

Jasper



This is the last photo of my beloved 17 yr old lab/chow mix, Jasper, who crossed the rainbow bridge December 19, 2009. Jasper came to live with me when she was 4 weeks old. She was bottle fed along side of 4 kittens that were also orphans. For many many months Jasper thought that she was a cat. She even attempted to use the litter box but it was too small for her fast growing puppy self. The first time she barked, we were playing hide and seek where I would hide under the blanket and call for her and she would try to save me from the blanket monster. She was so excited about not being able to get to me that as she was whining she let out a for real big dog bark and scared herself so bad that she peed on herself!! She has seen me finish college, get married, divorced, have a child, and so many other things that life throws at us each day. She slept in my bed almost every night of her life except when there were more important places for her to be like just after my daughter was born when she slept under the bassinet or crib. When she could no longer jump up there were stairs for her to get up in the bed and in the past 9 months as her hip

dysplasia got bad, I would pick her up to put her in bed. She was my ever present companion as I got older and she did too. Things got bad very fast for Jasper. She went from being old and managing to move around slowly, to suddenly not able to get up, and even with help she was not able to stand, then her breathing started getting labored. I was up all night with her Wed and again Thursday, hoping it was just the bitter cold or that it was the flu, but she was not getting better and I knew. People say that when the time comes to make that decision, your dog will let you know...Jasper let me know.

That Friday night when I picked up my daughter from her dads house, on our way home, I told her that we had to get straight home that Jasper was very sick, and we needed to be there. I had already made an appt with my vet for Sat am. I could not let my best friend suffer. My amazing 9 year old daughter was heart broken. "Mommy, can't Doc Bubba (our vet) just give her medicine to feel better?" And I told her about how VERY VERY blessed we are to have had so very long with Jasper, how it was selfish for us to try to make her stay when she was not able to smile at us anymore or wag her tail. (you have to be a dog lover to know that dogs smile!) She decided we would have our last Christmas with Jasper that night, so my daughter pulled out my grandmothers fine Christmas China, cut some cheese and put a bone on it and put some water in the matching Christmas mug. Jasper ate a tiny bite of cheese and drank some water. As I looked over again, my daughter was drinking from the same Christmas mug, and said, "OK mom, now you have to drink out of it." So I did, and she informed me that we were all a part of each other forever now. I was so glad this was not the late 70's when my girlfriends and I would cut our fingers and press them together so we could be blood sisters forever! Then she asked if she could put something with Jasper when she was cremated. And I said absolutely, and she ran to her room and grabbed my grandmothers, her GREAT Grandmothers, memorial card from her funeral in 2006. And I asked her why she would choose this, and she said, "Because I want to make sure that Jasper can find MomMom (my

grandmother and her great grandmother) in heaven and they can watch over us together."

I knew in that moment, that my daughter got it. That she knew that we cry because we are going to miss them that pass before us, but that those who pass before us, are never far. That Friday night I stayed up until 4am just loving on my Jasper, but at 4am I had to lay down in my own bed for just a few hours because my back was hurting so bad from 2 nights on the floor with Jasper. At 4am Jasper was comfortably resting on her blanket, with her pillow and I went to my bed. When I woke a few hours later, I ran out to the living room along with my daughter, and somehow, my Jasper, who could not walk, who did not have the energy to wag her tail or smile, somehow managed to get across the living room and back herself under the Christmas tree, through the light cords, all the way under the tree, without knocking the tree down, or even an ornament, so that all that stuck out from under the tree was her head, as seen in this photo. My daughter said to me, "Mommy, Look! She is our Gift!" and I told her that she has always been our gift and it is time for us to give her something back for all she has given us no matter how hard it was for us. My daughter went and had hot chocolate with my vet's daughter next door to his office as I went inside with Jasper. Jasper barely had the energy to give us a kiss goodbye, but as I held her those last few moments, she smiled at me one last time, and I am so blessed to have shared my life with her for so long. She and her life are worth celebrating every day and I will forever be blessed for the life she shared with me. Thank you for letting me share my Jasper's amazing life celebration story and her last photo.

Jennifer Click