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Thursday, January 31, 2008

A Pioneer Press Newspaper

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SPOTLIGHT

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PHOTOS BY RENÉ EDDE

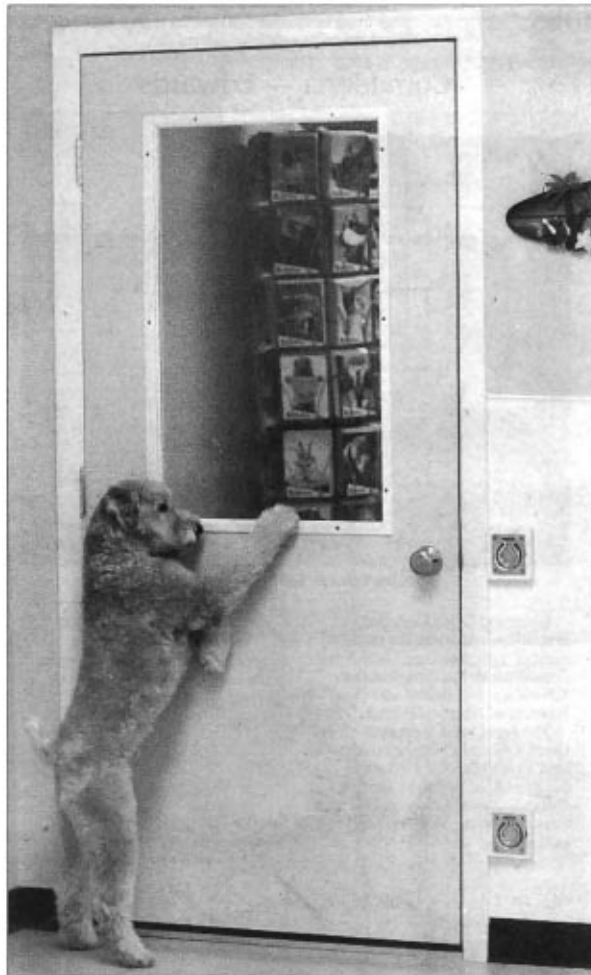
After returning from their honeymoon in Hawaii, Jeff and Kathy Ironside were looking for franchise ideas. They were surfing around on entrepreneur.com when Jeff saw doggie day care franchises. With a background in business, he decided to start his own, not a franchise — thus the creation of the Bow Wow Beach Club.

On Dec. 21, the Ironsides opened their place in Westchester. All employees are certified by the American Red Cross in pet first aid. The Ironsides also employ an in-house groomer, Mikki Verber of Westchester.

Dogs come from Westchester, Western Springs, La Grange, LaGrange Park and Hinsdale. They

also come from the city. Chicago resident Sean Lewis works in Oak Brook and brings his dog, Kallie, to the day care three days a week so she can be "socialized." He did an online search for doggie day care and found the Bow Wow Beach Club. Lewis was spending 10 hours a day away from her and did not think it was fair to come home and only take her for a walk. He felt she needed more activity, and now "she sleeps" a lot, he said.

Dawn Soprych of Westchester brings Penne to the day care once or twice a week. "It's been amazing," Soprych said. "She's not the same. She comes home so tired. She eats and then goes to sleep."



TOP: Bunker stands and peeks out the window Jan. 23 as his "dad," Bow Wow Beach Club owner Jeff Ironside, is out in the front lobby of the doggie day care center in Westchester.

ABOVE: Lexi takes a break from playing with the Frisbee but still keeps it close and away from others.

BOTTOM: Nicole Salvato of Westchester keeps a hold on her 11-month-old Shar-Pei puppy, Marley, before the puppy obedience class.



ABOVE: Bunker has taken it upon himself to stow away in a comfortable cage to rest while behind him Lexi strolls around, checking out what's happening in the playroom.

RIGHT: Ironside, who runs the Bow Wow Beach Club with his wife, Kathy, catches up on some work while Elmo rests at his feet and Bunker continues to rest in an open cage.

BOTTOM RIGHT: During the puppy obedience class on a Wednesday night, Marley, an 11-month-old Shar-Pei, introduces herself to Lucy, a boxer and St. Bernard mix. BELOW: Amber Verber, 5, of Westchester sits on a wall in the play area beside Bow Wow Beach Club employee Gary Konrad. They watch Lucy Engle of Westchester walk her dog, Buddie, during the puppy obedience class on a Wednesday morning.

