

STRETCHING THE POINT

Arf! Pet Care: All creatures, all the time

BY ALLAN C. HANRAHAN



Jennifer and Jonathan Register walk Mackenzie during one of the company's several thousand dog walks.

TESS GOLDBLATT

Jonathan and Jennifer Register founded their business, Arf! Pet Care, "out of our own frustration," says Jonathan, in order to find consistent, professional care when needed for their labrador retriever/American staffordshire terrier mix, named Mackenzie.

So in April, 2008, Arf! Pet Care was carefully created by the young college graduates. By October, the company was up and running, accepting "clients" from the animal world—limited at present to "dogs, cats, fish and a few birds."

However," says Jennifer, "Our sitters have experience with all sorts of animals."

"We have 12 part-time sitters—professionally trained," says Jonathan, and those staff members enable Arf! Pet Care to offer services including dog walks, pet visits, in-home overnight sitting, in-home private boarding, yard cleanup and home care, and a pet "taxi." That is, they will either keep the pet at their own home, visit each day to exercise and feed the pet, do any necessary cleanup or home care, serve as a "taxi" service for the pet or "sit" at the pet's home. "We are bonded and insured, our sitters undergo a criminal background

check, and all references have been called," says Jonathan.

In fact, there really doesn't need to be a pet involved; their company will "sit" just the house.

The Registers' staff, are all "animal-loving individuals who are professional, reliable, trustworthy, intelligent, fun and from all walks of life—students, vet assistants and technicians, military spouses, professionals, retirees and senior citizens," says Jonathan.

In addition to these services, guaranteed by Jonathan and Jennifer to be exceptional, there is free in-home consultation (with the sitter), emergency backup sitters, timely communication, reliability and availability. They are available every hour of the day, every day of the year. Plus, there is the intangible but oh-so-important "peace of mind" factor.

Looking toward the future, Jonathan confides that there is a big push to partner with associations and corporations in offering Arf! Pet Care services as an employees' benefits perquisite.

Because of the nature of their business, "Our website is our storefront," both agreed, and a visit to the site will impress the viewer. "We are as professional as possible," they add.

The young entrepreneurs are natives of Newport News and have known one another since age 14, although Jonathan graduated from Woodside High School, while Jennifer graduated

Continued on page 14



Port Warwick Dental Arts Thanks You for Giving Children a Reason to Smile

Dear Hampton Roads "Smiles for Life" Participants,

It was a pleasure meeting you through our recent Smiles for Life fundraiser. Thank you for allowing us to brighten your smile and, in so doing, brighten the lives of children in our community and across the country, some of whom don't always have a lot of reasons to smile.



Thanks to you, our efforts were a great success. Together we raised \$12,000 for Children's Hospital of The King's Daughters and the Smiles for Life Foundation.

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Again, thanks for your support, Hampton Roads—and the chance to brighten your smile.



Warmest regards,
Lisa Marie Samaha, DDS, PC and my exceptional team

Fellow, Academy of General Dentistry
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PERSONNEL MATTERS

Social networking sites: Friends or foes?



BY JENNIFER L. ELSASSER, RECRUITER & HUMAN RESOURCE ADVISOR

Social networking websites are clearly a growing trend on the Internet these days, especially among young adults and college students. MySpace and Facebook are great sites for keeping in touch with friends and family, but not necessarily the best place to post pictures of less than desirable moments or situations. Many registered users on these sites probably don't think about the possibility of unwelcomed eyes looking at their personal information—especially potential employers!

With the increase in competition for positions available during our country's current economic crisis, it would be prudent to "clean up" the personal information and pictures posted on these pages. The reason is that it may be a turnoff for prospective employ-

ers. Human resources and recruiting departments are looking at these sites more than ever as a means to gain perspective on candidates' judgment, values and social connections.

Much controversy regarding the use of these sites during the employment screening process exists. Some employers feel that if a person voluntarily posts his or her personal information, then the content is fair game and available for employers to use at their disposal. However, other employers disagree, arguing that this information should remain private. Both sides have valid points and the debate will continue until regulatory restrictions occur.

In the meantime, it is critical to refrain from using information found on these websites in any discriminatory

way. If social networking sites are used during the screening process, it would be wise to wait until a conditional job offer has been extended and consent has been granted from the applicant to ensure there are no discrimination allegations. It is also advised to read the user terms and agreements on the networking sites to ensure that no violations are taking place. As members of these sites, individuals should set their preferences to "private" in order to maintain their confidentiality, allowing only their selected friends in and avoiding unwanted visitors.

Overall, employers and potential candidates must use good judgment and common sense when using social networking sites and the Internet in general. As technology continues to provide easier access to personal information, maintaining objectivity becomes increasingly difficult, but even more important.

Jennifer L. Elsasser is a recruiter and human resource advisor with Goodman & Company's Human Resource Services Division. She can be reached at 757-873-1033 or by email at jelsasser@goodmanco.com.

ARF! PET CARE, continued from page 13

► Arf! Pet Care is available every hour of the day, every day of the year.

from Denbigh High before going on to the College of William & Mary, where she earned a finance degree. She also works at First Advantage Federal Credit Union, leaving Jonathan striving to exceed customers' expectations as he manages the day-to-day operations of their business, providing dependable, personalized service to Newport News, York County, and Poquoson.

TO THE Point

Arf! Pet Care

Address: 5007-C Victory Blvd., Yorktown, VA 23693

Contact: Jonathan Register, owner

Phone: 757-301-4747

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Website: www.arfpetcare.com

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