

AFTER THE LAST GOODBYE



A Guide to Aftercare Planning
for your Pet



Assurance of Honesty, Compassion & Integrity

PREPARING FOR A DIGNIFIED DEPARTURE

Whether your pet's passing was unexpected or will come after a lengthy illness, you will need to address what you would like done with their body. Together with the compassionate team at your veterinary hospital, *Honor Your Pet* will work in a spirit of collaboration with you, and always with utmost care and compassion, to help you plan for a dignified departure through aftercare services for your pet. (Learn more about our facility on page 10.) Your veterinarian can also be a wealth of information. You have an established trusting relationship with them, and we invite you to involve them in the process as your advocate.

Arrangements for services outlined in this booklet can be made through your Veterinary Clinic or through our facility. We welcome you to review our website and see the extensive services that we provide.

We acknowledge that the decisions that you need to make right now can be difficult. It is our hope that the information in this booklet will help you during your time of grief and that you will find solace in knowing that your pet's aftercare will be handled with honesty, compassion and integrity. We promise.

Two handwritten signatures in black ink. The first signature is 'Andre' and the second is 'Tara Laderoute'.

Andre & Tara Laderoute
Owners, Honor your Pet Aftercare Services



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Compassion & Integrity**



BENEFITS OF ADVANCED PLANNING

When possible, planning ahead will help to alleviate some of the stress associated with your pet's passing and enables you to:

- determine your family's needs and budget.
- involve your entire family (and friends, if desired).
- make decisions when you can be rational, not emotional.
- be aware of your options and ask questions.
- plan for personalization of memorial products, a pawprint, or saving a fur clipping.
- decide if you will have a life celebration event and if you would like help with this.
- think about whether or not you would like another viewing, prior to cremation.
- pay for everything (including euthanasia) in advance, so you do not have to deal with it on the day of your pet's passing.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY PET'S BODY?

After your pet has passed and you have had an opportunity to say your final goodbyes, the body will be entrusted in the care of your veterinarian. You may have it wrapped in a special blanket, if you wish, and then it will be placed in a body bag – just like a human being would be – and put in cold storage. The bag will be clearly identified, so there is no chance of a mix-up. Or, you may choose to take your pet's body home with you.


If you feel you are unable to make an immediate decision, that's okay! Instruct your veterinarian to hold your pet's body for a couple of days, until you provide further instructions.



Remember: There are no 'right' or 'wrong' decisions.

Having the time to preplan is a gift, allowing you to educate yourself and make thoughtful choices based on your intuition, your beliefs, and your budget. Whatever decision(s) you make, remember that if it feels right for you, then it is the right thing to do. No two people are alike, so choose what resonates with your heart and take the time to make your own choices.

Your first preplanning decision is whether you would like burial or cremation. If cremation is your preference, do you wish to have the ashes returned to you or not? We trust that the information in this booklet will help you understand the difference and the process.

A calico cat with orange, black, and white fur is sitting on a white windowsill. The cat is looking out a window, and its right paw is raised. The background is a bright, out-of-focus view of the outdoors.

*The risk of love is loss and
the price of loss is grief.
But the pain of grief is
only a shadow when
compared with the
pain of never
risking love.*

~ Hilary Stanton Zunin

OPTIONS FOR PET CREMATION

Whether you choose a returned individual or community cremation for your animal companion, *Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services* can accommodate all types of companion animals.

For either cremation service, you do not need to purchase a casket.

Returned Cremation

'If I choose a returned cremation, how can I be sure that I get my pet's ashes back?'

Your veterinarian works with *Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services* for all pet cremations. We have been serving Vancouver Island since 2000 and have worked hard to gain a reputation for excellence. *Honor your Pet* is the preferred service provider for 80% of the veterinary hospitals, clinics and locums between Cobble Hill and Campbell River, Port Alberni to Powell River, as well as many of the Gulf Islands.

Honor Your Pet is proud to be a member of the International Association of Pet Cemeteries and Crematories and meets (or exceeds) all criteria for ethical operation according to guidelines established by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association.

When *Honor Your Pet* arrives at the cremation facility with your pet's body, we issue and attach a stainless-steel tag with a unique number to the body bag, so it is clearly identified and trackable. This tag stays with your pet for the entire cremation and delivery process.

When you choose a returned cremation, you can rest assured that you are receiving only your pet's cremated remains to save, bury or scatter, as you wish.



Returned Cremation (continued)

With returned cremation, your pet is the only animal in the crematory chamber at the time.

Once the cremation is completed, the ashes are packaged according to your wishes, a certificate of cremation and the numbered stainless-steel identification tag that was issued by *Honor Your Pet* to ensure traceability and accountability, are attached. Everything will be returned to your veterinary clinic for you to pick-up.

The ashes will be in an environmentally-friendly disposable scattering tube or a preselected keepsake memorial vessel. If you initially chose the scattering tube and, at a later date, decide you would prefer a keepsake container, simply call your vet or contact *Honor Your Pet* for more info.

Depending on your geographical location and the day of your animal's passing, it may take up to a week for the ashes to be returned to you. Please be advised that, if you live in Powell River or on any of the Gulf Islands, your wait time may be longer. Your veterinarian will advise you on the expected time frame and will call you when the ashes have been returned to them and are available for pick-up at the clinic.

Of special note: Be aware that cremains (ashes) are composed of calcium phosphate. If you spread a concentrated amount in one area around your plants, you may burn the roots. Please scatter them lightly and use sparingly in any one given area.

Community Cremation

Community cremation is when your pet is cremated with others and the ashes cannot be returned to you. Making this decision is no less respectful of the animal. Some people take comfort in knowing that their once fun-loving and sociable pet will not be 'alone' when it is cremated.

Community Memorial Scattering

As a final act of caring, all community animal cremains from Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services are scattered on the six acres on which the facility is located. Spreading the ashes in this dignified manner completes the full cycle of life and provides a distinguished resting place for your beloved animal companion.

Honor Your Pet's crematorium is located in Black Creek, BC. To respect the privacy of individuals who choose to be in attendance on the day of their pet's cremation, visitation is by appointment only. To respect the integrity and beauty of the natural landscape and this private property, memorial tributes, such as flowers and mementoes, may not be left. Thank you for your understanding.

Ask your veterinarian about the cost of a returned and community cremation and options for memorial products, which may be reviewed in a separate pamphlet.

“The worst thing about losing your dog is not having someone there to lick the tears away.”

~ Final Farewells



HOME BURIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Backyard burial is something many pet owners consider. For a small ‘pocket-sized pet’, like a hamster or budgie, this may be okay. However, for anything larger, you must think about environmental and public health considerations, as well as long-term peace of mind. For these reasons, home burial is not generally recommended. While it is acceptable and easy to bury or scatter ashes somewhere special, the burial of a pet’s body is something you need to think long and hard about.

While there may (or may not) be bylaws or regulations directly related to pet burial in your municipality, bereaved pet parents should be aware that the burial of animal cadavers on privately-owned property in municipalities is not recommended and burial on public land, such as provincial parks, is forbidden.

Before you consider a home burial, ask yourself:

- Do I have the right tools and am I physically able to dig a burial hole that is deep enough to ensure it will not be disturbed?
- Will I always live in this home? If not, what will I do about the burial site?
- Will I always have access to the burial area?
- Is my proposed burial site on private land that is not my own?
- Is my proposed burial site on public land, where burial is forbidden?
- Do my religious preferences or spiritual beliefs guide me to burial or cremation?



Other Burial Facts:

Although unpleasant to think about, concerns about pet burial of cadavers are very real and include (but are not limited to):

- Toxins from a decomposing body can leach into the surrounding soil and affect ground water. These toxins may include euthanasia drugs, chemo drugs and/or any other prescribed medication your animal may have been administered.
- Scavenging animals – such as birds of prey, stray dogs and cats, and other mammals – may dig up the body and, if there are any trace chemicals, they may die after ingestion.
- A burial is not a 'final resting place.' If you move from your home, your pet's remains may accidentally be unearthed at some point in the future.
- If, at a later date, for whatever reason you need to exhume your pet's body and choose to cremate it, the remains may not be identifiable as that of an animal. From a legal standpoint, pet crematoriums should not accept 'questionable' packages for incineration. Doing so could be viewed as tampering with evidence in the event that a criminal investigation was to be conducted.
- Be aware that under no circumstances will *Honor Your Pet* assist, take responsibility for, or participate in exhuming the body of a buried pet.

“We would not cry, had we not loved!”



When it comes to the respectful disposition of your animal companion, aftercare services today go beyond cremation.

It starts with being right where you are right now, taking the time to plan for the aftercare that your fur, finned or feathered baby deserves. The pet aftercare business as a whole has evolved with time, as people demand that the same type of services be available for our pets, as they are for our human family members. *Honor Your Pet* has evolved and expanded right along with others in this industry across North America.

In addition to preplanning for cremation, Honor Your Pet now offers:

- Pet Memorial Products (see insert)
- Cremation Visitation and Viewing
- Celebrations of Life.

CREMATION VISITATION AND VIEWING*

All individuals journey through grief differently. Some people simply want their pet's ashes returned as soon as possible or scattered in a Community Cremation, while they mourn in complete privacy. Others feel the need to participate in the cremation process and desire to have a formal opportunity to say a final goodbye, either on their own or with family and close friends. All three options are made possible at *Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services*.

Given sufficient notice, we are able to accommodate visitation and viewing of the cremation process by appointment.

A private visitation immediately prior to cremation allows bereaved pet parents another opportunity to say goodbye, to be present during the cremation process, and to have a memorial service, if they choose to do so. You may bring your deceased pet out to our facility or we can pick him or her up in advance for you. You may be present when your pet's

body is carefully placed in the crematory chamber, wait for the cremation to finish, and then take your pet home with you the same day. Be aware that the entire process may take several hours.

Understand that visitation and viewing must always be pre-arranged as the cremation of other individuals' animal companions is ongoing and we want to ensure that when you arrive a cremation chamber is empty and ready for your pet, and that you will have privacy. *Please note there is an additional fee for this service.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE/MEMORIAL SERVICE

Honor Your Pet is proud to offer the services of Tara Laderoute, co-owner of *Honor Your Pet* and *Spirit of Life Memorial Products*. Reacting to demand from their Vancouver Island clients, in 2018, Tara became certified through the International Association of Pet Cemeteries as a certified Life Celebrant for Pets. She is the first person in Canada to achieve this designation and we are so proud that she has fulfilled this dream. Tara's training was provided by Animal Champlain Joe Dwyer from the Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement.

A life-long compassionate animal lover, Tara is able to assist in the organization of Celebrations of Life, MC events, and/or publicly speak to the extent that you want. Those that had a relationship with the deceased animal companion may also participate in the process if that is your request. Tara can help guide you through choices in scripture readings, sharing videos and photos, writing and reading a eulogy, playing music, candle lighting and more, all to reminisce about the lovely qualities and personality of your dearly departed pet.

At this point in time, Tara's fee for a Celebration of Life is a free-will offering, plus reimbursement for travel expenses. Please contact 250-337-5777 or email info@honoryourpet.ca for further details.





*“What is best for you ...
Is what you need to do.”*

Now that you are armed with information, please use this section to make notes for future reference for your pet’s final aftercare arrangements.

STEP-BY-STEP TO HONOR YOUR PET

After careful consideration, we have decided on the following choices to honor the memory of our beloved animal companion named:

Date of Birth: _____ Date of Passing: _____

Keepsakes:

We would like to include a:

- ☐ PawPals® Paw Print Keepsake
- ☐ Ink paw print
- ☐ Fur clipping

We have opted for cremation and have decided on a:

- ☐ Returned Cremation ☐ Community Cremation

We would like our Returned Cremation packaged in a:

- ☐ Scattering tube ☐ Keepsake memorial product

We would like to include some personal items with our pet for cremation (blanket, toys, etc.)

Such as: _____

We would like custom personalization on our choice of keepsake memorial product. (Please see insert for selections and pricing).

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

We would also like a small portion of the ashes in a piece of jewelry. (Please see insert for selections and pricing).

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Celebration of Life:

- ☐ We plan to do a celebration of life on our own.
☐ We would like to have Tara help us plan a celebration of life.

ADDITIONAL NOTES & QUESTIONS



ABOUT HONOR YOUR PET

Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services has been providing pet cremation on Vancouver Island, British Columbia since 2000. In 2009, Andre and Tara Laderoute purchased the company from its original owner. The crematory facility is located on six-acres in Black Creek BC, which is located about halfway between Courtenay and Campbell River.

Andre, Tara and their team take pride in providing the highest of standards to every grieving pet parent that is dealing with the loss of their animal. Knowing that their pet is being handled with honesty, compassion and integrity allows their clients to have the peace of mind that they deserve. For transparency purposes, all the staff at *Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services* work under full video surveillance. This confirms all processes and procedures are followed as expected by the accreditation program of IAOPCC.

Honor Your Pet Aftercare Services understands the unique relationship and value that exists between a pet parent and their animal. They also comprehend the professional relationship that develops between a pet's owner and that family member's healthcare provider, the veterinarian. We are dedicated to serving those valued relationships between human and animal, knowing how difficult it is to say goodbye to a beloved pet. We encourage you to include your veterinarian in the aftercare process as your advocate having the foundation of trust that you have established over the lifetime of your pet.

To read our staff bios and learn more about our company, we encourage you to visit our website and/or reach out to us by phone or email.

250-337-5777

info@honoryourpet.ca | HonorYourPet.ca

PET LOSS RESOURCES

Need help coping with your emotions while coming to terms with the loss of your pet? You may find comfort in visiting some of these websites for tips on coping with your grief. You will also find a wealth of resources on the Honor Your Pet website (HonoryourPet.ca)

- The Pet Loss Grief Support Page | www.PetLoss.com
- Grief Healing | www.GriefHealing.com
- The Rainbow Bridge | www.RainbowBridge.com
- Chances Spot Pet Loss & Grief Support | www.chancespot.org
- Letters to Pushkin | www.letterstopushkin.com

Facebook Pet Memorial Page

Honor your pet's memory on our Facebook Memorial page:

 facebook.com/memorialboard/



We want you to know ...

We extend heart-felt condolences
to you and your family.

Although we may not have had the privilege of meeting you or your beloved animal companion, the people at *Honour Your Pet Aftercare Services* and *Spirit of Life Memorial Products* are all animal lovers. We have also felt the pain of pet loss; we know it hurts.

For additional information to help you plan aftercare, memorial products, and resources for coping with pet loss, please speak to your veterinarian or or feel free to contact us directly.



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