



# Animal Love & Loss Network

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## In This Issue

[ALLN Announces PAYPAL](#)

[Lost....Missing Pet](#)

[Ideas for Articles](#)

[Dedication](#)

[The President's Corner](#)

[Jail Sentences Handed Out in Two](#)

[Animal Cruelty Cases](#)

[Tragedy in Poquoson, VA.](#)

[ALLN: Services](#)

## ALLN Announces

### PAYPAL

ALLN is pleased to announce

PAYPAL, a secure credit card, e-check payment service. PAYPAL is recognized worldwide for their safe, secure processing of your credit card and e-check payments. This is a free service to you and once you sign up you can shop other sites, stores and pay the "secure" way! Now you can pay your Membership Dues by PAYPAL and of course we always accept donations! Please click on the PAYPAL button to process your dues/donations. If you have any questions please email [susan@alln.org](mailto:susan@alln.org)

## Lost....Missing Pet

We hope this never happens to us. Having our dear pet become lost or stolen is a reality we do not want to happen. But if it does, there are steps you can take to help aid in recovering your loved one. ALLN offers free listings for a missing pet. Just click on the page and include vital information on your pet. We are happy to provide this service to you. We have already had the pleasure of announcing a found pet. The more you do to advertise and inform others the greater the likelihood of finding your pet increases. Go to <http://www.alln.org/>

Submitted By:

Susan Lynch, Treasurer, ALLN

## Ideas for Articles

If you have an idea for an article or would like to submit one, please contact us at [alln.org](http://alln.org)



## DEDICATION

"We who choose to surround ourselves with lives even more temporary than our own, live within a fragile circle, easily and often breached. Unable to accept its awful gaps, we still would live no other way. We cherish memory as the only certain immortality, never fully understanding the necessary plan."

Irving Townsend

We proudly dedicate this first issue of our newsletter to the animals who lost their lives at Poquoson Veterinary Hospital.

*Gretchen CB*

*Alex Abby*

*Ruby Pepper*

*Patches Gabby*

*Gio Hosea*

*Misty Prince*

*Rusty Kodi*

*Max Holly*

*General Cassidy*

*Maggie Andy*

*Bridgette Heidi*

*Angus Downey*

*Duke Sassie*

*Laverne Velcro*

*Sebastian*



## **President's Column**

As members of ALLN we share a strong and special bond. We all have a well-developed capacity to deeply love and care for our companion animals. How fortunate are we to be able to direct our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors in such a positive, life affirming and enhancing way! We know in intimate ways the joys and pleasures of sharing our lives and hearts with our animal friends. In a world all too often filled with an excess of unpleasantness, pain, hatred, and destructiveness, we have found a wonderful way to transcend, or rise above this. We have found ways to emotionally connect up with our companion animals that are mutually beneficial. People who are not animal enthusiasts do not know what they are missing!

There is a risk built in, as we know, with allowing ourselves to profoundly love and feel deeply bonded with other beings. This loving presence can, sadly, be lost—suddenly, or over a period of time. We then are faced with the difficult, heart-wrenching process of mourning our losses. Since we outlive the vast majority of the animal friends in our lives, we are repeatedly pushed into the role of mourner. For most of us, we allow this to happen to us because of the advantages we get from intimate relationships with animals far outweigh the disadvantages. Love and loss are all too often a package deal. The potential for loss is always lurking behind the good in the present. It is part of the human condition. When

we have some preparation for loss, however, we are better able to cope with it. When we handle our losses constructively we grow, and then we are better able to deal with future losses.

We need our animal friends, but we also need one another. This is where ALLN comes in. We all benefit by sharing our animal related joys and sorrows with like-minded, compassionate, and empathic others. We can enhance the quality of our experiences with our animal friends by being part of a caring community of human beings who celebrate and grieve with one another when needed and appropriate. Those who are members of ALLN are less isolated and alone. This helps us have better mental, physical health. Sometimes we help others, while at other times we take advantage of other's help. We share experiences, information, and support with one another that would not be possible outside of a specialized organization. We are proud to be publishing this first issue of ALLN's bi-monthly (every other month) newsletter. This publication is a forum for our membership -- non-professionals and professionals alike - to contribute ideas, experiences, information and resources relevant to the human bond. In the coming months and years we will seek to reach out, in many different and creative ways, to those in need, and to those who are available to help others with their "pet" loss needs. We welcome your active participation in our new organization.

You might think of yourself, in a way, as a shareholder in our nonprofit enterprise. We want you to feel that you have part "ownership" in our democratically contracted and governed group. ALLN belongs to all of us. It is a valuable new resource and asset.

In ALLN we simultaneously celebrate the special relationships we have, or have had, with our companion animals and we share our sorrows related to our present and past animal friends. We share a vision that the human-animal bond, in general, and pet loss specifically, will be taken much more seriously in our society. We also share in the goal that those who are suffering the pain and experiencing the grief related to pet loss will have caring, understanding, and experienced people turn to (as in ALLN's cost-free Internet chatrooms) to meet their emotional needs. In addition, we also share our mission to actively reach out to both the members of the public and to professionals who work with animals so as to inform them of our worthwhile services and noble visions.

I very much appreciate your decision to join ALLN. As a member, there is much you can contribute and much you can benefit from. Working together we can accomplish many good things. Please feel free to communicate with me at [larry@alln.org](mailto:larry@alln.org) about your concerns.

Submitted By:

Larry Kaufman, President, ALLN

## **Jail Sentences Handed Out In Two Animal Cruelty Cases**

The time has come for people who commit animal cruelty to go to jail. On February 11, 2001, outside the San Jose airport, in a despicable act of road rage, Leo the dog was thrown into traffic and killed. The perpetrator, Andrew Douglas Burnett, was handed the maximum sentence for animal cruelty by Judge Kevin Murphy, three years in jail. Leo's owner, Sara McBurnett, did not give up her quest to see that Leo's killer was found and put in jail for this senseless and cruel act. In the aftermath of this tragedy, an outlandish controversy developed about the value society places on the life of a pet. Numerous people criticized individuals for contributing to the reward fund to find Leo's killer. It seems as though many felt that Leo's tragedy somehow minimized the tragedy some parents suffer in the loss of their children. According to Sara, "To criticize this collective conscience is to criticize one of the most important qualities of our humanity, compassion. Compassion is the opposite of hate, and to act out with compassion as the motivating factor should never be invalidated by anyone.

Conversely, acting out in hate is destructive, and should be reviled and punished by everyone."

In another animal cruelty case in Charleston, West Virginia, the former owner of a Petland franchise, who was charged with 43 counts of animal cruelty when humane officers entered the store February 10, 2001 and found the animals without food, water, and lying in their own feces. The owner, Mary Ellen Morton was arrested and charged with animal cruelty. This defendant, Ms. Morton, was allowed to perpetrate these crimes of abuse and neglect over a 13 year period.

Ms Morton, was formally cited by Charleston authorities over a dozen times with a "slap on the wrist" as opposed to enforcing the laws on animal cruelty. One can only imagine how many animals over this time were abused and mistreated, and how many more pet owners suffered the emotional trauma that a sick, or dead family pet can bring. And, the animals, who can't speak for themselves, paid the biggest price. They, too, feel pain and some pay the price with their lives. After a year filled with six trial delays,

Ms. Morton accepted a plea bargain on March 5, 2002, for 4 counts of animal cruelty. Her lawyer made it clear in court that she was pleading "no contest," meaning that she accepted NO responsibility for her actions. Judge Tod Kaufman accepted her guilty plea. He ordered her to pay \$3400 in medical fees for the confiscated dogs and in an unprecedented decision by a judge in an animal cruelty case in WV, Judge Kaufman sentenced her to 60 days in jail. She was led out of the court

room by sheriff deputies and taken to South Central Regional Jail to begin serving her sentence. One must ponder the question, why has it taken so long for animal abusers to start spending time in jail?

Senator Robert Byrd, D-WV, took the Senate floor July 9, 2001, and spoke at length about all forms of animal cruelty and abuse. In this extraordinary and unprecedented speech, Senator Byrd states: "Laws are being ignored. Animal cruelty abounds. It is sickening. It is infuriating. Barbaric treatment of helpless, defenseless creatures must not be tolerated. Such insensitivity is insidious and can spread and is dangerous. Life must be respected and dealt with humanely in a civilized society."

Four pays up to Judge Kevin Murphy, Judge Tod Kaufman, Senator Robert Byrd, and everyone who worked so hard to bring the perpetrators to justice in the "Leo" case and the Petland case. Let there be NO mistake that these two sentences handed down has sent a clear message to animal abusers everywhere. If you abuse animals you are going to jail! We as a civilized society will NO longer tolerate this barbaric behavior.

Submitted By:

Melody Hunter, Vice President, ALLN

## **Tragedy at Poquoson**

### **Veterinary Hospital**

In Poquoson, Virginia at the Poquoson Veterinary Hospital, 29 animals lost their lives in a tragic fire that swept throughout the building sometime around 2:00 a.m. (EST), February 18, 2002. When firefighters arrived, the structure was fully engulfed in flames. The building was a total loss. Owner and veterinarian, Dr. Jean Eddy told me she lost 2 animals in the fire. One young woman lost her four cats, along with 23 other animals who were there for medical treatment or boarding.

All the bodies of the animals were recovered and returned to their owners. Hubbard Crematorium, in Poquoson, Virginia, donated cremation services to those people whose animals were lost in the fire.

A private memorial service was held on Saturday, February 23. Those in attendance included pet owners, veterinary staff, fireman, police officers, and 2 counselors. A candlelight memorial service was held directly after the memorial service at the veterinary hospital. This was open to the public.

Submitted By:

Melody Hunter, Vice President, ALLN

## **Animal Love & Loss Network: Services**

The Animal Love & Loss Network strives to provide a variety of services to people who share their lives with companion animals. Whereas our focus is not solely pet loss, many of our projects are designed to provide assistance and support to people who have lost, or are facing the loss of an animal companion.

Our chat rooms operate three times a week—Wednesday and Friday evenings from 8PM-10PM (EST) and Sunday afternoons from 2P-5PM (EST). We have tried to schedule the chats both to accommodate times of heavy internet traffic and to accommodate members in Europe and the west coast. Each chat is moderated by at least one experienced chat host, and support is available both after the chats and between scheduled chat times through e-mail, instant messenger programs, or phone. We believe that one of the most beautiful aspects of the chat forum is that visitors offer as much support and validation as they receive. To quote Ralph Waldo Emerson: "It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life, that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." We have had requests for training from members who either want to be able to co-host one of the chats, or are seeking training in loss issues and support skills to enable them to start local peer support groups. At this

point, we are happy to provide individualized training and supervision to members with those interests. Nancy Rodgers, our Chat Room Committee Chair, should be contacted with requests of this kind. We are currently developing a more structured, yet interactive and learner-centered training, which will be offered through the internet, and will also be made available by correspondence, for those without internet access.

In addition to support services, our web site features the ALLN Family Album, where members can post photos and tributes to both past and present animal companions. Through these albums, we seek not only to memorialize our lost pets, but also share the joy that our surviving and future pets bring us.

Another service we offer is our listing of missing pets. We post photos of lost and stolen pets free-of-charge on the site, and have facilitated some successful reunions since we began this project.

Since we are continuously up-dating our site and the services we offer, we welcome suggestions as to how we can improve what we have to offer to people and their animal companions. We are currently developing our on-line bibliography, as well as expanding the number of services geared specifically toward children, services which, we have found, are scarce to date on the web.

Submitted By:

Katie Nurmi, Secretary, ALLN