



It is Only Natural *by Lisa De Sieno*

The "human-companion animal bond" is a term coined by experts because our feelings toward pets are so special. When a pet dies this bond is severed and the sense of loss can be overwhelming. It is only natural that we grieve this loss. Recognizing that our feelings are normal and natural reactions can help in our ability to cope with the grief.

Grief is the natural reaction to a loss or significant change in our life. It is also a healing process in which you may experience many emotions such as sadness, anger, confusion, denial, guilt, disorientation, or depression. Physical symptoms including anxiety, fatigue, headaches, shakiness, stomach upset, loss of appetite or shortness of breath are common to many. At times, you might find yourself having difficulty sleeping or concentrating, crying or temporarily withdrawing from friends and activities. All of these experiences are normal and healthy reactions to grief. No two people will experience grief in exactly the same way.

The key is to try not to repress your feelings when they surface because this can make the process more intense. Find a way to express yourself and realize that there is not a "right" or "wrong"

way to grieve. A pet's death can also trigger memories of unresolved grief for loved ones who have died or other losses you've experienced. This can add to the intensity of your grief.

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it is not a sign of
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and aid in healing.**

In order to cope with these reactions, give yourself time and permission to grieve. Each person has his or her own timetable in which to move through these feelings and experiences. Get plenty of rest and be patient with yourself. Some days may be more difficult than others. Don't be afraid to ask for help when you need it. Often others want to offer support but don't quite know what to do. Allow yourself to cry—it is not a sign of weakness. Tears actually help to relieve tension and aid in healing.

Young children touched by the death of a pet can also experience emotional reactions. They may move in and out of periods of grief. Other times they may appear oblivious to the fact that the death has occurred. Use honest and correct terms with

children and encourage them to talk about their feelings and ask questions. Assure them that these feelings are normal and assure the child of love.

Creating a meaningful memorial is a wonderful way for you and your family to cherish special memories of your pet. Consider making a photo collage, planting flowers or a tree by the grave, having a sketch of your pet copied from a photograph, or making a donation to a pet-related facility. Memorializing is a way of paying tribute to the special place in your life that your pet shared. 🐾

*Lisa De Sieno is Director of
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**Forever
FRIENDS**

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Forever Friends is a division of
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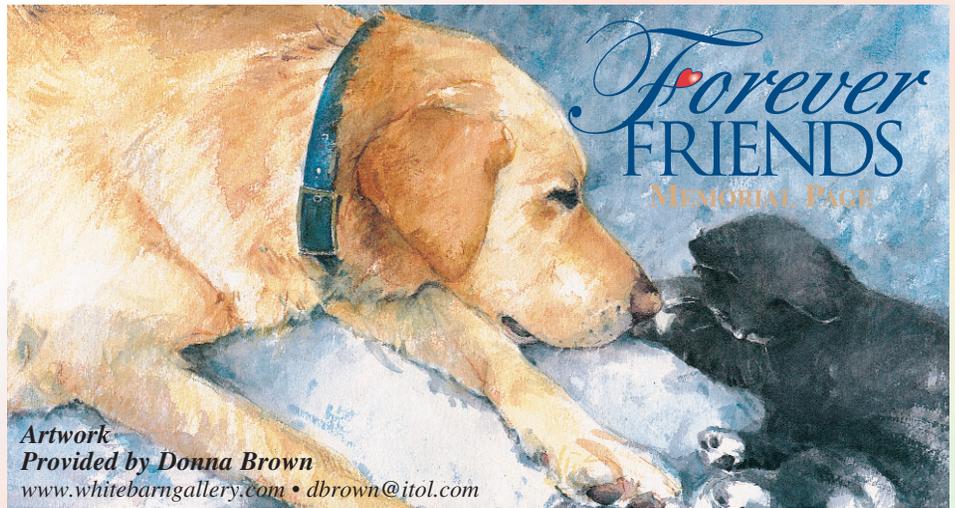
PET BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT

🐾 **The Association for
Pet Loss and Bereavement**
(718) 382-0690
www.aplb.org

🐾 **Petloss.com**
For pet lovers grieving the
death of a pet or an ill pet
www.petloss.com

🐾 **The Rainbow Passage**
Pet Loss Support Center
(262) 376-0340
douglasc@execpc.com

🐾 **Books available for
checkout from *Forever
Friends* Grief Library**
Charlotte's Web
by E.B. White
Pet Loss by Herbert A.
Nieburg, Ph.D.
and Arlene Fischer
The Fall of Freddie the Leaf
by Leo Buscaglia, Ph.D.
I'll Always Love You
by Hans Wilhelm
When A Pet Dies
by Fred Rogers
Lifetimes by Bryan Mellonie
and Robert Ingpen
*The Tenth Good Thing About
Barney* by Judith Viorst



For Magnum by Jody Hamilton

The rising sun, a mourning breeze. Awake, I hear your constant wheeze.
A labored breath, a wistful sigh. A gentle kiss to say good-bye.
Your trusting eyes, though filled with pain,
My love for you is still the same.
Your body spent, your face, so pale; A final swish of your golden tail.
My heavy heart, it braves the end. And saves a place for my best friend. 🐾

Alone by Kate

You happened on our doorstep, A friend to call my own. We took you
in to love you, So scared and all alone. I fed you and I kissed you,
Someone had heard my plea, To have a tiny kitten, I thank God that
it was me. But your life was shortly ended. For put to rest you were,
The FIP consumed you, I long to hear you purr. I would have held and
kissed you, If I were there to say goodbye. I lay awake just thinking,
And many times I cry. Yet I know you're not alone again, I know it
through and through, You're waiting on a rainbow, Amidst a sky so
blue. Now whenever I get lost, While I'm scared and all alone.
I'll look amongst the angels, And I'll know that you are home. 🐾

Please submit your stories and poems to: FF Memorials, 645 Heyrman St., Green Bay, WI 54302

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