

Pet Loss & Grieving: Part Three

By Jennifer M. Brauns

This article is the third and last in our Pet Loss & Grieving series. If you missed parts one or two, you can read or download them from our website www.milehighdog.com.

The previous articles in our pet loss series have covered pre-planning, aging pets, terminal illnesses, pet hospice, euthanasia, cremation, burial and the grieving process. This final article deals with final resting places and remembering your pet. We understand the unconditional love that your furry friend has given you and what a gaping hole there will be in your heart when your pet is gone. With a little forethought, you can ensure that there won't be regrets when your pet is gone and that you will feel like you have honored your pet in the best possible way.

Planning Ahead

If you have a dog or cat that is still living, there are many things that you can do now to ensure that you will have great memories later. Make sure to take photographs of your pet whenever you can. A special portrait will always be treasured. There are numerous artists who can turn your photo into a painting or drawing that you will treasure for years to come. You might even consider having some professional photographs taken while your pet is young.

Take a casting of your pet's paw print. There are kits available at many craft stores, veterinarian's offices and online, and the casting can be made into a wall hanging or a garden stone. Clip

a lock of hair and put it in a special box as a keepsake. There are many products including jewelry, garden stones, and art glass keepsakes that can be lovingly made from cremains or a lock of hair.

When it's Time to Say Goodbye

As we mentioned last time, people are rarely able to make rational decisions when they have just lost a pet. By deciding now on whether you want to bury or cremate your pet, you will know what you want for your pet when the time comes.



Glass Weeping Heart Pendant by Pet Memorial Glass Jewelry

Burial vs. Cremation

There are a number of lovely pet cemeteries in and around Denver if that is your wish. Many people prefer to have their pet's ashes with them or buried at home or in a special place. We have provided a list of end of life products and services at the end of this article. If cremation is your preference, decide now if you will want to have the ashes back. There

are group cremations available where you receive no ashes. If you want your pet's ashes returned, you can request individual cremation or even a witnessed cremation.

Caskets and Urns

Whether you choose cremation or burial, there are a number of truly beautiful caskets and urns available. Choosing products for your pet's final resting place ahead of time ensures that you will get what you want. Urns, for instance, can be made with your pet's name and photo etched on. They can be hand-painted, created from clay or carved from wood or stone. If you want something truly special, find it now and be sure to have it ready when the time comes. If you plan to bury the urn, it might not be as important to you to have a work of art. If the urn is going to be on display, a truly unique work of art that is as special as your pet might be in order.

Memorial Markers

Rainbow Bridge and other businesses specialize in engraving stones to be used as grave markers, headstones or memorial garden stones. Forever Friends also offers bronze medallions with your pet's three-dimensional image, name and dates if desired. The medallions can be displayed alone or embedded in stone.

Marble Etchings

Farewell to Pets offers beautiful

black marble laser etchings from a photo. They are available in 6" x 6" or 12" x 12" sizes and come with an easel for displaying in your home.

Memorial Gardens

In addition to pet cemeteries, there are other beautiful options for your pet's resting place. Dumb Friends League (DFL) offers the Sheilagh R. Malo Pet Memorial Garden at their Quebec Street shelter which is beautifully landscaped. Your pet's ashes can be placed in a sealed urn and interred in the garden in a place of your choosing. The spot will be marked with an engraved granite cap inscribed as you wish. Graveside memorial services are an option at the time of interment. Memorial garden burials are available for a \$500 donation and can include euthanasia and cremation. For a deposit of \$250, you can choose and reserve your pet's final resting place. The garden is open daily from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. The gates are locked when the shelter is closed and on major holidays.

DFL's Memorial Garden also offers tribute bricks to remember pets and people. For a minimum \$350 donation, your special message will be etched onto a brick and added to the garden's walkway.

Around the shelter grounds there are trees and benches that can commemorate your pet. Trees can be marked with an inscribed message brick for a donation of \$1,500 and benches can be dedicated for a donation of \$5,000.

Want to really make a difference? With a minimum \$10,000 donation,

a shelter kennel will be permanently marked with a plaque bearing a name, image and several lines of text. Other possibilities include an inscribed Lucite tile on the friendship wall for \$100 donation, ceramic paw print tiles on the Promise Wall (Quebec Street) or Buddy Wall (Castle Rock) for a \$250 donation or a ceramic photo tile on the Photo Wall. For these and other ways to remember your human or canine loved one, please call DFL at 303-751-5772, ext. 7227. All proceeds from DFL memorials and tributes are used to care for pets at the shelter. What a wonderful way to remember your pet.



Memory Sphere by HeartGlass Studio

Paws Fur Love Memorial Wall

Another beautiful way to remember you pet is with an inscription on the MaxFund Paws Fur Love Memorial Wall (photo on page 20). Fashioned after the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington D.C., your inscription can be a beautiful lasting tribute to a loved one. Memorial wall inscriptions require a \$250 donation to the MaxFund Shelter. For more information, call 303-595-9481.

Other ways to remember

As counselor Julie Millick shared in

our previous article, "It is important for people to remind themselves about their pet...Write a story, compile a photo album or do other activities that help you remember."

Save your pet's collar and tags. TheMemoryCandle.com offers photo frames that incorporate your pet's tags and/or collar into a beautiful memory candle. Many people also purchase velvet keepsake bags to hold tags, puppy teeth and other precious memories. Sandra David makes custom quilts in loving memory of your pets. Be sure to save any sweaters, t-shirts or other outfits your dog had to incorporate into a memory quilt. Pet Memorial & Glass Jewelry offers beautiful pendants, key chains and other items that can incorporate cremains, fur or feathers. One of my absolute favorite memory products are the beautiful one-of-a-kind art glass memory spheres that HeartGlass Studio in Golden makes. These amazing pieces are lovingly hand-crafted with your pet or other loved one's cremains.

Other great ways to remember your pet include writing a song, story or poem, creating a memory scrapbook or starting a pet-related business or charity.

We hope our pet loss articles have given you ideas for dealing with the inevitable passing of your pet. For all they have given us, the least we can do is hold on to our pets' memories and keep them in our heart. Losing a pet can be one of the most difficult times in your life, but with some planning and forethought, you can make it a very special memory.

Pet Loss Resource Directory

Pet Cemeteries & Crematories:

AAA Pet Cremation	303-340-8256	Aurora
Ark Pet Crematory	970-522-7344	Sterling
Best Friends Pet Crematory	800-522-5676	Greeley
Denver Pet Cemetery	303-288-0177	Commerce City
Evergreen Pet Cemetery	303-674-7777	Evergreen
Family Friend Animal Care (Cremation)	303-915-5813	Denver
Green Acres Cemetery & Crematory	719-444-0404	Colorado Springs
Northern Lights Pet Crematory	970-826-0330	Craig
Pet Cremation Services	303-403-1647	Wheat Ridge
Pet Rest Memorial Park	719-576-0496	Colorado Springs
Precious Hearts Private Cremation	303-507-9933	Littleton
Precious Memories Pet Cemetery & Crematory	970-482-7557	Fort Collins
Rainbow Bridge Pet Crematorium	970-962-9200	Loveland
Whispering Winds Pet Crematory	303-316-2717	Denver

Urns & Caskets:

Ashes to Art	706-461-2714	www.ashestoart.com
Rainbow Bridge Pet Memorials	866-276-2548	www.rainbowbridgepetmemorials.com
Remember My Pet		www.remembermypet.net
Tails of the Rockies	303-424-6250	www.tailsoftherockies.com

* Please note that pet cemeteries and crematories also offer caskets and urns

Markers & Garden Stones:

Forever in My Heart	800-873-7387	www.4everinmyheart.com
Pet Steps to Heaven	888-757-5712	www.petstepstoheaven.com
Rainbow Bridge Pet Memorials	866-276-2548	www.rainbowbridgepetmemorials.com

Memorial Jewelry & Art Glass:

HeartGlass Studio	720-229-0605	www.heartglassstudio.com
Pet Memorial Glass Jewelry	303-810-1135	www.petmemorialglassjewelry.com
Rainbow Bridge Pet Memorials	866-276-2548	www.rainbowbridgepetmemorials.com

Pet Portraits, Etchings & Medallions:

Cathy Lester Artwork	303-793-0056	www.cathylester.com
Farewell to Pets Memorial Products	719-783-0999	www.farewelltopets.com
Fetching Pet Portaiture by Lynn Culp	303-482-2682	www.colormutts.com
Jaime Rowe Photography	720-884-6573	www.jaimerowephotography.com
Jennifer Nystrom Airbrush Artist	720-320-4689	nystromj@msn.com
Memory Lane Studios	303-909-2852	www.memorylanepetart.com
One Eyed Dog Photography	937-554-6052	oneeyeddoggphotography@yahoo.com
Patty's Pet Photography	720-733-0275	www.pattyspetphotography.com
Split Image Photography	720-988-7209	www.splitimage-photography.com
Studio Denver Photography	303-282-4593	www.studiodenver.com

Miscellaneous Products:

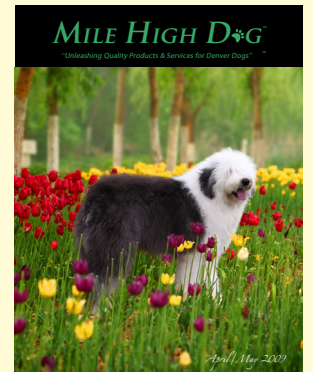
Creative Memories Scrapbooking	303-710-1752	www.mycmsite.com/jasonsaki
Deb's Custom Critters (Portraits w/poems)	303-840-5490	www.debscustomcritters.com
Farewell to Pets Memorial Products	719-783-0999	www.farewelltopets.com
Memory Candles	888-575-9363	www.thememorycandle.com
Pet's Poetry	877-730-9393	www.petspoetry.com
Sandra L. David Custom Quilts	303-570-5291	

Additions & Correction to Last Issue:

Correction - Ann Johnson, Pet Loss & Grief Counseling - office number 303-861-5699
 Addition - New Boulder Pet Loss Support Group led by Ann Cattarello - call 303-352-0930
 Addition - Pet Loss & Grieving Counselor - Carol Stanwood - 303-520-1387

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