

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Triangle Pet Sitter Promotes “Take Your Dog to Work Day”

Raleigh, NC, Jun. 11, 2002 -- The country has been taking its daughters to work for more than a decade. Could “fur children” be far behind?

June 21 is the fourth annual “Take Your Dog to Work Day,” sponsored by Pet Sitters International, a 4,200-member organization headquartered in North Carolina. The event calls attention to the benefits of pet companionship, according to Dennis Money, owner of Raleigh-based Guardian Angel Home & Pet Care.

“Our hope is that these dogs visiting the workplace will inspire co-workers without pets to adopt homeless animals from local shelters and humane societies,” explains Money, who serves on the board of directors of the SPCA of Wake County, a non-profit animal welfare organization dedicated to sheltering and promoting adoption of unwanted animals.

The term “fur kids” has entered the popular lexicon in recent years to describe how humans view their animal companions. In an American Animal Hospital Association survey, 55 percent considered themselves to be the “parents” of their pets.

That doesn’t surprise Money.

“My typical client is someone who really, *really* cares about his or her pets,” Money explains. “Like parents choosing a babysitter, they’re less price-sensitive than they are quality-sensitive. They’re not interested in the lowest bid.”

While Take Your Dog to Work Day is a novel idea, Money says, the reality is that most workers can’t take their pets to work every day. That’s where a good pet sitting service can help out.

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“I have clients who put in very long work days or who travel for business. It puts their minds at ease to know we’re taking care of their pets and checking their homes daily,” says Money, who has a background as a veterinary hospital manager and security guard.

Guardian Angel has been offering services to Triangle residents for the past four years. Now he wants to offer them to corporations as part of their benefits packages. Subsidized pet sitting is the wave of the future, he says, much as childcare benefits were in previous decades.

. “With all the layoffs, companies are now asking fewer employees to accomplish the same amount of work,” Money points out, “often resulting in long work days. It’s hard for people to concentrate when they’re worried about pets.” A study by benefits consultant William M. Mercer shows slightly lower turnover among companies that offer pet care benefits.

Guardian Angel provides home and pet sitting services for dogs, cats, reptiles and birds. Services include walking, play time, exercise, changing litter boxes, even watering the plants. At-home visits are less stressful to the pet than boarding, Money says, because the animal stays in familiar surroundings.

Because of his vet tech, surgery, and animal emergency experience, Money has a special interest in caring for sick or compromised animals. He provides animal massage and works on referral from veterinarians to administer medications and provide observations about the animal’s condition. He also reminds his clients of appointments and vaccination needs.

For more information about Take Your Dog to Work Day or about pet sitting services, call Guardian Angel Home & Pet Care at 919 981-7406 or visit www.mypetsangel.com.

BACKGROUND

Additional resources

SPCA Exec. Director, Mort Congleton, 772-2326 www.spcawake.org/links.html
Pet Sitters International public relations - Ellen Richardson, (336) 983-9222,
ellenr@petsit.com. www.petsit.com

Local companies with pets-at-work policies

Firms like Autodesk and Smith & Hawken, which have offices in the Triangle, are among those that allow pets in the workplace. Also: LipSync in Cary. Cat Banjo and Jill Flink Fine Arts in Cameron Village, Raleigh. Ladyslipper Music in Durham. AKC (registry/kennel club) national headquarters in Durham. National association. Art gallery in City Market. We have requested from Pet Sitters International a listing of area companies they know are participating in TYDTWD and can supply those to you.

Range of pet benefits

To lure and keep top talent, progressive companies have found ways to extend benefits packages with pet benefits that help employees balance work with personal lives. These include but are not limited to:

- providing new employees with lists of pet sitters and groomers, much as they would provide lists of area schools to parents of children
- providing pet health insurance
- allowing employees to bring their pets to work every day, or at least on specified days
- allowing employees to take vacation or sick days to be at home with a sick pet or to grieve for a lost one

Statistical information on pet benefits

A Society for Human Resource Management study shows that just two percent of companies offer some kind of pet benefits – but that's up from one percent in 2000.

Another study by benefits consultant William M. Mercer of companies employing IT workers found that three percent of the respondents have a pets-at-work policy. But interestingly, those companies with a policy typically had a half-percent lower employee-turnover rate than those without one, Mercer found. Because turnover is so expensive, employee loyalty can translate into big savings.

Web sites used for researching this release

http://links.cfonet.com/info/com.inceptor_cfo_1758.html?se=ink

<http://www.petsit.com/> Pet Sitters International

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/news/lifestyles/html98/alltips_081098.html

<http://www.deltasociety.org/dsz500.htm>

<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/living/DailyNews/petinsurance000403.html>

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp->

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http://www.findarticles.com/cf_dls/m4PRN/1999_Jan_25/53626690/p1/article.jhtml

<http://www.ewin.com/articles/petlve.htm>

<http://www.cnn.com/TECH/computing/9812/23/petsit.idg>

<http://sanfrancisco.bizjournals.com/sanfrancisco/stories/1999/06/21/story7.html>