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Nehalem Bay Life

Making it "work" in Manzanita

Ginger Matyas, pet sitter



Like many coastal communities, many residents have pets. It's impossible to walk on the beach on any day without seeing people and their dogs. But what do you do about your pet when you take that winter break to Arizona or Hawaii or even a day visit to a specialist in Portland? Ginger Matyas has the answer—leave them in her care. *

Ginger grew up in Ohio with a houseful of dogs and cats and worked in a pet store at an early age. In 1976, she headed west, eventually landing in Eugene, where she spent ten years and worked as a licensed massage therapist (LMT). Shortly after she moved to Portland in 1987, she started the city's first pet sitter business, which was an instant success with working families and traveling pet owners.

Early in her career Ginger organized "Pick of the Litter," a group of professional pet sitters who developed best practices and provided each other with mutual support and referrals. Ginger was licensed first through [Pet Sitters International](#) and then with [Pet Sitters Associates](#). In 2016, she and a partner opened Portland's first deluxe cat hotel, [Pounce Play and Stay](#).

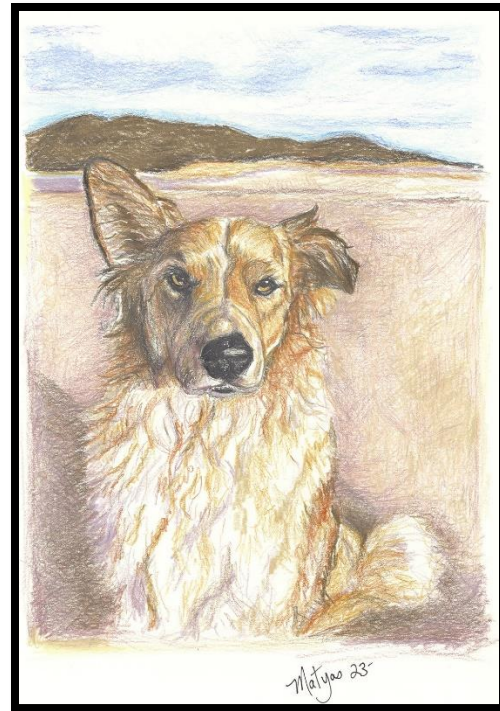
The move to Manzanita

Ginger knew Manzanita well from multiple vacations in the same vacation rental, but the move to live full time was a big decision. She felt that Portland had become too noisy, crime-ridden, and crowded for her comfort, but moving to a new location

* Contact Ginger at (gingerlee58@gmail.com) or through her *Katcandu & Woofgang* [website](#).

was a big risk. It took 15 months to find a long-term rental in Manzanita, where affordable housing is in short supply and rental rates are high.

Another challenge she faces is that the pet-sitting market in Manzanita is quite different from the Portland market, which consists largely of walking dogs during the working day and caring for cats when their “parents” are traveling. In Manzanita, with a smaller, mostly retired population, the demand for pet-sitting services is for overnight care for dogs when people are on vacation. Although she is paying rent for an apartment where she rarely sleeps, she has more time for her “pet art” which she uses to produce greeting cards for clients. (Interested readers can view Ginger’s pet art at the North County Recreation District (NCRD) through the end of May.) Despite the challenges, Ginger seems resolved to make her Manzanita “experiment” work to live in this quiet, beautiful area.



About Manzanita Today

Manzanita Today is a publication independent of the City of Manzanita. The editorial board includes Leila Salmon, Kathryn Stock, and Chip Greening. To contact us, write to ManzanitaToday@gmail.com.