

## **Barker Street Bakery: Bakery/boutique Serving Doggie Delights**

By Lucretia Fernandez Courier Staff

THE WOODLANDS—A Woodlands boutique is offering canines a slice of doggie heaven with cakes, cookies and other luxury items.

Barker Street Gourmet Dog Bakery and Boutique, located at 442 Sawdust Road, specializes in dog treats to accommodate any finicky eater or special diet, and offers a variety of accessories, necessary and extravagant.

The business began when Maggie, the beloved dog of Jay Kirsch and Frank Ciaccio, was required to go on a special diet. When Kirsch and Ciaccio couldn't find any dog food to feed their pet, they began making it for her.

Over time, making food for Maggie unleashed a business opportunity for the men, who opened a store in Alexandria, VA. In 2006, Kirsch and Ciaccio were moving to the Houston area so they began selling their goods at a farmer's market during the summer.

By December 2006, they were opening the doors to a new shop which quickly established a loyal customer base.

“We realized the people of Montgomery County are willing to treat their dogs and cats with luxury items,” Kirsch said.

The food is prepared without sugar or preservatives and is approved by a veterinarian, Kirsch said.

The bakery attracted dog owners Kelly Croft and Connie Thomas, both of Spring. Croft's dog was overweight and greatly benefited from the low-fat cookies at Barker Street. After 10 years, Thomas' dog, Rio, was diagnosed with diabetes and Thomas is glad she has a treat to give Rio after each of his insulin shots.

Customer Mary Coutrade also appreciates the god-food ingredients, saying her collies' health is very important to her.

“The dog treats at Barker Street Gourmet Dog Bakery and Boutique are made with the highest quality of ingredients and are just plain cute,” Courtade said. “My dogs love them.”

Customer Laura McConnell, with The Woodlands Dog Park Club, said that her dogs love the treats so much that she also ships packages of them to her sister's dogs in California.

In addition, the shop is a strong supporter of dog-related causes. It often provides the treats for Humane Society of Montgomery County and Woodlands Dog Park Club events.

“We want to support the community, especially the pet community.” Kirsch said. “It’s amazing the number of people who keep coming back, but we think it’s fantastic.”  
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