

# NAPPS 2016 Business

Carol Corera and her Flying Duchess team bring out the best in Toronto's pets.

By Arden Moore

**A**s a professional pet sitter, Carol Corera exemplifies what it means to demonstrate grace under pressure — especially when facing two major life situations.

She gave birth to her second son, a baby named Brinly, on Oct. 21 and two days later, she submitted the comprehensive application deadline before the strike of midnight for the prestigious NAPPS 2016 Business of the Year.

Going above and beyond to meet the needs of pets in the Toronto area is standard operating procedure for Corera and her Flying Duchess Professional Pet Sitters team. Although she is grateful to earn the prestigious NAPPS Business of the Year honors, Corera is quick to salute her staff, clients and advisers.

"Flying Duchess is not simply me, but it is backed by a team effort," she says. "It is our dedicated pet sitters who are willing to keep learning, our very loyal repeat clients who keep organically spreading the word for us, and the systematized processes we have in place that help keep things running and operating. We also appreciate our advisers Kintoo Yong, Evita Machevin and Matthieu Machevin, who have helped bring Flying Duchess to where it is today."

## Business of the Year Perks

The NAPPS Business of the Year Award is presented to a member who has demonstrated outstanding business practices and vision in maintaining and growing their business. The honor includes:

- Complimentary participation in the 2016 Education and Networking Forum in Orlando, Fla. (inclusive of registration, lodging, and transportation).
- Professionally prepared customized public relations press release to local media by the national NAPPS office.
- The Flying Duchess company logo displayed on the NAPPS website for one year.
- Recognition of Flying Duchess company during the 2016 Education and Networking Forum.
- Indefinite use of the "NAPPS Pet Sitting Business of the Year 2016" logo.

NAPPS President Yvette Gonzales, who serves on the nominating committee, says, "It was great to see so many worthy submissions, but Carol's well-thought out application package in addition to her many client nominations helped make a tough decision easier for the committee."

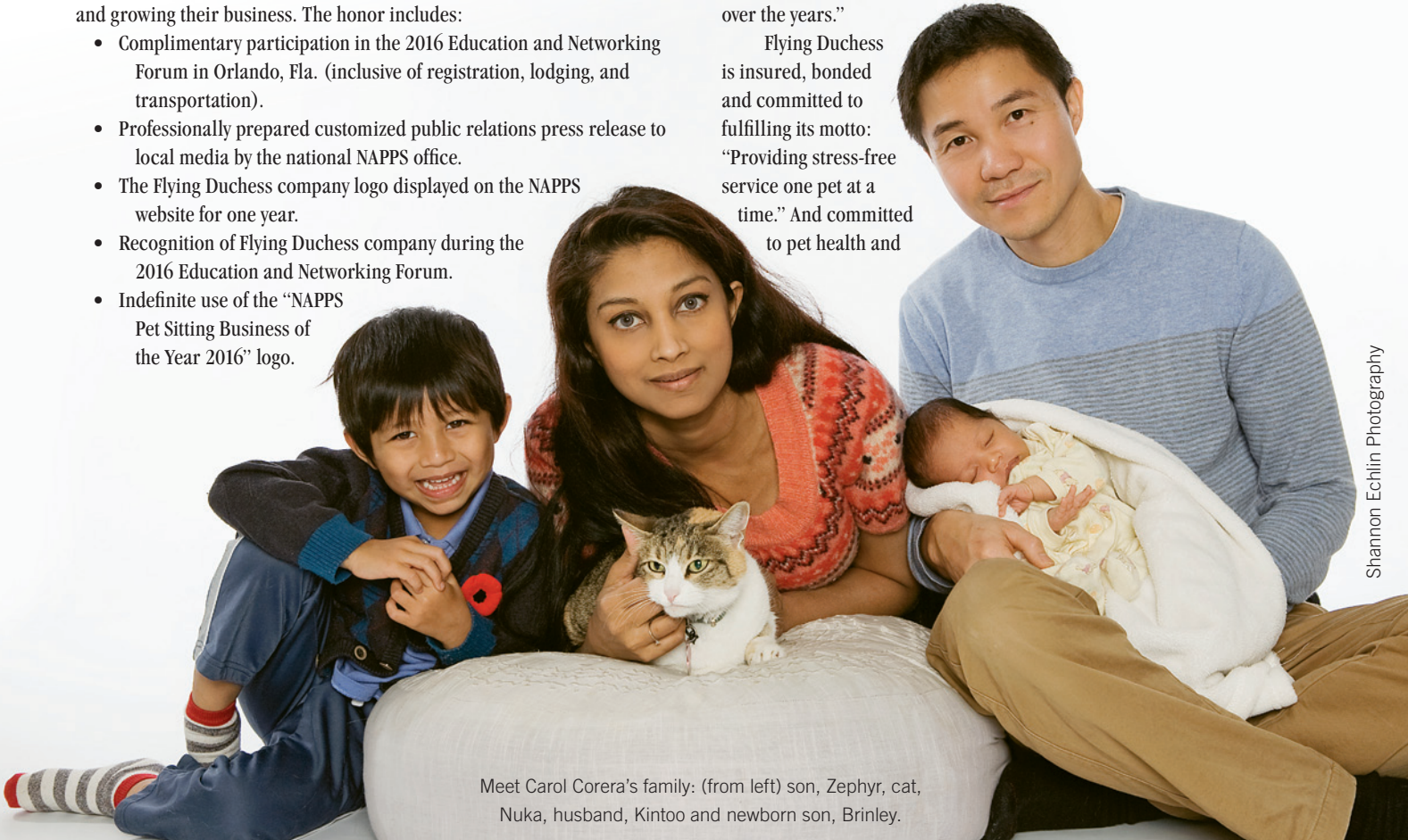
Corera, a former elementary school teacher, has traveled to many places, but regards herself as a loyal Torontonion. She lives there with her husband, Kintoo and their sons, Zephyr and Brinley, as well as her 10-year-old calico cat, Nuka, who she adopted as a stray kitten during travels to Kuwait.

"Nuka has been my constant companion through all my ups and downs and in many ways, she is like my first kid," says Corera. "I can relate to pet parents who want that extra care and service and give thanks, in part, to Nuka because she has taught me so much."

When Corera returned to Toronto, she discovered it was very challenging to find a full-time teaching position. She also realized that there was a shortage of quality pet sitting services in this Canadian city. That inspired her to start Flying Duchess Professional Pet Sitting in 2009. One of her first business moves was to join NAPPS.

"NAPPS has been my lifesaver when I needed to be kept afloat," says Corera. "I am grateful to have the support, mentorship and guidance that NAPPS has provided me over the years."

Flying Duchess is insured, bonded and committed to fulfilling its motto: "Providing stress-free service one pet at a time." And committed to pet health and



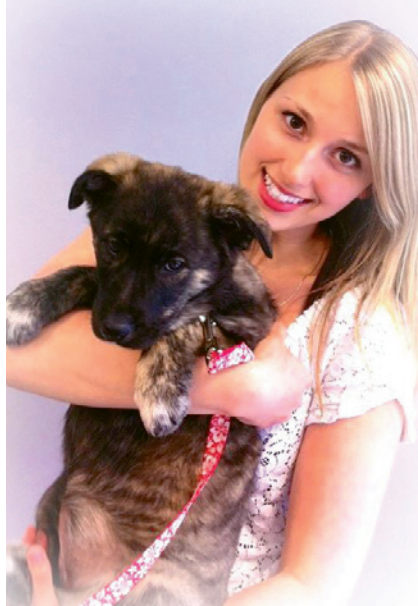
Meet Carol Corera's family: (from left) son, Zephyr, cat, Nuka, husband, Kintoo and newborn son, Brinley.

# of the Year

## WHAT CLIENTS SAY ABOUT FLYING DUCHESS

As part of the requirements in the application process to be considered for 2016 NAPPS Business of the Year honors, pet sitters had to include comments from clients. More than a dozen satisfied Flying Duchess clients willingly submitted statements. Here is a sampling:

- “The Flying Duchess pet sitter was confident and knowledgeable about caring for a diabetic cat. I love the fact that I received daily messages while I was away. The sitter described each of my two cats’ personalities to a tee. I returned home to two happy and healthy cats.” — *Ann Atkinson*
- “I was able to be on a worry-free vacation while my pets were looked after. I am happy with the level of service they provide and I am a repeat customer.” — *Robin Chow*
- “Having Flying Duchess care for my pet while I’m away is always a huge weight off my shoulders. I know that the team members are smart, savvy, caring pet lovers who inspire every confidence that they’ll take great care of my cat.” — *Sam Maglio*
- ““We feel secure while away. We return to find our pets content. The daily reports from Flying Duchess staff are truthful, comforting and thorough.” — *Brent Vickar*



“Flying Duchess provides a premium level of service. The automated voice-to-text technology used to provide updates adds a level of comfort while I am away from my pets.”

In addition, Flying Duchess uses Instagram to provide private pet photos for clients and social media to communicate community events and topics of interest to their clients. Its website is also mobile friendly, making it convenient for clients to access while traveling.

Corera gives thanks to her husband, Kintoo, for providing her with savvy business feedback, and her sister, Evita, who visited her during Corera’s final month of pregnancy.

“Without my sister’s help, I would not have been able to complete the questionnaire and send it in on time to NAPPS,” says Corera.

And, what’s Corera’s parting message to fellow NAPPS members? Invest the time to complete the Business of the Year application — it’s worth it. Gonzales echoes this message.

“While we understand it takes a great deal of effort to put the submission package together, the exposure and the prestige of being named NAPPS Business of the Year is something a business is able to use in marketing campaigns and for client acquisition not just next year, but the years in the future,” says Gonzales, who owns As You Wish Pet Sitters. “I strongly encourage businesses of any size to participate in our Business of the Year program, and challenge you to set yourself apart from the competition.” ■



## FACTS ABOUT FLYING DUCHESS PROFESSIONAL PET SITTING

- Location: Toronto, Ontario
- Established: 2009
- Staff: 18
- Owner Carol Corera is a certified pet first aid instructor.
- Mission statement: “Providing stress-free service one pet at a time.”
- Innovative service: provide clients with daily voice reports from pet sitters that are accessible internationally.
- Website: [www.flyingduchess.com](http://www.flyingduchess.com).

safety, Corera is a certified pet first aid instructor who conducts pet first aid and safety training to her team.

One of the pet sitters, Alyssa Rice, is studying to become a veterinarian and regards this job as ideal while she is in school.

“Carol has been a great role model to help me grow as a professional pet sitter,” says Rice. “Flying Duchess stands out for many reasons. We are all first-aid certified, have a passion for animals, and have gone through a training period to make sure we know what to do in any situation that might arise.”

The majority of the Flying Duchess business comes from those on vacation or taking business trips. The Flying Duchess team includes 16 pet sitters and two office employees. The staff primarily caters to cats and dogs, but also have experience caring for snakes, sugar gliders, birds, bunnies and pocket pets.

Declan Williams, a pet sitter on staff, says, “Carol has taught me a lot about the role that owner’s peace of mind plays in their pet’s happiness.”

### Clients Appreciate the Voice Mails

To alleviate stress felt by many clients who travel, Flying Duchess offers a toll-free virtual voice mailbox service. At the end of each visit, a Flying Duchess pet sitter records a detailed audio message about the pets that owners can listen to toll-free no matter where they are in the world.

“Our voice mails are more personal than a written email,” says Corera. “Our goal is to make our clients feel at ease when they hear the sitter’s voice — and sometimes, the meows or barks of their pets in the background. Equally important is for our sitters to be very transparent. If they have to cut short a visit due to traffic or a need to go to a medication visit, they let the client know and also let them know that they will spend extra time with the pets during the next visit.”

Client Alison Munro appreciates this voice mail service and adds,