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Letter to the Editor
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Several years ago the Ocean County Observer ran a feature article about "Paw-Ferred Pet Sitters" and Marsha Nitko, proprietor. I hired Ms. Nitko's services at that time for the care of my pets while I was on vacation. Being satisfied with her services, I relied on her business from time to time. I have not needed her services nor spoken to her for a year. Yet I found myself in dire straits last week and called two days in a row at the last minute. On both days I found everything in the same order as had been in the past: animals fed, toys strewn about with contented bodies greeting me upon my return, a lengthy note left explaining activities of each pet and the outside lights illuminated for my convenience. This repeated professionalism gives me a comfortable feeling about Ms. Nitko's services. Don't you wonder how she managed to do the same good job after a twelve-month waiting period? Yet, why is she one of very few business people who perform their services in such a professional manner?

This week the Observer printed a "For Better or Worse" cartoon about paid services within the family. The daughter and friend need money to go to the store, so they agree to do several household chores for the price of five dollars. However, the father offers them more than the agreed amount if they do a truly good job. The kids decide to settle for the five dollars. To me this cartoon reflects the majority attitude of people today, i.e., do an adequate job for an adequate pay. Why not a great job for more pay? (a.k.a. better reliable reputation for services done.)

Today's society seems to reflect the attitude of incompetence or mediocrity for the sake of earning nothing more than money - not responsibility, quality, nor future job possibilities due to outstanding work. When was the last time you could understand a businessperson who answered the phone? When was the last time a cashier looked you in the eye when beginning to ring up your order or handing you the change? How many times have you heard, "The computer is messed up" when the error could be detected with common sense? Yes, incorrect information can be placed in the data bank, but that does not prevent one from seeing an error quickly in lieu of "I don't know what's wrong."

As the saying goes: "You get what you pay for." This can also mean: "You earn what you deserve." A ten-percent tip for a waitress's service doesn't seem enough these days.