

# After 29 years in distribution, Palatine man focuses on dogs



Brad "Casey" Howe and Dusty



Anna Marie Kuke

For 29 years, Brad "Casey" Howe of Palatine was a sales distributor of live lobster from the East Coast. He was known as Casey the lobster man.

He obtained the lobster from Maine or Massachusetts and had it shipped through O'Hare International Airport, where it was then distributed to the Drake Hotel, Morton's Steakhouse, and several restaurants in Chinatown and elsewhere, he said.

But with changes in the airline industry, along with some personal health issues, Howe decided to close the distribution business.

He saw a story in the early 2000s about [Bark Busters](#), a franchise that offers in-home training for dogs. He clipped it and saved it. He then decided to pursue franchise opportunities and settled on Bark Busters, a global company focused on training dogs at the client's home.

The organization put him through a criminal check and three personality profiles to see if he would be suitable to handle dogs.

"Not everyone is fit for the job," he said. "You really have to have a love for animals."

In 2006, he opened his Palatine-based [Bark Busters franchise](#) and became a certified master trainer. While he operates an office in his home, he goes to client homes to train dogs. No shock collars or abusive treatment is allowed, he said.

"We train any breed, any age," he said.

Besides house training and helping to reduce excessive barking, his training also focuses on separation anxiety, aggressiveness and even sibling rivalry, he said.

Perhaps his most emotional case was his own dog, an 11-year-old Shepard mix suffering from cancer. For 22 months, he helped Dusty deal with cancer treatments until the dog recently passed away. Howe's devotion to Dusty, as well as to other dogs, helped him to earn the Bark Busters International's first "For the Love of Dogs Award," presented to him via Skype during the organization's annual convention in San Diego, California. The trophy includes "In Memory of Dusty" an award that will be given annually by the organization, he said.

"I am not only overwhelmed, but humbled too," he said.