

Alley Animals

A Brief Editor's Note

We hope you were blessed in 2014. Now, in this season of giving thanks and counting blessings, we want you to know your support certainly blessed our work on the inner city streets all year long. We give our thanks for every one of you.

As I searched for a thought or two to inspire you at this time of year, I realized I should instead draw a line under the fact that *you* inspire and energize *our* determination and *our* dedication to the work we do. You are, indeed, the driving force behind our nightly excursions into the dangerous neighborhoods and hundreds of alleys where homeless animals hide. The faces of innocent creatures enduring what no one should endure light the flame in our hearts, but you make it possible for us to do what we do.

Unfortunately, this year was no different than those past: the animals' suffering outweighed the victories we were able to accomplish. However, any inroad we can make toward lessening their pain remains our focus. We push ahead because of the good we might do, the relief we might bring to a worthy soul who would otherwise know only greater and greater suffering. Our victories

may be small compared to the overwhelming misery experienced by homeless animals silently bearing the hardship of life in the streets and alleys, but each victory reminds us other innocent beings wait for deliverance. Because we're the only ones who travel hundreds of alleys night after night, the animals' principle hope—and for nearly all of them—their only hope for relief rests in our return to the streets.

In this Year's End issue I chose to bring you stories of triumph. Although we took animals off the streets who were in the terminal stage of severe injury or starvation, and others who had deadly cruelties done to them, I decided to sound an "up" note. We keep going because of the good we can accomplish despite the mountainous burden of hardship and pain homeless animals carry on their backs. So along with our heartfelt wish that you experience joy this holiday season, much joy and reason to give thanks, we also ask that you remember the hidden ones who wait in the cold. We ask you to offer what you can in support of our nightly journeys into their world that we might do everything possible to bring them a blessing of relief. Such blessing of the homeless and hurting joins you to them and to our work as surely as it brings us a thankfulness for which there is no equal.

A Flat Tire On A Cold Night, and One Less Homeless Animal

By Lillian G. Leslie

It was going to be one of those nights. To start, winter decided to make an early appearance, a preview of what will be when cold strikes to the bone. This particular night wasn't that extreme, although the placement of a polar vortex in autumn was an unwelcome divergence from nights chilly, but not intolerable. As autumn flies by and we ready ourselves for its exit, we're all hoping for a winter less formidable than last year's. May the polar vortices remain indefinitely in the polar regions.

The unseasonable cold that fall night gave an unfriendly greeting to Dee as she left for the city streets, and she realized as the old alley car's heater strained to do its job, she ought to have worn a heavier jacket. She'd just begun the alley route when the steering wheel shook with a foreboding familiarity, and Dee knew right away what it meant: a flat tire. For many of us, changing a flat tire in the "best" of circumstances can be problematic, but at night in the cold and in a dangerous

neighborhood, this interruption becomes more than an annoyance. Dee pulled over, pressed her hands against the heater vents for a long moment, and got out to do what she had to do.

The jack handle was so cold it seemed to burn. Dee retrieved a small towel from inside the car and wrapped the metal handle, making it possible for her to use it without stopping every few seconds to breathe warmth onto her hands. Once the car was raised, she wrapped the lug wrench handle with the towel before undoing the lug nuts. Tires are heavy, but lifting one while trying to match the holes in the wheel rim with the lugs can be maddening, especially in the cold and dark. Dee wrestled with the tire and finally got it on, put the tools back in the car, and felt the stress of having to make up for a half hour lost to changing a flat. She wondered if her hands would ever get warm again,

(continued on page 2)

A Flat Tire *(continued)*

Completely focused on getting to the next alley and moving quickly, Dee suddenly put her foot on the brakes—hard. For a second, she wasn't sure why. As soon as the alley car jolted to a stop, Dee became aware of movement off to the side of the road. Her subconscious mind, ingrained in the ways of alley work, used its inscrutable pathways to alert her brain to stop the car and pay attention. It was a dog, a medium-sized light colored dog, sniffing the ground as he navigated through yards. The color of his fur stood out in the darkness, so Dee was able to recognize him as the dog she'd been seeing and leaving food for since early last spring. She called him Windy because he reminded her of a leaf being blown about in the wind.

Trying to befriend Windy had been a long, slow process, as it so often is with homeless and abandoned animals. He was always hungry, but he wouldn't go within 10 feet of a dog trap, or humans, for that matter. Unlike cats, who tend to remain in one alley or group of alleys, dogs roam far and wide. Dee didn't see Windy every trip through the streets, and rarely in the same place from one sitting to the next, which could be as long as two or three weeks apart.

Because Windy was now on the move, Dee drove slightly behind him for a couple of blocks; his light fur allowed Dee to keep track of him. She also had to mind the road ahead, the parked cars, possible pedestrians, and trash. When something on the sidewalk attracted Windy's attention, this was the opportunity Dee had wished for. She pulled over, grabbed some food, and got out of the car. Windy was busy trying to rip open a crumpled fast-food bag—he would lick the bag, paw at it, lick it again. There probably wasn't any food left in it, only the smell, but that was enough for him to continue the desperate attempt for find even a tiny leftover morsel.

For fear of startling him, Dee didn't approach while he was busy with the bag, instead she watched and waited for this hungry animal to smell the food she held in her hand. Finally he lifted his head to sniff the air, and his eyes met Dee's. He wagged his tail three quick wags, and Dee knew this would be Windy's last night on the streets. Kneeling down, she coaxed the little dog to come but he wasn't ready. Windy took a few steps toward the smell of the food before retreating between two abandoned buildings. He didn't outright flee as he had many times previously, so this was an encouraging development. Entering the shadows between buildings in pursuit of a dog should be avoided in favor of a safer strategy, so Dee opened another can of food and waited for Windy's hunger to prevail over his caution. And it did.

Dee left the area with the hungry, skinny dog she called Windy in her arms, and the months of working with him paid a handsome reward. Dee was so happy she smiled the whole rest of the night as she finished the alley route. She thought to herself, it was definitely "one of *those* nights" as she predicted at the start. Very cold temperatures can hamper alley work; it's hard to move when it's freezing cold, but in this case, it increased Windy's willingness to trust Dee for the food she offered him. The cold always makes animals hungrier, which is one reason we despise winter; however, on this night the cold turned out to be an animal's friend. The tire went flat at just the right time—any later, and Windy would still be roaming, hungry and homeless, on the inner city streets. By the way, he hasn't shown the slightest interest in empty paper bags since that last occasion; after all, he doesn't have to search for crumbs



Windy

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Alley Animals 410-823-0899

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Autumn by Alice Arnold

Driving along in and out of the alleys, I'm always looking under cars, around trash piles and abandoned houses where the hungry animals try to find food. When I saw her at first I thought she was a plastic trash bag blowing in the breeze. You don't know how many times I've followed a plastic bag rolling under a car and feeling so relieved that it was just a bag, but this time it wasn't. The movement came from a storm drain grate, she was popping in and out between the trash and debris; she blended so well I had a hard time distinguishing her from the collection of trash swaying in the breeze. I tossed some tuna out the car window and backed off to watch and wait.

It only took a few seconds for the kitten to smell the tuna and crawl out of the storm drain, her nose to the ground as she followed the scent of food. I pulled the car closer and got out slowly. The kitten had finished the pieces of tuna I'd thrown out for her and now she was frantically licking the dirty pavement. I got down on my knees and opened a fresh can of food. It wasn't long before the kitten could smell it, but as she started for the can, she stopped and ran back to the storm drain and disappeared. Her fear of me kept her from eating the nourishment she needed so badly. Before she poked her head out again, I slid the can a little closer to the grate and I slid along behind it as quietly as I could.



Autumn

This starving kitten finally came out for the food, even though she knew I was there. I talked to her softly and told her what a pretty girl she was, that I was going to help her, not hurt her. She ate a few bites from the can of food and suddenly she looked up and began crying the most pitiful cries; she came running over to me, still crying, and she let me pet her while she rubbed against my leg. As I ran my hand over her back, I remembered wondering when I first saw her head moving in and out of the storm drain grate, whether or not she was a bag or an animal. Now I'd say she's a bag alright, a bag of bones.

I got back in the car with her in my arms, thinking some ugly human put out this kitten to fend for herself, which she could never have done. She was friendly...too friendly. She'd had contact with people in her short life and then those people did what so many do: they abandoned her. She trusted them and they betrayed her. She wouldn't have survived long in that storm drain, and I couldn't help feeling so angry at the humans who did this to an animal. I'm sure they're not hungry or frightened or lost and alone. Oh well, neither is Autumn anymore.

She was very hungry and thirsty, and completely exhausted. She slept for days, waking up only to eat, drink, and go to the litter pan. Every time she opened her eyes she purred and purred, then she curled up again and purred herself back to sleep.



The storm drain where she sought shelter amidst the trash.

Adoptions Suspended Through January 1st

Archie, Windy, Autumn, and Missy will be ready for adoption after January 1st. We do not adopt animals between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Too often, animals adopted as holiday gifts end up in shelters or abandoned; some are neglected, others put on a chain or

banished to a lonely life in a cage. Adding an animal to a family requires careful thought and preparation, so for the animals' sake, we believe it best to suspend adoption until the festivities are over.

Sometimes You Just Don't Know

by Alice Arnold

I'd just put out the last pot of dry food from the bag I was using, so I needed to bring up a full one from behind my seat, so I pulled over to make the switch. It was about 3:45 a.m. and no one was on the road. I situated the full bag of food and I was about to continue my route through the alleys when I saw a dog under a street light, she was sitting behind the pole. I got out of the car and I knew she could smell the pot of food as I walked toward her.

When I got close, she backed up a few steps and put her tail between her legs, so I crouched down and put the pot of food on the ground. Then I pushed it toward her. She grabbed a bite and ran back a little ways to eat it, then she looked at me and crept forward for more. This continued for a while and eventually she let me pet her. I could feel the collar around her neck, and she was thin but not bony, a little scraggly but not starved. When I got her in the car with me, she was so good, she sat next to me and didn't fuss or make a sound, she just scratched her ears a couple times and curled up as if she felt completely comfortable riding in a car.

After the alleys were done, we were taking a closer look at our well-behaved passenger, and we noticed the rabies vaccination tag on her collar. This might mean she was lost. Because the tag was expired, it took some time to locate a phone number, but we were so glad we'd be able to let a person or family know we found their poor little lost dog. It's a good feeling.

A woman answered our call and told us her son had let the dog out and she's been gone for two weeks; she gave us her address and we arranged to take the dog there. We thought the dog would be overjoyed to be home, and we looked forward to reuniting her with her family. When Donna and I pulled up to the location, we heard very loud music, almost shaking the windows, and the little dog gave no reaction when we walked up to the porch. Her tail didn't wag, she didn't act excited at all, and when the lady let us inside, Missy (as the lady called the dog) ran halfway up the stairs, stopped to look at us, then ran up the rest of the way. The situation wasn't what Donna or I expected, and I wondered why Missy ran upstairs the way she did. The woman laughed and said she's upstairs all the time.

The music was blaring and there were a lot of kids in the house, but none of them seemed to care that Missy was back home. It was distressing to me. Donna and I looked at each other and I knew she was thinking the same thing I was—this was not a good situation for us to leave the dog who seemed so grateful when we took her off the street. It didn't feel right, even though this was technically her "home". In order for us to take Missy with us when we left, we needed the woman to voluntarily give up the dog. I said to the woman, "We're worried that Missy might have picked up mange when she was on the streets; she's been scratching and her ears look red" (which they did). Donna added, "You know kids

can get mange if they pet Missy or pick her up, and you wouldn't want your kids to get mange." We were on a roll, so I kept it going. "Missy could have picked up worms as well when she ate whatever she could find on the ground. If Missy has worms, your kids could get worms and if they do, you'd have medical bills for the kids and Missy".

Even though we were trying to make a good case for the lady to give up the little dog, everything we said was true. Missy could have gotten mange, her ears were red, and she might have gotten worms from eating garbage. People can get mange and worms from handling an infected animal, and kids don't always wash their hand as much as they should.

The lady sat and thought for a minute while Donna and I looked at each other. Finally the lady said, "how much does it cost to get rid of mange and worms?" I reminded her she'd have to pay for vaccinations, too because the rabies tag had expired. "That's it! I can't pay for all that stuff," the lady said, and we went to the bottom of the stairs and called out to the little dog. She peeked at us from the top step and then came down slowly but she stopped halfway, so Donna patted her legs and called again. This time Missy came running. As we left, the lady said she'd go back to the shelter for another dog if the kids decide they want one. We hoped they didn't.

Sometimes you just don't know how things will turn out. We thought we were going to watch a family glad to have their dog back, and a poor lost dog would be back in a safe and loving home. That didn't happen, but things have a way of working out for the best sometimes...not always, but sometimes.



Missy did have worms but not mange; the scratching we observed was due to fleas. Her vaccinations have been updated and all parasites eliminated. She's a happy dog.

Alley Animals

In Loving Memory Of:

The precious dog who died in the crate. *Sandy Miller*

My beloved brother **James F. Leslie**.
Franklin E. Leslie

Our sweet **Monroe**. *Deborah Heinecker*

Rudy, Sam, & Tuttle. *Joyce Jefferson*

Buddy & Muffie. *Rita Hockett*

Denise Hamer, my beloved wife who loved animals.
George M. Hamer, III

My mother, **Caroline Ford**, a lover of all animals.
Kim McClary

Bubblegum & Jack, gone but not forgotten.
Jim & Nancy

My mother, **Jessie Batch**, from her daughter and son-in-law.
Shirley and John Rice

Lena H. Abbot, my Mom, I miss you everyday.
Carolyn

Lora Kincade. *Robert Kincade*

Andy, the noble and lovable Labradoodle who made everyone smile.
Edmund & Kathy Novak

Aviva, Layla, Mario, & Natasha. *Sarah Kaplan*

Audrey DeVilbiss. *Karen Frayer*

Glen Campbell. *Edna & Hank Kloczewski*

Rosie "Mouse" Kane. *Deniz Corcoran*

Sasha, my purring engine! She has been gone for ten years but never forgotten.
Sylvia Benton

Miss Dolly died on June 17, 2014. For 2½ years, Gina Sola, a vet tech and friend, came to my home 2 to 3 times a week, to give my cat fluids for kidney failure.
Charleen Ponton

Pretty Pollyana, the sweetest kitty. I rescued her as a kitten, and she left me too soon at 9 years old. She will be greatly missed!
Shirley J. Landes

Widgeon ("Weege"), Mount Washington's best loved Basset. We all miss her sweet and gentle presence.
Louis Wm. Steinwedel

My sister, **Bobbie LaSov**, who did so much for animals on earth and who surely must be surrounded by hundreds of animals in the Perfect World.
Jeanne Blake

Hans, Gretel, Max, Heidi, and Fritz, my adorable Doxies.
Maggie Hediger

Our beloved **Lucy**. *Gail & Tom Koch*

My Mother, **Helen Hart**. *Helen H. Needle*

For **Dory**, and **Lillian's father**. *Ned Landis*

My Mom, who passed 6-11-14 after 3 years of Alzheimers and pancreatic cancer. Mom, when you thought I wasn't looking, I saw all you did for me.

When you thought I wasn't listening, I heard every word.

Thank you for the time we had before your leaving.
Love, Annie

And, my late husband, who passed 8-23-06. The same sentiment applies. You've made me who I am. In sweet remembrance.
Love Annie

My beloved son, **Jesse Elkins**. *Antonia Fowler*

Sparky, my monkey. My heart was broken when I lost you, and it still is. Mommy misses you everyday.
Tammy Dickson

Leon & Ethel Mae Lineburg—good people, generous friends.
Donya Rittinger

Ethel Mae Lineburg and her husband, **Leon Lineburg**.
Lynn Bartosz

Ethel Mae Lineburg.
*Ronald Vane
Sondra J. Riley*

My beloved brother, Randy, who died much too young—I miss you so much. He loved nature and all living creatures. Randy, I will always love you and hold you in my heart.
Mae Kondner

John Fiorina, from his nieces.
*Elizabeth Knust
Mary Barthel*

Dixie Studnicki enjoyed life. She loved treats, especially pizza. Dixie was a snuggler, burrowing into Jimmy's shoulder when he held her. She kept Cindy company through her workday. An affable pug. Dixie was fond of all creatures, especially box turtles. She was a loved family member. We'll miss her.
Mom, Dad, and Aunt Micky

Ashes and Mindy, my sister Debbie's two beloved cats, who died within a month of each other. Little Ashes was 17 years old; Mindy was 14 years old. This is the first time in 33 years my sister hasn't had a cat, and she feels lonely in an empty house.
Sandy Graham

Gracie, my cat, whom I lost recently after a long battle with lymphoma. She meant the world to me and her loss truly broke my heart.
Rona Greenfield

On May 5th of last year 2013, my sister-in-law, **Jean Hirsch**, passed away. This year 2014 on May 30th, my brother **Gerard (Buddy) Hirsch** passed away. He was Jean's husband and they both loved animals dearly.

Marie Hirsch

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Alley Animals

In Memory of: *(continued from page 5)*

Jane R. Lang, a person of kindness and beloved wife of Raymond Lang.

*Jane Tabb
Charlotte Parker
Mrs. Audrey Kraus*

Edmund, a gentle guinea pig who died last winter after only 9 too short months with me. He was over 6 years old when he was turned into a shelter because the previous owners "didn't have time." After adopting him I discovered what he wanted was to sit on my lap and be petted. So every morning that's just what we did, listening to music at the same time, after which he would get his morning veggie snack. What a blessing he was.

DonnaRae Castillo

Abigail and Katrina, two senior domestic rats I adopted after they had been left on a vet's office doorstep. Both had mammary tumors and one also had her incisors growing through the roof of her mouth into her nasal cavity. Surgery gave both a few months of the comfort they so much deserved and they now play and snuggle together over the Rainbow Bridge.

DonnaRae Castillo

Pippin, my sweetheart teddy bear (i.e., long-haired) hamster. He was prone to infection and had to be medicated twice a day for over 3 months. Despite his many medical problems, he never lost his sweet good nature and would snuggle next to me in "our" chair. He was a special little guy.

DonnaRae Castillo

Lillian's father and my mother, **Ruth Pegg**, who also died this year at age 101. She, too, loved animals and graciously welcomed all my stray cats when I retired and moved in with her. The furry folks and I miss her greatly.

Marlene Pegg

Lillian's father, at 101 years old—what a treasure! He lived through WWI, the roaring 20's, the Great Depression, WWII, and so much more. The stories he must have been able to tell.

Sara Culler

James F. Leslie, Sr. He must have been a wonderful man.

Dianne White

Lillian's beloved father; may beautiful memories now comfort his daughter.

Prayers, Rose Marie

Lillian's Dad; his physical presence is gone but he lives on in your heart.

Linda Rodrigue

For **Lillian Leslie's wonderful Dad**.

*Sandy Graham
Doris Richard
LaVerne Gatti
Denise Gatti*

Lillian's beloved Dad.

*Stan Puciul
Marilyn Wellbrock*

Lillian's Dad, James F. Leslie.

Shirley & Wade Keeling

James F. Leslie, Sr. Thank you for the gift of Lillian to this earth. Your light will continue to shine through the magnificent daughter you raised.

John & Maggie Miner

James Leslie. Lillian is in my thoughts and prayers.

Sheila Akehurst

James Leslie, Rest in Peace.

Sherri Pennock

The sun goes down, but gentle warmth still lingers on the land

The music stops, and yet it echoes on in sweet refrains
For every joy that passes, something beautiful remains.

In loving memory of Lillian's father. **James F. Leslie.**

Rosemary Brennan

Lillian's beloved father, **James F. Leslie, Sr.** Even at 101 years of age, it is always too soon, and the hearts of those who truly love are never "ready." He must have been an exceptional human being—caring, kind, generous, strong. Like his daughter. How proud of you he must have been, and how much joy and love you undoubtedly brought into his life. I think you were each a credit and a comfort to the other. You will find peace in knowing you loved someone wonderful, and he loved you.

Diane Hankey

My Dad, **James F. Leslie, Sr.** How I miss our Sunday afternoon telephone calls. After all those years you remained a loyal fan of the Orioles when all they did was lose, I can't help feeling a hollow sadness now that your team is finally winning, especially when your wish was to live long enough to watch them win the World Series. I'll have to cheer for the Ravens by myself this year.

Lilly

In Honor Of:

My friend, **Mary Worrel.**

Barbara Willson

Pete Tinsley's birthday and his beloved dog, **Sadie.**

Shirley Geddes

John & Shirley Rice's wonderful cats.

Jerry

My wonderful cat, **Dylan.** He was a small feral kitten when caught. It took years to make friends, he was so afraid. Now, he grooms me to sleep every night.

Sandy Pendleton

Alley Animals, for all the work they do.

Angela Brittain

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Alley Animals

In Honor Of: *(continued)*

My smart and dear little dog, **Bets**. She was a surprise Christmas gift from my brother Rog, and the nicest present I've ever gotten. I don't know what I'd do without her.
Sandy Graham

Dewey, who is named after the Iowa library cat. He is as sweet, lovable, and friendly as his namesake was.
Sylvia Benton

Three brave TNR'd feral felines—**Kate, Liza, and Big Bear**—who lived and were fed in a retirement community in Santa Fe, New Mexico, until a neighbor demanded they be "disposed of." They were trapped and taken to a kind woman 15 miles away where they had food, water, and litter in a huge shed for two weeks then were released with daily food and water. Two weeks later, Kate and Big Bear returned to "their" community. They walked 15 miles in 92° heat, crossed five major roads, and eluded coyotes and gun-happy humans to get "home." Liza, sadly, did not survive the journey.
Margaret M. Detwiler

Orlando—she's always with us.
Cornelia Vanderlain & Jim Cox

For **Alice**, a very courageous trooper who "Keeps on going" in spite of a life-threatening illness. God bless you.
Doris Richard

For all the sweet and hurting animals on the city streets.
Lorraine Hill

My dear friend, **Dawn Griest**, on her birthday. With much love from me and my two dogs Carmela and Tess.
Judith Eble

My niece, **Mary**. Her strength I admire, her compassion and perseverance I respect, her spirit I love.
Lilly

Please Consider remembering Alley Animals in your Will. Animals on the streets will go on suffering, and if you have been blessed in this life we hope you will consider sharing your blessings with the least fortunate among us.

Archie



Archie came from one of our roughest areas where a number of cats had been torn apart when people brought their dogs through the alley, dogs they were training to kill. We don't know how Archie managed to survive, but he's safe now. A very sweet cat who enjoys his naps, preferably on a person's lap, Archie gets along well with other felines.



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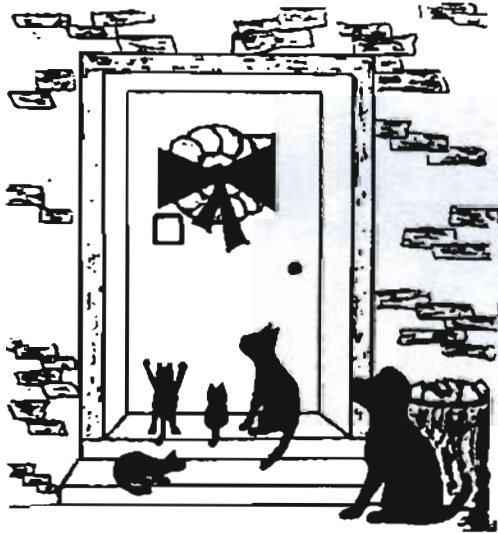
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Alley Animals

From Me to You

When I lost my Dad in July, I had an extremely difficult time coming to terms with the loss. I would never enjoy another Sunday telephone call, never buy him a funny card, never again kiss his bristly cheek. Though this wasn't to do with Alley Animals' work directly, my overpowering grief did affect my responsibilities; I struggled with the simplest of tasks and I strained to stay motivated. Because preparing our newsletters rests on my shoulders, I believe I owed it to you, our supporters, to explain why the summer issue was little more than a reminder that we depend on your help to continue our work in the streets.

I let you know my Dad passed and I hoped you would understand why I didn't have the wherewithal to prepare a regular summer newsletter, but I certainly didn't expect the lovely cards and notes I received. You took time out of your lives to offer such genuine sympathy for my loss; I was touched in a way that defies description. At a time when I felt lost and I didn't know the way, you stood next to me. You offered me comfort; words of my appreciation can't even touch the edges of what your thoughtfulness meant to me.

Now I go through the days without my Dad, some days so much harder than others, but along with the emptiness and the sorrow I feel the warmth of people I've never met, people who extended a kindness to me for which I am *immeasurably* grateful. I kept every note, every card you sent, and during the harder times. I look at them and know you understand.

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