

## People &amp; Places

## Pets

## Comfortable goodbye?

## US vets bring pet euthanasia home

NEW YORK, Oct. 18, (AP): Clarence the giant schnauzer came into Penny Wagner's life as a puppy nearly eight years ago, at a traumatic time for her family.

She and her husband, Steve, had recently lost their 21-year-old daughter in a car accident. Soon after, their other child went off to college and Steve returned to work, leaving Penny home alone with her grief. That's when they brought Clarence into the family.

Earlier this year, the beloved pet became critically ill with advanced kidney disease. Their veterinarian wouldn't allow them to stay with him until the end at the clinic due to COVID protocols, so they decided to have him put down at home in Albuquerque, New Mexico, in a favorite laundry room spot.

A vet working with a company called Pet Loss at Home arrived and greeted Clarence and the Wagners. She gave the couple all the time they needed before administering two injections, one to relax the 90-pound dog and the other to let him go. The couple cuddled him as they cried, and their other dog, Cooper, was able to say goodbye as well.



McVety

"He'll always have a special place in my heart," said a tearful Wagner. "I think he was very comforted by the fact that he was home and that he was with loved ones up to the moment we said goodbye."

Private services that offer home euthanasia for pets have been busier than ever since the pandemic led to restrictions on humans inside veterinary practices and animal hospitals. But home euthanasia isn't for everybody. It tends to cost more, and some pet owners believe it is unduly upsetting to small children and other pets in their households.

The vast majority of pet euthanasia is still done in a clinical setting, though some vets have begun to offer end-of-life care at home as part of their practices.

## Peaceful

For Wagner, the human touch was a gift. The same is true of Diane Brisson, 72, in Pinellas Park, Florida.

Brisson used Lap of Love when it came time to bid farewell to Champagne, her 12-year-old Yorkie, last December. Champagne was the only dog her mother, since passed, enjoyed. Champagne fell critically ill with pancreatitis and other organ failure, and Brisson couldn't bring herself to leave him at the vet alone at the end.

"I couldn't have asked for anything more peaceful," she said.

Lap of Love allowed her to have a neighbor with her for support. The neighbor took photos as Champagne sat in Brisson's lap in a favorite chair, the only piece of furniture she brought from her hometown in Massachusetts when she moved to Florida. The vet waited patiently until Brisson was ready to let go. The doctor placed Champagne in a small wicker basket with a white satin pillow and a lavender satin blanket after he passed to take him away for cremation.

"I stayed with him for about 20, 25 minutes and said, 'OK, you're going to be with nanny now. You're going to watch over me with her and you're going to take care of her up there, and she's going to take care of you,'" Brisson tearfully recalled.

Lap of Love returned Champagne's ashes to Brisson. She plans to have them scattered at sea back in Massachusetts, along with her own ashes when the time comes.

**Dani McVety**, a hospice veterinarian in Tampa, Florida, founded Lap of Love in 2009. She considered her ability to help people manage grief to be rare among vets.

"A lot of times doctors aren't necessarily comfortable with that because they haven't been trained to do it," she said.

She and her senior medical director, vet Mary Gardner, teach a course on end-of-life care at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine.

"When I first started Lap of Love, I figured it would be a part-time job. I don't think any of us knew that it could actually be a full-time thing where there would be enough people in any given area that would want this help," said McVety.

Her company operates in 35 states with more than 230 vets.

In general veterinary practices, McVety said, euthanasia costs vary widely, depending on the services sought. It can be as inexpensive as under \$100. At an emergency hospital, it may be more. Like Pet Loss at Home, Lap of Love's fees vary based on location. In Tampa, for instance, Lap of Love charges about \$300. Each client receives a clay paw print.

Most clients pay for the vet to take their pets for cremation. Others drive there themselves or elect to bury their pets at home.

After Clarence was gone, the vet who assisted the Wagners sent a condolence card with marigold seeds inside, suggesting they plant them in the dog's honor. They did, and sent her a photo when the flowers were in bloom.

## Pandemic

Pet Loss at Home has served more than 35,000 families since 2003. It operates with about 75 doctors in 50 metropolitan areas, including Seattle, San Francisco, Denver, Houston and Minneapolis. The pandemic has caused a dramatic increase in business, said Rob Twynning, who founded the company with his wife, Karen, a veterinarian.

"Right now the phone is ringing off the hook," said Twynning, in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. "We have so many calls that we just can't help everybody."

Pet Loss at Home charges anywhere from \$300 to \$600 or more, depending on the city and the drive time.

"It's about comfort," he said. "At home, your pet is familiar with the smells and sounds. A vet clinic is filled with other pets' smells. It's filled with other noises, like barking dogs. It's typically a shiny table where the pet will be elevated. A lot of the time, it's not a veterinarian. It's a technician. At home, you can take your own time."

Twynning's vets serve mostly dogs and cats but have handled other species too, from snakes to parrots.

In Marietta, Georgia, 73-year-old Linda Sheffield went in a different direction last year when her rescue poodle, Timmy, fell ill with a collapsed larynx. She consulted animal communicator Nancy Mello, though she didn't let on that Timmy had been diagnosed and was on strong medication. With Timmy showing no outward symptoms during four or five video sessions, Sheffield made the decision to put him down.



Britain's Prince William and Kate, Duchess of Cambridge attend the first ever Earthshot Prize Awards Ceremony at Alexandra Palace in London on Sunday Oct. 17. (AP)



From left: Emma Watson, Mohamed Salah, Emma Thompson and Dani Alves and Joana Sanz pose for photographers upon arrival at The Earthshot Prize Awards Ceremony, in London, Sunday, Oct. 17. (AP)



Actor Johnny Depp, (backdropped by St. Peter's dome), poses on the red carpet before a masterclass, at the 16th edition of the Rome Film Fest in Rome, Sunday, Oct. 17. (AP)

## Event

## Winners of environmental prize announced

## Celebs join William for Earthshot award

LONDON, Oct. 18, (AP): Celebrities joined Prince William in London on Sunday for the inaugural awards ceremony of his Earthshot Prize, an ambitious environmental program that aims to find new ideas and technologies around the world to tackle climate change and Earth's most pressing challenges.

The winners announced Sunday included the government of Costa Rica, which was honored for a project that pays local citizens to restore natural ecosystems, and the city of Milan, which was handed a prize for its Food Waste Hubs program, which recovers food from supermarkets and restaurants and distributes it to those in need.

Actors Emma Thompson, Emma Watson and David Oyelowo joined William and Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, in handing out the awards at Alexandra Palace in north London.

Guests were asked to "consider the environment when choosing their outfit," and Watson arrived wearing a gown made from 10 wedding dresses from the charity Oxfam. Kate wore an Alexander McQueen dress made for her in 2011, while her husband wore a dark green velvet blazer and a polo neck.

William and his charity, The Royal Foundation, launched the Earthshot Prize last year, inspired by President John F. Kennedy's 1962 "Moonshot" speech that challenged and inspired Americans to go to the moon.

The prize, to be awarded to five winners every year until 2030, is billed as the most prestigious of its kind. Each winner will receive a grant worth 1 million pounds (\$1.4 million) to develop and scale up their ideas.

"There's been lots of amazing ideas over the past decades but it's the implementation that really counts, so that's what this is all about. So it's really a reason to be cheerful," Thompson said.

Lynn appeared as Thelma Lou on the show from 1961 until 1966. She reprised her role in the made-for-TV movie "Return to Mayberry," in which Thelma Lou and Barney got married.

Born **Elizabeth Ann Theresa Lynn** on August 29, 1926 in **Kansas City, Missouri**, Lynn began studying dance and acting at a young age. In 1944, she started performing as a part of USO Camp Shows.

Lynn took her talents overseas, performing in the USO for servicemembers during World War II. She was "thought to be the only American woman to have traveled the dangerous Burma Road during the war,"

according to the museum's statement. She moved to **New York** in the late 1940s and began acting in film, and later, television. Her career spanned decades, but fans came to know her best for her role in "The Andy Griffith Show."

In her later years, Lynn participated in reunions with fellow cast members and various Mayberry-themed festivals. (AP)

son said.

The other winners were a land-based coral farm in the Bahamas to restore dying coral reefs; a green hydrogen technology developed to transform how homes and buildings are powered; and an India-based technology that creates fuel from agricultural waste in a bid to stop crop burning.

William has said he wanted the initiative to inject some optimism into the climate debate, and on Sunday he urged young people not to give up hope for the future.

"For too long, we haven't done enough to protect the planet for your future. The Earthshot is for you," he said. "In the next 10 years, we are going to act. We are going to find the solutions to repair our planet."

The United States will host next year's award ceremony, he added.

## Ceremony

The ceremony came days ahead of the COP26 UN climate change summit in Glasgow, which begins Oct. 31. William, his father Prince Charles and Queen Elizabeth II are all expected to attend.

Earlier this week William criticized the space race and space tourism, saying in an interview that the world's greatest minds should be focused on repairing Earth instead of "trying to find the next place to go and live."

William voiced his disapproval in an interview with the BBC aired Thursday, a day after the former "Star Trek" actor William Shatner became the oldest man to fly to space, in a rocket funded by Amazon founder Jeff Bezos.

"We need some of the world's greatest brains and minds fixed on trying to repair this planet, not trying to find the next place to go and live," said William, who is second-in-line to the British throne.

Asked whether he would like to become a space tourist, William said "I have absolutely no interest in going that high."

"I've been up to 65,000 feet once in a plane, that was truly terrifying," said William, who served in the Royal Air Force as a helicopter pilot. "That's high enough."

William, who is formally known as the Duke of Cambridge, was speaking about climate change ahead of his inaugural Earthshot environmental prize awards ceremony on Sunday and two weeks before a UN climate summit starts in the Scottish city of Glasgow at the end of the month.

William, who has been immersed in environmental issues all his life through the strong interest of his father, Prince Charles, and his late grandfather, Prince Philip, voiced his worries about the world his own children will inherit.

He said it would be an "absolute disaster" if his 8-year-old eldest son Prince George, who he said is "acutely aware" of how resources impact the planet, was having to raise the same issues in 30 years' time.

"Young people now are growing up where their futures are basically threatened the whole time," William said. "It's very unnerving and it's very you know, anxiety-making."

Echoing comments from his father, William urged world leaders to put words into action at the UK climate summit in Glasgow, known as COP26.

"I think for COP to communicate very clearly and very honestly what the problems are and what the solutions are going to be, is critical," William said.

The summit is scheduled to take place Oct. 31-Nov. 12. It is being billed by many environmentalists as the world's last chance to turn the tide in the battle against climate change.



Tutt



Barker

legendary drummer who spent years playing alongside **Elvis Presley** and teamed up with other superstars ranging from **Johnny Cash** to **Stevie Nicks**, has died. He was 83.

In a Facebook post early Sunday, **Terie Tutt** wrote that her father died at home surrounded by his family.

"It's with deep sadness that my family and I share the loss of our beloved dad," Terie Tutt wrote. "The Legendary Drummer, Ronnie Tutt, 'has left the building.'" (AP)