



## Diablo's Story

As I mourned here on the sand of Redington Beach, Florida three years and two months ago, I could not have imagined returning this year to write a Memorial for my precious black and tan Chihuahua named Diablo. That's because when I was here in 2010 to write a Memorial for Charley, my precious white and tan Chihuahua who passed at age seven, I hadn't seen Diablo for many years.

Diablo, also fondly known as Diego, Little D and D, was born in Florida in the fall of 2001. Most of the time, I liked to call him D.

D first came into my life when a former girlfriend, Krista, acquired him from the breeder at the age of eight weeks. D enjoyed his first year of life living mostly in Port Richey at Krista's house, and also at my 18<sup>th</sup> floor condo in Sand Key. He loved both homes, but even more he loved his walks outside.

In 2002, after Krista and I parted ways, D remained in Port Richey with Krista and her children. But I had visitation rights, and I wholeheartedly enjoyed bonding with D every other weekend.

During a reunion that Krista and I shared during the summer of 2002, we all traveled to Fernandina Beach to visit my long-time friends, the Bakers. I recall D exploring Amelia Island and having the time of his life. D, now nearly a year old, had developed his sweet personality including prancing for his meals.

Following that trip I did not see D for over two years. During that period he became a father for the first of two times, and I got my Chihuahua Charley, also eight weeks old, from a breeder in Bushnell.

Charley and D met at Krista's home in Port Richey in December of 2004. That visit was one of the last times I was to see D until late in 2010 following Charley's passing from a rare blood cancer. It was then that Krista asked me to take D back into my home, as she had her hands full with D, D's son Paco and Paco's mother Chelsea. I believe at that time, Krista was unaware of D's heart condition.

For the last two years and eight months, I was blessed with the companionship of my beloved friend. Despite his heart condition, which worsened from a heart murmur to an enlarged heart, and then to congestive heart failure, D never lost his adventuresome spirit. During his last year, he traveled with me to Jupiter on the east coast of Florida; to Galena, Illinois; and to the Northern Virginia area where I grew up. D's last road trip was in May this year, when we drove 3,200 miles traveling to the Midwest and then through Virginia on the way home to Florida.

On Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup>, Lap of Love Veterinary Hospice came to my Seminole townhome to end D's suffering following a procedure performed to drain fluid from his belly. While D could not physically recover from that stomach tap, he lives on forever in my heart and in the hearts of those who knew him.

I'll always love you D.

*Andrew Herman, July 31 2013*