



How Many Tales Are There About Lupus Patients and Their Pets?

In 2000, Ann Marie Glaviano was diagnosed with an aggressive form of systemic lupus that targeted her kidneys and central nervous system. Two years of chemotherapy changed her lifestyle, but she's got more than her own autoimmune story to howl about. Medici, her 6 year old, 12-pound Papillion, was also diagnosed with lupus and just finished his chemotherapy.

At the height of her health challenge, Ann Marie became a divorced mom of two – it was a very lonesome road! But her pets always seemed to know when she was totally exhausted – Medici pulled off her socks for her or he would drag the cordless phone to her (it was bigger than him!). "Our cat, Nana, bless her soul, would stay close to my heart under the covers when I would get the chills. I can't imagine not having my pets when no one else could be with me," she said.

"I didn't know a thing about lupus when I was diagnosed," says Ann Marie. "It shouldn't be that way!" Even though more people have Lupus than have AIDS, most the general public is unaware of this deadly disease. Surprisingly, many medical professionals lack familiarity with the disease as well, frequently resulting in misdiagnosis followed by the wrong treatment, or no diagnosis which delays treatment.

It is a difficult disease to diagnosis because it mimics so many different diseases and symptoms vary among patients. Because lupus can strike virtually any organ, it is a serious illness which can ultimately lead to death. It is a discriminating disease in that the majority of its victims are women, usually diagnosed in their 20's and 30's, that may cause complications with pregnancy.

Ann Marie insists that the general public is far too ignorant of this often hidden disease. "People need to get up front and personal about lupus, we have to put names and faces together to make it a real topic to discuss.

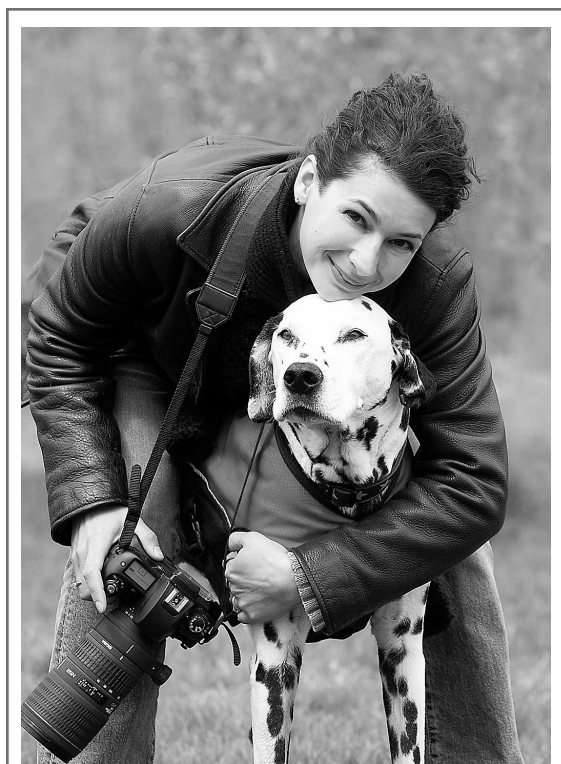
To help generate greater awareness of lupus, she has embarked (excuse the pun!) on an ambitious venture to publish the first annual 18-month calendar dedicated to lupus patients and their pets. **A large percentage of profits derived**



Ann Marie and Medici
Photo by Lisa Kruss, petphotos.com

from the sale of the calendars will go into a dedicated fund with the Lupus Foundation of Illinois to aid lupus patients and their pets.

It's a big order asking area lupus patients to come forward and share their "tails" of recovery and pets. "I envision this production to reveal the strength of lupus patients with one great story after another, re-energized by lupus recovery and how the patient's pets have been a part of that recovery and their joy. You know B positive is more than just a blood type, it's a must!"



Photographer Lisa Kruss and Sparky,
Photo by Marc Lester

Assisting in the project is businesswoman and entrepreneur pet photographer, Lisa Kruss of Pet Photos in Lombard, Illinois.

Lisa's talent is capturing the love between families and their pets and focuses on custom family and pet portrait sessions. She also provides pet models and imagery, graphic design and writing services for the pet industry and her photography is published locally and nationally.

"Pet Photos is not just about creating quality photographic memories for families and their pets. It's about caring for others and making a positive difference in the lives of everyone we interact with," says Lisa. Her website information can be found at www.petphotos.com. Lisa founded Pet Photos in 2003 to celebrate the loving relationships and strong bonds that people form with their many animal friends.

CALLING ALL MODELS

Lupus patients and their pets are needed as models to help create this work of art and love. "The calendar will be a fun way for lupus patients to share their life and times with their pets and with their experience in winning the fight of life after lupus."

Ann Marie & Lisa also need volunteers to help in raising sponsorship dollars to fund the production work, printing costs and selling.

"A little help goes a long way when you are battling this disease. I hope people will respond and tell the rest of us how much their pets mean to them during their recovery."

Contact Ann Marie Glaviano at (630) 355-0958 or PetNpatients@msn.com to

- **Become a model with your pet for this project,**
- **Advertise in the calendar or**
- **Donate funds to help support this effort**

Donations for the project can be directed to the Pet N Patients fund at Naperville Harris Bank.