

Remember Dogs From Your Past This Sunday

National Pet Memorial Day offers ways to honor cherished former dogs and other pets.

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With National Pet Memorial Day on Sept. 9, 2007, many owners are searching for ways to honor their deceased cherished pets and find a healthy way to express grief.

“Rituals are an important part of the grieving process,” says Colleen Mihelich, president of Peternity.com, an online store specializing in pet memorial products. “They help us to move forward by providing us a way to constructively act on our grief. National Pet Memorial Day gives pet owners an opportunity to further the healing process by formally acknowledging our passed animals and our grief. It is a day to celebrate the life of our pets and all that they generously gave to us in love and friendship.”

Here are a few things that can be done to honor your former pet for National Pet Memorial Day: Create a living memorial to your beloved dog of plants and/or trees in your backyard. Hold a pet memorial service for family and friends. Make sure to invite the “fur” friends, as well! Visit your pet’s gravesite. Leave flowers, a favorite biscuit, a picture, etc. (check with the cemetery to see what is allowed). Put together a scrapbook or a collage of favorite pictures. Make a donation to an animal charity, a local shelter or rescue organization.

Whatever you decide to do, remember that grief after the death of a loved pet is normal, and may take time to get over.

“Psychologists have long recognized that the grief suffered by pet owners after their pet dies is the same as that experienced after the death of a person,” explains Margaret Muns, D.V.M.