

Dogs Day Out will move to new digs

By Carolyn Steeves

While many small businesses are closing their doors, local grooming shop Dogs Day Out is expanding. Owner Shannon Meehan hopes that the larger space and expanded services will leave her clients smiling, or wagging their tails, as the case may be.

Meehan, the owner and a groomer, opened Dogs Day Out in 1998. Back then, the grooming salon was in the Idlewild Crossing shopping center. In 2004, the shop moved to its current location in Windsor Square.

This June, Dogs Day Out will be moving to Galleria Boulevard and expanding its services.

Meehan said that they will not only offer grooming, but also have a doggie day care, a bakery, obedience training and in-home pet sitting for nearby homes. Her employees are especially excited for weekend "Tea and Biscuit parties."

"Everything just kind of fell into place," Meehan explained. "I found this big, beautiful space in the Galleria...the man who's going to run my day care is engaged to a pastry chef, so I decided to add a bakery."

She had initially planned to only take half of the space, but an irresistible deal was put on the table and she ended up leasing the whole building.

Meehan attributes the success of Dogs Day Out to their customer care.

"We're a very personal-



Cynthia Moran is a groomer at Dogs Day Out in Matthews. PHOTO BY CAROLYN STEEVES

ized grooming shop," she said. "We're very, very in tune with a lot of our clients and their owners. People come to us because they know they're going to get that specialized treatment."

That specialized treatment has led to a very loyal client base. "When I moved the first time, I moved about seven miles and I didn't lose any clients," Meehan said. "We're really more like a giant family."

"I built up my business strictly by word of mouth," Meehan explained. She said her clients would recommend at least 10 other clients.

One client came in to pick up her dog last weekend and asked about the upcoming move. "As long

as you don't move out of state," she said. "Because I can't trust anyone else with my dog!"

Meehan moved to Charlotte from Indiana roughly 18 years ago. She studied biology and animal behavior science at Ball State University.

After coming to Charlotte to help a sibling, she worked at an animal veterinary hospital, then trained dogs and finally picked up on grooming.

"I have always wanted to be around animals," Meehan said. "Even though I originally wanted to study bigger animals and work at a zoo, I am perfectly happy working with dogs."

In the back of the grooming area, behind a white picket fence, are Meehan's

seven rescued dogs. They accompany her to work every day. "We travel as a pack," she joked.

"If I couldn't take my dogs to work with me, I don't think I would have seven," Meehan said. One of the reasons she decided to open a day care was so that people wouldn't have to leave their dogs alone while they're at work. "I certainly wouldn't want mine home alone all day."

Meehan is hoping to open the new store on June 1 and have a grand opening for the new location later that month.

"I'm really excited about the move and so are all of my employees," Meehan said. "We're all just really gung ho about everything."