Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge.

When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge.

There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together.

There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable.

All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigor.

Those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them in our dreams of days and times gone by.

The animals are happy and content, except for one small thing: they each miss someone very special to them who had to be left behind.

They all run and play together but the day comes when one suddenly stops and looks into the distance.

His bright eyes are intent; his eager body quivers. Suddenly he begins to run from the group, flying over the green grass, his legs carrying him faster and faster.

You have been spotted and, when you and your special friend finally meet, you cling together in joyous reunion, never to be parted again.

The happy kisses rain upon your face; your hands again caress the beloved head, and you look once more into the trusting eyes of your pet, so long gone from your life but never absent from your heart.

Then you cross Rainbow Bridge… together.

*Author Unknown*
The loss of a beloved pet can be heart-wrenching, whether the death was sudden or it came after a long illness. Animals are a part of our families and they give us unconditional love and it can take a long time to recover from the loss.

Although some people may not understand, the loss of a pet can be as difficult to deal with as the loss of a person, and it is important to take the time to grieve properly. At times you may be feeling many different emotions at once including shock, disbelief, anger, guilt, sorrow and shame. All of these feelings are a normal part of the grieving process. Don’t be afraid to cry, even if children are involved. They need to know that you feel the loss as well.

Take time to grieve for your lost friend. This may include holding a memorial service for him or her, writing down or talking about special memories of your pet, making a donation in their memory to an animal-related cause, or planting a tree or flower in their honour.

In time you may decide to adopt a new pet; they will never replace your lost friend but they will help to fill that empty space in your home.

---

**Additional Resources**

The Humane Society offers a monthly support group where people experiencing the loss of their pet can talk to others going through the same thing. It is a non-judgmental environment where the deep loss is acknowledged and support on coping is provided. The support group meets on the last Wednesday or every month from 6-7pm.

Please register in advance by emailing petloss@windsorhumane.org.

For individual counseling, we recommend reaching out to Family Services Windsor Essex for support. For more information, visit [www.fswe.ca](http://www.fswe.ca).

"Only people who are capable of loving strongly can also suffer great sorrow, but this same necessity of loving serves to counteract their grief and heals them."

(Tolstoy)

1375 Provincial Road, Windsor, ON N8W 5V8
Phone: 519-966-5751 • Fax: 519-966-1848
info@windsorhumane.org • www.windsorhumane.org