

Tribute to Tippy



Ten years ago I went to the Brimfield Antique Show in Massachusetts with my dear friend, Susan. I received a phone call from my husband, stating the girls had found a kitten in the yard. Since we already had 4 dogs and numerous other pets, he promised the new kitten would find another home.



When I arrived back in Phoenix a few days later, the kitten had a name, a brand new collar and a litter box. Meet Tippy, our first cat. I had mixed feelings about having a cat. Growing up, we had dogs but my mother did not like cats. I'm not sure why, but we never owned one. So I didn't know the first thing about these feline creatures.



The girls' responsibilities were clearly laid out~if you want this kitten you must care for it, including cleaning the litter box (not one of my favorite smells). I remained detached from this animal, as I was homeroom mom for one child, crew team mom for another and life was busy and full.



But over the years, something happened. My indifference to cats grew into a love and longing I didn't expect. Shortly after finding Tippy, the girls "found" another cat (which we think someone dropped over our wall). We lost two dogs and gained another and we have been a family of two dogs and two cats for quite sometime.



As the girls became older and their school and social lives grew, Tippy became my cat. At the end of each busy day, when I finally had a chance to sit down and put my feet up, Tippy would crawl into my lap and settle in. Like having a favorite blanket, she was my piece of comfort that closed out each day.

Stroking her soft fur was relaxing and her purring confirmed that she enjoyed it too.



Over the last several weeks, Tippy wasn't feeling well. What started as an intestinal obstruction morphed into lethargy and weight loss. Tippy loved my homemade cat food but soon stopped eating. The last few weeks, each and every time I sat down and had a lap, she was in it.



Ten years ago loving a cat was something I couldn't comprehend. And now my heart is breaking because this sweet cat was clearly in the last chapters of her life.

Yesterday, we made the very hard decision to euthanize Tippy. I cannot remember the last time I had a good cry, but my tears for her are of loss, love, and thankfulness. Tippy opened my eyes to the unconditional love cats give us. I am so grateful my two little girls found her, all those years ago. That sweet little gray and white face showed me a love I never knew existed.

Mary