

HOMETOWN FEATURE

Angel's Paws navigates through pandemic

Tammy Wynn, a licensed social worker, hospice care specialist and registered veterinary technician, founded Angel's Paws in 2010, to provide pets with the same end-of-life support that their human owners receive, while also providing their humans with much-needed emotional support as they are faced with their pet's end of life or palliative care and eventual passing.

She didn't, however, anticipate spending the 10th anniversary of her business in the midst of a pandemic. Instead of hosting a big anniversary celebration and open house on National Pet Parents day in April, she was creatively scrambling to find ways to keep both her staff and pet parent clients as safe as possible, while following the COVID guidelines set forth by the state of Ohio.

Says Wynn, "All plans for our Open House and Anniversary celebration quickly flew out the window when the pandemic hit. It truly gave an entirely new meaning to 'March Madness', as it felt like a month with 300 days, and our anniversary month of April felt like 5 years.

"Although we are an essential business as a veterinary facility, we are also a home-based business as we provide both home hospice care and home euthanasia to pets in the sanctity of their own home. We were determined to continue to help pets cross over the Rainbow Bridge with dignity in the comfort of their own home, in the arms of their pet parents in the safest manner possible for both them and our clinical staff which includes full-time veterinarian, Dr. Kate Smith and our 7 veterinary technicians. Additionally we needed to make sure that all 11 full-time employees and 4 part-time employees, including our administrative team and cremation specialists had a highly sanitary and safe workplace to come to. After carefully reviewing the public health guidelines, we went into high gear and put out the call for PPE, and to our delight, we had true heroes who immediately stepped forward and answered our prayers. Our veterinarian's mother sewed more than 60 masks out of fabric covered with pawprints and hearts, volunteer Heather Ratliff's mother immediately delivered an entire case of safety glasses, and Matthew 25: Ministries

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Angel's Paws

provided us with much-needed hand sanitizer, antibacterial soap, cleaning supplies and gloves."

Wynn continues, "We remain deeply grateful to our heroes who allowed us to continue to serve pets who were sick and suffering during this time of our region's shutdown via both our Pet Parent Peace of Mind home hospice visits and also for home euthanasia. Thanks to these heroes, we were able to help 475 pets cross over the Rainbow Bridge in the arms of their loved ones between March 21 and June 15. During the shutdown, we also began delivering the ashes of the pets directly to the pet parents' doors, rather than scheduling an in-person pickup, and we also began offering our free grief support groups to pet parents virtually via Zoom. We are still continuing to hold these sessions virtually twice a month per the most recent state guidelines limiting the size of social gatherings."

She concludes, "We finally reopened our facility and chapel to our clients this week, and online appointments easily scheduled for those who wish to pick up their pet's ashes and spend time in our chapel. These visits are scheduled 45 minutes apart, and we sanitize our chapel between clients."

Wynn, long-recognized as an expert in the pet hospice field, is also the 2020 President-Elect of the International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care (IAAHPC), an organization dedicated to addressing the physical, psychological and social needs of animals with chronic or life-limiting illnesses while promoting physical, emotional and spiritual support for caregivers. <https://www.iaahpc.org/>

Since opening in 2010, Angel's Paws has served more than 10,000 pet parents, providing them with their services, which include, in-home quality of life assessments, unlimited access to

their team via a 24/7 hotline for enrolled clients, home nursing visits by their registered vet techs, discounts on palliative care prescriptions, home euthanasia, private cremation and free grief support groups which meet two times per

month, as well as one-to-one grief counseling.

They also have more than 91 veterinary hospitals in the Cincinnati area, who because of their partnership, are now able to offer "true hospice care" to pets and their parents.

For more information, call 513-489-PAWS, or visit www.angelpaws.com.

Link to 4:55 Angels Paws Thank You To Heroes video:

animoto.com/play/75A5kJTU-sAUBIW6Mv7gzHw?autostart=1

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