

2A | BUSINESS

Lisa Bardy stands behind a case of baked goods in the store she's owned since 2011 — Bow Wow Baketique.



PHOTO BY
MELISSA WALSH

Where happiness is a warm puppy treat

By Melissa Walsh
Staff Writer

GROSSE POINTE WOODS — In 2010, Lisa Bardy experienced life-transforming loss.

"My ridiculously sad story is my mom died. My dog died. So I quit my job and opened a store," said Bardy, 48.

One could write a country song about Bardy's loss, except it might sound more like a polka. Bardy, who now lives in Harper Woods, is Polish- and Slovak-American and raised in Hamtramck.

Rather than writing a lyric, Bardy's loss prompted her to quit her corporate job and open a dog bakery and boutique Memorial Day 2011, largely inspired by the special care she gave her late pet, Belle, that included homemade, healthy dog treats.

"I had no idea what I was doing, but (the store)

opened," Bardy said. "I think for me there's no other way. I had business classes in college, but nothing's happening until you just go ahead and do it."

Bardy said her store is continually evolving. In February, she introduced the Hamtramck-influenced "puppy paczki" and promises "puppy pierogi" in the near future.

She uses all wheat- and meat-free natural ingredients in her dog treats, including sweet potato, pumpkin, apple, carob and molasses.

"It's all the things we eat minus the bad stuff," Bardy said. "So if you bite into a brownie, you'll be disappointed because there's no sugar."

Bardy's assortment of dog goodies has spread by word, or bark, of mouth, leading to cake orders for celebrity dogs, including Farms K-9,

Duke, for his last birthday party and Butler University mascot, Blue, celebrating the 2018 NCAA men's basketball tournament. Local therapy dog, harlequin Great Dane Lady Darla, is a frequent customer.

Bardy adopted her current pet dog, Nala, 8, shortly after the store's launch, who serves as an executive taste tester, but was "laid off" from her earlier role greeting the canine customers.

"(Nala) absolutely hates dogs in her store. So she can only come when I'm closed," Bardy said.

WDIV Local 4 named Bardy's business "best pet shop" the past three years. But Bardy said she doesn't consider her work in the store "work." Creating treats for dogs is a means to generating joyful living for herself.

"I held real jobs," Brady said. "This isn't a real job."