



# Spirits

# in Transition™

options in  
end-of-life care for our  
animal companions

*Following Their Path - All The Way*

• Animal Hospice • [www.spiritsintransition.org](http://www.spiritsintransition.org) • Animal Hospice •

- Seminars - Support Help Line - Resources - Networking - Integrative Approaches -

## Update Spring 2009

### Animal Hospice is getting around the US

It's an exciting time for getting the word out on hospice care being a viable option for our animal loved ones too. 2009 activities are in full swing.

Many thanks go to our amazing hosts who do what it takes to bring the SPIRITS *in Transition* weekend seminar to their areas and to all of those so deeply dedicated to learning more ways of supporting animals through this very special time we call end of life.

2008/09 destinations: Washington, Oregon, Minnesota, Tennessee and California. Our furthest traveling participant, Elena Grassi, came all the way from Italy to join us. Elena is currently translating into English the book "Friends until



*In 2008 the spirits in Transition seminar took place in 6 locations in 5 different states.*



*Spontaneously playful participants show that a seminar on animal hospice can also be fun.*



### Gathering resources for hospice for horses at Trailblazer Festival

The Trailblazer Festival, a first of its kind event for trail riders, took place at the Santa Barbara Fairgrounds in November 2008. Ella presented on the topics “Headache in Horses” and “The Use of Acu-Points in the Trail Horse”. The booth’s focus of however, was dedicated to interviewing festival visitors on their experiences providing extraordinary care for a horse or another large animal. We especially thank Linda Tellington-Jones for generously sharing her booth with us, and Helena Bresk (above) for being the main pillar of support as the Tea Fire and other life events greatly impacted the availability of our volunteers. The truly inspiring information gathered will be used in future classes.

the End” by Italian veterinarian Stefano Cattinelli, who’s life journey brought him to support his clients in allowing their animals to die in their own time. She will also translate our online classes into Italian!

## Annual Conference

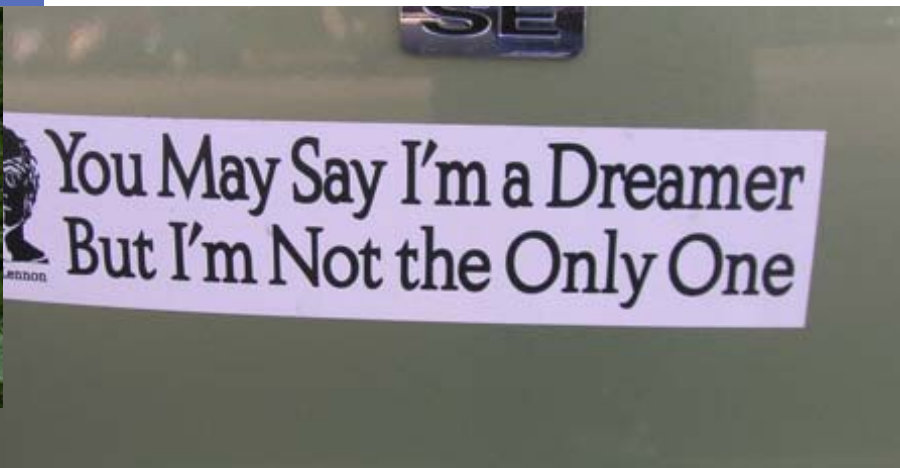
A landmark in the young history of animal hospice, the **First International Symposium for Veterinary Hospice Care** was launched

in 2008 on the campus of UC school of veterinary medicine in Davis, CA. For Kathryn Marocchino, founder of The Nikki Hospice Foundation for Pets, <http://www.pethospice.org/> it was the manifestation of a twelve years vision, a promising start of focused exchange of information among those engaged and interested in animal hospice.

Among the 135 participants were about 20 veterinarians. Ella’s presented on “Quality of Life-Quality of Death”. You can find the conference proceedings text as well as an article published in JAHVMA here:

<http://www.spiritsintransition.org/articles.htm>

The Latham Foundation decided to dedicate a special edition of their magazine to Animal Hospice, a first in history as well! You can locate the entire magazine including Ella’s article at the same link above.





# Heart Paintings

Month after month, week after week the white fluffed 14 year old Bishon lady “Daisy” was brought in by her deeply dedicated mom Sherry to receive Acupuncture for her failing Kidneys.

Ella called her “the princess”, as Daisy “floated” into the veterinary hospital on a white pillow.



With that, homeopathy and home prepped food (favorite: meat loaf !) she did well for quite some time. Daisy was able to die at home, with Sherry waking up in the middle of the quiet night, 20 minutes before Daisy’s last breath.

As part of her internal processing Sherry did paintings of Daisy shortly before and after her death, skillfully capturing the subtle changes. She chose the “after” one for the 2008 Art Tour invitation, saying: “My paintings will not match your sofa”. So very true!

Sherry, we marvel over yes, the artistic skills, but also over the courage and generosity in publicly sharing the sacredness of being there with a dying loved one .

Blessed Journey indeed, Daisy!  
And Thank You  
for continuing to teach us in the  
Spirits in Transition seminars about  
happy living with blindness.

**PLEASE MARK THE DATE and let your veterinarian know about it:** The 2<sup>nd</sup> Symposium for Veterinary Hospice Care is scheduled on Sept. 5-7, Labor day weekend 2009 at UC Davis, CA.

## **Animal Hospice Organization forming: Introducing IAAHPC**

Latest at the 1<sup>st</sup> Symposium for Veterinary Hospice Care it became clear that the time has come for us to gather and discuss different perspectives on animal hospice, aim to define its goals, raise public awareness for the topic, provide resources as well as further education.

Dr. Amir Shanan, DVM, who attended both, the Symposium as well as the *SPIRITS in Transition* seminar, took the initiative and contacted Ella as well as other animal hospice professionals to take the first logistical steps towards forming a non-profit organization by the name of **International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care, IAAHPC**.

The organization can be joined by anyone with interest in animal hospice, such as: YOU! Tune in at:

<http://iaahpc.org/>. Much development to be expected!

Open Studios Art Tour  
2 0 0 8

featuring paintings & drawings by  
Sherry Lewis

October 18 - 19  
Sat./Sun. 10 am - 5 pm



# A blue print for local animal hospice support

Several of the group participants of the SPIRITS in Transition seminar held in spring 2008 at the Hospice Center in Bend, OR, came together to create a local animal hospice support network, the non-profit organization SYNERGY. A main initiating force is Sharen Meyers, a hospice social worker with a profound love for animals. Including the seminar she hosted, Sharen participated in not less than three of Ella's weekend events in 2008. Synergy received its non-profit status in spring 2009.

Congrats & our very best wishes, SYNERGY !



The participants of the 2008 SPIRITS in Transition seminar held in Oregon at Hospice Center in Bend.

We are here for you!

## Animal Hospice Helpline

If you or someone you know needs someone to talk to while caring for a terminally ill animal, remember we can be contacted any time through our website [www.spiritsintransition.org](http://www.spiritsintransition.org) or call at any time Bunny at (805) 598 6496 (no veterinary advice) call Bunny at (805)

## COMING SOON: Animal Hospice Online

Starting end of July 2009 at [www.spiritsintransition.org](http://www.spiritsintransition.org)

As a next step towards the goal of making educational resources on animal hospice easily accessible, the first ever online class on the topic will be offered by SPIRITS in Transition starting this spring. Wherever you are, you can learn in your own pace much of what is contained in the weekend seminar.



Sharing Our Happiness

Gladly announcing our marriage:

Ella Bittel & James Armer, DVM

Valentines Day 2009

Santa Barbara, CA

*It was at an AHVMA Holistic Veterinary Conference that Ella and Jim first met. Jim is a veterinary surgeon and emergency veterinarian and offers acupuncture for pets in his private practice. Based on his own inclination it came easy to Jim to deeply respect Ella's passion for Animal Hospice. While intent on being supportive, he joyously admits that, among a few other things, he is the culprit for the delay of this newsletter. Ella cannot think of any nicer excuse herself.*