



Dog Friendly Businesses

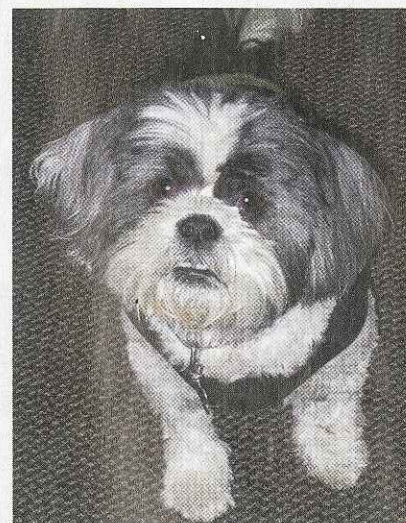
[A Waggin' Good Time at the Office]

DiMuro Ginsberg Law firm in Alexandria, Virginia



Photos Courtesy of DiMuro Ginsberg Law Firm

“Dogs at work boost employee and clientele morale”



by Lauren Hagan

Wet noses and wagging tails greet clients and co-workers at DiMuro Ginsberg law firm in Alexandria and at Augusta Physical Therapy in Staunton, Virginia. These businesses are home not only to businessmen and businesswomen, but also to prancing pawed puppies. For reasons of health and happiness, dog-friendly businesses are becoming more common.

Attorney Hillary Collyer has more than just filing cabinets beneath her desk; she also has a dog bed and toys to occupy her Shih Tzu mix, Lady. Lady is a natural at the office, loving the attention she receives from co-workers who stop by to give her treats and pay a visit to their furry co-worker. Although she sleeps most of the day, she still provides excellent company for Hillary, who received special permission to bring her to work. Even though Hillary is the only one in her office who brings her pet companion to work daily, others sometimes bring in pets on weekends.

Dogs like Lady provide a number of benefits to office settings that could be stressful and tedious for some people. The first benefit, and one that Lady has clearly helped accomplish, is

encouraging social interaction between co-workers. Lady gives Hillary's co-workers a reason to swing by her desk to give the Shih Tzu mix a friendly pat on the head and a treat. She's not only a companion to her owner, but also a conversation topic for co-workers. Studies have shown that long-term exposure to pets lowers blood pressure and heart rates, resulting in a healthier lifestyle.

Additionally, scientific studies have proven that pets reduce stress. In an office where situations tend to get tense fast, Lady provides a welcome break. Her simple, though silent, company temporarily relieves employees of deadline anxieties or other stress factors that can drastically change the atmosphere of the office environment.

Dogs in particular encourage exercise. Instead of spending lunch hour hunched over a table in the staff lounge, owners who bring their dogs to work are encouraged to remove themselves temporarily from the work environment to take their dog for a brisk walk. This benefits the owner's health and happiness, as well as the dog's. >>