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Thursday, January 09, 2003 - 6:46:53 PM MST



**Sandy Suggitt/staff**

**Stephanie Salyer's friend, Lexi, models a fleecewear sweater at No Bones About It Dog Bakery & Pet Stop in Midtown.**

"I had gone to market in October anticipating opening a pet boutique next year, but I hadn't started ordering," Salyer said.

She'd been coming to Ruidoso looking for a space to set up shop off and on for a year. Bronco Sue's moved into the building at 2330 Sudderth Drive in October and wanted to rent the adjacent space. Salyer looked at the space several times by mid-October, and on Nov. 1 made the decision to lease the space and open No Bones About It Dog Bakery & Pet Stop the day after Thanksgiving, giving her less than a month to get her shop in order.

It was very busy for her and traumatic to leave The Children's Center, which she had considered buying.

"I really wanted to scale down, to live in a smaller community," Salyer said.

## Making, literally, No Bones About It

By Sandy Suggitt  
ruidoso news staff  
writer

In mid-October, Stephanie Salyer gave two weeks' notice, giving up her 11-year job as director of The Children's Center, a preschool in Albuquerque, to open a pet boutique in Ruidoso little over a month later.

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"When I was a kid, I spent summers here with my grandparents and of course I fell in love with it. My best friend from Albuquerque relocated here five years ago and opened Sweet Retreat (Jennifer Basile). It was kind of fortuitous."

But why a pet bakery?

"I'd always wanted to have a pet boutique," she said. The dream came about five to seven years ago when she was traveling on the East Coast and would go into pet boutiques to buy items for her pet.

"I spent more money on my dog than on myself and I thought there had to be other people like me. It's kind of new to the Southwest."

Salyer said she's had trouble keeping stocked and has had to reorder every week she's been open.

"I started to run on low Christmas Eve and some stock suppliers were out of items until Jan. 6. It's taken two to three weeks, because of the holiday, to get stuff."

The gourmet dog treats and fancy pastries for dogs and cats at No Bones About It look like the real thing, but the "chocolate" is carob, and the layers of "sugar" frostings are really sugar free, made with 100 percent natural and healthy ingredients for pets. But listen to some of the names: colli-e-clairs, biscotti, Boston terrier pies, fur-de-flower. Most of them are made of wheat flour biscuits dipped into carob – and they all look good enough to eat.

"I have tested them," Salyer said laughing. "They're very bland, but they're all up to human grade standards, so you could eat them."

The pet boutique has edible greeting cards for dogs and cats and an upscale selection of kitty treats: To suit the finickiest of tastes, there are mackerel shavings and chicken and liver biscuits. Especially favored by felines is a product called "3 Bathed Mice," tiny, life-like gray mice in a can of catnip that has kittens keeping their humans awake at night.

There are picture frames and memo boards for dogs and cats, pet beds – including an orthopedic napper for dogs with hip dysplasia, toys, cowboy boots for dogs to chew and sling shots to shoot balls to dogs. In one section of the store, Salyer has a clothing line for pets: two-legged and four-legged fleecewear for dogs, knit sweaters, and — for Christmas — a set of jingle bells on a red velvet collar with matching booties with bells. (Measure from the collar to the base of the tail and that's the dog's clothing size.)

Salyer said she can't keep up with the demand for dog clothing, and has been placing an order every week.

"Pet owners are just the best, easiest people to be around. I traded in working with kids to working with pups."

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