Sleep Well, Lady

June 16, 2010 By Tim Horn

On the evening of June 6th, my partner, Peter, and I made the inevitable yet agonizing trip to our nearby veterinary hospital to put our eldest boxer, Lucy, to sleep. She was 13 years old.

As strange as it feels to air a deeply personal (and painful) matter in a public forum, it felt wrong not to share the news of Lucy's passing with the POZ community. Lucy and I, along with Buster (our youngest boxer), were featured in this month's issue of *POZ* magazine, with some truly magnificent photos by Kevin McDermott (including the coveted cover shot [right]).

I was blown away by the dozens of deeply personal notes I received from people, many of whom I've never met, regarding their own relationships with their pets and, most touching of all, expressions of empathy for what Peter and I were going through with Lucy in the last months of her life.

Bringing written closure to Lucy's life, in light of the *POZ* article, hasn't been easy--it's taken me ten days to click the "publish" button on this blog entry, after starting and restarting countless drafts attempting to convey something meaningful. Waxing philosophically or politically about the merciful advantages of euthanasia to end pain and suffering seemed too cold, whereas attempts to describe the effect of Lucy's death on my life seemed too maudlin.

What I can say is that she was a beautiful dog. She was a companion animal that touched me in ways I never thought possible.

In April 2008, we learned that she had two malignant tumors in her lungs and that we were looking at four to six months--she gave us 26. Two bonus years, on top of an already amazing life, is something to be celebrated.

I will miss Lucy terribly--her amazing exuberance, her boundless energy, her fierce loyalty and her mistaken identity as a lapdog--and will cherish every moment I've had with her, including the care she required as an elderly pooch and her last minutes as the vet administered the fatal anesthetic. She went quickly and peacefully. For that, I am thankful.

For where there is no prose to describe the joy of Lucy's life, there are unlimited memories and, of course, pictures worth a thousand words.

Sleep well, Lady.

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