

Las Sendas Up Close

Bringing neighbors closer to their community

January 2018

Happy Pets Palace Nurtures Animal Health Passion



By Linda Huss
Owner, Happy Pets Palace

Cassandra Balsley chose the animal care profession at age 15, and after graduating from Red Mountain High School, in 2014, Cassandra began working at Happy Pets Palace, a dog boarding and daycare center in Mesa.

During her job interview, Cassandra made it known that her goal was to become a veterinarian. She decided to major in Biological Sciences, at Arizona State University (ASU), where she earned a full scholarship, and attended the prestigious Barrett, The Honors College. She also continued working part time at Happy Pets Palace.

Throughout her studies, Cassandra's passion to improve animal health and animal care based on research and studies steadily increased. Her path started at a young age because her love for animals was all-consuming and brought her joy and happiness.

This past December, Cassandra graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in biological sciences from ASU. She was awarded Summa Cum Laude honors with a 3.89 GPA. Cassandra is looking forward to entering vet school in the fall of 2018. It's wonderful when young adults recognize what makes them happiest and they follow a path incorporating those interests into their lives.

Cassandra has transitioned to a full-time employee and shift lead at Happy Pets, and her added responsibilities will be helpful toward her future vet career. She will be spending more time talking with dog owners, which will help her become more comfortable and develop a personable bedside manner. Cassandra also will be learning office skills and supervisory duties for her future role.

The benefits of working a job, which aligns with her veterinary career path, have included building friendships with other dog lovers, making great memories and traveling with co-workers. In 2017, Cassandra and Shannon, her co-worker, took a trip to Cambodia to work with elephants.

Co-worker Mia Powers, a shift lead with Happy Pets, enjoys working with Cassandra. "Cassandra has a friendly personality, and she's going places in this world," Mia said. "She has an amazing connection with animals, and they all adore her."

When Cassandra was 8 years old, she got her first dog, Shiloh, a yellow lab and Vizsla mix. That is a wonderful age to get a first dog because it helps teach responsibilities and creates a great bond. Shiloh is the dog who started Cassandra's love for animals and her passion to help and protect them.

Unfortunately, Shiloh developed cancer and passed away at the age of 10. Since his disease left unanswered questions, Cassandra will focus on cancer research in her vet studies. Her current dog, Daisy, is a Black Lab mix who has been a family pet for the past six years.

Choosing a profession requires careful consideration. Following your passions and doing what makes you happy will lead to career fulfillment. When you can identify something that brings you joy when you perform routine job tasks, it will help you stay on course. Surrounding yourself with like-minded people who share similar interests and values can be incredible because of the encouragement you'll receive and the natural friendships that can form.

Here at Happy Pets, we love having Cassandra on our team. She is helpful in so many ways, and we are thankful for having such a great employee for four years. When she goes to vet school in a few months, she will be missed, but we know there will be greatness in the next chapter of her life and for the pets she will be helping. ■

Happy Pets Palace is located at 1918 E. McKellips Road, on the northwest corner of McKellips and Gilbert roads. For more information about this award-winning dog boarding and doggy daycare facility, visit the website at HappyPetsPalace.com, or call (480) 207-1852.

COMMUNITY EVENTS ARE PUPPY-FRIENDLY

Submitted by Happy Pets Palace

Happy Pets Palace hosts free puppy socials every other Saturday, continuing in the New Year, beginning Jan. 13, from 10 to 11 a.m.

Puppy play sessions can begin when your puppy is 9 weeks old, or 7 days after your vet gives the first series vaccination for parvo/distemper. The puppy socials take place outside at Happy Pets Palace when weather permits.

Puppies are young and innocent. We want to help them gradually build confidence and accept new experiences without fear.

Puppies 16 weeks or younger are at the optimal age to be shaped and introduced to safe, new experiences. This will lead to a more well-balanced and receptive puppy.

Introduce your puppy to accept handling by having their mouth, ears, tail, feet and collar touched by a variety of people. When your dog is approached, you want him to be receptive. Training your dog to be social with people and dogs is a great thing to do at an early age. It makes going out in public a much more enjoyable experience.

Puppies need to learn how to calm down, and they need a settling period. Self-regulation helps to avoid over-arousal. High energy and high arousal in dog-dog

group play are closely linked to aggression, even with the best of friends. If your puppy doesn't learn to self-regulate at a young age, then his adult play style may be considered rude in the dog world, or worse, it may cause aggression during amped up play. Learning proper play etiquette is so important in socializing pups at a young age.

Dogs are pack animals and enjoy being around other dogs. They don't want to live a solitary life. They love having a purpose and going on adventures.

If your goal is for your puppy to have a full and enriched life, please let us help. There will be puppy-training tips, and to ensure good safe play styles, as well as socializing, trained staff will monitor play. There also will be occasional guest speakers discussing nutrition, exercise, photography tips and other fun topics.

Puppy socials at Happy Pets Palace are designed to monitor puppy introductions and gradually build experiences in a fun, happy and playful manner. Your puppy needs play session experiences while they are young. Our wisdom and experience will help pair up puppy play styles to be nicely matched for reciprocal play. We encourage healthy treats to guide puppies along and praise good choices. ■



Happy Pets Palace is an award-winning dog boarding facility, located at 1918 E. McKellips Road. We offer doggy daycare, puppy training, puppy socializing and overnight dog boarding. Learn more about our services at HappyPetsPalace.com.

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