

Halloween for mature audiences

It won't look like Henderson's typical work force

Wednesday, October 31, 2007



Angie Lilly owner of Gabbi's Boutique is sponsoring Henderson's first Dog Costume Contest on Second Street at 3:45 p.m.

HENDERSON, Ky. — In Henderson, Halloween isn't just for children, although upward of 1,000 are expected to trick-or-treat at downtown merchants starting at 3 p.m. followed at 5 p.m. by the city's annual Halloween parade.

This year, there's a Dog Costume Contest on Second Street at 3:45 p.m., although it's doubtful Gabbi and Taylor (she'll be a princess, he a jailbird) will get to compete.

That's because their owner, Angie Lilly, is sponsoring the event. Categories include most original, scariest, prissiest, studliest and look-alike (dressed like owner).

The two pooches hang out inside Lilly's new Gabbi's Boutique at 137 Second St.

The other day Gabbi, a tiny yorkie/Maltese mix, was still in her "jammies" and lying near a floor heater while her "big bubby" Taylor, a 3-year-old peekapoo in a St. Louis Cardinals vest, was greeting the mail carrier.

The shop specializes in pet clothing (much of it made by Lilly in the store's sewing room) and toys and treats, but it's also a self-service pet spa. Pet owners bring their animals, especially big dogs, to her shop and for \$12 use the wash basin (equipped with a ramp), grooming table and supplies.

"You'll find mom and kids back here scrubbing a dog and laughing," Lilly said. "We had an English sheep dog in here the other day."

Lilly began making pet dresses, coats and harnesses last year, partly to occupy her time after her son got his driver's license, but also because Gabbi, who weighs under 3 pounds, was "freezing cold" all the time.

"Every time I went to buy her something, it was \$30 or \$40," Lilly said. "I thought, 'I could make this.'"

Soon she was making pet clothing for friends and family, then took the plunge nine weeks ago, deciding there was more "incentive" to selling pet outfits herself than on consignment somewhere else.

Lilly has made some Halloween vests and costumes for pets and used felt to create her own outfit for today's activities. She's a giant snap biscuit treat.

But most of the shop's Halloween costumes, including a hot dog, cheerleader, firefighter and skunk, came from manufacturers.

"My goal is to keep my outfits at \$20 or less," she explained, "but to make a full-blown Halloween costume and have it worn only one time would be (counterproductive and costly). People can get (manufactured) costumes for \$15."