

Pet Age

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Pet Sitters International Names Pet Sitter of the Year

Former zookeeper takes home the top honor.

Vanessa Sorace, the owner of Zoo Sitters LLC in Cape May Court House, N.J., was named Pet Sitters International's 2012 Pet Sitter of the Year.

The award is presented annually to one pet sitter who embodies the passion and professionalism of the pet-sitting industry.

Sorace received her bachelor's degree in psychology with a concentration in animal behavior and worked as a zoo keeper, caring for a variety of exotics including monkeys, lemurs, bats, bears and large cats.

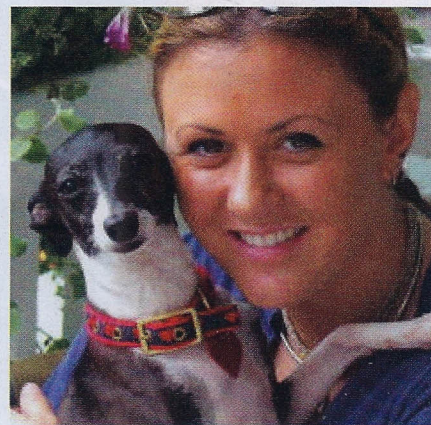
After leaving the field, she decided to pursue her MBA and spent several years quickly moving up the corporate ladder as a national accounts manager. Despite her success, Sorace soon realized that cor-

porate America was not as fulfilling as she had hoped.

"I began to think about combining my two passions—animals and business," Sorace said. "After six months of living in Costa Rica and observing many exotics in their natural habitats, I decided to return to my hometown of Cape May and start a professional pet-sitting business."

Created by Pet Sitters International in 1995, the Pet Sitter of the Year designation is considered the pet-sitting industry's highest honor. The 2012 selection process brought in more than 360 nominations for professional pet sitters across the United States.

Serving on this year's selection panel were David Pearsall of Business Insurers of



the Carolinas; Jordan Di Marco, 2011 Pet Sitter of the Year and The Pawsitive Coach Arden Moore, pet expert and founder of Fourleggedlife.com.