

December 1, 2010

Mr. Gregory Carastro
VMCLI
75 Sunrise Hwy
West Islip, NY 11795

On Sunday evening, November 28th 2010, I had the heartbreaking experience of bringing my beloved 10 year old German Shepherd, Sydney, to your emergency facility. What her personal vet and I were treating her for the week prior, was way off base. Because she was showing symptoms of being unable to stand up, both the veterinarian and I thought it was her hips, but Sydney ended up having an abdominal mass that ruptured, and was bleeding into her stomach as well as bleeding around in the pericardial sac of her heart. 2 emergency surgeries would have been necessary to try to save her, but it was unlikely that she would have survived the heart surgery, and even if she did, her prognosis would have been poor. The heartbreaking decision was to euthanize her. Needless to say, I was devastated.

I cannot say enough about your entire staff, especially Dr. Brooke Hutt. When I arrived, your staff immediately brought a stretcher out to my truck to get Sydney inside. Within, 10 minutes, Dr. Hutt came out to brief me about what was going on, and was going back in to do more quick testing. Within 15 more minutes, she was back out again, took me inside and we talked. She was so caring, comforting and explained everything that was going on in a way you would understand. I, being a Critical Care Technician in EMS understood a lot more, but Dr. Hutt didn't know that, but you know that's how she talks with everyone. After talking, we made the decision to euthanize, and she told me to bring the family inside, that she would bring Sydney in, so we may spend our last moments together. Your staff, brought in a comforter, laid it on the floor, brought Sydney in, she laid on it, and we spent some time consoling her, saying our goodbyes. Dr. Hutt then came in, got right down on the floor with us, and explained how everything was going to happen, that she would go peacefully. Everything happened exactly as Dr. Hutt had explained. We spent a few more moments, and they carried her out. Your staff also asked me if I would like a clay paw print of Sydney, and presented me with that precious paw print that I will hold and cherish forever. I had her cremated, and will be picking her up at your facility in about 2 weeks.

Would you please relay to your staff my most sincere gratitude for trying to do everything for my "little girl", and the way they took care of her, me included.

One final note.....I would like to know if you would approve my sending you a check in the amount of \$250 to have this money be available to someone who comes in and might not be

able to afford a certain test or medicine for their beloved pet, and have this money applied to it. I know it's not a lot, but might help a little. Look at it as the "Sydney Memorial Fund". I would like to do this yearly. Back in 2004, Sydney had to have a laryngeal tieback at LIVS, and the cost to me was \$4,000. I didn't care what I had to do to get it. If this is not something you could do, I would understand. You may email me: EX32430@optonline.net with your decision.

Once again, thank you for everything and have a wonderful Holiday Season to you and your staff.

With warmest regards,

Barbara Bender



This was her last ride in our convertible to Maryland. She got lots of attention along the way!