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**Animal Care
is Human Care**

**What a Pandemic
Made Clear**

Profile of Success

**Serenity
Dog Retreat**

**The Dog Daycare
Business Think Tank**

Your Questions Answered



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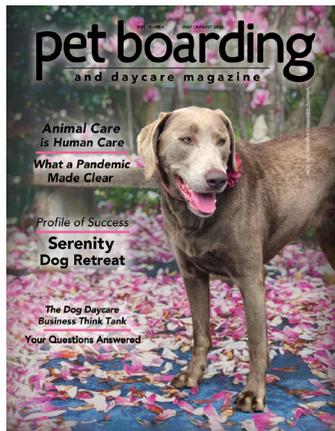
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ON THE COVER:
PHOTO OF SERENITY DOG RETREAT

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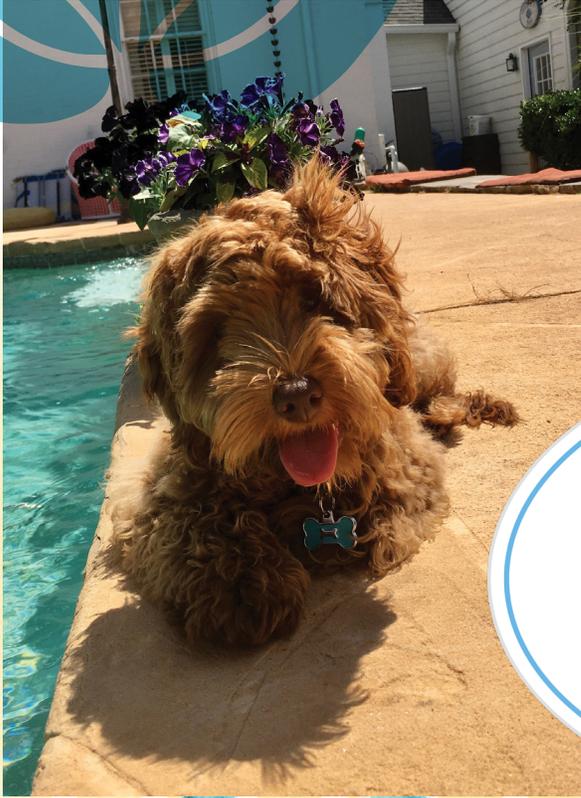


Photo by Emily Followill

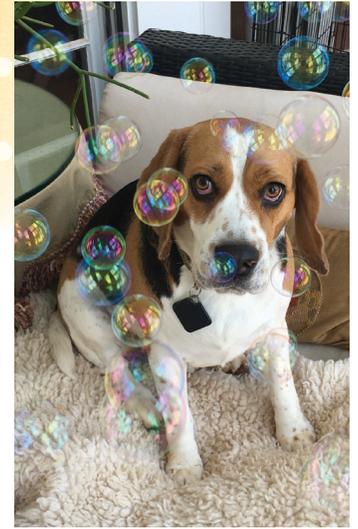


Photo by Emily Followill

Exclusive Care in a Breathtaking Setting

By Kathy Hosler • Photos provided by Serenity Dog Retreat

Photo by Emily Followill



SERENITY

– the state of being calm, peaceful, and untroubled.

Imagine the complete bliss of vacationing in a sprawling southern manor surrounded by 25 lush acres of beautifully manicured lawns and gardens. During your stay you are treated to luxurious lodging, around-the-clock personal service, fun activities, and the opportunity to relax and unwind with a few close friends. That is what the guests of Serenity Dog Retreat get to experience!

Beth Ramsey, founder and owner of Serenity Dog Retreat, has been an animal lover all of her life. During high school and college, Beth worked in a veterinary hospital as a receptionist.

After college, life and work took her on a different path. For the next 25 years, she held a position at Coca Cola.

Beth never lost her love for animals, and she was determined that her second career would revolve around them. But, she did not want to open a standard commercial boarding kennel. She had something far more exclusive in mind.

"I had a vision to create a pet boarding experience that would allow dogs to benefit from the same conditions I loved cultivating for my own four-legged friends—the freedom to play and explore in a beautiful natural setting, a restful,



Photos by Emily Followill



Beth set about implementing her vision to create unique boarding and daycare programs that would provide her canine guests with a stress-free experience in an exclusive setting.

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quiet home-like environment and plenty of loving attention. I wanted it to be small, upscale and selective," says Beth.

Beth started planning and looking for land while she was still with Coca Cola. She looked at existing facilities and even drew up her own plans, but nothing she came up with matched her vision.

"Then, everything changed when I went to look at a historic Georgian plantation that was located on 25 acres near Atlanta, Georgia.

"With great anticipation, I drove up the private driveway lined with 50 magnificent crepe myrtle. When the estate came into view, I immediately fell in love with it. It was like stepping back in time. The property and the layout were perfect."

Beth set about implementing her vision to create unique boarding and daycare programs that would provide her canine guests with a stress-free experience in an exclusive setting.

In August 2018, Serenity Dog Retreat opened its doors.

"When people arrive with their dogs, they are blown away by the magnificent estate and the accommodations their dog will enjoy," says Beth with a wide smile. "Invariably, the owners say, 'Can I stay too? I need some serenity in my life.'"

Beth repurposed a three-car attached garage into twelve walk-in luxury suites that have full-length tempered glass doors and airy, open ceilings. The bedrooms are furnished with toddler beds and flat screen televisions.

"I wanted all the animals to be in an authentic home environment even though the dogs are only in the suites for eating and sleeping," says Beth. "At other times, they have full access to our Country Club Daycare services which are customized for each dog according to its age, interests and energy level.

"The dogs are often with me in the living area of the house, or supervised by a staff member while lounging at our resort-style in-ground swimming pool or enjoying the outdoor play areas.

"During rest periods, the dogs enjoy our gorgeous sunroom, kitchen or lounge area where they can relax and nap on comfy dog furniture. Or, they can do art projects, work on brain-stimulating puzzles or have fun chasing bacon scented bubbles," says Beth.

There is a very thorough four-hour evaluation process for any dog that wants to come to Serenity. Owners go to the website, fill out the online application, and then they create a client portal and schedule the evaluation appointment. The evaluation is critical to making sure a dog can get along with the others, and also helps them become comfortable in the surroundings prior to their first overnight stay.

"Dogs that have any kind of aggression or dogs that are super high energy are not a good fit for us. We

Photos by Emily Followill



"During rest periods, the dogs enjoy our gorgeous sunroom, kitchen or lounge area where they can relax and nap on comfy dog furniture."

- Beth Ramsey, founder and owner of Serenity Dog Retreat

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Photo by Emily Followill



The resort has a two-acre outdoor play area enclosed by a seven-foot-high fence. It includes the beautiful in-ground swimming pool.

are called Serenity for a reason," says Beth. "If a dog is unable to relax and socialize with others, this isn't the right place for them."

The resort has a two-acre outdoor play area enclosed by a seven-foot-high fence. It includes the beautiful in-ground swimming pool. The dogs can come in to the main house whenever they want through the doggie door into the sunroom.

To keep the amount of dogs they care for to a manageable number, they only accept dogs for daycare that regularly board at Serenity. The resort has a ratio of just 3-5 dogs per staff member. That ensures each guest gets the finest of care and lots of TLC. All of the staff is trained in CPR and first aid, and receives extensive education through The Dog Gurus training programs.

"Having a small business allows me to build an amazing relationship with each of my clients," says Beth. "I am in constant contact with the owners. I send emails and pictures of their pets to them during the day. Now I am also making fun videos of their dogs' activities and posting them on Instagram and Facebook. The owners love it!"

Their website, www.serenitydogretreat.com, is the first contact that most people have with them. It has been very instrumental in matching the right clients to the retreat. All the information about their lodging and

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daycare services, their requirements and the amenities they offer is on their easy-to-navigate website.

Beth hired a famous photographer to take gorgeous pictures of the estate (inside and outside), the lodging accommodations and of the dogs enjoying pampering at its finest.

"I think it is really important to present your business in a complete and professional way," says Beth. "When prospective clients get to see the entire setup, it makes a huge difference."

And, that difference is very evident. In just two short years, she proved that you don't have to be huge to be super successful. Beth Ramsey really found her niche when she decided to make a southern plantation into an exclusive retreat for pampered pooches.

Calm, peaceful, untroubled—that really describes Serenity Dog Retreat. And, who couldn't use a little more Serenity in their life? ■

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