

KOALA T KORNER

KOALA T. CARE

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Summer 2007 Newsletter

PET-SITTING, DOG WALKING, & HOME MANAGEMENT SERVICES

My Crazy Cats



Thank you, Travis Payne,
12 yr. old son of a Koala T.
Care customer, for sharing this-

Let me tell you about my cats. First of all, I have not one, or two, or three, but four. This was not planned, it just happened. First, we adopted Smoochie, a black Bombay cat. He is the most wonderful cat an owner can have. Therefore, we thought all cats were like him. I thought Smoochie should have a playmate, so we adopted Wee Wee. She is nothing like Smoochie, however her name fits her perfectly. She is not fond of the litter box, hisses frequently, and her main contribution is to eat and sleep all day. She even lives on top of the refrigerator to make sure food is only a pounce away.

Sam, our next cat, was truly unplanned. Sam is a handsome blue eyed Siamese cat. He is adorable to look at, but can act horrible. At first, he always fought the other cats and talked all night. He still talks all night. Sometimes at three in the morning he decides that he just wants to talk, and talk, and talk. He can actually say the word "out". Nobody wants to hear Sam say he wants to go out at three in the morning. You can usually hear my mom hollering, "shut up Sam!" Eventually, he does, and pounces someone's bed. I still wish we had only brought home cat food that day instead of another cat.

Last Spring, we went to Wal-Mart and found a deserted, red tabby kitten outside in a box. He now lives with us. He is known as Wally from Wal-Mart. Wally always seems to be in the middle of trouble trying to keep up with the others. Wally fits in perfectly; he causes as much trouble (Continued on back)



A Koala T. Care customer has 3 used, top of the line, automatic, timed dog/cat feeders for sale. These feeders each hold 20lbs of kibble, periodically dispensing a controlled amount of pet food. This provides a way to feed your pet when you're not there, without just sitting a huge amount out that the pet could just gobble up all at once. Originally, the feeders cost \$115 each. They're still in good shape, and our customer is selling them for \$30 each. Call Toni if interested.



Water Restrictions

Since Koala T Care Sitters water plants & run sprinklers for vacationing customers, KTC Pet Sitter, Becky Mathews, checked with Cobb County Water Systems about current restrictions. Odd numbered addresses may water between midnight & 10am on Tues, Thurs, & Sunday. Even numbered homes may water on Mon, Wed & Saturday - no outdoor water use on Fridays. If anyone is seen by city officials watering on the wrong days or times, it is the home owners who would be fined, so please, don't ask us to water outside of proper times. We wouldn't want to get you in trouble! Do, however, leave us plenty of water bowls for your furry herd. Your pets' appetites will lag in the warmer season, but they'll be plenty thirsty. (Besides, we can recycle the pets' water into your plants when we change it!) ☺



Help KTC Keep Pricing Increases Down

I went into the office supply store recently to buy a box of tags that we use to I.D. customers' keys. What used to cost us \$2.49 is now \$7.99! It has more than tripled since we've been pet sitting! But Koala T Care's rates in that same time haven't even doubled. They are, however, being raised effective immediately. You'll still find Koala T Care's prices to be very competitive among local pet sitting services.

Regular Pet Sits \$17 for 1-2 pets:
Additional Pets \$1/pet/visit
or \$2/pet/visit if the additional pets are dogs that are to be leash walked.

Discount \$1/visit any day you schedule 3 or more visits/day
Business Traveler Rates \$16/visit less 3x/day discounts, when applicable, will apply for families who use KTC services on nearly a weekly basis- Check with Toni to see if you qualify.

Midday Dog Walking Rates
\$15/visit for 4+ visits a week, on an ongoing basis, between 10:30am and 2:30pm. Midday customers qualify for Business Traveler Rates when using our services outside of Midday hours.

After redefining our work area and adding pet sitters who live nearer Dallas Hwy, we will no longer have a distance charge to any visits within our geography.

Koala T Care has done a lot to scale down expenses which were never extravagant to begin with. I would like to ask you, our customers to help us to keep prices from needing to be raised, again, any time soon. (cont.)

Crazy Cats (cont.)

as Smoochie, Wee Wee, and Sam combined.

At Christmas they developed a new game called "kill the tree". It came with terrible sound effects. For example, CRASH BOOM, BANG! These are the sounds of ornaments crashing and the tree falling to the floor while my mom screams, "bad cats!" This does absolutely nothing for the tree lying on the floor, but my poor mom feels like she is accomplishing something. Two out of the four cats are usually guilty. Wally is usually the ring leader of mischief. If you encounter a cat disaster and say, "who did it?" Wally looks so proud.

Everyday, right after breakfast, Sam goes to the door, leading everyone else. Smoochie begins the pitiful plea by lifting his paw and meowing softly. I watch as mom begins to give in. Smoochie next reaches up and curls his paw around the French handled doorknob. He turns to Mom and gives her a pitiful look he has practiced many times with success. Mom gives in after Sam flashes his blue eyes. At this point, Smoochie, Sam, and Wally race out the door. They return about six hours later with a present for my mom, the dead catch of the day. This is usually placed proudly on the doormat.

While the boys are out playing, Wee Wee has control of the house. She empties all of the food bowls as fast as she can before the others return. When my mom starts cooking, she begs for our food. One time, I was getting ready to make a sandwich, and turned around to get a drink. When I turned back around, she had jumped on top of the fridge with my turkey. This reminds me of another game they play. When Mom is cooking Sunday dinner, they know something good is coming. Have you ever seen a ten pound cat drag a six pound pork roast off of the table? I have, and it's not a pretty picture. I was trying desperately not to laugh, while my mom was about to cry. Thank goodness for takeout!

As you can see, my cats can be outrageous at times. Lately, there has been a new prowling guest on the back porch. It has been really cold at night, so I put out a blanket and a small bowl of food. He looks like a mixture of Sam and Wee Wee. Maybe the next paper I write will be "My crazy five cats"! For you see, I have already named him Scrat the Cat.

Keep Prices Down (cont.)

In this business, there will always be unexpected changes in schedules and pop-up trips that come up with no warning, but advance notice of your pet care requirements not only makes our lives less frenetic, but keeps our expenses down. Last minute schedule changes often mean extra gasoline and time as we shuffle keys and files to the pet sitters on call. We use fewer cell minutes adjusting schedules when we have the visits planned in advance. There's less paper, ink, and time used changing and printing invoices. You can understand where we're going with this. Just call in those requests the *first* time you think, "I have to call Koala T. Care to come visit the pets." Our office phone is available to take messages anytime, 770-819-4000.

Most pet care services require payment in advance or at the time of service. Koala T. Care asks only that the customers pay our invoices when they arrive home (due upon receipt). On the upper right of the Koala T. Care invoice, there is a "stop date" - the last day of the assignment - the day of receipt. By leaving the invoice, we know exactly how many visits are utilized, making credits or rebills unnecessary. That system has worked well for us in the past, but (a sign of the time, I guess) collections are becoming a problem. KTC tries to pay the pet sitters the week after they do the assignments. Without timely compensation, KTC's expenses go up when our bills are not paid on time. To remedy this, we will be requesting a deposit on long term assignments, and late fees will be added to invoices over 30 days past due, beginning August 1, 2007.

Established Koala T. Care customers can call requests for pet care to the office phone at 770-819-4000 or e-

mail koalatpetcare@bellsouth.net. That's right; you can now e-mail your schedules. Requests on-line or on the office voice mail, don't use cell minutes and are much easier for us to process. We're sitting at the desk with pen in hand and schedule in front of us to accurately note your pet care needs. If you do not get a confirmation, please call back. Sometimes messages are cut off when customers experience dropped calls, and e-mails do not always go through. Also, please keep in mind that ANY IMMEDIATE CHANGES OR ADDITIONS MUST BE CALLED TO THE CELL PHONE IF YOU CANNOT REACH TONI AT THE OFFICE. Because we're out pet sitting at all hours (and because no one wants the cost of a receptionist reflected in the bill rates ☺), Toni's cell phone *is* the receptionist! During busy pet sitting times, office voice mail and e-mails can only be checked *early* am and *late* pm. Please use the cell, 678-231-7495, for any last minute arrangements or if you have questions. We ask that you use that cell number only between 7am and 7pm, unless it's an emergency, in which case, call it at any time.

Burning Profits!

The next thing I have to do to protect our rates is have a long talk with our postal carrier and my neighbor. David met me as I pulled into my driveway the other day. He was saying, "You're going to be mad at me", as he was handing me pieces of burned paper. The mail carrier had put some of our mail in his box by mistake. He took "his mail" (He was holding a cigarette between fingers of the hand with the mail) and pitched it on his desk. The lit cigarette flew out of his hand with the envelopes and promptly caught them on fire!



When I sent the parched payments back to customers for replacement checks, I told them, "Working in the pet care industry, I've anticipated the day when I'd have to say, 'The dog ate it.' or, 'the cats made spaghetti out of it.' Never once did I ever expect to mail the charred remains of payments to my customers with the note, 'My neighbor burned it!'" ☺