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Michael Olivieri-Baker of Galloway Township stands behind the counter filled with baked dog treats at his store, It's a Doggie Dog World.

Shop unleashes pampered pet products

By JACKIE HANUSEY
Staff Writer

EGG HARBOR TOWNSHIP – There is a new dog destination in town.

It's a Doggie Dog World seemingly has everything owners could want for their pampered pet.

"Dogs are like little kids in a candy store here," said co-owner Michael Olivieri-Baker of Galloway Township.

The store in Risley Commons on the Black Horse Pike stocks hundreds of collars and leashes, holistic pet foods, and dog clothes accented with Swarovski crystals.

There are dog toys made entirely from recycled products, Pucci and Armani lotions and even Bark-a-rita glasses, which can be used as dog bowls.

But not all items are extravagant. Whether it is a \$5 pin or a keepsake box, there is something for every dog and cat owner.

The store has an array of treats; owners can even make a political statement by getting their dog an icing-topped elephant or donkey.

Right inside the door there is a more practical feature: self-serve dog washes.

"Why have the mess at your house?" Olivieri-Baker said. "It's a good time for the kids, and it gets the dogs out of the house."

For a flat rate of \$23.95 owners have use of the dog wash and their pick of spritzes, shampoos, conditioners, and ear and eye cleaners. Ramps, towels and hair dryers are available, as are aprons for the owners.

Co-owner Brian K. Jackson of Galloway Township was never a dog lover until he had

to watch Rocky, a Lhasa apso and poodle mix, while Olivieri-Baker was on vacation.

Olivieri-Baker has always loved his four-legged friends but it took some special bonding time for Jackson, who during the weekdays is executive assistant to the president at the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.

"I never grew up with dogs," he said, but Rocky melted his heart.

Rocky also has a firm place in the store. As the model for the company logo, he usually greets customers from behind the counter.

Olivieri-Baker, who after surgery was looking to stop traveling, wanted to open a business, and while on a vacation to Baltimore the owners stumbled upon Dogma in what was once a Baltimore brewery.

"It had an urban feel and a relaxed atmosphere," Jackson said. After leaving the store they knew they wanted to create something similar in southern New Jersey.

Jackson helps order merchandise, bringing the latest pet trends to the area and working the weekends, while Olivieri-Baker is a constant fixture at the store weekdays.

This weekend Jackson will travel to New York City to scope out designer wear at Pet Fashion Week.

"I've never been," he said, but he said he looks forward to bringing the latest trends to the area with South Jersey friendly prices.

The store has been open just a month, and the owners said it is not unusual for shoppers to instantly call their friends upon visiting the new shop. Some customers have traveled from New York for

the shopping experience.

Jackson and Olivieri-Baker are also working on season-specific events and gifts.

"We will likely have gift baskets available on different occasions," Olivieri-Baker said.

Also expected in the fall to accompany the soccer jackets will likely be emblem merchandise for the Eagles, Giants, Jets and other popular football teams.

Fundraisers for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Atlantic City Animal Shelter are also in the works.

"Even if you don't have a dog, this store makes you want one," Olivieri-Baker said.

In mid-August the owners said they were thrilled with the feedback they were getting.

"Our dog never eats treats," Olivieri-Baker read from an email from a happy customer who was ecstatic about finding a treat her dog liked.

And no dog leaves empty-pawed, as there are complimentary treats available for all.

At this pet boutique, bakery and self-serve dog wash, dogs and cats are welcomed with open arms, Olivieri-Baker said.

"All must be on leashes, though."

If You Go

It's a Doggie Dog World
Risley Commons
6106 Black Horse Pike,
Suite A2A
Egg Harbor Township, NJ
08234
Phone (609) 241-0835
www.itsadoggiedog-world.net

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