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# Laid off? Be a pooper scooper

## Former aircraft dispatcher cleaning up in new job

By Mark Hansel mhansel@nky.com January 18, 2010

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BOONE COUNTY - Kevin Kendall was at a crossroads in his career.

— Like a lot of people, he was downsized out of a job.

— "My seniority was gone and I either had to start over at the bottom or do something else," Kendall said.

Kendall, of Dearborn County, Ind., had worked as an aircraft dispatcher for 30 years and suddenly the job that he thought would take him into retirement was gone. About to turn 50, he decided that it was time for him to take control of his own future.

He began looking at franchise opportunities and had a pretty good idea what he wanted from his corporate partner.



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The Enquirer/Michael E. Keating

Kevin Kendall, laid off from his long-time job as an airline industry dispatcher, found a new career as a pooper scooper with a company called Pet Butler.

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"I was looking for a franchise with a national toll-free number that would provide information and pricing through customer service representatives," Kendall said. "I wanted to focus my efforts on growing the business and a lot of times in a small business, the details bog you down."

After about a year of research, Kendall came across a business opportunity that was a bit unusual, but seemed to have everything that he was seeking.

Pet Butler, which was founded in 1988, provides professional pet waste cleanup and removal to individual yards, parks and multi-family communities.

Put simply, Kendall says, they scoop poop.

In addition to customer service support, the company also handles billing, provides public relations assistance and has a franchise fee of \$25,000.

Kendall, now 51, saw it as his chance to clean up - in more ways than one. He started the franchise in 2008 and has 52 regular customers.

After a career spent in a very serious business, which has become even more so in recent years, Kendall says he wanted to do something completely different.

"This was about as far away from the airline industry as I could get and that was fine with me," Kendall said. "It's not every day you can get into a business that has a very funny side to it. People enjoy talking about it and everybody loves talking about their dogs."

While Pet Butler does not take itself too seriously - slogans on Kendall's truck include "What can we doo for brown?" and

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"Picking up where your dog left off" - the company and its representatives take a professional approach to the job itself.

"The whole Pet Butler organization is very good," said Linda Van Der Wel, a customer for about 18 months. "If you compare the price and the service to doing it yourself, it's definitely worth it."

Pet Butler services cost \$13 dollars per week for regular maintenance of a single-family home with one dog or \$16 for two dogs. The company also provides one-time cleaning services, with prices that vary based on the number of dogs, the size of the yard and period of time between services.

Van Der Wel said she and her husband, Peter, simply did not want to pick up after their dogs and considers the deal a bargain.

"To be honest, I would probably even pay more," she said.

Kendall said there are a lot of reasons people choose the service. Some, like the Van Der Wels, just don't want the hassle, others have small children who share a yard with pets and are concerned about disease and some are just environmentally conscious.

The Van Der Wels own a home at Triple Crown in Union, but Kendall says he has customers from all walks of life who live in large homes, smaller homes or apartments.

He is negotiating a contract with a pet-friendly apartment complex in Southgate.

His franchise covers Boone, Campbell and Kenton counties in Kentucky and Dearborn County in Indiana.

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