

SAVE & SELL

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2006

Barking for biscuits

Baker finds success with focus on pets

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Rachelle Latour's doggie snacks are so good, people have been known to snack on them.

"I've had people come back and say: 'I didn't know they were for dogs'" Latour said, noting they devoured them.

She makes baked gourmet treats that she sells at the Guelph Farmers Market and a growing number of stores, and has received a positive response from customers.

Her small company named Spoil The Dog is the maker of wholesome biscuits, brownies, muffins and pies for dogs, cats and horses.

A teaching assistant by profession, Latour formed the company after deciding she only wanted to feed her mixed-breed dog, Moccacino, the best food. She began making it herself when Moccacino, now five, was only a puppy.

"I was making them for my own dog, the most natural treats that I could," Latour said.

They were originally whole wheat-based, but Latour found too many dogs were allergic to that, so she switched to chickpea powder instead.

The treats are high in protein, fibre and calcium but low in saturated fat, and contain no salt, sugar, corn, soy, preservatives or additives.

Customer Elayne Starr said her eight-year-old terrier-poodle cross, Kosmo, suffers from food allergies, but has no problem with Latour's treats.

"He loves them. He scratches at the (cupboard) door to get at them," Starr said.

Raised in Sault Ste. Marie, Latour earned a Bachelor's degree in English and French from Laurentian University in Sudbury before working as a teaching assistant in communities from Winnipeg to Montreal, then settling here at John F. Ross collegiate.

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Rachelle Latour, owner of Spoil The Dog, cooks up some dog treats in her Guelph home.

DAVE CARTER, GUELPH MERCURY