

# Accolades

**THE COSTCO CONNECTION**  
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## Saving the honeybees

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**MEMBER CONNECTION**

### The cat pamperer

It's NO SECRET that cats are having their moment. The Internet is rife with videos showing kitties of all ages in all their glory. Kellen Fox, a Costco member in Sedro-Woolley, Washington, says, "Cats are amazing. They're the perfect package of grace and feline and symmetry. They're wild, but they're domesticated."

So it was natural for her to want to get into business with the furry kitties, which led to the creation of Cat Nap Inn (catnapinn.com), a bed-and-breakfast just for cats. In Aljea, Washington, about an hour and a half north of Seattle, they're wild, but they're domesticated.

"I was in the health care insurance industry and I wanted to love going to work every day," Fox explains. "I stumbled across an article about luxury boarding facilities, and I started researching. I went to a low-to-cost class, I traveled the states and Canada. It took three years and I opened my doors in 1999. It was a dream come true."

Since then, Cat Nap Inn has welcomed 2,500 "guests," twenty-five rooms, with either a window or a virtual fish tank, are available for feline visitors. There are six levels of rooms, or suites, from the Discount Studio at \$20 a night for one cat to the Deluxe "bling" suite at \$45 a night for one cat. Kitties are kept separated unless they're from the same household and get along. Each suite has its own HEPA vent filter, so the cats never share air.

"The facility was designed for cats," Fox emphasizes. "Everything was built with health and safety and what cats like in mind, while the bed and play come with our cats, we offer all sorts of extra services. Many people include themselves when they go on vacation, and they like to do the same for their kitties. We have our Spoil Me menu. It features Tasty Treats, which is a chimpade or the Surf 'n Turf wild Alaskan salmon, and our Sensatee (tummy) service, aka the Sweet Creams package, which includes a cozy blanket, a Snuggle Safe (a heated microwave pad that stays warm up for 10 hours) and a bedtime snack."

In fact, the cats are treated so well, they often balk at going home with mom and dad. "Sometimes people get a treat ordered," Fox says. "I tell them that's a good thing—a good thing that they're not in a rush to go home."

—Steve Fisher

**Cat Lover Parking**

### Hunting treasures

THE LURE OF treasure hunting has called to everyone at some point or another. (Costco members experience it every time they visit the warehouse.) But for some, the call is stronger.

"I started it as a hobby with my kids. After we found our first ring, we were hooked on ring-finding," says Dan Roelke, a Middleton, Wisconsin, Costco member. "And after about two years of doing it, I actually turned it into a business."

The calls to find lost rings are increasing, but the venture is not quite lucrative enough for Roelke to quit his day job.

"It's a side business that I do on nights and weekends, or as often as my wife lets me get out," he explains. "But during the day, I'm an IT guy. I sit behind a desk, staring at a computer screen, so when the phone goes off with a lost-ring hunt, I jump at the opportunity to get out and explore nature. I bring my kids along, too, which is great."

Roelke started searching for rings in 2011. "Somebody had posted a lost ring ad on Craigslist," he recalls. "We had a metal detector, so we said, 'Let's go see if we can help him out.' We went out and, about 30 minutes into the search, we had found it."

They got a warm feeling and a small reward for their efforts and, in 2013, Lost and Found Ring (lostandfoundring.com) was born. Most searches come from people who have found Roelke on Google, or from stories in local papers or word-of-mouth. He has driven as long as six hours one-way to get to an assignment.

Roelke says ring-finding is not about simply knowing how to use a metal detector. "Ring-finding is an investigative process," he says. "Before we even start searching, we ask a lot of questions. I encourage people to write down everything, everywhere they were, while their memories are fresh. It's those tiny details sometimes that lead us to the right spot."

When Roelke does get paid for his efforts, he tends to put the money into new and better equipment. But sometimes a plea for help leads to more than money.

"Just the look on people's faces," observes Roelke, "is enough of a payment most times." —SF

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As seen in "The Costco Connection." July 2017



As seen in "Bellingham Alive." July 2017



ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FLEAS & YOUR CAT'S HEALTH

# CAT FANCY

FOR THE LOVE OF CATS

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## Pursonalities

# There's No Place Like Home... Except the Cat Nap Inn

By Dusty Rainbolt

At the Cat Nap Inn, Kollens Fox spends her days surrounded by what she loves most — cats. But it wasn't always that way. In 1994 Kollens Fox's long days were consumed listening to people whine about their health insurance. She made a good living, but something was missing. All that tedium evaporated when she picked up the July 1994 issue of CAT FANCY. Don Vaughan's article, "Cat Resorts" changed her life.

After reading Vaughan's article, Fox began researching the kennel business, taking classes and visiting facilities in four states and Canada. She and her husband Hans Knuths shopped for property and jumped through legal and financial hoops; they filed for permits by the reams. Finally in November 1999 Fox opened the Cat Nap Inn in Sedro Woolley, Wash., just 90 minutes north of Seattle and 30 minutes south of the Canadian border.

They opened with 16 cat suites, and demand soon outgrew the facility. In mid-2001, they expanded to 24.

### A SWANKY STAY

Cat Nap Inn is no ordinary boarding kennel — no dogs allowed. Rather than simply giving cats a place to stay while their owners travel, Fox provides her boarders with a home away from home.

At the basic rate of \$13 per night, Fox does her best to make the cats feel comfortable. Clients can choose from a variety of cat foods and three kinds of litter. Staff also keep a log of when the two daily love and play sessions occur.

"We want the cats to be happy," Fox says. "They get love and play just like home. We match the attention they get at home; they get lap time or [we] let them chase a laser pointer — whichever they need."

### THE ROYAL TREATMENT

Because cats like high places, basic suites offer five perch levels, and either a window or a faux fish tank. Rooms include HEPA filters and are negatively pressurized so the boarders don't share air or germs.

The windows provide 24-hour entertainment. In the middle of the yard, guests can monitor the activity at the birdfeeders and birdbaths. Chipmunks and bunnies also make appearances. For a nominal fee, clients can rent a birdfeeder so their kitties can get some close-up bird-



This Cat Nap Inn guest enjoyed a room with a view.

watching action. Clients can also request optional massages, recorded love notes, manicures, bed warmers, fleece bedding and bedtime snacks. Fox says that 25 percent of her boarders receive these extra features.

Cats that stay for a month at a time get special attention because they need it more, Fox says. They also offer an Extended Napper package for long trips. This provides extra services such as birdfeeders and grooming at no additional charge.

"We don't raise our rates during peak times, but we don't give discounts, either," Fox says.

People don't mind. They bring their cats all the way from Seattle.

"Kitties are part of the family and the family is separated," Fox says. "People don't want to worry when they're on vacation. They want to go on vacation and get massages. Their cats come here and get massages."

Although Cat Nap Inn can't handle Intensive Care Unit (ICU) cases, they care for diabetic cats, give medication and, occasionally, give subcutaneous fluids.

Boarders have ranged from a 5-month-old kitten to a 17-year-old hyperthyroid cat.

"We give great service. I have a wonderful staff," Fox says.

Her staff includes her three cats, among them Slabberpus, the official greeter, Tofsey and Snugglepus.

"It's wonderful to want to get up and go to work," she says. "I can't believe I get paid to do this." ❧

*Dusty Rainbolt is an award-winning freelance writer and a member of the Cat Writers' Association. She lives in Texas with her husband and several cats.*