

# Your pooch will feel great after a visit to L'il Angels

BY HEATHER BARR

A special tub for a relaxing bath, a drying tool that fluffs the hair just right, nail polish to match what you are wearing and even special treats if you're good. Is it a spa? No it's L'il Angels grooming, a place not for you, but your pet.

Cathy Wesson tries to make the experience for your pet not just a place to get groomed, but a place to feel good. That's why she prefers her environment to bigger pet groomers.

A tiny, cozy house beside Eng's Self Defense on North Piedmont Avenue is where her and Dorie and Bree, her Maltese dogs, make their business.

"It's what I've always dreamed about, having my own shop. I wanted it to be a relaxing place for the animal to come so I think the smaller and less people the better," said Wesson.

She likes to keep her shop quiet, soft music playing and a nice fragrant candle burning.

The grooming stage itself is liked by some dogs and others tolerate it, but she believes it helps them not only in looking good but feeling good.

"Many dogs, once they are groomed, will get down from the grooming area and walk around with a prance. They feel good when time is spent on them. It's like how we feel after we get a haircut," said Wesson.

When grooming Wesson always tries to put the animal at ease by talking to them and petting them. She also knows when a dog may feel scared and gives them breaks in the grooming if needed. She will then let them wonder the shop or curl up in cage with a towel or blanket.

The grooming begins by cutting the dog's hair first to comb out all the possible mats and unneeded fur. Wesson believes it is important for pet owners to brush the dog's hair frequently or mats can occur which can be painful for the dog. In winter especially, the mats on a dog can collect moisture and keep a dog from getting dry, causing them to get sick.

After brushing, she uses a clipper vacuum which sucks the hair up so as to give the dog a better cut and a cleaner finish.



Cathy Wesson grooms pooch Trixie Fox of Clover. Trixie is appreciative as Wesson cuts off her mats of hair.

She will then give the luxury bath which is hoisting the dog up into the raised tub and shampooing them with any of her nine different shampoos for dogs. The kind depends on the type of dog, their skin, hair type and other problems. One shampoo especially made for poodles helps make the poodles' hair fluff better and has a moisturizing spray for their skin.

Then comes the doggy massage which entails drying them off with her Quiet Force Dryer. The dryer is not harsh like a normal blow dryer, which can burn or hurt the skin. It is set on the right temperature to blow on pets so as not to damage their skin. Also, the dryer gives out a circular motion which when blown on the dog can create a massage type feel.

"Some dogs will just stand there forever letting you blow it on them," said Wesson.

The style comes last. This is when Wesson can get creative and she likes to play with a dogs hair to find their best look. With bangs in face, without, with bows? She does it. For some she uses Exture Plus Mousse, mousse for dog, to help make dog's hair look more full. It also helps to keep tangles out.

If you're looking for dressing up your dog for an occasion, look no further. She even has her own bow making boutique where she makes bows for the dogs depending on occasion.

She has anything from spirited Kings Mountain High School paw design ribbons to stickers to accessories such as baby bottles which can be attached to the bows. In her previous job she did many pooches for weddings. She does advise owners to not leave the bows in a dog's hair too long because they could pull out or damage the hair.

Along with the bows, she also will do a dog's nails in a matching color.

Her favorite pets to work on are the underprivileged, old or handicapped animals. "These dogs just appreciate the grooming so much. I am very flexible with these animals. If they need to lie down or be in a certain stance while grooming I let them and I work around them," said Wesson.

Many people who find pets abandoned or stray will bring them to her to clean up.

"I take special care to these animals in need. If I can bring just one dog in from being outside by cleaning them up, I have done my job. I know what

it's like to take in a stray and love them," said Wesson. She has four dogs at home.

She began in the business of caring for animals at All Creatures in Stanley. She worked in the kennel area waking dogs after surgery, giving dogs medications and cleaning up after them. Then one day the groomer quit, leaving the vet to turn to Wesson for help. The vet asked if the clippers would fit her hands. And, sure enough, they fit.

Having the task of grooming without training, she got information from a library book. She soon realized she really liked grooming and decided to get training. Bow Wow Boutique in South Gastonia took her in as an apprentice and she worked there for four years.

Now she is at her own shop. She has been open now for seven weeks.

"Things have been running very well. People have really taken interest in what I do. This type of thing is not for everyone. It is for people who think of their pets as part of the family," said Wesson.

The name of the shop fits Wesson's beliefs perfectly. "I just think dogs are God's creatures that love us unconditionally whatever we do.



ALAN HODGE/THE HERALD

Paul Bolt (left) of Bridges Auto Parts store in Kings Mountain, presents a new chainsaw to drawing winner Kenneth Caveny. The saw was a prize in the NAPA Great Outdoor Adventure Sweepstakes.



West Elementary fourth graders, left to right; Daniel Gill, Brittany Hale, Jennifer Brandstetter, and John Michael Hinson pose with the "Great Escape" fire safety certificates they received from Kings Mountain fire chief Frank Burns (left rear) and firefighter Jamie Black. Hale's entry won first place and a chance to go to the national competition in Florida.



Kings Mountain fire chief Frank Burns (right rear) and firefighter Jamie Black presented certificates to North School fourth graders Dymond Adams (left) and Laura Hollifield for their entries in the "Great Escape" fire safety contest.

## Kings Mountain Weather Report

	Nov. 3-9	Year Ago
Total precip.	0	.70
Max. 1 day	0	.70 (9th)
Year to date	36.81	51.87
Min. temp.	32 (3rd)	30 (6th)
Max. temp.	77 (9th)	57 (9th)
Avg. temp.	57.9	49.0



EAST SCHOOL FOURTH GRADE A HONOR ROLL - Front, left to right, Nicholas Furr, Eric Rucker, Emily Britton, Mark Main. Second row, Caleb Beach, Kyle Richards, Ricky Greene, Tiffany Herndon, Lydia Anthony. Back row, Ted Hale, Robert Barnes, Brittany Weathers, Meagan Ingram, Marshia Meeks.



EAST FOURTH GRADE A/B HONOR ROLL - Front, left to right, Brendon Rowland, Preston Lee, Brittany Belt, Randy Barrett. Second row, Jessika Rutherford, Tia Petty, Deanna Heath, J.J. Smith, Robert Trinidad. Third row, Derrill Baird, Toni McGinnis, Mickey Hamrick, Antonio Sloan, Shea Grigg. Fourth row, Marshall Jackson, Phillip Johnson, Hillary Smith, Katie Swafford, Daniel Asgari.



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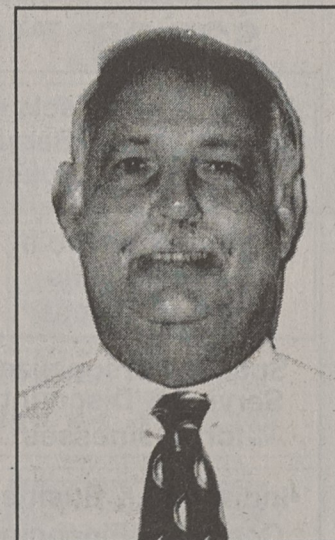


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