

From: friendsofnikki@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, July 26, 2011 2:41 AM
To: Donna
Subject: "Because the Love Never Dies....."

Dear Friends and Family,

"Because the Love Never Dies....." is the phrase I used for our Friends of Nikki bumper sticker. I felt that it came to me through my little Danni, who had already crossed at that time. However, it kept popping into my head today, as I remembered my first dog, Ziggy. He was born in 1975, the year I graduated nursing school. I was not allowed to have a dog, as a child. Our apartment building did not permit pets. I was determined to get a dog as soon as I was independent, and working. I graduated in June, got a job, an apartment, and a dog. I still remember it as one of the most exciting, and happiest, times of my life!

Ziggy was a Maltese puppy, and was born on July 25th of 1975. I called him my "First born, Last born, and Only born Son". He was truly my first born, but as most of you know, I had other boys, including Danni, Doogie, and currently, Tommy. I know Ziggy is OK with that! He was the one who started me on this lifelong path of being a "Dog Mom". I will be forever thankful, to him, for that.

Ziggy died 2 days after his 10th birthday, in 1985. I was taken totally off-guard. I just thought he'd be there forever. Pet loss support was not available, as it is today, so I basically grieved alone, and not for very long. Ziggy's death got buried inside of me, until 15 years later, when Nikki died. Then the pain and memories that I didn't process came into my consciousness, as if it were yesterday. Being older, and in a different place emotionally, I grieved both Ziggy and Nikki. That pain led me to starting Friends of Nikki, and the rest is history.

So, as I remember Ziggy today (7/25), on his 36th birthday (boy, I'm getting old!!), and Wednesday, on his 26th year in Heaven, I smile. He came to me, not only because I always wanted a cute little puppy. I believe now, that he came to me as part of a bigger Plan. One that guided my life's direction toward the care of animals, and their parents. These amazing little beings, that many think are "just dogs", or "just cats", or "just birds, bunnies, fish, ferrets, rats, horses,", etc., etc.....are life-changing forces that teach us how to be better humans.

A song, which I sang, to Ziggy, when life had its ups and downs, was "You and Me Against the World" by Helen Reddy. Some of you may be old enough to remember it. I've attached it, if you'd like to listen. If you are unable to open it, just google YouTube. For those who have lost pets, and asked me, "how long is the grief going to last?" I don't have an answer in earth time, I do know that the happy memories last forever, and a day.

Happy Birthday, Ziggy! And thank you for choosing me as your Mommy.

Warmly,
Donna