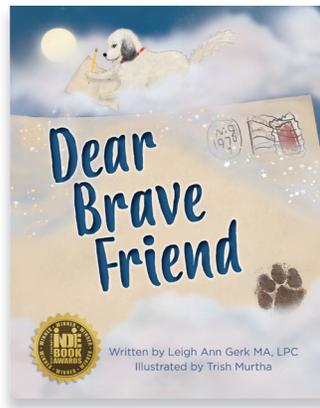


# PRESS KIT



High resolution images files are provided for download on the Press Room website page.



## PRESS KIT

### **BIO:**

Leigh Ann Gerk MA, LPC has been in the counseling field for over eleven years. She is certified in Pet Loss & Grief Companionship and the founder and owner of Mourning to Light Pet Loss providing individual and family counseling for anyone grieving the loss of a pet. She currently offers 3 free pet loss support groups in Northern Colorado and is excited to branch out and offer more. Having grown up on a farm, Leigh Ann's childhood playmates included baby calves, horses, bunnies, dogs, and 32 cats that set up house in a boxcar that also served as her playhouse. This upbringing introduced her, at a very young age, to the human-animal bond and instilled in her a deep understanding of, and love for, this extraordinary relationship.

### **ABOUT:**

Leigh Ann Gerk, founder of Mourning to Light Pet Loss, LLC, is devoted to walking beside and guiding heartbroken families through the difficult journey of losing their beloved pet(s). Through individual and family counseling, including free pet loss support groups, she provides understanding and compassionate support. Additionally, she is a mentor to those working in the animal field, providing educational workshops, informal discussions and debriefings to help alleviate stress, compassion fatigue, and processing the many emotions felt in busy veterinary clinics or crematories.

### **DEAR BRAVE FRIEND SYNOPSIS:**

This gentle and heartwarming story captures the love between a boy and his dog, and the sadness that follows after his cherished dog passes away. Written in the form of a letter from the dog to the boy, the letter shares relatable, real life examples of how the boy (and therefore anybody who has lost a dear pet) may be feeling and suggestions on what he can do to help himself get through this most difficult time. The letter also touches on simple acts of kindness that can follow the reader throughout his or her lifetime. The message in this story is applicable to young and old, girl or boy, and to any family pet that has stolen your heart. Story starters, drawing pages, and a place to add pictures of your own beloved pet are also included in the back of the book.

### **ABOUT GOLDEN HARVEST PUBLISHING:**

Keeping to her roots, Gerk 's publishing name, Golden Harvest Publishing, was named in memory of her late father, Elmer Frank, who spent endless hours working and tending to his much-loved wheat fields.



## PRESS KIT

### PROFESSIONAL QUOTES ABOUT *DEAR BRAVE FRIEND*:

*"Dear Brave Friend* lovingly demonstrates healthy grieving to children who have experienced the death of a pet. Poignantly presented in the form of a letter from a pet to a young child this book deftly covers the variety of feelings that the young reader may encounter while letting them know that, whatever their emotion, it is a normal and healthy way to experience loss. The author brings her expertise as a counsellor in pet loss and grief companionship to this touching book which also provides exercises for children to express their feelings."

*—Next Generation Indie Book Awards Judge*

"This sweet and meaningful book is sure to support the whole family. The author has taken care to capture what it's like for a child to lose a friend and impart a message of hope."

*—Kathleen Cooney, Veterinarian and end of life specialist*

*"Dear Brave Friend* is a beautiful way to talk with children about pet loss. The story line and illustrations are powerful tools that give a child's heart permission to know that they might feel a certain way, and it's perfectly acceptable. Coupled with the practical workbook at the end, this book has it all—not only for children and parents, but for all ages! This is a "highly recommend" read for every pet lover!"

*—Coleen A. Ellis, Pet Loss Pioneer, Two Hearts Pet Loss Center*

### TESTIMONIALS ABOUT LEIGH ANN AND *DEAR BRAVE FRIEND*:

"Each time I see Leigh Ann she gives me something to hold onto, a new light in the dark tunnel. Even when I no longer need the grief counseling, I will always want Leigh Ann in my life as she is a true angel and helping people with the loss of their pets is her life calling."

*—Shannon Modoc*

"This book has personally touched me greatly. It sent me back remembering my furry babies and just how much I miss them.! It is so comforting to know they are in a better place and that there is a perfect book for both big and small to help through all the emotions involved in losing an animal. Absolutely loved it!!

*—Laura Fisher-Jorgenson*

"Wonderful!!!! A beautiful story for anyone who has loved a pet; young, old, and all in between!! Love, love, Love!!!!

*—Carly Prevenas*



Finding Hope Through Loss

## PRESS KIT

### FACTS:

- Leigh Ann Gerk is in Pet Loss & Grief Companionship.
- Leigh Ann is a proud member of the International Association for Animal Hospice and Palliative Care (IAAHPC)
- *Dear Brave Friend* launches on Amazon and earns a #1 Hot New Release Status (August 25, 2019)
- *Dear Brave Friend* wins a Next Generation Indie Book Award in the Childrens/Juvenile (Non-Fiction), category and is a Finalist in Animals/Pets.
- The Next Generation Independent Book Awards is the largest International awards program for indie authors and independent publishers.

### NOTABLE FACTS:

- Research tells us that pet ownership has more than tripled since the 1970's. Currently, 68% of U.S. households, or about 85 million families, have a pet. Of these families, 9 in 10 consider their pets to be a part of their families.
- Pet parents, including children, need to share their story, say their pet's name and go through the grief journey, just as people who have lost a human family member do.
- It is often just as hard, or harder, to lose a pet than a human family member.
- Pet memorials and funerals are becoming much more common and accepted.
- *Dear Brave Friend* is offering a 15% discount to name a star after your dear pet at the International Star Registry. Please use code DBF15 at check out. Go to: <http://www.starregistry.com> or call 1-800-282-3333 to order.