



The Animal Love & Loss Network Newsletter

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALLN!

-Nancy Rodgers

The ALLN board members would like to wish all of you a safe and happy holiday season. We know that sometimes the holidays can be a difficult time for everyone. We want you to know that we are here for you when you need us. Our chat rooms will be open both on Christmas and New Year's Day.

We are not only wishing all our human friends a safe and happy holiday season, but also our animal friends. Sometimes, when we are rushing around with holiday preparations and celebrations, we may forget that there are several dangers our animals can get into. Every season holds different potential perils for our animals. This is one reason we have put together the ALLN TIP BOX. We have tried to point out the most common dangers.

Remember at the holidays, as always, to make sure that *everyone* in the house is safe. It is a good idea to keep a poison control phone number handy near the phone, along with your veterinarian's phone number—just in case it is needed.

1-888-4ANI-HELP

Help is available 24 hours a day.

There is also an excellent quick emergency guide at:

<http://www.avma.org/pubhlth/poisdgde.asp>

FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT: Networking for the Future

--Nancy Rodgers

ALLN was formed a year ago by a group of dedicated volunteers who know what it is like to lose a pet. We also know the emotional roller coaster that can follow the loss of a pet.

I have the privilege to now be the President of ALLN. This position will be a very challenging and enjoyable experience for me. I enjoy helping people, and animals are one of the biggest joys in my life.

As one of the founding members of ALLN, I believe in the organization 100%. We have gone through some changes. Change is always a necessary part of growth. I believe in having an honest, open and up-front approach with people. I am here to listen. For me, feedback from members is an essential part of growth and improvement. If you encounter a problem, or have a comment, suggestion, or question, please feel free to share it with me.

Our web site is one area where we continue to make significant changes. As we continue to network with an increasing number of organizations involved in work related to our

mission, we are adding new links, and new information to our resources pages. Our "Family Album" is growing, as new photos are added, paying tribute to animal companions, both past and present. We want to provide enough resources in different areas so that we can better help those who come to us for information or support.

ALLN has a lot to offer our visitors now, and in the future we will continue to make additions and improvements to our site. Please continue to visit us often.

ALLN is growing primarily by word of mouth. Each week, we welcome new visitors to our chat rooms. People are referred to us by our members, and other chat room visitors, who have found comfort in that forum of support. Our chat rooms are free for those in need, and an increasing number of people have been able to benefit from them through word-of-mouth. We hope to continue to gain recognition in the community of pet-related professionals. Getting information about ALLN services to pet-sitters, veterinarians, groomers, etc. is very valuable in this effort. Any assistance you can provide with this is welcomed.

If you would like to make copies of our brochures and other information, to share with others, please feel free to do so. Our newsletters, brochures and pamphlets are accessible to anyone for download just by clicking on the link. Also, if you would like any materials, such as business cards, to share with anyone who may either need our services, or be interested in promoting the organization, please contact me at nancy@alln.org. I will send them to you.

If you are not yet an ALLN member, and would like to join ALLN, the cost of an individual or family membership is \$25, which includes a posting in our ALLN Family Album. We encourage members to post photos of both present and past animal family members.

ALLN is also now welcoming Corporate Sponsors. If you, or your employer, would like to support ALLN through the corporate sponsorship program, we will be glad to add you to the growing list of sponsors. Your business need not be animal-related, as you can see from the corporations which already support us. We deeply appreciate all the help that we have received from our sponsors.

Three levels of sponsorship are possible: Bronze, with a donation of \$50; Silver, with a \$100 donation, and Gold, for support of \$200 or more. If you would like additional information about this program, please contact Noreen at

noreen@alln.org. She will be glad to answer your questions.

I look forward to the coming year at ALLN and hope that we can honor our members, expand our out-reach, and increase our membership. I welcome any comments, feedback, or questions you may have. If you have a link to another site or know of any services, support groups, or counselors that you would recommend, please contact me at nancy@alln.org. Together, we will make ALLN's second year as fulfilling and wonderful as its first!



ONE YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE ALLN CHAT ROOMS

--Nancy Rodgers

October 28, 2002 was the one-year anniversary for our first chat room. When we started, we only had chat rooms open on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings. After a few months, a lot of people began to request a Friday night chat, since Friday night is the busiest night on the internet. On March 22nd we were very pleased to open up a Friday night chat room. We have noticed an increase in the attendance in all of the chat rooms and hope that they will continue to grow. We also hope to be able to offer an additional chat room after the first of the year.

We believe that the chat rooms should be a comfort zone, where people are able to express whatever they may be feeling. We have made the chat rooms easy to enter, not requiring any registration process, so that a first visit to our chat rooms is much less stressful than many others on the internet. We also provide both a "help" page and e-mail support to new visitors to introduce them to using the chat room software.

Our visitors come in not only to talk about their losses; they come to share the adoption of a new pet in the family, to update us about the recuperation of an ailing pet, or to just stop by to say "hello." Having found a place of warmth, friendship, and compassion, many of our visitors have become much like "family." We love to see people come in months later and let us know how they are doing. We want everyone to be able to feel like "family".

With the increase in chat room attendance, and the possibility of adding yet another time slot, we are also in need of more chat hosts. We ask that chat room hosts be ALLN members, and that they have experienced the loss of a pet. We look to chat room staff, naturally, to be kind, understanding, empathic and non-judgmental towards others. We are happy to train anyone who would like to work in the chat rooms. We firmly believe that whatever background education we have, we all have "gifts" to share. For many, if not most of us, those gifts are part of a legacy

bestowed upon us by our animal companions. If you would like to share your gifts with others, please contact Nancy at nancy@alln.org.

Nancy Rodgers is the President of ALLN, and Chair of the Chat Room Committee. She has been a Bedlington breeder for the past 8 years, and shares her home with her husband, her son, 9 spoiled Bedlingtons, and several cats.

The ALLN Pet Tip



The holiday's are upon us. It is important to insure that your pets will be well provided for and safe during this joyful season. Taking the time to follow these helpful tips will insure a wonderful holiday season for all!

Food – Please be wary of feeding your animals from the table. Bones can be lethal to dogs and cats alike. Also candy, especially chocolate, can cause extreme distress and sometimes can be fatal if eaten in large quantities.

Decorations – We are decorating our home for the holidays and if you take a few precautions our animals will be safe and can enjoy this time with you.

-Both holly & poinsettias are potentially toxic to animals. Make sure these plants are not available to your animals.

-Tinsel, if ingested, can wrap around an animal's intestine and cause extreme distress, sometimes making surgery necessary.

- Light cords are another source of danger, especially to cats, who may chew on cords and tree decorations. Make sure cords and breakable ornaments are not within reach of your animal.

Quiet Spot – Make sure your animal has their own quiet retreat during the holidays. With family & friends visiting your animal can become excited and confused.

NEW PUPPY/KITTY – It is not a good idea to introduce a new pet at the holidays. It takes time for you & the animal to adjust and if you want to get an animal for a holiday present wait until after New Year's then go to your local shelter or reputable breeder to select your pet. Then when you bring him/her home you will have the time and can provide the attention they will need.

GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR VET

--Katie Nurmi

Our relationships with the veterinarians to whom we entrust our animal companions' well-being are extremely valuable. All of us, however, know the frustration of hectic veterinary offices and busy professionals. Many of us have found, in the process of nursing critically ill pets, that in those disturbing and emotional times, it is often

more difficult to communicate effectively with those involved in our pets' care. This can be a frustration for veterinarians as well. We hope these tips and guidelines may help facilitate working relationships between pet owners and pet care professionals.

Be an active participant in your pet's care:

▷ You may want to set up a "get-acquainted" visit with your veterinarian & your pet before there is a need. This will make both you & the pet more at ease if something serious comes up.

▷ When seeing a vet for the first time, explain that you want to be an active participant in your pet's care. This will help set the tone for subsequent visits.

▷ You know your pet best. It is you who spends the most time with the pet & has the best opportunities to observe symptoms & success or failure of treatment regimens.

The most important member of the care team isn't your veterinarian – it's you.

▷ Bring a stool sample with you to appointments. That way, if the veterinarian needs to check for internal parasites, it can be done easily.

If your pet is being seen because of vomiting, bring a sample with you, if possible.

Educate yourself:

▷ Learn all you can about your pet's condition(s). As you learn more, you'll know better what to expect, what to tell your veterinarian, etc. Also, learn about your pet's medications. Ask your veterinarian for information about the drugs

and any anticipated side-effects. Don't hesitate to ask questions.

Be observant and document:

▷Between appointments, be sure to note symptoms, reactions to medications, and other details. Make note of questions you want to ask to help you remember them at the appointment. The more information you can give your veterinarian, the more benefit you'll get from appointments.
▷If others around you notice things that you don't notice, ask them to tell you or make notes for you also.

Go to veterinary appointments organized and well prepared:

▷If your pet is taking many medications and/or supplements, make a list, in a computer document, if possible. List the dosage, the condition for which the drug is being used, and any other pertinent information.
▷Keep the list up-dated, and always take a copy to any veterinary appointment you have. This helps ensure that your medical records are accurate and reduces the amount of time spent reviewing them at the appointment. You can give the vet a copy & have a copy in front of you to make notes and ensure that you don't forget anything. Having this printed information will not only help you remember everything, but will help you be more concise when talking to your vet.
▷Review your documents just before the appointment to refresh your memory.

(The document is also helpful if you have some-one caring for your pet while you are away). Or, if your pet unexpectedly needs emergency care, you will be able to provide accurate information, regardless of the circumstances.

▷If changes are made in the treatment, remember to ask your doctor what to expect, and when you should see results. If you are to give a new medication, be sure to ask when to start giving it.
▷If you don't already know, ask your veterinarian how to get information and answers to questions between appointments.

Be mentally and emotionally prepared for your appointment:

▷When your veterinarian enters the room, offer your hand for shaking and make eye contact. This establishes personal contact at the beginning. Do this at each appointment.
. ▷If you find asking questions to be difficult for you, rehearse with a friend before the appointment.

You don't have to go it alone:

▷Don't hesitate to take someone close to you with you to the appointment. This can serve multiple purposes:
--A lot of information can be packed into one appointment. A friend can help you remember and interpret what was said.
-- When our pets are ill, our emotions can lead us to misinterpret comments or read things into them.

Having another person there is a good way to objectively review the appointment afterward.

--If you are upset or distracted, a friend can drive you home while you take care of yourself or your pet.

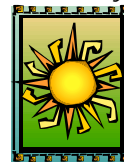
The bottom line:

Being an active, educated partner will help you to achieve the best health care for your pet. Good documentation and preparation will help both you and your veterinarian to achieve your goals.

Katie Nurmi is the Vice-President and one of the founders of ALLN. She hosts one of the chats, & is the newsletter editor.

ALLN SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

--By Susan Lynch



\Sun'shine`\", n. 1. The light of the sun, or the place where it shines; the direct rays of the sun, the place where they fall, or the warmth and light which they give. Anything which has a warming and cheering influence like that of the rays of the sun; warmth; illumination; brightness.

The definition of Sunshine is what the ALLN Sunshine Committee is all about. ALLN strives to be a source of comfort, cheer and warmth to all who are in need. Our committee sends out cards to the bereaved pet owner or to people who are dealing with the illness of their animal.

We also acknowledge the happy times -- anniversaries and birthdays, for example.

You can ask to send an ALLN card to an animal lover at any time. Please contact the acting Sunshine Committee Chair, Jo Somerset, at jo@alln.org. She will be happy to assist you in sending the greeting. The committee also sends cards to members of ALLN, as well as to animal family members on important birthdays (animal or human) and anniversaries.

Susan Lynch is the ALLN Treasurer and one of the ALLN founders. A sheltie enthusiast, she shares her home and her life with 2 shelties, and her husband, Mike.

IN MEMORIUM:

In September, 2002, our president, Nancy Rodgers, lost a very dear friend, who was also companion and soul-mate to her mother, Marcy Gillum. Loss can make poets of many of us. This poem was written by Nancy's husband, Dennis, as a loving tribute to Chelsea, a very dear Bedlington Terrier.

Chelsea Blue Angel

The tears will pass as we cry
for Nanmar's Chelsea Blue
The hurt will ease but will never
go away

The happy times with her we
will cherish always
Those memories will last
forever and a day

It was meant to be a rescue we
were supposedly saving
This sweet Georgia Peach

But we were the ones who
were rescued
For you showed us, Chelsea,
just how far love can reach
You were the keeper of the
home
How faithfully you fulfilled that
role
The squirrels and birds said
beware of 702 Albert for
Chelsea Blue is on patrol

Mom would call and say –
Chelsea time for your pill
And you were never late a
gentle hand, a waggin tail,
A bedtime snack with pappa
Ken
The ice cream tasted great.

Cody and Heidi will be there to
great you
With Tinker and BoBo not far
behind
They'll show you the fields of
Heaven
And all the treasure you'll find

Chelsea Blue Angel of NanMar
With tears we say good bye
But for now you'll be with other
angels
And on you they will keep an
eye
Angel Gene will keep you
groomed
And you'll make angel Smitty
laugh
But a special angel named
Geoff
Will always be caring for you on
our behalf.

*--written by Dennis Rodgers for his
mother in law
Marcy Gillum*



MARY—WAR DOG 1939-1945

--Jo Sommerset

I was looking for a photograph,
and came up with this one and
I wanted you to meet her—

Mary "War Dog 1939-1945."

She was my pride and joy. I
was only 8. My father enlisted
her in the Army when they
called for German Shepherds.
HE said we could not possibly
keep a GERMAN dog when we
were fighting the Germans. IT
broke my heart when they
came for her. I never forgave
my father for letting them have
her.

In 1946, when she was
demobbed, I felt the proudest
of owners, as we had the
choice of having her back or
having her destroyed. I was
presented at her passing out
parade with all her papers and
medals and a collar that was
red, white, and blue, with "War
Dog 1939-1945" engraved on
it.

She won a medal for bravery
for saving her handler from a
burning building; she dragged
him out by the jacket and was
burned on her back and side.
The second medal was again
for bravery when she was shot
in the hip trying to capture a
German soldier, who just took
out his gun and fired.

She lived to be 13 ½ years old.
The picture was taken at the
beach in 1946. I was 13 at the
time. My father inadvertently
called some prisoners that
were walking along the beach
"Jerry's." Mary rushed over and

had one of them on the floor; she was astride him with teeth bared. (They filed down the dogs' teeth when they took them for the Army; they had to hold, not bite.)

The police were called and we were told to present all her war dog papers at our local police station the next day. Dad explained that she had been trained to go for "Jerrys."

She would play Dead. You could not see her breathing. I would go anywhere with her. I loved her so much, and she will never be forgotten for what she did for me and her country.



Jo Somerset is an active member of ALLN and also on the Sunshine Committee. Currently she has Shadow – another German Shepherd and also a cat Freddie in her live. Jo resides in Bristol England.

Many of us have stories of present and past pets. If you have a story that you would like to share with us, please send it to katie@alln.org or to nancy@alln.org. We believe that sharing our stories keeps

the loving memories alive. It also is a great way for us to express how much our animals have meant to us. Please also feel free to send us a photo to accompany your story. We hope that you will share your stories with us and the rest of the members of ALLN. We look forward to hearing from you.

DO DOGS GO TO HEAVEN?

My little Bully passed away, no more to breathe a sound.

I held him for the last time, then entombed him in the ground.

Day and night I wept so much, in tears I thought I'd drown.

I searched my soul for comfort, but no peace therein was found.

In great despair, I hit my knees and then began to pray.

"Father will I ever see, my dog again someday?"

I raised my eyes and saw an angel standing near a gate.

I sensed an inner peace I'd never felt before that day.

The angel smiled and said to me, "Oh man of little faith!

God sees every bird that falls; He knows your Bully's fate.

I have met your little dog, I saw him pass my way.

Your precious dog is still alive; he just walked through this gate.

Paradise is lovelier than you can comprehend.

No pain or grief, no tears or fears, and life will have no end.

God gave to man His only Son, to cover all his sins.

So why would God withhold from you, your pure and loving friend?"

The angel took me by the hand and said, "Now come with me.

A glimpse of paradise I'll give, to you so you can see."

Through the gate and o'er the Rainbow Bridge we did proceed.

Through green valleys filled with flowers, rolling hills and trees.

"Wow, so this is paradise!" The place was filled with joy.

I saw my Bully playing there, with dogs and cats and toys.

He also had some doggie treats, and food that he enjoyed.

He'd made a lot of new friends there, including girls and boys.

Then I saw a child come near, and hug my little mate.

She said to him, "I love you so," and kissed him on the face.

The angel said, "The child just
crossed the Rainbow Bridge
today.

Now she needs a little friend,
to love and help her play.

God's love for her would be
enough, in that make no
mistake.

But in His love, He knew full
well, the child would want a
mate.

This is why God called your dog
unto this splendid place.

God's entrusted her with him,
`til you pass through the gate."

I pleaded, "May I hug them
both?!" The angel answered,
"No!

You'd violate a sacred site, and
now it's time to go."

He led me back across the
Bridge and through the gate to
home.

He left me there with new-
found hope and peace within
my soul.

If someone ever asks what
happens to a dog that dies,

Just give a gentle smile of joy
and look them in the eye.

Take their hand and comfort
them and tell them not to cry.

For dogs don't die, they simply
cross a bridge to paradise.

~ Dan Atcheson ~

**My cat knows the
song in my heart,
purring it back to
me when my
memory fails.**

-author unknown

ALLN FIRST ANNUAL MEETING HELD

The first annual ALLN
"physical" meeting was held
September 30, 2002 in
Plainview, New York, at the
Plainview-Old Bethpage Library.
The meeting took place in
conjunction with a
regularly scheduled Paw-to-
Heart support group meeting.
Board member Noreen
Morrone gave a well received
presentation on ALLN to Paw to
Heart members.

Our ALLN Board election
results were announced at the
meeting. Officers as of that
date are:
Nancy Rodgers, President;
Katie Nurmi, Vice-President;
Susan Lynch, Treasurer,
Barbara Cook, Secretary. Board
Members: Medea Berkman,
Julie Kaufman, and Noreen
Morrone.

MEET OUR NEW ALLN BOARD MEMBERS

---Nancy Rodgers



Barbara Cook:

Barbara has been
associated with
ALLN since they

started. She is in partnership
with her husband as the
Secretary/ Treasurer for an
asphalt paving contractor that
she and her husband opened
in 1986. She is a beginner in
the dog show world with her
Akita "Toki". She one day plans
on working with Akita Rescue.
Barbara shares her home in
Northern Virginia with her
husband Jeff, daughter
Jennifer, 3 Akitas, "Toki", "Yogi"
& "Mika", a St. Bernard
"Tucker" and a cat "Martie".

Barbara is shown here with her
Akita "Toki".



Dr. Julie Kaufman:

Julie Kaufman is
an author, a doctor
of chiropractic, and a certified
Animal chiropractor. For the past 13
years she has been providing
chiropractic services for large and
small animals throughout
Wisconsin. In 1989 Dr. Kaufman
graduated from Cleveland
Chiropractic College. She was a
senior instructor and board member
for the American Veterinary
Chiropractic Association from 1989-
1993 where she currently guest
lectures. She earned the 2nd animal
chiropractic certification awarded in
the world. There are now
approximately 700 veterinarians and
chiropractors who are certified to
practice animal chiropractic
worldwide.

Dr. Kaufman's other contributions to
animal health and the animal
chiropractic profession includes:

- Founder of the Wisconsin Professional Animal Chiropractor's Association, WIPACA.
- Developer of a holistic equine education program for horse owners, professionals, and trainers.
- Dr. Kaufman lectures throughout the country to horse and dog clubs, veterinary schools, and holistic groups. She has discussed holistic animal health and pet loss on several national radio and television shows. Many of her articles on holistic animal health and the exploration of the human-animal connection have been published in journals and magazines.

• Dr. Kaufman is committed to enhancing the quality of life for animals, and nurturing the human animal bond.

Her Recent Articles include: "A book excerpt: Crossing the Rubicon" appearing in Holistic Health Journal: July, 2000.

She has also been interviewed for articles for the following magazines:

1. Doris Day's Animal Guardian magazine.
2. The internationally acclaimed horse magazine Equus.
3. Natural Pet magazine.
4. Holistic Health Journal.
5. Farm Show Magazine.
6. "Equine Alternative Therapy: Chiropractic Care" by Carol Perkins, The Sentinel, (Libertyville IL), volume 24, number 4, July 1996.

National appearances:

Television interviews: Dr. Kaufman appeared on CNN in 1991.

Radio interviews: Dr. Kaufman was interviewed on the national talk radio show "Here's To Your Health" with Deborah Ray, on October 14th 1997

Local appearances:

Dr. Kaufman has appeared on several local television news broadcasts including interviews for WORT radio, The Wisconsin State Journal, The Capitol Times, The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Madison Magazine, and Channel 27 and Channel 15 news.

Book Publications:

In October, 1999, Dr. Kaufman's first book Crossing the Rubicon; Celebrating the Human-Animal Bond in Life and Death, became available in print.

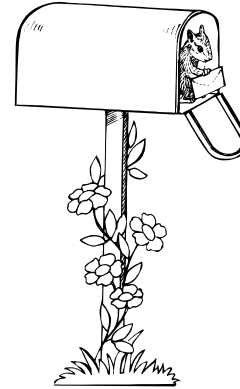
Internet Site:

The Animal Chiropractic and Holistic Health Forum:

<http://www.animalchiropracticzone.com>

Julie is shown here with her horse,

Note: Dr. Kaufman's book can be purchased from the web site.



We LOVE mail!

Send us your contributions for the newsletter!

If you would like to write an article on a pet-related issue, or have poetry, photography, etc. you would like to see published in the ALLN newsletter, please contact the editor: <mailto:katie@alln.org>



BOOK PICKS:
COMING NEXT ISSUE

In the next issue of the newsletter, we will be reviewing *The Soul of Your Pet: Evidence for the Survival of Pets After Death*, by Scott S. Smith. We plan to bring you more book reviews in the future—one in every issue. If you would like to see a book previewed in the newsletter, or have a book to recommend for the web site bibliography, please contact Katie at katie@alln.org.