

KOALA T KORNER

KOALA T. CARE

6506 Jackie Lane
Austell, GA 30106

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Winter 2006 Newsletter

PET-SITTING, DOG WALKING, & HOME MANAGEMENT SERVICES

2006 - A year of changes...

Koala T. Care has seen a number of changes in 2006, so let's get everybody caught up:

Lara Moved

Right after Labor Day, my daughter, Lara, who had been working as one of our pet sitters, moved to Rochester, NY where she and her dad are starting a new business. She hated leaving all the pets, to which she was so attached, and she asks about them constantly. But, it was time, as she said, to shake her life up a bit (and if moving from Georgia to New York doesn't accomplish that, I don't know what will!) Since Lara was the only sitter with Koala T. Care who was available to do overnight pet sits, we can no longer offer that service at this time. We will keep looking for someone who can refill that position. If you know any excellent candidates, please have them contact me. It's not easy finding a suitable pet lover who doesn't already have their own pets that they need to stay home with.

A Bigger Staff

2006 has seen Koala T. Care increase its staff size to better accommodate the needs of our customers. We have a group of caring, devoted pet lovers who

live throughout the Koala T. Care service area to provide quality pet care! This is a very important step for our service. 2006 marked Koala T. Care's 10th anniversary. "Year Ten" is often the year of "burn out" for many owners of pet sitting companies. It's not that these people loved their jobs or the pets they cared for any less. It's just that pet sitting is a 365+ day a year job with major responsibilities and scheduling changes coming in 24/7. With a larger staff, the responsibilities can be more evenly dispersed; there's better back up to cover busy time periods, emergencies, vacations, or illness. Besides, it's always more fun when there are others working with you and sharing experiences. Our staff's planning meetings are always riddled with laughter over all the dog & cat anecdotes we tell.

New Mailing Address

We haven't moved, but after complications with the mail station last year, Koala T. Care switched its mailing address directly to the office at:

**6506 Jackie Lane
Austell, GA 30106**

Most of you noticed the address change on the invoices, but if you use a payment processing service, please tell them about the new address.



Herman got a bag of Coal!

A Christmas Poem from the Dog

Eyeing Hydrants, digging holes,
Drinking from the toilet bowls...

Playing games of "tug-o'-war",
Putting scratch marks on your door...

Rolling over, playing dead,
Getting dog hair on your bed...

Scaring folks who bring the mail,
Chasing cats as well as tail...

Barking, begging, heeling,
howling,
Also, on occasion, growling...

Romping through a field of grass,
Sneezing, snoozing, passing gas...

Sniffing everything I see,
Peeing on the Christmas Tree...

Woofing, wagging, chomping,
chewing,
These are things I sure love doing!

(But, I'll try not to do that tree thing...) **Happy Holidays!**

(More of last year's Christmas Photographs on back page.)

December 10-16

If you were one of the three families who requested pet sits Dec 10-16, please call Toni at 678-231-7495 or 770-819-4000. I need to confirm information one of you gave me. Thanks, Toni



Fred & Suki wait for Santa

Winterizing

Acclimate: To adapt or become adapted to a foreign or unfamiliar environment or climate.

Do you know what's foreign to a Georgia raised house dog? Cold weather. Many of us remember when the family dog used to stay outside. No coats were put on those dogs. But our house dogs aren't used to cold; they live in temperature controlled homes. If your pet is an inside pet or doesn't have much fur, try a little dog jacket. Don't send him out in shorts and a T-shirt!. That's #1. Protect the pets from hypothermia. But, there are other winter dangers that aren't so obvious.

2. Antifreeze used to winterize our vehicles is extremely poisonous to pets. Unfortunately, it smells sweet and tastes great to them. Watch how you store antifreeze. If you think your pet may have lapped some up, *rush* it to the vet – don't wait for symptoms to appear!

3. Salt is used in icy weather on sidewalks, driveways, and streets. It has a drying effect on pets' pads; plus they lick their paws and ingest it, causing problems for pets with kidney disease.

4. Winter holidays include pet dangerous decorations. Electrical wires look fun to kitties. Christmas stands look like water bowls, but pine sap is toxic to cats. Cover the

Pet Obesity

Koala T. Care is often hired to walk and exercise overweight pups. But, if you read the fine print on any exercise program, you'll see, "combined with the proper diet". In fact, there are a few of the dogs we walk that concern me as heart attack risks. So, I'm writing to you on your pet's behalf. YOU can help your pet live happier and healthier, and it's

tree stand with netting. Put Mistletoe and Poinsettia, which are harmful to pets, out of reach.

5. Water bowls freeze over, and outside pets can suffer dehydration which can put them into risk of shock and reduce their ability to handle low temperatures. Heated water bowls are among many products you can now find to keep water drinkable in freezing temps.

6. If traveling in winter, give your pet sitter the number of a neighbor *within walking distance* who has access to your house key. Icy roads make it very difficult for your pet sitter to get to your pets. She/he may need to call your neighbor and ask them to walk over to check on your pets till the sitter arrives.



Max & Gordon in holiday dress.

7. Nasty weather is rough on our plans to walk the dog. But exercise supports your pet's physical health which assists in better handling stress, illness and changes in the temperature. Play some indoor games that get both of your heart rates up, but also tough-out the weather and take walks anyway! You'll be getting your exercise and helping your pet to **acclimate** to the colder weather of winter.

really not that hard to do!

Accept that your dog is not always going to finish every meal. Each summer people are worrying that their pets aren't eating. That's okay. It's hot. Their activity is reduced, so the amount of food they *need* is also reduced. Unless our pets are or have been sick, or suffered dramatic weight loss, we shouldn't be sending them back to their unfinished bowls to lick them clean. These animals are often smarter than we are. They know when to push away from the table! Don't badger them to finish.

I know pet owners who cut out a pet's meal to help it reduce weight, only to replace the meal with a "treat snack". How many diets have you seen that encourage you to give up that nutritious breakfast in favor of a couple of cookies?! Leave the meal there. Just adjust the amount of each meal. If you have an obese pet, reduce each meal by 1/5, and keep adjusting, **over time**, till a trim physique is maintained. Buy a second kind of kibble to use for treats. It will taste different than the regular meal and be more nutritious and less fattening. Keep carrots in the frig for treats. Not only are they better for Bowser's weight, they'll clean his teeth. Chewing clean, raw carrots will lessen the bacteria build up around the teeth. Unchecked, that bacteria floats into the bloodstream and could settle on the pet's heart valve.

If your pet's a "grazer", not eating its food during a "mealtime", but grazing throughout the day, you can still limit the intake by measuring how much food you put out. Once it's gone, don't refill the bowl till the next day. Or, put small amounts of food out 2-3x/day and pick it up after ½ hour. You're the controller here!

Combine these diet changes with some good walks, and your rolly-polly pup will look and feel much better! (Now if I could just keep MYSELF on this diet plan!) ☺