

Pets

Barbara Snyder

One doesn't need a study to tell us that pets are crucial to good health, companionship and combatting loneliness. Owning a pet teaches youngsters about responsibility, can lower your blood pressure, increase your mobility through exercise and ease the transition to the other side. Nursing homes and hospitals have been utilizing dogs and cats to comfort patients and help with hope, the one item we all need in times of despair.

She came to Denver with two cats and a dog. It took three passengers and two airplanes to get them here. Ziggy needed to be shaved as he was a shade of the 25-pound requirement. This was after having to re-home Mr. T, the turtle that was a household pet for years. He went to a farm where he could roam free. (He was lucky to be alive after a member of the non-party beer bash let him out of his aquarium. Two weeks later, he moseyed into the living room. At that same non-party, Ziggy was let outside and spent the night shivering under a bush during a particularly yucky rainstorm. He never wanted to go outside again. Oh and did I mention, that because there was no-party, the police came and wrote a report? Indeed, it made the police blotter, much to the chagrin of the young man who did not have a party.)

So off to Denver, a new venture and soon thereafter, Stevie Nicks joined Ziggy Marley, Pink Floyd and PooBear. Animals know when their owner is sick and these animals were no exception. Major surgery and very short walks were the norm for her and PooBear. That is until he got sick and died from an embolism. So sad and left a huge void.

Three cats left until Ziggy Marley was diagnosed with something bad that ultimately killed him. He was blessed with 19 years and unlimited affection. That left two, who spend much of their time sleeping and worrying with all the medical treatments that arrive at the door. Nurses and infusions and palliative care. All this could never really occur without the sensitivity and affection of these cats who sense that all is not as it should be.

Soon, it will be one as Pink Floyd (really Pretty Boy Floyd since he only has one eye) is slowly deteriorating, a case of dementia and losing his hearing. It will be sad.

In these days of corona virus, a dog is looking good. A reason to get out of the house and get a little exercise. The loving Stevie might be ok, but who knows. Only tomorrow will tell.

The lesson here: Pets ease the hardship of illness and pandemics.