



RENOVATION & DESIGN

Messy pets can become a challenge

Family companions don't always get along with cleaners

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Laurie Mustard / Winnipeg Free Press
Tammy (front row, from left), Maggie, Claire and Melissa (back row, from left), Carman and owner Lisa Manary make up the team at Little Luxuries Home and Carpet Cleaning.

My good buddy Lisa Manary, in partnership with her hubby Dan Manary, owns and operates Little Luxuries House and Carpet Cleaning (serving the Winnipeg area), so one fine day it occurred to me she might have some interesting stories about what it takes to keep homes spic and span!

I was right, but the focus turned out to be different than I expected. So grab a coffee and prepare to be entertained.

I pulled on my hardcore investigative reporter hat and got right down to business.

Grilling her over the shiny table in her spotless kitchen, I asked Lisa what she'd consider to one of the major challenges encountered in the home cleaner business.

I mean, I'm looking for dirt.

She thinks for a minute, her eyes light up, and she said, "Pets!"

Now, Lisa and I are animal lovers to the max, so I know there's no one better to be working with other peoples' pets. I ask her if she can share an example or two of the animal adventures she and her team face.

She begins with a story about a visit she made to a lady's house, not a client, a senior who might need some help while going through a difficult time. Little Luxuries does what it can to assist seniors in need.

Long story snort. Lisa pops by to assess the situation, sits for a chat with the lady, who said, "I have two big dogs, would you mind if I let them in?"

They had been barking outside very loudly since Lisa's arrival.

"As long as they're friendly, sure," said Lisa.

The lady lets the first dog in. It is the size of a small horse, and "friendly" times 10. It immediately jumps all over Lisa, leaving her, within a minute or so, "totally covered in slobber and hair, but no harm done," Lisa said.

"Well that wasn't so bad," the lady said. "I'll let the other one in."

This one was the size of a small elephant, even more exuberant and immediately doubled the slobber and hair donation the first one made.

"Good thing I love animals," Lisa said with a laugh.

She said generally pets add joy and good company to the cleaning crew, but aren't always quite on the same page regarding behaviour protocol.

"Every once in a while, a crafty cat will sneak out a door, leaving me scaling fences in hot pursuit," Lisa said. "It doesn't happen often and my heart nearly beats out of my chest until I've got kitty back home and safe."

Once in a while, Lisa has to stand between one of her staff and the family snake to allow the staffer enough security to get the job done.

On one occasion, Lisa gave a big dog barking very loudly in his cage a treat the owners had left to help in just such a situation. The dog inhaled the treat and immediately starting choking big time.

"Oh no! I can't kill the family dog," Lisa said, panicking. He recovered shortly after.

There's surely a book in these pet stories, but that's all I have room for today.

Of course, there are other challenges facing home-cleaning companies, such as homeowners forgetting to shut the alarm system down resulting in a noisy visit from police and security peeps. "It all comes with the territory," said Lisa, who loves her biz regardless.

The excellent business was voted the No. 1 home cleaning company in Winnipeg in the 2015 Top Choice Awards survey. Learn all about them by visiting littleluxuries.ca

And if pets could vote, no doubt Lisa, Dan and the crew would be their first choice as well.

Comments or feedback, love to hear from you!

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