



PetSittingology

Presents

15 PROFESSIONAL PET SITTERS



SHARE THEIR FAVORITE
'TALES' FROM THE PAST YEAR!



15 Professional Pet Sitters Share their Favorite 'Tales' from the Past Year!

Pet care professionals are an extraordinary bunch of individuals.

Aside from the obvious love for all living creatures we share, the professional pet sitter must work all major holidays in order to give their appreciative clients the time away to spend with their own friends and families.

Also, the professional pet care provider must create a strong, well balanced business to support the service they provide. In other words, the pet sitter must create, run and manage the day to day operations the very same way as all other local small business providers.

This is sometimes missed or overlooked by the pet parent, especially when the sitter simply wants to perfectly serve the client in any way possible.

Just like an amazing magician or performer, all the behind-the-scenes work and effort is protected from the audience, giving the illusion of an effortless show. Truth be told, the pet sitting business owner must serve their local community in a way that is financially profitable. Without a profit (or without otherwise earning the means to survive another day) the professional pet sitter could not be there at a moments notice for the client.

The truly successful professional pet sitter earns respect and admiration from their ideal client (and industry colleagues) by maintaining a set of procedures and policies, remaining available and transparent, keeping the lines of communication open, engaging in ongoing industry training, education and support, and by living their best life possible.

The 15 Professional Pet Sitters and Their Stories

Note: Each weekday beginning *Tuesday, January 27, 2015*, you can revisit this page to read that day's new story!



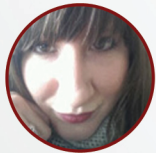
1. Tomika Bruen, Out For A Walk Pet Sitting and Dog Walking, Los Angeles "You Won't Know Until You Ask!"

How one pet sitter put her fears aside to secure the ideal building complex for her pet event, along with several excited sponsors to participate.



2. Anthony Mucci, Daily Dog Walkers, Fort Lauderdale FL "The Most Meaning \$5 Tip Ever Received"

See how one elderly client named Genevieve made an unexpected impact that will last a lifetime, all with one five dollar bill.



3. Beth Green, Paws Pet Care Pet Sitting and Dog Walking, Louisville KY "The Face of Homelessness and Their Pets"

A seemingly typical lunch with her son, changed the course of her life – and her entire local community.



4. Beth Harwell, Dog Walkers & More at Coddle Creek, Mooreville NC "Prepare for the Worst, Plan for the Best"

Hiring a skilled and professional pet sitter proves to be the best decision this family could have made.



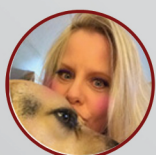
5. Cynthia Johnson, Copy Cat & Dog Care, Lebanon OH "It's All About The Right Relationships"

Reaching out to the right people in her community offered this pet sitter the chance to raise more money than ever before.



6. Tori Lattig, Endless Pawsibilities, Toms River NJ "Specializing in Pet Hospice Care, Special Needs, and Aggressive Behavior"

When a client trusts YOU to be there when their dog gives birth without them, you know you are doing something right.



7. Kristin Watson, Kristin's K9 & Cat Care, Bonham TX "What It Means To Be A Full Time SOLO Pet Sitter"

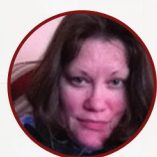
A typical day in the life of a professional pet sitter who operates solo is often anything but typical.



8. Nancee Marin, An Artful Dogger, San Bernadino County CACA

“Oh, You Get to Play with Cats and Dogs All Day? Must be Easy!”

A look behind the curtain at the day-to-day work involved that makes the job appear so simple.



9. Cindy Vet, Pet Buddy Pet Sitting, Decatur GA

“Become Part of Their Final Moments”

It’s so truly humbling when the pet parent requests your input, advice, and presence when it’s time to say goodbye.



10. Dawn Higgins, Dawn the Pet Nanny, Horsham PA

“The Elderly Man Standing In Front Of Me Is Covered In Blood”

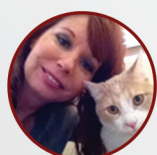
Sometimes, you must trust your intuition when walking a dog. And sometimes that choice saves a man’s life.



11. Tami Truex, Head to Tail Pet Sitting, Valpo IN

“Helping a Garage Full of Feral Cats Survive”

No two jobs in our industry are quite the same. It’s inspiring to know that pet professionals are asked to do things for clients that others would never imagine.



12. Rebecca Kirkland, Whiskers ‘N’ Wags Pet Sitting, Colorado City TX

“The Calm Before The (Tornado) Storm”

Are you prepared for any weather-related natural disaster? This pet sitter was taken by surprise but kept calm to protect the puppy in her care.



13. Michelle Romano, Waggs & Purrs Pet Sitting, San Antonio TX

“The Things We Do For Love”

One way telephone conversations with sweet kitty, rescuing mom after loosing her house keys, and running a social media campaign to find a lost pet.



14. Maureen McCarthy, Love and Kisses Pet Sitting, Indian Train NC

“When It All Ends Too Soon”

One pet sitter’s tribute to her favorite Great Dane with a heart of gold, who crossed over to Rainbow Bridge way too soon.



15. Rita Reimers, Cats90210, Los Angeles CA

“The Original Cat Whisperer”

Featured in more publications and columns than she cares to admit, this professional woman has never met a cat she couldn’t help.



Tomika Bruen

Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Tomika Bruen, Out For A Walk Pet Sitting and Dog Walking



The day-to-day life of a professional pet sitter is often misunderstood.

So much goes on 'behind the scenes', both in the office and in the field, in order to give the impression of an effortless and successful job.

This series will spotlight [15 Professional Pet Sitters and Their Stories](#) in an effort to pull the curtain back on extraordinary jobs well done.

Today, we say hello to Tomika Bruen of [Out For A Walk Pet Sitting and Dog Walking](#) in Los Angeles, California.



You Won't Know Until You Ask!



2014 was my first official year in business and what a year it was! There are several highlights, but the one that stands out for me is the “Halloween Yappy Hour” my business organized for an apartment complex in Los Angeles.

went to drop off my business cards in the lobby of a high-rise apartment building that I frequently pass. While I was there, the thought came to me that I should also ask about the possibility of hosting an event for the pet parents in the building.

The events coordinator for the complex loved the idea of a Halloween-themed pet event! She told me she had wanted to plan something for the doggies in her building, but didn't know what.

From there we made arrangements via email and set the date for the week of Halloween.

The tenants of the building were so appreciative – everyone that attended participated in the costume contest.

And Sponsors, Too!



Another aspect of the Yappy Hour that stands out for me is the sponsorship provided by other local small businesses. The businesses donated items for the goodie bags given to each Yappy Hour attendee. Out For A Walk has social media to thank for sponsors' participation. There are many pet related businesses on platforms like Instagram, several of which we follow. All it took to get other small businesses on board was to reach out via direct message on Instagram.

And to think, all we had to do was to ask the apartment complex if they were interested in such an event. And to put the word out on social media about wanting sponsors for the goodie bags. We are looking forward to all the connections we will make in 2015 simply because we ask!

Over To You



Read More: Click [15 Professional Pet Sitters and Their Stories](#) for all the featured pet professionals in our series.

In this story, Tomika made it look so easy. In fact, it truly is as easy taking the first step and simply reaching out. Today, the Internet has legitimately leveled the playing field by making everyone accessible.

How can you do what Tomika did by getting over her own fear and asking the right person (in this case, asking the apartment complex if they are interested in working with her on a holiday-themed pet event).

Funny enough, the complex coordinator had already given the idea thought but had no knowledge herself on how to pursue such a thing.

Thankfully Tomika stepped up, took action, and made it all fall into place.

Now Your Turn



Let's keep this topic and dialogue going...

What is currently the one thing you would love to make happen for yourself and your business this year? Who can you reach out to in order to gain the needed support?

Think big!

You'll be surprised who you can get on board simply by making a call or sending an email.

Who would you love to reach out to?



Anthony Mucci



Pet Sitter Spotlight: Anthony Mucci, Daily Dog Walkers

This is Day 2 of our *15-part Professional Pet Sitter Series*.

On the surface, it may appear that our profession has us only forming strong bonds with the precious pets in our care.

While this is certainly a fact, many in our industry develop strong and meaningful friendships with the human client, too.

This is the case with today's spotlight on Anthony Mucci, of *Daily Dog Walkers and Pet Sitters* in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Fair Warning: Have a box of tissues close by for this one.



The Personal Side of Pet Sitting



When I started my pet sitting business back in 2008, it was all about the pets. I never gave much thought to the wonderful cast of characters that I would meet along my journey.

I have had the pleasure of meeting an author, a New York play and screen writer, a professional opera singer, an actress,

professional athletes, doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs along with many fascinating people from around the world.

Many stand out in my mind but this story is about a particular English woman named Genevieve. My pet sitting business was pretty new and I had recently acquired a client in an old part of town known as Sailboat Bend. The dog was Benjie and he was a wiry Jack Russell terrier. He was somewhat unstable and spent more time jumping rather than walking.

Upon returning from my walk with Benjie, I found a note on the windshield of my car. I could tell it was written by an elderly person. The note read

“Dear Sir if you have a moment would you kindly stop by my residence. There is a matter that I would like to discuss with you.”

It was signed ‘Genevieve’ and her address was written at the bottom.

My first thought was “some old bird is going to yell at me because Benjie pooped on her lawn.” I hesitated for a moment and then walked down to her house. She lived in a quaint light blue cottage with gingerbread trim around the front peak. I unlatched the gate and knocked on the front door.

After what seemed like an eternity the door opened about 2 inches. “Oh you came. I wasn’t sure you would” she said to me in a surprised tone.

She opened the door the rest of the way and introduced herself as Genevieve. She invited me in and offered me a seat. She was dressed as if she were going out for the day. Later I found out that this was her normal daily attire.

I glanced around and it felt like I had stepped back in time. The cottage was furnished in a Victorian motif. Everything was old but in impeccable condition. It was June and the cottage was very hot. There was an oscillating fan on a table and every now and then I would catch a bit of the breeze. Genevieve started to speak and for the first time I noticed that she had a British accent.

She cleared her throat “I have been watching you walking that scoundrel of a dog from down the way and I wanted to inquire if you are for hire?”

“Yes, of course” I replied “do you have a dog?”

Genevieve smiled warmly “yes, his name is Harry. I named him after Prince Harry. I will fetch him but beware he can be a bit of a bugger around gents.”

She excused herself and came back carrying the cutest little Westie. Harry was adorable and warmed up to me immediately. Genevieve went on to tell me that her legs could no longer take her past the house next door and that Harry needed a proper walk. Since she was on a “widow’s pension” her finances only allowed for 2 days per week. She thought Tuesday and Friday morning would be best.



Weeks turned into years and our friendship grew.

Genevieve insisted that I call her Jenny. That is what the people she fancied called her. She called me Antony (no h).

Jenny shared stories of her husband, how they met, their life together and his slow painful death from “that bugging cancer.” They had one daughter who sadly passed on as well.

Jenny didn’t have a computer or television; she could not afford cable and never turned on the air conditioner. Her connection to the outside world was a little radio that sat on the end table next to the oscillating fan.

She would often ask “*Antony what is going on in the world that would be of interest to me?*”

I looked forward to Tuesday’s and Friday’s just as much as Jenny & Harry. She wanted Harry walked in the morning before it got too hot. I would usually stay and extra 10 or 15 minutes to visit with Jenny.

Every Christmas Jenny would give me a card with a crisp \$5.00 bill inside and a note thanking me for caring for Harry.

Sadly this past summer Harry’s heath surpassed Jenny’s and it was time for him to cross over the rainbow bridge. Jenny asked if I would accompany her to the veterinarian’s office.

We drove in silence. Jenny held Harry on her lap gently petting his head.

We went into the room together. Jenny placed Harry’s little stuffed teddy bear between his front legs. She stayed for the first sedation shot but she did not have it in her to stay until the end. She didn’t want death to be her last memory of her precious boy.

I stayed with Harry until the end. He passed peacefully.

Jenny phoned me in early December and invited me over for high tea. When I arrived Jenny suggested we sit in the parlor. She had pulled out her best china tea cups and had a plate of biscuits on the coffee table. We drank tea and reminisced about Harry.

As I was leaving Jenny handed me a card. I didn't open it until I got home. Enclosed were a crisp \$5.00 bill and a heartfelt note thanking me for taking care of Harry.

She went on to thank me for being a kind soul and befriending an old lady.

Truth be told, the pleasure was all mine.

Over To You



Read More: [Click 15 Professional Pet Sitters and Their Stories for all the featured pet professionals in our series.](#)

I was in tears the first time I read this story, and am still choked up reading it again.

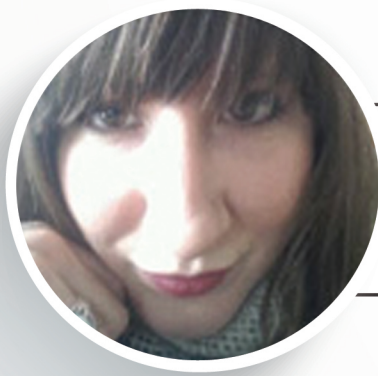
What I love most about Anthony's story is how it shows we are not merely a hired hand to pour food in a bowl and let the dog out.

The impact of hiring a professional reaches much farther.

Imagine how Genevieve's days would have been different had she just had a friend or relative pop over to walk Harry.

The professional pet sitter is an extraordinary person, full of complete love and care for all creatures.

Tell us, which human client has had a profound impact on you, your life, or your business? Who do you have a strong connection with? Was the friendship a complete surprise? What have you learned and taken from this relationship in your world?



Betheny Green

Pet Sitter Spotlight: Betheny Green of Paws Pet Care at Home



This is Day 3 of our **15-part Professional Pet Sitter Series**.

It certainly goes without saying that most pet professionals are kind, caring, and thoughtful people.

The story that follows is from Betheny Green of Paws Pet Care at Home in Louisville, KY, and begins with a seemingly normal lunch with her teenage son.

What transpired from that afternoon is so wildly inspiring that an entire community has been profoundly impacted by the ongoing acts of kindness.

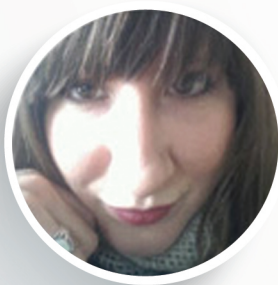
I've recently heard a quote that is relevant here and has stuck with me:

“It's not what you look at, it's what you see.”

And I'm sure you'll agree that what Betheny Green saw on that Summer afternoon is something we can all aspire to 'see.'



The Face of Homelessness and Their Pets



On a beautiful, warm Indian Summer day when I took my (then) 17 year old son Jacob to lunch at a restaurant off Bardstown Road in the Highlands of Louisville, KY.

We chose to eat outside to enjoy the sunshine.

He was getting ready to leave the nest for college. It was our last day together until he left.

We had just sat down with our food when a shirtless, raggedy young homeless man with his companion-dog (wearing a home-made rope collar that was actually trailing behind him) sat down on a park bench not too far from us.

The dog sat at the young man's feet, tail thumping happily between his legs, looking lovingly at his Master. watched as the young man leaned down and petted his dog and whispered words of endearment to it. The man had dreadlocks. They were both dirty. They were both skinny.

immediately started to stereotype...to judge. ***I avoided eye contact.***

They BOTH looked very hungry, but neither was begging or asking for food. I vaguely remember feeling sorry for the poor little dog. The young man was actually whistling if I remember correctly.

Then, something amazing happened that would change my life.

Without even a word, Jacob got up and took his lunch over to the young man and offered it to him. The man accepted the food and ever so humbly thanked Jacob. Fist bumps ensued.

To my complete surprise, before the homeless guy took ONE bite of the food he was given, he tore half off and gave it to his dog.

He fed his dog first.

Exactly half of the food Jacob gave him went to nourish the only friend and companion that guy probably had.

That was the first time I had ever saw... or paid attention to... the face of homelessness.

My eyes were opened and so was my heart.

I don't know who that man was, or what his circumstances were. All I knew is that he was someone's son, brother or father. He was certainly loved and adored by his dog, which was probably the only true source of unconditional love and friendship that he had at that time... or maybe ever.

I started looking for homeless people with pets. And I found them. I found MORE than what I wanted to find. There are hundreds of homeless right here in our beautiful city and about 8-10% of them have pets that provide companionship and unconditional love to them. I started taking pet food and supplies to them and pretty soon, my friends did too.

That image of that young man will be forever burned into my mind, and the selflessness of my son and the love of a homeless stranger for his faithful companion is part of the inspiration behind a non-profit that I started months later called **"My Dog Eats First"**.

At My Dog Eats First, we believe in the healing power of pets and in the love and companionship that these pets bring to the underserved ("homeless and indigent" sounds so....harsh).

We envision a world made better by the impacts we can have when we all do a little something good for others, no matter what their station in life may be. Our mission is to provide pet food, supplies, and veterinary care for the pets of the indigent and homeless with respect and love. And that's what we've been doing for a year now.

Check out our progress at www.mydogeatsfirst.org and www.facebook.com/MyDogEatsFirst. Then, go out and do something kind for someone less fortunate.

Over To You



Read More: Click [15 Professional Pet Sitters and Their Stories](#) for all the featured pet professionals in our series.

How can you make a similar impact in your community? It doesn't have to be starting a non-profit, it just has to be helpful.

How can you look beyond your day-to-day activity and make a profound impact on one person's life?



Additional Resource

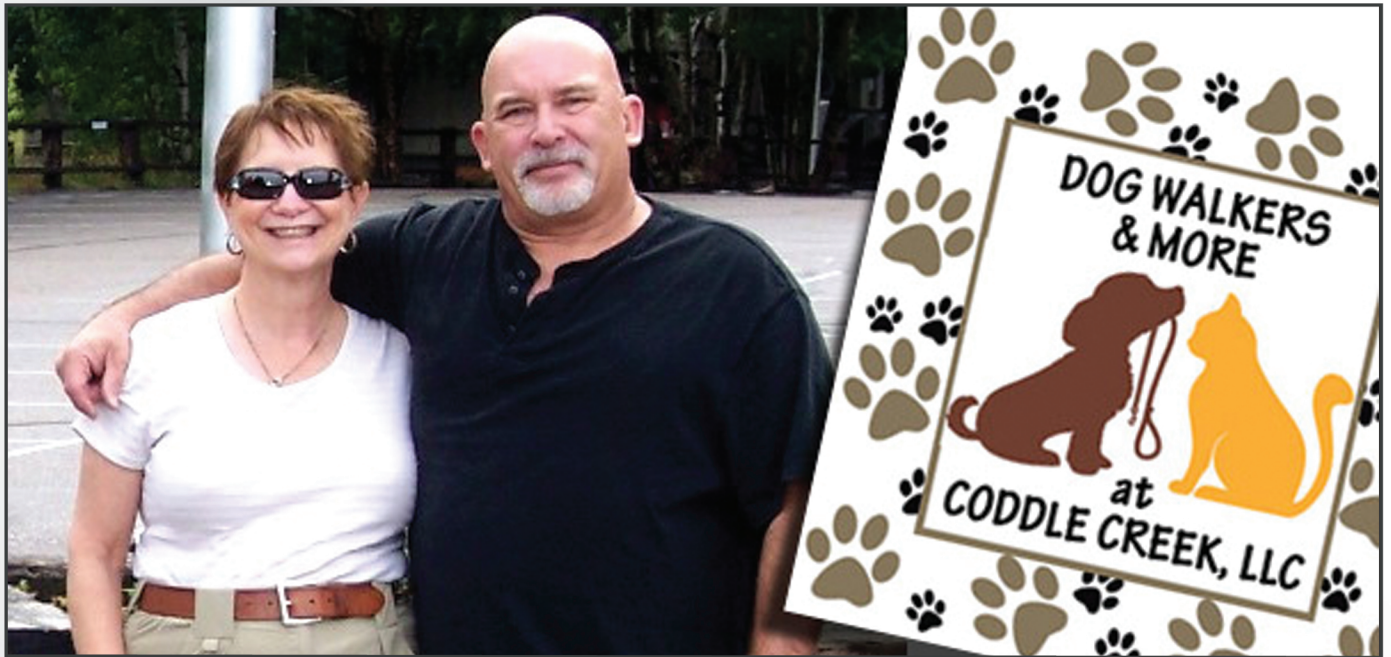


I had the good fortune to interview Betheny Green for one of our training sessions. Press play below to watch the in-depth conversation, and please add your thoughts below.

[Watch on Youtube here.](#)



Beth Harwell



Pet Sitter Spotlight: Beth Harwell of Dog Walkers & More at Coddle Creek

This is Day 4 of our [15 Part Series to Spotlight the Professional Pet Sitter.](#)

If there is one thing every pet sitting business owner knows, it's the great need of ongoing public education of our thriving industry.

To no fault of their own, some pet owners will look to ask a friend, relative or neighbor to check in on their fur baby when leaving town.

In today's spotlight, Beth Harwell of [Dog Walkers & More at Coddle Creek, LLC](#) has experienced first hand the true life saving benefit of hiring a skilled and trained professional pet sitter.

Prepare for the Worst, Plan for the Best



Sometimes people question the value of paying for a professional pet sitter and wonder why they cannot just use the kid next door or the random person they found on Craig's List.

Last summer we had an incident that highlights multiple reasons a professional pet sitter is the best option.

We are quick to point out that even with professional pet sitters, emergencies can occur. The important point is how the pet sitter handles and responds to the incident.

A little background information will be useful. We had been pet sitting on an as needed basis for a family with two dogs over a period of 8 months. One dog was a large mixed breed and the other dog was a very small, fluffy mixed breed, off white in color.

The dogs had both been in the home for many years with no issues. Both were rescues and seemed to have settled in nicely. The dogs were not crate trained.

When their family members were away from the home, the dogs had free reign through most of the house with access to each other, their toys, furniture and their water bowls.

We made three visits daily. During our visits it was customary to let the dogs outside to potty, bring them inside to eat their meal or snack, play with them and then to put them out for a final potty opportunity.

That was the time we checked the mail, watered the houseplants, washed the food bowls, sent a message to the pet parents and wrote our note.

Last July I was following this typical routine at the dinner visit when I heard a great deal of loud barking. I went outside only to find the large dog standing over the little dog chewing on his ear.

I yelled for him to stop and he growled at me. That was a first with this previously gentle giant.

Thankfully, he then backed off the little dog and I was able to pick him up. His ear was bleeding profusely, but I could not see any other injuries. However, it seemed prudent to me to have the dog checked out by the emergency vet.

I was able to reach the pet parents by phone and got permission to take the dog to the vet. I would have taken him even had I not been able to reach the vet, but felt better getting permission.

Next Stop: Vet Hospital



Upon arrival at the vet hospital I completed the paperwork giving permission for examination and treatment. The vet was also able to get verbal permission from the owner.

After the vet examined the dog, we talked. I told the vet I would be taking the dog home with me as it was not safe for the two dogs to be together in the home alone at that time.

Imagine my surprise when the vet told me they would need to keep the dog overnight for surgical procedures on his ear. The dog had puncture wounds on his head and multiple abrasions around the tip of his ear and under his neck.

I was allowed to go into the crate area and talk to the dog and pet him to provide some comfort in this new surrounding and to reassure him that I would return the next day to take him home with me.

I then went back to the home to make my final visit of the day with the large dog. He was back to his normal self and there were no issues with him.

I talked on the phone with the emergency vet around midnight for an update on the little dog's condition and early the next afternoon picked him up from the emergency vet hospital. At that time he was still a little lethargic from the medications, had a great deal of edema under his neck and was wearing a cone.

They had shaved the top of his head but left the wounds open to drain the serous fluid from the top of his head and under his neck. There was a small additional charge for the overnight hospitalization of around \$70.00 which I paid as the vet hospital was not able to reach the pet parents on the phone again.

I brought the little dog home with me and my husband and I provided care for him at our home for two more nights. We administered his medication and coaxed him into eating and drinking. During that time we continued to make three visits per day to the home to provide pet sitting services for the older large dog.

We learned that there had been two recent incidents prior to that one in which the large dog attacked the small dog but each time one of the pet parents witnessed the attack and was able to intervene before any injuries occurred.

Unfortunately, the pet parents thought they had told us about these incidents but they had not done so.

The issue is a situation referred to as “predatory drift” and is not uncommon when there is a large discrepancy between the sizes of two dogs and the smaller dog is white or off white in color and has a fluffy coat.

Things turned out as well as they could in this overall issue. The pet parents took the large dog to the vet to be checked out physically to see if there were any illnesses that may have contributed to the incident. There were none so the pet parents followed up with a consultation with a behavioral vet specialist.

They faithfully followed the vet's recommendations and there were no more incidents for a few more months. Then one day there was another incident. Their hearts were broken but they did the only reasonable thing at that point and returned the large dog to the rescue.

But to the point of our assertion that a professional pet sitter is a better option than the kid next door or the random person off Craig's List.

- A professional is mature and uses good judgment in making decisions
- A professional is more concerned about getting proper care than being blamed for unanticipated occurrences
- A professional carries liability insurance
- A professional can accurately describe the situation to the pet parents and to the vet
- A professional will attend to all the duties required instead of needing to run off to another job
- A professional will handle vet bills if necessary and get reimbursement from the pet parents after the fact

How many of those points do you think the kid next door or random person off Craig's List would be able to accomplish? This incident is just one illustration of why a professional pet sitter is your best option for pet care.

Over To You



Read More : See other stories from professional pet sitters in our 15-part series, [15-part Professional Pet Sitter Series.](#)

This story highlights a few important points.

One, it's vital that the professional pet sitter continue education and training in her business. The professional needs to be a quick thinker and decision maker when any situation arises.

And Two, it was noted that the pet parents did not let Beth know about previous incidents with the dogs fighting. Perhaps the parent didn't think it was relevant but the professional pet sitter must learn to ask a variety of questions from different angles.

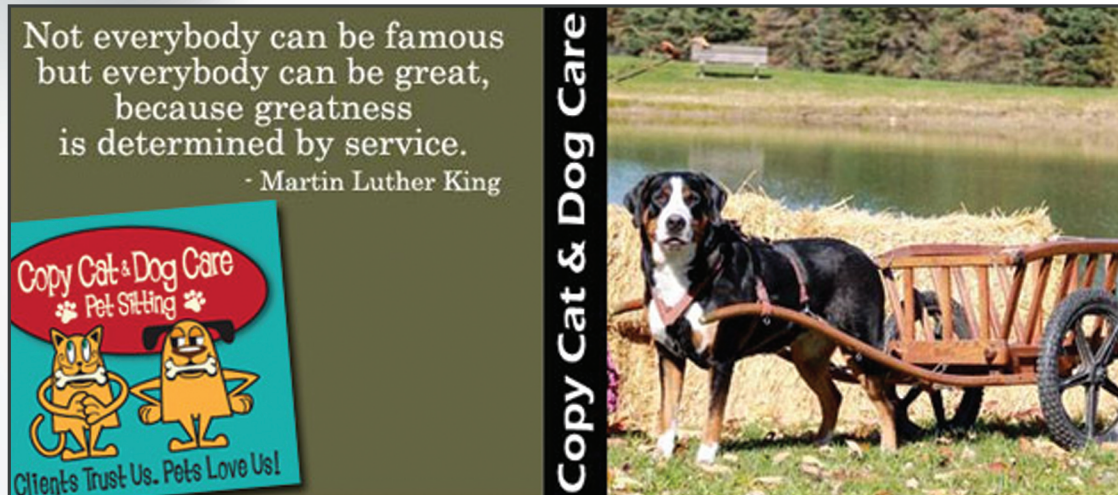
As we all know, preparation is key!

Tell us, how have you personally come to save the day for one of your clients?





Cynthia Johnson



Pet Sitter Spotlight: Cynthia Lummis Johnson of Copy Cat & Dog Care

This is Day 5 of our [15 Professional Pet Sitter Spotlight Series](#).

One of the most unfortunate statements I hear in our industry is a version of “I went into this business because I don’t like people.”

Or “I’d rather spend my time dealing with the furry clients rather than the human clients.”

While I completely understand the sentiment of that thought, I say it’s unfortunate because no matter what business you are in (including our extraordinary industry) it’s ALL about dealing with the human client first.

It’s also vastly important to form genuine bonds, connections, and strategic partnerships with other various people in your community.

Without the help and support of others, you will most certainly burn out and hit a ceiling in your pet business.

The “secret” to any successful business is forming strong relationships. Period.

As you'll read in today's Spotlight from pet business owner Cynthia Lummis Johnson of [Copy Cat & Dog Care](#) in Lebanon, Ohio, forming a few strategic relationships helped her raise a great deal of money (and awareness) for a wonderful cause.

The Right Relationships Are Everything



Every year, I try to do at least one type of fundraiser for a local shelter or rescue.

I am ALL about relationships—relationships with my clients and their pets, relationships with fellow pet care professionals and relationships with people in my community.

This past fall, I reached out to Sara, a local small business owner and an Executive Director with [Thirty-One Gifts](#).

I pitched the idea of having a fundraising party with the hopes of her donating a percentage of the sales. It's not uncommon for consultants to offer a percentage of their commission when agreeing to a fundraiser.

What IS uncommon is for a consultant to volunteer her entire commission, which in Sara's case was 30%. Ends up she's an animal lover herself and shares her home with two rescued pups.

I chose [Advocates 4 Animals](#) as the beneficiary — a small, local, no-kill, 501c3 non-profit, all-volunteer rescue. (No paid staff.)

A long time client sits on their board and I've seen firsthand the amazing work they do. She was thrilled with the idea.

The Plan Was In Motion



I created flyers and an event page on Facebook. “31 to the Rescue! Pawty”

We accepted orders online for those who couldn’t attend and I promoted, promoted and promoted our efforts.

I reached out to my contacts in my local Chamber of Commerce and other small business owners who I regularly network with in the hopes that they would support me.

And they did! Clients really stepped up and showed their support, as well.

Long story short, the event was not only a HUGE success but it was so much F-U-N!

We picked a great venue, we enjoyed yummy food/drink and of course, we talked PETS! A representative from Advocates 4 Animals attended which really helped put a face to the organization and gave people the opportunity to talk to her to better understand their mission.

Ends up, with the party proceeds and the additional cash donations we collected, it was not only the BIGGEST fundraising party Sara ever had but it was also her most successful party PERIOD. (She’s been with Thirty-One Gifts for 8 years.)

Total sales topped nearly \$2,400. (Avg fundraiser is \$800-\$1,000).

Her party commission was \$720.00 and I donated an additional \$80 to make the total rescue contribution an even \$800.00.

It was wonderful to organize an event, have the full support of so many people, and have it really be a community effort.

Pets and our love for them connect people in ways that are truly incredible.

Here are some pictures from the event





Over To You



Read More : See all the other wonderful stories in our [15 Professional Pet Sitter Spotlight Series](#).

Have you formed successful relationships and partnerships with those who can help you in your community?

Let us know how you formed them and what the results have been?





Tori Lattig

Pet Sitter Spotlight: Tori Lattig of Endless Pawsibilities

Sure, anyone can have a friend or neighbor pop over to feed their pet when they are out of town.

But that choice undermines the true skill, training, and education the professional pet care provider has.

We are not merely a commodity to be hired with no regard to the person caring for the pet.

A vast majority of pet business owners invest their hearts into every job, and you can't put a price tag on that.

Tori Lattig of [Endless Pawsibilities](#) in Toms River, NJ, is a prime example of what it means to hire a professional.

Pet Sitter With A Heart of Gold!



We founded our company on providing care to special needs pets; those with medical needs or aggressive behaviors.

This unique niche has given us the opportunity to work with pets who have illnesses ranging from diabetes to seizures to Addison's disease and the more.

We are used to administering subcutaneous fluids, oral medications, topical medications, injectable medications like insulin and allergy shots and working with feeding tubes.

Providing support to clients who's beloved pets have fallen ill and helping them manage their pet care at home, through hospice type care is unfortunately another side of the business that is necessary.

To be the one that clients call on for advice and guidance is an amazing opportunity. To be so trusted and so valued is totally humbling.

Since we typically deal with special needs pets who need supportive medical care, imagine my surprise when I spoke with a client about his upcoming vacation and he told me one of his dogs was pregnant and due when they were away!

In an email, he wrote, "Again, we are sorry for the timing, but we have the utmost faith in you and your staff and thank you for taking this job on. Hopefully, you can send us some pictures when the big day arrives!"

Fortunately, mom had the 4 puppies 3 days before they left for vacation. I arrived for the first visit and was happily greeted by mom and dad dogs!

Pet Sitter With A Tremendous Dog Training Background



Mom, Onyx, quickly went back to nursing and I kept an eye on the pups as I went about my “house chores.” The puppies’ dad, Jasper, was my shadow.

Everything was great that day. Jasper and Onyx are great, we spent time outside, the puppies were feeding and sleeping well.

Since the puppies were so young, I required that we provide overnight care so we could monitor everyone and make sure things went well overnight. I was afraid that an overnight stretch of time without someone home would be an invitation something to go wrong.

That first night, I was up almost all night. Onyx had decided that one of the puppies shouldn’t be kept with the other 3. So, she kept moving him from place to place around the living room. I sat and watched her to see what she was going to do.

She would lay with him in one spot for a bit and then leave him and go lay with the other puppies.

I examined him to see if I could find a reason she didn’t want him in the whelping box. I monitored his breathing and color. Nothing obvious stood out to me. I called my fiancé, who is a Certified Veterinary Technician, at 1am to make sure I wasn’t missing something and

Since puppies can’t maintain their own body heat and leaving him alone for extended time could prove dangerous, I stayed up and made sure to encourage Onyx to lay with him. When she wasn’t with him, I had him wrapped in blankets under my shirt to keep him warm.

First thing in the morning, I called their regular veterinarian and consulted with him and then the client. We were all on the same page – we needed a crate to keep them all together.

I ran home and grabbed a large crate to set up and use as a whelping box. Once I got it all nice and cozy, I moved the family in together and Onyx seemed relieved.

I also felt safer because now I knew that when I had to leave them at points during the day, she couldn't move him somewhere he couldn't be warm.

I spent the rest of my stay with Onyx, Jasper and their puppies truly enjoying the experience. I weighed them each morning and charted their growth.

I laid a blanket on the floor and would lay the puppies on it to encourage them to move around. I watched them sleep and feed. It was so sweet watching them nuzzle up to Onyx and latch on. She was a perfect mom and took great care of her babies.

Naturally, I took LOTS and LOTS of pictures and videos. It was impossible not to! They were 4 adorable puppies!

Major Adorable Video Alert!



You know those extremely cute doggie videos that go viral? These should be two of them!

Share these with your network to make someone smile today.



Over To You



Read More : See our complete series on [15 Professional Pet Sitters Spotlight!](#)

As a professional pet business owner, you literally have no knowledge of what your next client request may be. You only need to be prepared and ready to handle any situation that may come your way.

Tell us, what client request or on-the-job situation caught you by surprise that you needed to step up and save the day?





Kristin Watson



Pet Sitter Spotlight: Kristin Watson of Kristin's K9 & Cat Care

This is Day 7 of our spotlight on [15 Professional Pet Sitters.](#)

One of the greatest things I love most about helping pet sitting business owners is the fact that no two are operated quite the same.

The professional pet sitter can choose what services to offer, what specific policies to put in place, and how big she wishes to grow.

At some point in time, the question of "Should I bring on some help?" pops into the mind of the business owner.

And while plenty choose to bring on qualified staff to keep things in line with the overall business goals, many pet sitters remain a one-person show.

This is the story of what it's like to be a solo pet sitter.

Today's pet sitter spotlight is on Kristin Watson of Kristin's K9 & Cat Care serving the Bonham Texas and surrounding areas.

A Day In The Life Of A Solo Pet Sitter



I would like to share just ONE of my experiences as a pet sitter.

In case one wonders what it means to be a Full time-Sole Proprietor

Sunday Afternoon

- Arrive at Client's home to take care of 3 Dogs and 2 Horses (photo below)
- Let 3 dogs out of their kennels inside Master bedroom and take them to yard for potty and playtime
- While dogs are outside, I go inside to clean & disinfect kennel full of urine and feces.
- I walk to barn and muck 2 stalls. It has rained all day, thank God for Muck boots
- Fill trough with water and 2 buckets inside stalls with water too.
- Say Hello to horses and give them some TLC
- Walk back to home and let dogs inside.
- Play with dogs inside with their ropes
- Let dogs in, let dogs out, let dogs in, let dogs out, let dogs in, let dogs out let dogs in, let dogs out, let dogs in, let dogs out
- Feeding time... Feed 3 dogs and watch as they finish for food aggression.
- Replenish their water.
- Let dogs out in yard after done feeding.
- Walk to barn and feed horses.
- Fasten gates for the night to keep horses in barn.
- Walk back to home and let dogs inside.
- Try to check email for business related items, new clients, questions and scheduling, complete Clients invoice and interrupted by one dog who has attention deficit disorder
- Take dogs outside to play some more, try and wear down energy levels
- Come inside with dogs and see if there may be a Holiday movie on t.v. Found a movie, see if dogs might relax for a bit, and they do

- Time for bed... Let dogs out one more time.
- Night night for me. Take some Ibuprofen and try to sleep
- 2 dogs trying to sleep in their kennels, but 1 dog howls and howls
- Let howling dog outside again, and put her in kennel. She whines herself to sleep.
- Wake up with little sleep and do it all over again for 3 more days.

This job is HARD at times, but I would not change it for the world.

God has blessed me with my business, and I am so thankful.



Over To You



Read More : See the full series spotlighting [15 Professional Pet Sitters and their Favorite 'Tales'!](#)

Does this 'day in the life' resemble you day-to-day business activity? Which parts can you relate to?





Nancee Marin

Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Nancee Marin of
An Artful Dogger



This is Day 8 of our [15 Professional Pet Sitter Spotlight Series](#).

I'm not sure I've met any professional pet sitter who can say "I wanted to be a pet sitter when I grew up!"

This means, we have all entered this glorious profession leaving behind another career (or two).

That works out extremely well, and in the favor of all parties involved. This allows the professional to have life experience and a wide variety of outside skills and training that could easily be useful in our day-to-day business.

Today's spotlight is no exception. Say hello to Nancee Marin of An Artful Dogger serving the surrounding areas of San Bernardino County, California.

As a self-proclaimed "Lover. Artist. Musician. Writer. Linguist. Thinker. Sit-down comedienne. Foodie. Cheap chic fashionista. Mad Renaissance woman.", Nancee is one unique and extraordinary pet care provider.

Here is her story.

True Life: The Professional Pet Sitter



“Any kid can do it.”

“You don’t need to go to college for that stuff.”

“Oh, you get to play with pets all day. It must be easy!”

I hear those all the time.

But it’s not all fun and games. Pet sitting is a lot like a box of chocolates. You’ll never know what you’re going to get. Some jobs are a walk in the park and some are pretty hardcore.

More often than not, wearing different hats is a fashion requirement in the industry. You’re not just a pet sitter.

You often end up using skills from various disciplines to perform the job. And luckily, as a Renaissance personality/multipotentialite/polymath (in other words, a person with many interests), I am up to the task.

Sure, pet sitting does have its perks. Sure, I get to snuggle all night or all day with those cuties and try to steal each other’s covers and bed space, which can be both fun and problematic at the same time. ;) They like to lie on top of me.

So you can see that I can lose sleep pretty often in a cramped-up arrangement, but at the same time I get a lot of love, warmth, and comfort from a dog pile! Quite often I end up being a “hot dog sandwich”—I’m right smack in the middle of two big Doodles, my favorite regulars, who end up being attached at my hip.

They usually get depressed when they sense that their “parents” are leaving, so “Mom” (who calls me a good surrogate mom to them) and “Dad” always find it remarkable and hilarious that they perk up as soon as I arrive, and they know it when I’m close to their driveway, even when I’m still several feet away from it.

They somehow smell or sense my presence from afar. They like to dart towards me, running around excitedly, and wait for me until I get out of the car, and then they fetch some teddy bears for me.

They’re always in “suspenseful” anticipation whenever their parents tell them days in advance that I am coming to stay with them. They do get sad when they’re locked in the house and see me across the street, not being able to reach me! Thanks to them, I was inspired to pursue pet care as one of my career paths.

As a Renaissance soul, to me, careers are just like Lay’s potato chips—no one can have just one! :) (I suppose the same applies to owning pets as well!)

Unlike his more gregarious “sister” Bella the Goldendoodle, Billy the Labradoodle is friendly, but normally standoffish with people, especially on the first time of meeting, and he was also like that with me.

He’d turn and walk away—until the third day of my stay with him. He sat next to me on a Saturday afternoon while I was web surfing. Ever since, he’s been by my side most of the time, no matter what I do—eating, sleeping, and yes, sometimes bathroom time, too. He even likes to escort me to my car whenever I go back home.

He’s one of the most faithful of all the pooches that I’ve met. He’s really protective and fond of me. I even like to say that ALL MEN should be DOGS—like him! :)

I also had the honor of sitting three cats, all rescues. Probably one of the easiest jobs: feed, clean up litter box, and hang out. Repeat cycle. One of the kitties, Annie, was quite a doozy.

Her mom told me that she preferred to keep to herself, so I respected her space during the meet-and-greet by not paying too much attention to her.

Then the delightfully unexpected happened on the first daily visit.




Supposedly the most standoffish and skittish of them all, she almost immediately warmed up to me. She was hamming it up with kneading sessions and belly rubs in the throes of feline pleasure. Nine lives in seventh heaven? :)

For a particular overnight assignment, I had to stay up for an average of 12 hours EVERY DAY for a menagerie of six dogs of various breeds (separated in two packs due to aggression issues among themselves) and 12 fish tanks.

Yes, you've read that right. Since all the dogs were rescues (some were previously abandoned and abused and some were seniors, one of whom has age-related health problems), they had special needs—medications for anxiety, extra TLC, plus home-cooked meals for the eldest of the bunch and, yes, for the fish, too!

There were also the usual additional household duties. Let's just say that their (human) parents are very grateful that I've taken on the job because no one else would do it! They actually hope that I'll stick around and the massive amount of responsibility won't make me bail out on the next sits! (Of course, I still continue to work with them!)

There are some occupational hazards involved, from minor ones to not-so-minor. Take pet oopsies, for instance. If you can't stomach the triple P (poop, pee, and puke!) on a regular basis, then I don't think you're quite cut out for the job.



Once I found the master bedroom carpet splattered with runny doo-doo all over. (Billy had new food. His stomach was trying to get used to it, so it was quite tender.) Thankfully I had my secret weapon (concentrated non-toxic green cleaning products) to easily handle the bowel “crime scene” and all was well.

I’ve certainly had a few scares during overnight stays. There were occasions where I accidentally locked myself out in the backyard. Fortunately the doggy door was open, so little old me simply squeezed through the opening and all was well.

At another instance, I was locked out in the front yard. Thankfully I had already made the habit of carrying a small pouch with my phone and keys stashed in it everywhere I went.

And oh, let’s not forget getting stung by a wasp when I was taking out the trash. (Yes, this happened at the same place I had my 12-hour-a-day sit.) Fortunately, I brought a bottle of tea tree oil and all was well again.

My knowledge of natural health and wellness came in handy, quite literally, in the above situation and the poop splatter incident, and after my experience with the aforementioned huge menagerie assignment (as well as other ongoing personal life situations happening at the same time that still need to be resolved), I felt especially led to take up Reiki, a holistic healing modality that promotes balance in mind, body, and spirit.

After experiencing improvement in my health as a result, I wanted to extend the same benefits to my furry charges and living creatures in general. This may sound woo-woo (no, not the kind of noise that my Husky girls like to make!), but I believe there is no coincidence.

Interestingly, the mom of those same rescue dogs somehow picked up my vibes and randomly asked me if I started my studies in holistic health. The funny thing is that I had NEVER told her anything about it at all!

I didn't even hint at it on my social media posts and I doubt that she's the typical online junkie. As she obviously expressed her openness to try anything that would help calm her household, she was really intrigued and asked me to keep her posted on the progress of my studies.

I decided to test-drive animal Reiki with pretty pleasing results. For some of them, it has taken them some time to get used to it (and sometimes I wonder if it really kicks in!), but once they do, they become quite receptive to it. The rescue dog packs seemed to be considerably calmer and happier, bringing much-needed peace in the household.

(Practitioners have often observed that rescues love Reiki, being well aware that they need balancing.)

The Doodles, who'd normally follow me and get pretty bummed out at my departure, were seemingly almost oblivious to the fact that I had already closed the garage door, standing outside, ready to drive back home.

On my last evening of holiday overnight stay, they hopped in bed with me and started to fall asleep just before I left. I thought it would help them relax even more if I gave them a short treatment.

They ended up lying in bed the whole time after I got up and walked away. But I honestly didn't see this coming. It turned out better than I thought. :)

Let's not forget that pet sitters also have to deal with a common mishap: alarm and door lock snafu. The former sets off unintentionally or it doesn't work properly. The latter sometimes just gets jammed for some reason. No happy-happy-joy-joy moment for me.

It was an unnecessary quasi-drama. Near-endless phone calls from the alarm company and cops rushing in needlessly while the dogs freaked out over the ruckus. (Fortunately, the alarm is now finally well-functioning—after several hours of repair.) I've also recently had a problem opening the door of that same house.

It took several tweaks and turns before I was able to open the top lock of the front door. There were previously no issues with opening the door.

Here's yet another occupational hazard: I also almost tripped a couple of times while dog walking. Others haven't been so lucky. Some pet sitters had to witness accidents and deaths while caring for pets, and not to mention getting seriously injured themselves trying to break up dog fights or being attacked by random dogs!

Heaven forbid something like any of those happens to me. But if push comes to shove, I now have another tool in the box for pet emergency situations. I've recently completed a PetTech course, by far the most comprehensive training in pet safety that includes CPR, first aid, and snout-to-tail assessment.

Pet parents may be pleased to know that I offer the assessment (plus Reiki) as a complimentary part of my extended stay package, as well as live music.

Yes, as a musician, I've also done some "serenading" to help them get into their chill-out state. I can attest to the fact that animals are drawn to music and that many musicians have animal magnetism thing going on.

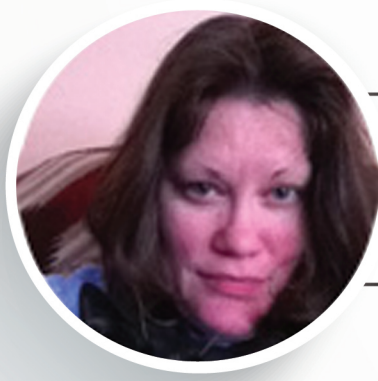
They're huge pet lovers. They have plenty of tall tale tails to tell, but that's another story for another day! :)

Over To You



Read More : See all others from our [15 Professional Pet Sitter Spotlight Series](#).

We all come from a wide variety of backgrounds. What was the career you left behind to pursue a career in the pet care industry? What life lessons have you learned from that past experience?



Cindy Vet



Pet Sitter Spotlight: Cindy Vet of Pet Buddy Pet Sitting

This is Day 9 of our [15-part spotlight series on Professional Pet Sitters!](#)

So much of what we experience as professional pet sitters is often a double edged sword.

We put our entire heart into caring for each furry client and sadly, the worse part of this career is often dealing with the inevitable; that moment you must say goodbye to a dear friend.

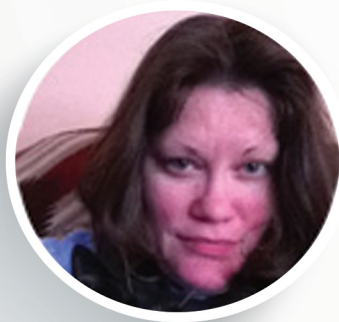
It's never easy. And there is no way around it.

The best a professional can do is handle it with respect, love, and grace.

Today's spotlight is the very text book definition on how to be there for the human client when it's time to allow the furry client to peacefully pass on to Rainbow Bridge.

This is the story of pet sitter Cindy Vet of [Pet Buddy Pet Sitting](#) in Decatur, GA.

The Good and The Sad



As you know, most of my furry kids I pet sit for are special needs kids.

I have one client who lives up the street from me.

I've done middays regularly for her for over 10 years. Her dog Jackson was lost to Cancer several years ago.

I helped her with extra visits and care when Jackie was in his final few months here with us. She consulted me regularly about how he was really doing.

Anyone whose lost a pet knows that letting go is extremely hard.

I've always believed that part of being a responsible pet owner is learning to let them go when it's time for them, not for us.

That's at best, a judgment call.

Dealing primarily with special needs pets, I have on my website, as part of my mission statement, that I provide quality pet care for responsible pet owners.

The last few months, my client has been dealing with Smokey, Jacksons brother, being diagnosed with cancer as well. The personal growth that she has made over the last few years is both inspiring and heartbreaking.

Having lost Jackie, she better understands now what Cancer is like for a dog. Her and I have had very frank discussions.

She has made me promise that I will let her know if I think she's not seeing when Smokey is telling her it's time.

My heartbreaks for them both. But to know that she has that kind of trust in me as a pet sitter, as a care giver for her pet is humbling.

She is placing her trust in me to be Smokeys advocate if she can not do it herself.

That's so beyond anything I ever thought I would experience in this "job" I do every day. And yet, it's exactly why I do what I do... and why even on the hardest of days...

I always love what I do!

When a client asks you to be with their pet in their final moments because the client can not do so peacefully.....

...when they ask you to gently let them know when they are not seeing what their pet is trying so hard to tell them....

...when they ask you to spread their ashes or pick out an urn...

That's both the hardest moments of my life as a pet sitter...

But the biggest blessing I could ever have bestowed upon me as well!

Over To You



Read More : Check out the other stories in our [15-part spotlight series on Professional Pet Sitters!.](#)

What do you think is the hardest part of our industry? What's the most difficult part about being a professional pet sitter?



Dawn Higgins

Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Dawn Higgins of Dawn
the Pet Nanny

Dawn the Pet Nanny



"We love your pets as our own!"

This is Day 9 of our [15-part spotlight series on Professional Pet Sitters!](#)

If there is one thing I have learned about running my own business, it's the power in trusting your gut.

Call it intuition, or a feeling, but 99 times out of 99 times, your gut feeling to a choice or decision you need to make will be the absolute correct one.

Too often we get caught up in second guessing what we truly know we should be doing.

Dawn Higgins of Dawn the Pet Nanny LLC in Horsham, PA knows about this first hand.

As you'll see, something inside her was telling her to make a certain decision, and someone's life was saved because of it.

Professional pet sitters are extraordinary people who go above and beyond for every living creature in their local community.

Hiring a qualified and trained professional to care for your pet while you are away can be the best decision you can make.

Listen To What Your Gut Tells You.



I was out walking a regular clients dog, named Blue. When we started our walk, I had the thought of taking Blue to the local community park which is just a short distance away.

For some reason, at the last minute I changed my mind and we changed directions. It's a good thing I did!

We headed off for our walk on what seemed to be like any other day.

We took a nice long stroll around some of the neighborhood streets. Passed a few dogs behind fences that we normally see and went on our way. Blue had already done his "business" and we started to head back to his house.

Since I had some extra time on my hands, I decided to make one extra loop around Blue's block which I never do!

We were heading up the block and I hear what sounds to be a little dog barking his head off. Next thing I know out from a bush comes a little Yorkshire Terrier.

He runs past us and right into the road. Of course my first reaction is to get him for fear he will be hit by a car! He decides he wants no part of being captured and decides to play a cat and mouse game of catch me if you can.

All the while Blue thinks it is time to play and is leaping and jumping all over the place. I realize that the dog belongs to a neighbor who lives behind Blue.

I begin walking to the door and the dog takes off and runs into the fenced in back yard. I notice that because he is so tiny, he can fit right between the gate and the fence post. However, he is now in the back yard and is staying there.

I begin walking away with Blue in tow heading back to his house. I have this nagging feeling though about leaving the dog as he could slip right back out into the street.

I look over my shoulder and there he is in the front yard. I turn around and go to the front door. I ring the door bell.

No answer. I ring it again. Still no answer. I knock on the door. No answer.

I knock again but this time with my fist. I thought I saw someone's shadow inside and maybe they don't hear me. Then the door opens and I get the shock of my life.

The elderly man standing in front of me is covered in blood. If I didn't know any better, I would have thought a crime had just taken place. I say "Sir" what happened to you.

Forgetting my point of being there is the loose dog running around! The first words out of his mouth are "I'm going to catch hell from my kids". I said to him I'm sure your kids will just be happy to have you here with them.

I ask him what happened and why he is bleeding. He says he fell on the concrete. Now it is starting to make sense. I ask him if he can walk and he says he can so I tell him to step out onto the porch and sit in the chair.

I ask if anyone is home to help him. He says his "elderly wife" is upstairs but she won't understand and will be upset. As he sits down he says he has a bit of a scratch on his head. I know from experience that head wounds bleed an awful lot so I really don't know what I'm dealing with here.

That is until he moves the piece of paper towel and I see that he has a very large and what appears to be deep gash on his forehead and blood is coming out everywhere! Then I see his arms. The poor man ripped a lot of skin off of both arms when he fell and they were bleeding profusely as well.

I tell him I'm calling 911.

As I'm waiting for the ambulance, I ask the man if I can enter his house with Blue to get some paper towels for his head. It looked like a crime scene inside. Blood everywhere! At this point, I was able to get his dog inside so at least he was safe! I come outside and help clean him up. We are talking and I ask if he is taking medication. He's on blood thinners. That explains the torrent of blood everywhere. I mean I know that he has a severe wound but the amount of blood was crazy.

The police and ambulance show up shortly after I help him get his face a little cleaned up. He is completely surprised that an ambulance would come to his home for a simple scratch on his head! I tell him that scratch might need a few stitches.

He is completely lucid and trying to tell the policeman that his keys are on the table and he will drive himself to the hospital. Thankfully they were having no part of that! The policeman asks him to spell his name. He asks him again because he doesn't understand his last name. The third time the man made a joke and said "don't you know Paul McCartney", that's my last name! He held his sense of humor throughout the ordeal.

The paramedics wrap the man's head up almost to the point of looking like a mummy. Then both arms are wrapped up. He starts waiving saying he's never seen so many bandages in his life. I tell him he is so lucky he can see those bandages! He asks the paramedic if he can walk to the stretcher. They allow him but with help. He gets on the stretcher and as he is being wheeled to the ambulance he waves frantically and yells out "Dawn, My Angel, thank you for saving me"!

I tell him that I will be back next week to check on him while I'm out for my walk.

Now that I've had time to contemplate today's events, I wonder, what would have become of this man had I not shown up?

I tell him that I will be back next week to check on him while I'm out for my walk.

Now that I've had time to contemplate today's events, I wonder, what would have become of this man had I not shown up?

Over To You



Read More : See all of the stories in our ongoing series of [15 Professional Pet Sitter Share Their Favorite 'Tales' From the Past Year!](#)

While we are hired first to care for a client's fur baby, more often than not, the friendships, bonds, and relationships we make with their human counterpart can have a profound impact on our lives.

Everything happens for a reason.

If we were brought into a person's life via our calling as a pet professional, all the better.

Tell us the impact you have had on the human client.

Please share this with your social communities, too!



Tami Truex



Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Tami Truex of Head to Tail Pet Sitting Services

Day 11 of our ongoing series that shines the spotlight right on the amazing work of an entire industry. See all of our stories from our [15 Professional Pet Sitters Sharing Extraordinary Tales](#).

On the surface, pet sitting may sound like ‘you come over, walk the dog, play with the cat, and make sure there is enough food and water to go around.’

We know, however, there is a tremendous more responsibility that goes into a successful job well done.

We also know that quite often we are turned to as a life saving resource when a pet parent does not know where else to turn.

It's the professional pet sitter to the rescue... Always. And don't you forget it :)

Power to the Pet Sitter!



Today's powerful story is from Tami Truex of [Head to Tail Pet Sitting Services](#) in Valpo, IN



My story starts with a client that I picked up at the beginning of 2014. She hired me to care for her 2 dogs and two inside cats.

At the interview she showed me the garage and told me there were feral cats and kittens living in there.

I was to give them dry cat food. The garage had been taken over by wild cats and 2 females had new litters.

I finished pet sitting for her and a few weeks later she called and asked if I could help her catch the cats and she was taking them out to a farm.

So the trapping began. I would come in the morning to set the trap and she would cart them off to her friend's farm.

I did get a glimpse of this one tiny kitten. She was very pretty and so young. I told her if she catches that one that I wanted it.

So after trapping for a week she calls me and says she caught the little one only her front leg was mangled and she took her to the vet.

After the surgery we went and picked her up and nursed her back to health. We named her Pumpkin and she is still a little feral and rotten but so cute! We love her and she bonded with my daughter.

So as pet sitters we are asked to do things for clients that many people have no idea we would say yes to.

Over To You



Read More : See all the amazing stories featuring [15 Professional Pet Sitters doing extraordinary work.](#)

What are some things you were asked to come to the rescue with? What situation would others never believe you were asked to perform?

How have you defined the phrase, “Power to the Pet Sitter!”



Rebecca Kirkland

Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Rebecca Kirkland of
Whiskers 'N' Wags Pet
Sitting



Day 12 of our [15-part series on the life of professional pet sitters.](#)

As we make our way through more and more of these extraordinary tales, it becomes increasingly obvious that the professional pet sitter is so much more than a “one trick pony” (pun intended?).

Truth be told, a true pet care professional must consider the welfare and well being of the animals in her care from a variety of angles. She must consider the health and the safety from elements inside the home. She must consider the safety from outsiders, including other people, other dogs and other animals.

And she must consider the unknown factors. Like the weather.

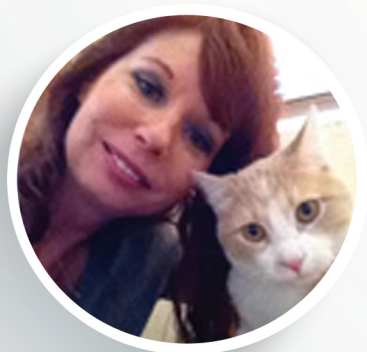
Each job we take as a professional care taker could potentially present an entirely unique set of circumstances that we must act upon in a matter of seconds.

The pet parent relies on our good judgement to keep her furry family member protected.

This is why hiring an experienced professional should be your top priority.

In today's spotlight, Rebecca Kirkland of [Whiskers 'N' Wags Pet Sitting](#) in Colorado City, TX was put to the test and passed with flying colors!

The Calm Before The (Tornado) Storm



We as pet sitters have to make quick, precise decisions constantly for the health and well being of our clients.

Sometimes they can be scary decisions but when in our care, it should be our first priority. Here is my story.

It was last spring, during the crazy, unpredictable weather that we tend to have in west Texas. On this particular day it was overcast with a bit of much needed rain.

I had an adorable French bulldog client that is one of my favorites to sit to take care of this day. It had been raining off and on so we stayed inside for most of the stay.

I was able to get her out long enough to potty but she jetted back inside when the rain started! We were on the floor playing our usual tug of war game with her favorite toy when the wind picked up.

This was nothing unusual. We lived in west Texas for crying out loud! The wind always blew! As it got increasingly louder the pup was getting worried and became less interested in her toy. I went to the sliding back door to look out and see what was happening.

It was raining very hard and the wind was horrendous. We stood there and right before our eyes, the trampoline in the back yard started to bend as if somebody was flipping an omelet.

The satellite dish went out so I had no way to check the weather other than the app on my phone which was sending out all kinds of weather alerts... including tornado warnings in my area.

The house began to shake a little and the pup was getting increasingly disturbed. I picked her up and as watched out the window, I started getting concerned about our safety. There was no cellar or basement in the area so the only thing I knew to do was get into the middle section of the house.

Before we did that, I called the owner to let them know about the trampoline and at that time, I looked across the yard and watched as a barn in the neighbors lot next door being lifted off of the ground! This was a metal barn!

All I could do was tell the owner what was happening and I could feel my heart pounding out of my chest. It was scary to say the least. All I could think of was what if the wind/tornado threw that barn over here on top of this house.

I told the owner I was going to take the pup and get to the middle bathroom, so that's what I did. Both the pup and myself was shivering from fear. I got in the bathtub and put the pup underneath me to protect her, just like I would a child.

The house shook and terrible noises surrounded us. After about 5 minutes it quieted down. I came out of the bathroom to see what damages had been done.

So much relief that we had made it through the storm.

Miraculously the only damage that the house sustained was the bent up trampoline and a flag pole bent all the way over to a 90 degree angle, which was actually only 2 feet from my car! But the important thing was that the pup and myself were safe!

It's odd when we are faced with disasters like that, we gear up with that ultra protective emotion and I just wanted to make sure that that sweet pup was safe! Very scary for both of us, but the client was so relieved that we were both ok and they couldn't thank me enough for what I did.

They are one of my best clients and have 100% trust in me.

That is a GREAT feeling! Never predict the unpredictable, such as in the west Texas weather!!

Lesson learned? Check weather status when I know that I'm going to be out for awhile!

Over To You



Read More : See all other stories of courageous professional pet sitters in our [15 Pet Sitters Series.](#)

When have you been called upon to act in a moment's notice?



Michelle Romano

Pet Sitter Spotlight: Michelle Romano of Waggs & Purrs Pet Sitting



Day 13 of our [15-part series on the life of professional pet sitters.](#)

So much of a professional pet sitter's days work revolves around plenty more than only caring for the well being of the pet.

The pet sitter is also in a position to be responsible for the client's home, surroundings, possessions, and property.

Choosing to hire a trained and skilled pro to care for your furry friend is not a decision that should be taken lightly. The entire home – along with all the contents inside the home – is also at risk, should something happen.

Today, we say hi to Michelle Romano of [Waggs & Purrs Pet Sitting](#) in San Antonio, TX, who saved a lifetime of memories (and much more) from disaster.

Saving An Army Captain



Soooo... this just happened today...

I went to one of my mid-day visits today and when I opened the door I was immediately hit with the very strong odor of gas.

The first thing I did was get the 2 small dogs outside in the yard. I came back in and found the stove had one dial left on, no flame just gas.

I opened all windows and doors to allow the ceiling fans to blow out the strong gas odor.

This was serious! I didn't want to turn on any light switches and was even afraid of creating a spark walking on the carpet because we have very dry weather here and getting shocked is a common occurrence.

The client was contacted. She is an Army Captain on a nearby base and couldn't immediately leave but was relieved her dogs were ok and that I was there to take care the situation.

It took a lot longer for the odor to dissipate than what I had expected. I was concerned for the dogs health – one is a 15-year old Miniature Schnauzer with a serious heart condition and the other a young terrier.

I was getting a headache from the gas odor so there's no telling what was going on with those pups. I kept them both outside for over an hour. By the time we went back in, the air inside was much better. All the windows were opened.

I had a scheduled afternoon visit as well, however I went back much sooner than I was supposed to. Pups were fine. Air was better. Kept them outside again for over an hour.

Client was on her way home so they will be back in her care shortly after I leave.

Client did a completely irresponsible thing by leaving her stove on. Scary thing was, when I got home for the day there was a news report about a house in a nearby town blew up because of a gas leak.

The man survived but was badly burned and transferred to the hospital on the same Army base where my client was.

Crazy day!

Over to You



Read More: See our full profile of [15 Professional Pet Sitters Doing Extraordinary Work!](#)

Keeping the welfare of the pets in your care is always priority number one. But you also must keep your own health and safety in tact.

When have you found yourself in a lifesaving situation where everything turned out well because of your amazing actions?

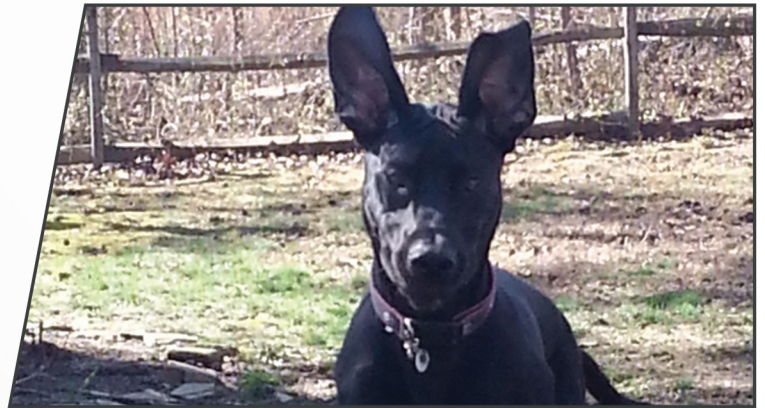




Maureen McCarthy

Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Maureen McCarthy
of Love and Kisses
Pet Sitting



Day 14 of our [15-part series spotlighting the Professional Pet Sitting Industry.](#)

It's certainly never easy having to say goodbye to a furry client when the end is near.

It's also never easy when you have been a part of the pooch's life for over two years.

No matter where our day-to-day jobs, careers, or lives take us, it's simply about enjoy what we have, and enjoying those around us.

For you never know when it will suddenly be taken away.

Today's professional pet sitter spotlight is on Maureen McCarthy of [Love and Kisses Pet Sitting](#) in Indian Trail, NC.

This is her story of the time she shared with her special friend, Jasper.

A Tribute to our Friend Jasper



Reprinted here with permission.

I write this blog today with a very heavy heart.

I received a call yesterday about one of our clients dogs. His name was Jasper and we had been pet sitting for him for a little over 2 1/2 years.

Jasper was great dane with a heart of gold and always getting into things. He was a fun loving big goofball. He went in to have surgery for a blockage and did not make it through the surgery.

What a heartbreak for his family. We all will never forget our friend Jasper.

When I first met Jasper, I went to my clients home to do a meet and greet with Jasper and his parents. They told me they had a great dane puppy and needed a daily pet sitter to come and let him out and play with him midday. Get some of his puppy energy out.

When I walked in the home, this big black puppy, with huge paws came running over to me and I must admit that I thought he was going to be a lot smaller. He was huge for puppy. But then again, he was great dane. I must admit it was love at first sight.

Jasper seemed to always get into something. He was very curious dog.

I have had my sitters call me and say “you are not going to believe what Jasper got into today” One afternoon my pet sitter’s called me and told me that Jasper got into a container of Protein powder.

Jasper would also take down the container of dog treats and help himself to his share of treats during the day. I am sure he thought nobody would find out. That was not such a bad thing.

He was a good boy with big heart filled with lots of love and playfulness and this blog is dedicated to our friend Jasper and how much myself and my sitters will miss him.

We will still get to go over to the house and care for his adopted sister Macey. She is an older beauty and we love seeing her too!! I am sure it will be hard to not have Jasper there but we will focus our attention to Macey and give her lots of Love and Kisses as usual.

That is the name of my pet sitting business and that is just what myself and my pet sitters do, we give tons of Love and Kisses to all our clients dogs and cats. May Jasper rest in peace.

The poem below is called the Rainbow Bridge and I want to post it for his owners Carolyn and Jeff...May you both find comfort in it.

Rainbow Bridge Poem



“There is a bridge connecting Heaven and Earth. It is called the Rainbow Bridge because of its many colors. Just this side of the Rainbow Bridge there is a land of meadows, hills and valleys with lush green grass.

When a beloved pet dies, the pet goes to this place. There is always food and water and warm spring weather. All the animals who have been ill and old are restored to health and vigor; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by.

The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing; they each miss someone very special to them, who had to be left behind. They all run and play together, but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance. Her bright eyes are intent; her eager body begins to quiver. Suddenly she begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, her legs carrying her faster and faster. You have been spotted, and when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion. The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross the Rainbow Bridge together, never again to be separated.”

Over to You



Read More: See our full spotlight on the [15 Professional Pet Sitters Making A Difference in their Communities.](#)

It's never easy saying goodbye. How have you helped a pet parent get through this very difficult time?





Rita Reimers

Pet Sitter Spotlight:

Rita Reimers of Cats
90210 and Charlotte
Cat Sitting



This Day 15 of our [15 part series spotlighting the Professional Pet Sitting Industry](#) and the extraordinary work being done day in and day out.

It should go without saying that the professional pet care industry is an extraordinary bunch of individuals who have amazingly big hearts.

Much of what the pet parent client sees is the direct result of many years of love, care, and professionalism. Similar to the skilled magician or gifted performer or talented surgeon, you only see the effortless work as the training and education is done behind the scenes.

And that's a price you can't pay for.

The successful pet sitter will also be directly responsible for staff members that they send into the client's home to do the job. In today's spotlight, you'll see 3 separate examples of how hiring the right people literally make all the difference in your success.

You will also read how Rita Reimers of Cats 90210 and Charlotte Cat Sitting made a promise to a pet parent that she fulfilled — but wishes it never would have come to it.

The Right Staff



I put applicants through a rigorous process before bringing them aboard as cat sitters, and as a result I have some pretty wonderful people representing my company.

Here are a few stories from 2014 that illustrate how important it is to hire the right staff with the right stuff.

Background: I started Just for Cats Pet Sitting aka Cats 90210 back in 2003 as a solo cats-only pet sitting service, under the name The Kat Lady. I had been sitting since 1998, but 2003 I got serious about it with an eye toward replacing my income and leaving corporate life.

As one of only 2 other cats-only sitting service in Los Angeles at that time (now we are one of two), it soon became apparent that I could not remain a solo pet sitter and make enough money to live, if I also wanted to have a life too.

I began adding people to my staff in 2005, which is when we became Cats 90210. I was able to leave corporate life in April 2006.

Once I moved back to Charlotte NC and we opened our Charlotte location, Charlotte Cat Sitting, in 2014, the parent company Just For Cats Pet Sitting was formed under which both companies are housed. We now have 12 sitters working for us, 10 in LA and 2 in Charlotte.



Sarah Saves a Life



It was Sarah's second set of visits with Tucker kitty, and she was booked for a 19-visit twice-a-day stretch over 10 days, including the week of the July 4th holiday.

Upon arriving for the second visit in the set, Sarah immediately knew something was wrong when Tucker did not greet her at the door, as was his habit.

Sarah looked around, finally finding him sitting in his litter box. Quietly observing Tucker, it became apparent that he was in pain and straining to urinate.

Of course it was a Sunday, but since Sarah takes her own cats to the same vet Tucker's owner uses, she knew the vet was open. Sarah called Tucker's owner, Zac, who agreed that a vet visit was in order, and after letting me know what was going on, Sarah took Tucker right in.

I should also mention Sarah was booked for a dozen visits that day, so she also took a moment to let her next few morning clients know she would be a little late that day, and told them why.

Tucker was diagnosed with a sever urinary tract blockage; the vet said that Sarah's quick action saved Tucker's life.

It was decided that Tucker would stay at the vet for the rest of the time Zac was away. Since his blockage was so serious, the vet wanted to keep a close eye on him.

Zac was extremely grateful that Sarah's quick action enabled Tucker to have a complete recovery, and we have sat for Tucker two times since then. We're very lucky to have Sarah as part of the Cats 90210 family.

Cross Country Move



I was called by Melissa, who was about to embark on a cross country move from Atlanta to Los Angeles, and she needed some help in LA getting the cats settled in.

The very day her fiancé Landon and the cats were to arrive in Los Angeles, he would have to leave again for a business trip, leaving the cats alone in an empty and strange apartment for three days.

It was a little odd to take a booking without having met the clients at all, but I did my research on their names and found the story checked out.

Since I live 4 hours away from Atlanta, I did offer to drive there to meet Melissa, but we couldn't work out a good day for it since she was busy getting prepared for the move.

The day Landon and the cats were to arrive in Los Angeles, our sitters Pam and Melanie were going to meet him and the kitties at the new apartment and get the keys.

I was sending two sitters since we were going into a situation that was a little different than usual. But that morning, Landon texted Pam to say he left the key under the mat, as he had arrived the evening before and was sick with the flu. He left the cats there and went to stay with a friend.

Of course then we were very concerned about this odd situation, so I was glad two of the sitters were going there together. Upon arriving at the apartment, Pam and Melanie found two very scared kitties, Austen and Benny, alone in an empty apartment.

They were separated from one another by a gate, as they don't get along very well unless someone is home with them. One of them didn't even have anything soft to lie on, so Pam got a soft jacket from her car and left it for him to curl up on.

Pam visited the kitties for the next three days, giving them extra love and affection. She could see they were beginning to relax and be a little less afraid with each visit. On the fourth day, both Melissa and Landon arrived in Los Angeles.

Pam met with Melissa and Landon to finally meet them and to retrieve her jacket. They were very grateful to Pam that she was able to get the kitties settled in and enable their move to go as smoothly as possible.

Holiday Bail Out



A frantic call came in to the office the week of Christmas, at a time when we were full and not really taking new client reservations. Polina was very upset; she and her boyfriend were already out of town, and the friend that was taking care of their two cats decided she wanted to go see her family for Christmas after all.

After speaking at length with her boyfriend, Roger, I agreed we would find a sitter to take care of their kitties. Polina and Roger were already very comfortable with us since they were able to read details about our sitters and see their photos on our website.

After speaking with me, Roger said he was very sure we were the right sitters for them.

We had just hired a new sitter, Steven, who luckily lived not too far away from Roger and Polina, and he agreed to handle the sit. This would be his first booking. Since we were not meeting the owner and it was an odd situation, I sent our sitter Melanie along with Steven to meet the current sitter, meet the kitties, and get the keys.

Roger and Polina were very relieved that they didn't have to end their vacation. Once they arrived home, Steven went over to officially meet with them, which made Roger and Polina feel even better about our services.

They have booked us again since then.

A Client's Last Wish



I first met our client, Linda, and her kitties, Sonny and Lexie, back in 2007. Linda was a marathon runner, and she ran in marathons all over the world while we took care of her cats, Sonny and Lexie.

Back then, we had a wonderful sitter on staff, Alyssa, and she became Linda's primary sitter. Linda and Alyssa became friends, and Alyssa was one of a handful of people that Sonny and Lexie accepted into their world. The only thing Linda loved more than running was her cats.

In 2009, I took over as Linda's cat sitter when Alyssa moved to Long Beach, and while Sonny and Lexie would sniff me and tolerate my presence, they didn't take to me the same way they had to Alyssa.

Sadly, in 2010, Linda was diagnosed with Cancer. She went through chemo and was declared cancer-free by the end of 2011. During the time she was in chemo, Linda made me promise (several times) that I would get her cats to Alyssa if anything were to happen to her.

I promised her I would, but I told her it would never come to that. "I know" she said, "but promise me anyway."

I moved to Charlotte in 2013, and before I left I met with Linda in January 2013, introducing her to Melanie, who would be taking over care for Sonny and Lexie.

Linda's hair had all grown back, she looked healthy, radiant, and beautiful. That will always be my last memory of Linda, for shortly after that she was re-diagnosed. The cancer had come back, and it was in her brain.

Linda booked Melanie a few times to visit her cats while she ran marathons. Then she stopped booking us, and the only contact I had with her was on Facebook.

By then I knew Linda was back in treatment, yet she never let on just how serious it was. One day, I signed into Facebook early in the morning to find the horrible unexpected news that Linda had passed away the night before.

I noticed that some of her friends were talking about her cats, trying to decide what to do with them.

Then I remembered my promise...

I called Alyssa right away, she hadn't yet heard about Linda's passing, but she immediately called Linda's best friend to tell her she was coming for the cats.

Melanie met her over there since we had the keys, and Alyssa took the cats home before her other friends had a chance to take them to a shelter.

Never in my wildest dreams did I think I would ever have to make good on that promise I made to Linda back in 2010. Linda counted on me to make sure her cats had a good life after she was gone, and I am glad I was able fulfill her wish.

I still miss Linda, I still can't believe she's gone...

Over to You



Read More: See the full and complete [15-part series spotlighting the Professional Pet Sitting Industry.](#)

Tell us, has there ever been a promise you were forced to make or keep with a client? Have you connected with a specific pet parent on a deeper level?

Let us know in the comments what you think! And please share this entire series with your social communities.