



# The Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement, Inc.

aplb

Vol. 12 Issue 3

Autumn, 2009

## EVEN MORE GREAT STEPS FORWARD

### LATEST HAPPENINGS

The first online training seminars for pet bereavement counselors was given in the five weeks, from August 2 through the week of the 30<sup>th</sup>. Thirteen people took this new instruction, and were awarded *APLB Certificates of Training*. The next sessions will be from January 4<sup>th</sup> through the first week of February. You can read about this on our website.

There is no certification for petloss counselors in the US. The certificate we have been awarding was only for training. As the sole leader in this area, we are now instituting a new *APLB Certificate of Counseling Excellence (CCE)* to those who complete the above training, and then go on through our Internship Program, and become Assistant Chatroom Hosts. This is a first, and a major step in our field.

Plans are already underway for our Sixth Annual Conference on Pet Loss and Bereavement, May 21-23, 2010. You will be sent Email announcements, and more information will appear in future editions of this newsletter, as well as on our website.

Every year our annual picnic gets better. On Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup> it was wonderful to meet and break bread, together. The farm setting is gorgeous, and you can see photos from this and the previous picnics, on our Events Page. What a nice day that was! When we get higher concentrations of members in other areas of the country we will also be holding the same kinds of events in those locations.

We are always looking for interesting material to print in future editions of this newsletter. This includes poems, essays, artwork, cartoons, and even mood pieces. The only requirement is that it must be related to pet ownership and bereavement. Most online articles may be reprinted. Please keep watch, and send them to me at [sife@aol.com](mailto:sife@aol.com).

### PRESIDENT'S CORNER

For the past 7½ years I have seen a steady growth of the APLB in every phase, and it is such a privilege to share in that growth. We are the international leaders in the field of pet loss bereavement support, and we can pride ourselves in this.

As unfortunate as it is that we meet our new friends as a result of the death of pets, good comes from it in the way of compassion and understanding for one another. Ours is a common thread of caring that is not found in every organization. Via the Internet we have become a source of solace for the world, in its pain from pet loss.

It is wonderful to see the friendships that form from participation in the chat rooms. And it brings such personal satisfaction to see the healing from pet loss take place in these people, as they continue to visit with us.

In our first year of existence we did not even use a computer. But since we went online, nearly 12 years ago, there have been approximately 32,000 visitors to the chat rooms. And our website hits have been close to 727,000. These are awesome numbers.

As you know, every September we enjoy a picnic in Maryland for our members, their friends, and pets. We have many members in Florida, and we would like to start this same trend there, next year. I would like to hear what our Florida members think about it. Please Email me at [Tanzitan@aol.com](mailto:Tanzitan@aol.com)

Our website lists many books for adults as well as children who need help with pet loss. Children's bereavement is often overlooked while parents process their own grief. All these books can be conveniently purchased from Amazon.com, via our Bibliography page.

# APLB Quarterly Newsletter Autumn, 2009

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the association for pet loss  
and bereavement

aplb

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## In Memoriam

Our Honor Roll of Beloved  
Deceased Companion Animals

*These are new names added since the publication of our last newsletter. All are now permanently posted with their photos, on our website's Hall of Fame pages.*

*To permanently record the remembrance of a beloved pet in our In Memoriam registry and Honor Roll, send \$25 with up to 25 words and a clear color photo. New listings will appear in every edition of this newsletter. Multiple family memorials are also posted, at no additional charge.*

~~~~~

**Aubry** 1/12/96 -- 8/3/09

Aubry, you were the best boy, ever. We miss your sweet presence. You brought such joy to all of our lives, and we miss you more than words can say!

*Daddy Rick, Daddy Chuck & CeCe (Rick Pessagno & Chuck Rowland)*

~~~~~

**Eva** 10/03 – 9/12/08

Sweet Eva, your innocence softened the edges of relationships. I will always be grateful for your unselfish gift. But more, I will love you, always.

*--Mom (Leslie)*

~~~~~

**Josie** 05/01 – 7/7/09

To our Josie girl: You managed to take our hearts and fill them with such sweet love. What a special furchild you were to us.

*– Until Forever, your Daddy (Joseph) & Mommy (Toni)*

~~~~~

**Kiriki** 9/20/93 – 9/13/06

Kiriki, Precious "Bright Eyes", soul friend and gift from God. You lived well, loved fully and gave your all. In my heart forever!

*– Love, "Mom" (Rev. Shellie K. Pinner)*

~~~~~

**Miss Mimsi Gray** 0/15/02 – 6/17/09

My precious little love, may your spirit soar, free to run and play in God's beautiful heaven, with memories of our most cherished time together.

*– Your loving mom, Lisa Gray*

~~~~~

**Nathan** 11/01/95 – 07/22/09

My friend, I miss you so much. My shadow is gone.  
I hope so much to see you in Heaven.

– *All my love, Sue Frost*

~~~~~

**Panzer** 2/25/96 – 5/11/09

To my best buddy in the world. You touch my heart and life in ways I will never forget. You will always be remembered and loved. *Vaya con Dios, amigo.*

– *Your ever loving dad, Michael*

~~~~~

**Semi Miss** 5/20/75 – 4/9/09

Semi, you are still very much in my heart. Until we see each other again, be at peace and be free, my dear old friend.

– *Alis, your human*

~~~~~

**Wisteria** 5/3/86 – 8/19/09

Thank you for being a sweet, beautiful and devoted friend who brought us joy and love for so many years. We will love you always.

– *Love, Sandi, Don, and the amazing cats*

### CONFERENCE PREPARATIONS

Our Fifth International Conference on Pet Loss and Bereavement will be on May 21-23, 2010. That is one week before the Memorial Day weekend. We invite proposals and presenters.

A special webpage is being constructed to provide full information. It will also feature a registration page for this.

The APLB is looking for a keynote speaker who is well known to the general public. If you can help us with this contact Dr. Sife at [sife@aol.com](mailto:sife@aol.com).

We are very pleased to announce that Valerie Brideau will be working with Dr. Sife, as Assistant Conference Coordinator.

## HOORAY FOR US!

I have such a good feeling, about how we are growing and better serving the needs of the pet-loving community. We are taking some more big steps forward, and that's wonderful! All of our staff volunteer in various ways, with different workloads and schedules. And each of us serves in a special capacity, enabling the others to do their different jobs without having to look over their shoulders. That's real teamwork, and I am so pleased with how our APLB is continually growing and developing.

I wanted to share this with you.

Because of a lot of hard work, we have a great deal going for us. Our chatrooms are universally recognized as the best on the Internet, and we all can feel very proud of that. And our website is by far the most informative and helpful of all that there are. Our new online counselor training program is an outstanding success, and we have just created our ground-breaking *APLB Certificate of Counseling Excellence*. That's another giant step forward. These are the first and only certifications for pet counselors.

The next course will be given online, in January, and the one after that will be offered at our upcoming conference. It's all happening!

By doing our individual jobs so well, each of us makes the APLB so successful. I want to thank you for being members and supporting our activities, to make this happen. And I hope you all share this sense of pride with me. Hooray for the APLB, and hooray for us!

Please stay in more frequent touch, and let me know how you are doing.

– *Dr. Wallace Sife*

## WHY WE DO IT

– Dr. Wallace Sife

Someone interesting confronted me, the other day. We were having a pleasant conversation, when he asked me what I do. When I told him about the APLB and all our counseling and help, he seemed a little taken aback. He knows how serious and dedicated I am, and he was surprised that I was so involved in something that he thought was frivolous. He asked, “Why do you sweat the small stuff, when there are so many more really important things that desperately need to be addressed.”

This man works in world politics and is often passionately involved with the United Nations and its frustrating work in trying to resolve tragic worldwide emergencies and plights. I understand his dedication to help make this a better world, and I respect him greatly for that. But his challenge caught me off guard for a moment, and I had to think. I needed to take him to task, and explain, in the larger scheme of things, why my work here is still so important – despite the tragedies, evil and suffering of all kinds, everywhere around us. All of us may experience something like this, and I wanted to share my thinking with you.

There are many levels of existence for us, and it is our moral and civic responsibility to help make this world a better place than we found it. And to literally millions of good people, pet bereavement is not “small stuff”. I told him that he had lost perspective on things. Nobody ever has the right to be judgmental about the pain that others feel, whatever the causes.

My own start in counseling in pet bereavement was very unexpected, and I had no prior thoughts that I would be doing this. I had been in private practice as a psychologist, and I was already preparing to retire. But my beloved seven year old miniature dachshund suddenly went into the final stages of congestive heart failure. And we had only three weeks left, together. After he died, I was an emotional “basket case”. That surprised me, and I tried to better understand my turbulent emotional reactions. So I vainly sought appropriate help. But in 1987 there were only three pet bereavement counselors, anywhere. And the literature on this subject was sparse and inadequate. So I felt I had to write the book that I would have wanted for myself – but now for others. That’s how *The Loss of a Pet* got written.

After that, I then began counseling in this very new and untried field. Later, at a local book signing and lecture I met with many people who wanted me to form an organization, and that’s how the APLB got started. We all had lost beloved pets, and we felt that everyone would benefit from widespread mutual support, which was still unavailable at the time. After that, we went online. The APLB had evolved out of our own needs and grief, and we then realized that we were in a unique position to reach out and help others.

Being closely attached to our pets is natural, and wonderful. Regardless of disturbing social conditions around us, that desperately demand attention, we still have to deal with our own individual everyday needs and attempts to have some pleasures of our own. Chief among these is our need to love and be loved.

In seeking this, each of us acts out in many different and personal ways. Having companion and working animals is something that started gradually developing thousands of years ago – way back in our primitive history, when everyday survival was a first concern. After a great deal of time, the modern eras eventually changed everything. Powerful new social factors, such as urbanization, living alone, and the breakdown of tight-knit communities affected us in many ways. One of these resulted in a spurt of popularization of pets – for companionship and love.

This was a very human and healthy response and personal outreach. Our existence is deeply affected and shaped by our individual sense of security at home. Despite whatever we do on the outside, our craving for love is of primary importance in our private lives. A great majority of us delight in animals, and seek the unconditional total love and security that pets give us. But there are many who do not, and never will understand or honor this. And during intense bereavement, we are too vulnerable to them.

Whatever their reasons or justifications, we must learn to feel secure, and not get upset by their demonstrated indifference or prejudice against us for this. It is easy to become defensive and hostile to

*(Continued on Next Page)*

## **Why We Do It (Continued from Previous Page)**

Them. But we must always keep in mind that there are also some good people out there who just don't seem to "get it". Actually, very few of our critics are motivated by personal malice. However, so many are completely involved in their own judgmental or defensive way of living, and they may never be able to really understand.

A good person's life involves social and moral responsibility and action. This also requires personal care, which includes a healthy sense of self-love. Every person on this planet needs to be a little self-indulgent and pleasure-seeking, if possible. Of course, we have to strike a happy medium. For example, despite our compassion, we couldn't survive if we gave away all our income, to important charities. We also couldn't maintain balanced mental health if we denied ourselves some basic love, as well as the unique pleasure we get from pets. But to a few, being totally involved in trying to remedy the world's ills can make them tend to overlook some of the "smaller" things in life – which can be so important to others.

It is not so surprising to realize that we need our pets more than ever, today. The daily news is distressingly full of the greed, indifference, evil and malice that is expressing itself in our rapidly changing world. Each of us is very involved in our own micro environments, as well as the macro, all around us. And we normally crave the stabilizing effect of love of others – and that from our companion animals, who are actually very dear family members. Despite our critics, we do not ever have to justify love of our pets, to anyone. Nor should we feel we have any obligation to even attempt this.

When someone has a beloved companion animal who dies, that will affect him/her very deeply (as we all know, here). Regardless of our moral involvement and obligations to the great needs of the world, we also have a prime responsibility to help ourselves – as well as any other individual who is in deep grief.

Only about twenty years ago most of us would keep our heartache "in the closet" because there was little understanding or communication about it. But with the coming of age of the Internet and contemporary television there has been a fantastic explosion of information on everything. We now see that we are not alone, in our bereavement for beloved pets. And some of us are being motivated to reach out to help others, even when they are hurting.

Fortunately, now there also are hundreds of books addressing the subject. Twenty years ago there were only three.

Pet loss and bereavement is no longer seen as a "touchy-feely", relatively unimportant subject. It is about a very legitimate personal loss and grief. Good people should not feel apologetic about this, because of the many other very important things that are going on around us. Fortunately, today this lesson is being learned and made more apparent than ever before.

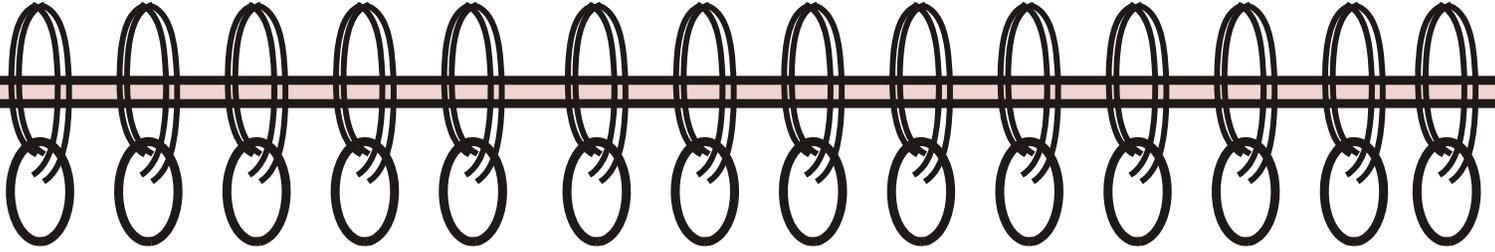
The APLB has been at the forefront, in this. Our unique organization was founded twelve years ago, to teach and help heal. And I and all our singular volunteer staff are dedicated to this act of love. Our pets have made us better people, and we do this because of what we have become. We are proud of our special work, and what we are accomplishing.

Every member of our staff came here as a bereaver, seeking support. After they found themselves in our safe, caring environment they started looking through their own tears, to understand and help the others. They were then specially trained and shown how they can reach out to be of practical assistance. That is the spirit of the APLB, and it honors all our dear pets – and ourselves, as well.

After going through a traumatic pet loss most visitors join us as members. We then offer them individual support and counsel, in addition to our unique newsletters and other benefits of membership. There is a wonderful sense of camaraderie, here. At first it amazed me, that so many stay on for years, constantly renewing their involvement with us, and helping support all we are doing. But I soon realized by this token action, they are reaching out, in their own ways, to help, as well.

So it is not so difficult to understand why we do this. Whether good deeds are measured on a personal or a global scale, they are all important, in our varied and individual struggles for survival. Goodness prevails and finds its own level, within us.

In this rapidly changing world, fraught with evil, hate, indifference and tragedy, our love of animals and each other gives new hope and sense of belonging and pride, for who we all are, as a people. And we don't have to be world shakers. Unexpectedly, and in a roundabout way all of us here have discovered that simply reaching out to help others is personally enriching, as well. That's what makes the APLB. And it also cogently tells what we are and why we do this.



## **DOG RULES**

*- Taken from the Internet*

- 1. Dogs are never permitted in the house. The dog stays outside in a specially built wooden compartment named, for very good reason, the dog house.**
- 2. Okay, the dog can enter the house, but only for short visits or if his own house is under renovation.**
- 3. Okay, the dog can stay in the house on a permanent basis, provided his dog house can be sold in a yard sale to a rookie dog owner.**
- 4. Inside the house, the dog is not allowed to run free and is confined to a comfortable but secure metal cage.**
- 5. Okay, the cage becomes part of a two-for-one deal along with the dog house in the yard sale, and the dog can go wherever he pleases.**
- 6. The dog is never allowed on the furniture.**
- 7. Okay, the dog can get on the old furniture but not the new furniture.**
- 8. Okay, the dog can get up on the new furniture until it looks like the old furniture and then we'll sell the whole works and buy new furniture... upon which the dog will most definitely not be allowed.**
- 9. The dog never sleeps on the bed. Period.**
- 10. Okay, the dog can sleep at the foot of the bed.**
- 11. Okay, the dog can sleep alongside you, but he's not allowed under the covers.**
- 12. Okay, the dog can sleep under the covers but not with his head on the pillow.**
- 13. Okay, the dog can sleep alongside you under the covers with his head on the pillow, but if he snores he's got to leave the room.**
- 14. Okay, the dog can sleep and snore and have nightmares in bed, but he's not to come in and sleep on the couch in the TV room, where I'm now sleeping. That's just not fair.**
- 15. The dog never gets listed on the census questionnaire as "primary resident," even if it's true.**

## PAUL'S LITTLE KITTY

– Paul K. Chaney

My wife and I (now an ex-wife) decided in 1984 to get a kitty. We went to the humane society. There were lots of cute little ones. However, my wife felt sorry for a grown-up cat who appeared to be afraid of everyone. He stayed at the back of his cage. He was tan, with stripes on his tail. So we passed on all the little ones and adopted what became “Paul's Little Kitty”, or just “Little Kitty”, for short. It was evident early on that this cat had led a tough life. The vet noticed from scars on his body that he had been in a lot of cat fights. Also, whenever I would get a broom out, he would run, just at the sight of it. (Later, though, kitty did get his revenge against the broom. When I'd leave the door to the closet open, he would go in and chew on its end.)

He was a scared cat at first, staying away from both of us. But the first day home, we learned a kitty trait that would stay with him for the rest of his life. We bought a bag of cat food, put some in a bowl and went to bed. He thought he died and went to kitty heaven. Food!!!! He got into the bag and gorged himself until he was sick. The next day we had no idea why he was sick, at first. I slept downstairs with him the next night (as he was warming up to me by then). Eventually we figured it out. He must have had a really tough time finding food, and from that day forward he would eat as much as we'd put out. His cravings became so bad, that in the middle of the night he would wake me up to feed him. I was going batty since I needed sleep as much as he wanted food. So I bought one of those automatic cat feeders that open on a timer. The first night it worked like a charm. However, on the second night, that smart cat learned that if he kept hitting the feeder with his paw, it would eventually open. Then he would wake me up at 4 in the morning for more food. Ahhhh. So, I mounted the feeder on the wall and let the food drop into a big kitty litter box. Yay! This solution worked.

Over the years, kitty continued to be afraid of strangers, but he would sleep between my legs, using one leg as a pillow as we watched TV, every night. He would never let me or anyone hold him, but found comfort in touching me while he slept. He did sleep on my bed every night. In the early years, he would sleep on the side of my pillow, with his head on it. He was always waiting at the door when I came

home from work at night (something he continued to do to the end). He'd make this little kitty 'woof' noise until I fed him – which I had to do right away. His room was downstairs so I'd give him food and go back upstairs to the kitchen. You had to be very careful going down the stairs because he would follow, getting under your feet. As you can imagine, he started gaining weight, and maxed out at 19 pounds. Well, the time had come for kitty aerobics.

We bought special diet food and started playing together, every night, getting his weight down to 13 pounds. His favorite toys were two catnips. One was a candy cane and the other was shaped like a Christmas wreath. He would put one paw through the middle, and rub it against his nose.

Kitty's favorite place to sit was a box in the front room, looking out over our finch feeder. He could sit for hours observing the birds. He also liked to sit on top of the refrigerator. I'm sure he felt like he was on top of the world. Eventually, he became less scared and would actually walk up to strangers. He was always afraid to go outside, but did get out once to chase the neighbor's dog out of the yard.

Later, I was divorced and got the kitty in the settlement. Five or six years ago, he started getting arthritis in his front legs. I had to put a stool next to the bed so he could sleep with me. He could no longer sit on the refrigerator, and I carried him up and down the stairs as much as possible. We continued to watch TV together, though. Kitty would never let me work freely at the computer, at home. He insisted on walking across the keyboard. I was able to solve this problem by getting him his own chair, which I would place next to mine. He would sleep there while I worked.

In 1998, kitty stayed under the bed and wouldn't come out. It was not unusual for him to sleep there but he wouldn't come out for food, either. I had to put his water and his food under the bed. The vet found a tumor on his stomach and kitty had to have surgery. He survived and there were no complications. Then he came home. However, he refused to leave the

*(Continued On Next Page)*

*(Paul's Little Kitty Continued)*

garage, downstairs. I think he somehow felt the house had something to do with his pain. Luckily, I moved into a new house, two weeks later. Kitty loved it. It had a few stairways, where he could sleep at the top and look down over his world. Eventually, he decided not to climb stairs, anymore. He had a bed that he adored and spent most of his time sleeping there. My bedroom is upstairs, so he no longer slept with me. But when the sun rose in the morning, he sat at the bottom of the stairs and cried until I woke up and come and feed him. Then he typically went back to bed, leaving me wide-awake. Kitty had also lost most of his hearing. You had to make sure that he saw you when you walked up to him. Otherwise, he got startled.

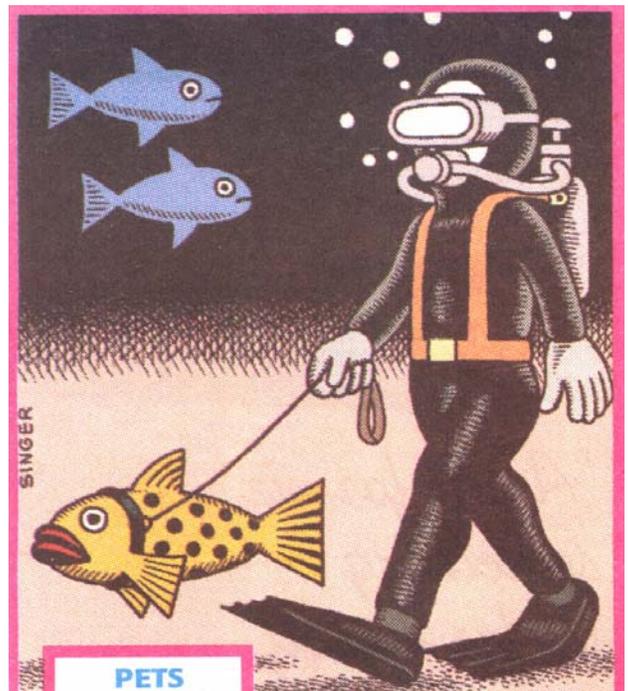
That last week, kitty quit eating. This is a bad sign for cats, especially one that loves his food so much. The vet gave him fluids and I was able to bring my kitty home. He did not appear to be in any pain and he started eating again. But he was not moving around as much as normal, and I feared the worst. I was totally unprepared for the eventual demise of my Kitty. He had been my alarm clock, my pal and TV companion. For the last 15 years he was always waiting for me to come home. I would do anything for my little kitty. He slept in his bed, right here by the computer, as I wrote things. I love him.

A few months passed, and my Kitty was put to sleep. He was actually doing very well, but suddenly, he went fast. These last two or three months have been rather emotional for me, but I am doing fine. It was a very emotional experience watching him and knowing he did not have long to live. My vet was very honest about when the time would be right. Clearly, the decision was not a happy one for me to make, but I know it was the right thing, and I have no regrets. While on one hand, I feel that an emotional burden has been lifted, I also miss him, intensely. I took lots of pictures and gave a 'say goodbye to kitty party' where all my friends could have a picture taken with him. Little Kitty was cremated and is once again at home, but in spirit only.

*Paul K. Chaney, Ph.D. CPA, is an associate professor of management at the Owen Graduate School of Management at Vanderbilt University. His pets include 'little kitty,' 'dog-kitty', and his childhood dog, 'tippy.'*

## LITTLE KITTY

The morning sun is loath to rise,  
without the prompting of his cries  
He waits with patience of one who loves,  
for the sound of footsteps from above  
Alas, alas he comes to feed,  
The gnawing hunger, the loving need  
And now the day's begun anew,  
with service from that one so true  
Which the master? Which the pet?  
It matters not, when needs are met  
This love so strong, the tie that binds,  
Release neither from the other's mind  
Forget him not and never fear,  
When sadness wets your check with tear  
So from this tie, both have gained,  
in one's heart and soul the other shall remain.



## MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION UPDATES

Since the publication of our last newsletter, many individuals have joined or renewed their existing memberships in the APLB.

We would like to thank everyone for supporting our much-needed work.

And we want to express our special appreciation to those who have donated at the *Platinum Angel*, *Silver Angel*, and *Patron Angel* levels, as well as those who gave **Additional Donations**.

Please see our website's *Join Us Page* for more information on these categories.

*We are a designated 501(c)(3) philanthropic organization  
and all dues and donations are tax-deductible*

### NEW BASIC MEMBERSHIP

#### *Silver Angel*

Gray, Lisa      Richmond, VA

#### *Patron Angel*

Pessagno, Richard      Voorhees, NJ

#### *Additional Donation*

Goebel, Mara      Tempe, AZ

Thanks also to all of our newest members at the Basic Membership Level.

|                            |                            |                     |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| Auld, Mary                 | Timonium, MD               | Ayala, Roseanne     | Bellevue, FL               |
| Bagrier, Patrick           | East Orange, NJ            | Curotto, Nancy      | Chicago, IL                |
| Curotto, Nancy             | Chicago, IL                | Duval, Laura        | Colton, NY                 |
| Flick, Gemma               | Moline, IL                 | Foster, Maryann     | Sunnyside, NY              |
| Freedman, Ellie            | Laguna Beach, CA           | Frost, Susan        | Wenonah, NJ                |
| Fuss, Michael              | Wilbraham, MA              | Giberson, Wendolyn  | Seattle, WA                |
| Goldstein, Naomi           | Ridge, NY                  | Hess, Angel         | Lebanon, VA                |
| Horne, Tina                | Linwood, PA                | Jospheon, Kate      | Clarkston, MI              |
| Kalinke, Tom               | Madison, WI                | Keith, Andrea       | Irvine, CA                 |
| Kenyon, Philip             | Wheaton, IL                | Kirkpatrick, Sharon | Georgetown, TX             |
| Larchuk, Amy               | Media, PA                  | Malphrus, Janet     | Hurlock, MD                |
| Martinache, Sharon         | Pinellas Park, FL          | Mondani, Penny      | Fort Lauderdale, FL        |
| Oneto, Toni and Joseph     | Valhalla, NY               | Raychuk, Anya       | Bronx, NY                  |
| Schlameuss, Sheryl         | Old Bethpage, NY           | Schneller, Gina     | Howell, NJ                 |
| Shelton, Lee               | Toronto, Ontario, Canada   | Smith, Barbara      | Sundridge, Ontario, Canada |
| Stewart, Connie            | New Port, NC               | Sumrall, Linda      | Biloxi, MS                 |
| Szasz, Melissa             | Swartz Creek, MI           | Winsor, Janora      | Las Vegas, NV              |
| Zita, Lori-Lynn McAllister | Tottenham, Ontario, Canada |                     |                            |

## RENEWING CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS

### *Platinum Angels*

Guss, Marc                      New York, NY

### *Gold Angels*

Pescosolido, Pamela              Visalia, CA

### *Silver Angels*

Colloton, GERALYN              Lake Carmel, NY              Kwong, Lana              Burlingame, CA

### *Patron Angels*

Moore, Micky Golden              Farmington Hills, MI              Rice, Susan              Clovis, CA

### *ADDITIONAL DONATIONS*

Chack, Abby                      East Rockaway, NY

Thanks also to all of our renewing members at the Basic Membership Level.

|                          |                              |                       |                           |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Akers, John              | Laurel, MD                   | Ayl, Kathleen         | Agoura Hills, CA          |
| Barton-Barrett, Tracie   | Garner, NC                   | Bawol, Jo Ann         | Erie, PA                  |
| Beatty, Tim              | Lower Cloverdale, NB, Canada | Boone, Pat            | Colorado Springs, CO      |
| Bredemeyer, Kathleen     | Fort Wayne, IN               | Cerro, Elizabeth      | Poquoson, VA              |
| Chambers, Susan          | Malvern, PA                  | Cummings, Karen       | Cambridge, Ont., Canada   |
| Curran, Susan            | York, NE                     | Dean, Carla           | Lake Hiawatha, NJ         |
| Dean, Virginia           | Woodstock, VT                | Decker, Peggy         | Altamonte Springs, FL     |
| Elleven, Russell         | Fort Worth, TX               | Elliott, Marci        | Orlando, FL               |
| Evert, Debbie            | Colorado Springs, CO         | Fawcett, Suzan        | Hamilton, Ontario, Canada |
| Feldman, Bonnie          | Brooklyn, NY                 | Fury, Barbara         | Brooklyn, NY              |
| Genuardi, Kathy          | Elkins Park, PA              | Gerard, Lee           | Okemos, MI                |
| Hammock, Deborah         | Macon, GA                    | Herman, Sandi         | Philadelphia, PA          |
| Hiscock, Patricia        | Woodridge, IL                | Hoyt, Peggy           | Oviedo, FL                |
| Jablonski, Michael       | River Heights, UT            | Johns, Bud            | San Francisco, CA         |
| Kahora, Donna            | Somerset, NJ                 | Kennedy, Alis         | Woodbridge, Ont., Canada  |
| Kula, Jeanne             | Palos Verdes Estates, CA     | Lancaster, Sinead     | Humble, TX                |
| Linden, Elise            | West Caldwell, NJ            | Litzinger, Karen      | Pittsburgh, PA            |
| McCabe, Joseph           | Corpus Christi, TX           | McCubrey, Sonya       | Wethersfield, CT          |
| McIntyre, Lisa           | Naperville, IL               | Martin, Edward Sr.    | Hartsdale, NY             |
| Moore, Debra             | Pinole, CA                   | Morgan, Letitia       | Cass Lake, MN             |
| Morris, Joyce            | Loganville, GA               | Nelson, Bernadette    | Worcester, MA             |
| Newman, Diane            | Ozark, MO                    | Palik, Ann            | Torrance, CA              |
| Pederson, Joan           | Gaithersburg, MD             | Pinner, Shellie       | Runnemedede, NJ           |
| Porter, Barbara          | Hopkinton, MA                | Poulos, Jennifer      | Youngstown, OH            |
| Powell, Sally            | Toronto, Ont., Canada        | Quick, Michele        | Chesapeake, VA            |
| Redfern, Jennifer        | Mount Pleasant, SC           | Robinson, Sam & Linda | Pittsburgh, PA            |
| Temple-Holmes, Elizabeth | Chandler, AZ                 | Tosto, Janice         | Bronx, NY                 |
| Santamaria, Sally        | Stamford, CT                 | Saxton-Lopez, Nancy   | Ridgewood, NJ             |
| Schneider, Katherine     | Eau Claire, WI               | Simpkins, Gregory     | Egg Harbor Township, NJ   |
| Sims, Martha             | Little Rock, AR              | Sorter, Randy         | Denver, CO                |
| Stiles, David and Diana  | Addison, NY                  | Stockdale, Carol      | Stroudsburg, PA           |
| Tucci, Maryjean          | Burlington, NC               | Weaver, Steve         | Raleigh, NC               |
| Welbourne, Miryam        | Brooklyn, NY                 | Zellers, Kathleen     | Henderson, NV             |

Please visit our website's Edel Meister Fund webpage. All contributions are added to this special fund, to cover the costs of creating new APLB projects. Because of your generosity we are now providing the only formal preparation and certification in the United States for counselors in pet bereavement. Your member support is being actively utilized – and is very much appreciated.

## SOME RECENT THANK YOU NOTES

“I just looked in my email inbox and I saw the condolence card, Thank you so much for that. I did not expect to see that. You have really made my day.”

“I want to thank you and the rest of APLB for all you do to help people like me through this pain.”

“APLB is really the leader in this service. The need for this is more and more evident as recognition of the human-animal bond grows.”

“Thank you guys for everything you do. You have really have been a lifeline to me. “

“If it were not for you guys I would not have gotten through that horrible time in my life.”

“Thanks for what you are doing. It is difficult to lose a pet and non-pet people don't understand how they truly become part of our family.”

“I attended the chat room last night and even though I did more than my fair share of tear shedding, I felt better, surrounded by very sympathetic people and lots of understanding. Thank you.”

“Thank you for all of the work you do on behalf of pet owners and our beloved pets!”

“Thank you also for the fine work you and your colleagues do through the APLB. It is a fabulous resource.”

“Bless you for the work that you do. And thank you again for the personal phone call.”

“The APLB chat room brought me through an extremely deep grief a few years ago. I wish I had more time to keep in closer touch - you are an amazing and caring group of people.”

“I strongly commend you for your site and the information it provides. People are becoming more aware of the resources to help them through their grief. It pleases to become a member.”

“Thank you for your prompt Email response. I was intending on sitting in on your chatrooms when I get a chance. I thought I could go right to a good source as yourself for a quick fix.”

“The chat format and talented, caring hosts really make APLB a healing place. Thank you again,

“This is one of the most healing places I have ever experienced. The kindnesses expressed here is amazing”.

“Thank you for being such beacons of comfort and support to those who grieve. You certainly helped me, and I am sure you have helped hundreds if not thousands of others, to heal as best they can.”

“Thank you for having this website for people like me.”

## ITCHY, SCRATCHY, SNEEZY PETS

– Penny J. Leisch

Pets, like all animals, can have allergies. They have an immune system that works very much like ours. Just as people may be allergic to many things, animal allergies vary too. The scientific reasons for allergies are complex, but a simple explanation is that the immune system over-reacts to a specific substance, such as food, medicine, or plants. So how do you know if your pet is allergic, and what do you do about it?

Their symptoms are much like yours. If your dog scratches constantly, chews his paws, licks her tummy, or paws at a runny nose and watery eyes, it's possible that seasonal plant allergies are the cause. Food allergies may cause other symptoms too, such as diarrhea, vomiting, weight loss, reoccurring infections, and mysterious hard-to-diagnose ailments.

Allergies may also cause behavioral problems. If you doubt this, think about how children behave when they are ill. Feeling miserable causes people and pets to be cranky, snappy, achy, and irritable. Allergy treatment requires the skill of a veterinarian. If your vet doesn't treat allergies, I urge you to find one who does.

The vet will guide you through the steps required to get your pet stable and healthy. He can take blood tests to diagnose the specific allergies. He can provide information about special diets or allergy medicine that is appropriate for your animal. Sometimes, he may also prescribe a diet plan designed to help find the ingredient causing the allergic reaction. Have patience. Don't give up and don't attempt to treat your pet yourself. Herbs and human medication can be fatal if you make a mistake.

Severe allergies that go untreated can affect a pet's lifespan, as well as the quality of life for both of you. Not all allergies require years of medication or high medical costs. It may cost a few extra dollars to find the answer, but the answer may be as simple as buying a different brand of food. Corn, wheat, and soy are common pet food and treat ingredients. They are also common allergic foods for dogs.

However, there are pets that suffer from multiple allergies and diseases like asthma. These animals need veterinary care and supervision. Just like people, they can have life threatening attacks. You may be surprised to learn that a healthy snack, such as a carrot, can cause your dog tremendous discomfort or worse. (I had a dog that was allergic to carrots, along with a few dozen other things.) These pets require a little extra care, but a good veterinarian can make life happy again for both of you.

Your vet will help find the easiest, most cost effective treatments for your pet. He can also help you find resources for low cost medications and safe, healthy foods. Once you get the answers and a treatment plan, follow the doctor's directions, even if you have to read the label on every product you buy for the rest of your dog or cat's life. You'll save money in the long run by avoiding future health problems and chronic illness.

*Penny J Leisch is a writer, author, and resume specialist in Austin, TX. She also participates in Austin's feral cat TNR program. Penny and her husband, Michael, have been involved in pet rescue and the care of special needs animals for over twenty years. Penny also offers a variety of resources at [PetsByPenny.com](http://PetsByPenny.com) and at [PennyLeisch.com](http://PennyLeisch.com). She will be presenting on "Lost and Missing Pets" at the APLB's Fifth International Conference, next May. You may contact her via Facebook or LinkedIn too.*

## **GROW OLD WITH DOGS**

*Author unknown: Taken from the Internet*

**When I am old**

**I will wear soft, gray sweatshirts,  
and a bandanna over my silver hair,  
and I will spend my social security checks  
on wine and my dogs.**

**I will sit in my house on my well-worn chair  
and listen to my dog's breathing.  
I will sneak out in the middle of a warm summer night  
and take my dogs out for a run,  
if my old bones will allow.**

**When people come to call,  
I will smile and nod, as I show them my dogs,  
and talk of them so beloved in the past  
and the ones so beloved of today.**

**I will still work hard, cleaning after them,  
mopping and feeding them  
and whispering their names in a soft, loving way.  
I will wear the gleaming sweat on my throat,  
like a jewel, and I will be an  
embarrassment to all – especially my family – who have not yet found  
dogs as their best friends.**

**These friends who always wait,  
at any hour, for your footfall  
eagerly jump to their feet out of a  
sound sleep, to greet you as if you are a god.**

**With warm eyes full of adoring love  
and hope that you will always stay,  
I'll hug their strong necks,  
and kiss their dear sweet heads  
and whisper in their very special company.**

**I look in the mirror and see I am getting old.  
This is the kind of person I am and have always been.  
Loving dogs is easy. They are part of me,  
and accept me for who I am.  
My dogs appreciate my presence in their lives.  
You will understand when you are old,  
if you have dogs to love, too.**

*The Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement*  
*P. O. Box 106*  
*Brooklyn, New York 11230*

*Affix  
Stamp*



*Newsletter*

*Autumn, 2009*

**We are all in this lifeboat together. Each of us must do whatever can be done to help anyone else who is in bereavement for a beloved pet. Caring is so necessary in this wondrous encounter – which we all take part in during our own brief span, here. And what we learn and then freely offer to others immeasurably enriches every giver, as well. That’s what the APLB is all about. We want to share your experience, and grow with the input only you can provide. Reservoirs are filled by one raindrop at a time. Come, join with us, and help make the difference.**

**a p l b**

**The Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement**

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