well-being of all pets.

They can reference herbal and homeopathic remedies. They will consult with pet health care specialists and, utilizing nutritional guidelines, help you establish and maintain the best quality of life for your pet.

Naturopathic physician Mather works with resolving pet behaviors by utilizing the Bach Flower Remedies. What, a questioning look?

Well, the Bach Flower Remedies are a completely natural, gentle and effective way to remedy pets' undesirable behaviors. By looking at their underlying causes, it is possible to find a solution to balance impulses.

Once the underlying cause is understood, the correct remedy or combination of remedies gently will balance the animals' behaviors until they are at peace with the world again. And then you give them an all-natural peanut butter doggie cookie.

Healthy Pets Northwest sponsors monthly pet care seminars that have been well received. Attendance is on a "donation only" basis, and all proceeds are given to Portland pet shelters and charities.

The topics vary monthly. For a schedule of seminars and lots of further information please visit www.healthypetsnw.com.

Business news with a queer bent should be reported to MARTY DAVIS at marty@justout.com.



From left, Brenda Kehau, Julie Cantonwine and Gaia Mather educate, heal and promote the well-being of all pets

Vacation Travel Planners

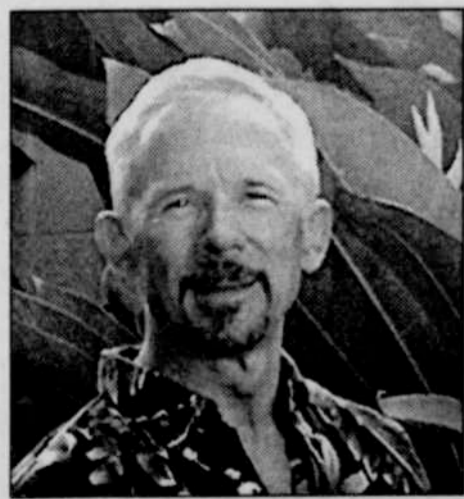
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