

(P.A.T.) Pets As Therapy

SAFFY (SUBARON SAPPHIRE SENORITA) AND RALPHIE (NIATONA THE BOY WONDER)

Saffy has been a PAT (Pets as Therapy) Hospital Visiting Dog since 1999 when she passed all her temperament tests with flying colours. Saffy always was a gentle quiet natured little bitch with everyone and always so eager to please. She was bombproof with everyone but especially with children. After reading an article in the Dog Press I decided to apply for her to become a PAT dog and of course the rest is history.

Saffy is just about retired as she is 13 years of age and not so steady on her back legs now.

Saffy and I visited the daycare centre of a local hospice on Friday afternoons regularly and have over the years had so many happy and sad moments. We I have made some wonderful friends and Saffy has brought smiles to many faces. They followed her show career and I used to take in all her rosettes and trophies for them to see, her Crufts win being celebrated with tea and cream cake !!

Ralphie my other 5 year old old bundle of fun....Well what can I say...He is a typical Stafford – full of fun, loves everyone with a passion, runs at you at 100 mph to give you a great big smacker on the lips.

He has excelled at obedience, tried his hand at Agility and gained his KC Good Citizen Dog Scheme Bronze and Silver and Gold awards so far.

Ralphie is also a PAT Dog – he actually took his assessment at Crufts when 18 months old, amongst all the hustle and bustle, noise, crowds and other dogs and he behaved wonderfully. He did me proud that day and we came home with a “Third” Rosette too.

Ralphie visits the Hospice daycare centre too ,even more often now since Saffy’s retirement

The now so familiar photo of Saffy with Lilian, who looked forward so much to Saffy’s visits. She had a real rapport with Saffy and talked all the time to her; this photo shows one such occasion.



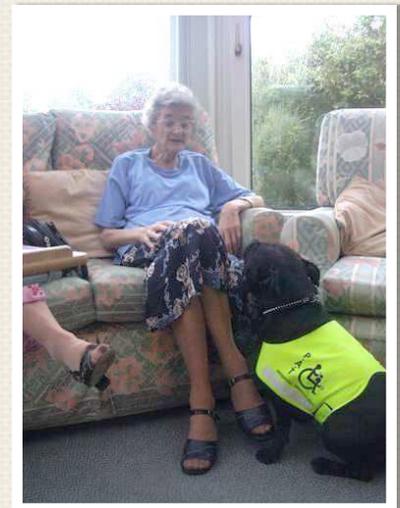
Judy a larger than life character who when she became ill had to give up her own dog because she could no longer look after him, and everytime when she saw Saffy had tears in her eyes smiling “Saffy you have made my day”

Judy had an infectious laugh and Saffy was so enthralled by her sitting as close as could be.

She painted this picture of Saffy and it now hangs on the wall in the hospice.



To Margaret who always made extra special fuss of Saffy. She liked our visits in the summer as she liked to throw a tennis ball in the lovely garden area. We visited Margaret when she had to go into Nottingham Queens Medical Centre. Margaret did not have any family to visit her and I think was probably lonely in hospital and when we arrived was lying on her back eyes closed in a small ward with 5 other ladies. . She buzzed for the nurse to sit her up. We were there for about 20 minutes. I sat Saffy on my knee so she could get closer to Margaret, she was so surprised and happy to see Saffy. Soon the other lady patients had sat up to see what was going off , one finding chocolate biscuits to give Saffy. They all made such a fuss - and I left them all excitedly talking about their own doggy experiences. What a difference the visit made to that ward !!



Sadly we never did see Margaret again.

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Louisa, who had a little Yorkshire Terrier at home and loved all dogs, Saffy had a special place in her heart and always checked up to see if Louisa had a little treat tucked away somewhere in her handbag. I have to say the answer was normally yes !!. Louisa always liked to have Saffy up at face level so she could talk to her and look her in the eyes and kiss her... Saffy had a special stool she sat on to be close up to her.



Edna, who battled hard against her illness twice and who always asked for that piece of cake with her afternoon tea, only to give Saffy the whole lot !! How could I say no ! Saffy always had reduced dinner rations when she got home on Fridays !! Funny how Saffy always dashed to sit by Edna when the tea trolley was heard coming up the corridor.



One of the administration staff had a real fear of all dogs when I first began to visit and could not come down to the daycentre when Saffy was around. But not for long she eventually plucked up the courage to come and see Saffy –

she had to make sure Saffy was on her lead before she would come into the room but her fear gradually subsided and she got to stroke Saffy at least once I think !

Apart from the visits to the hospice Saffy has also been in several PAT Parades at dog shows and large canine events when the Pets as Therapy Organisation promote the work of Pat Dogs. All the dogs are introduced to the public and then the public are invited into the ring to fuss the dogs. Saffy has always been



impeccably behaved on these occasions and never once let herself, the breed or me down. I have for several years taken her to Crufts to wander around in her PAT coat – merely as a promotional exercise for the breed. Which needs all the positive coverage it can get. Saffy has always been wonderful and spent many hours being fussed, kissed and photographed.



Ralphie with Terry. He is a passionate dog lover and always makes a fuss.



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When Leonard was a young boy his family owned a Stafford.

It bought back floods of memories for him the first time he met Ralphie and he kept everyone amused with his doggy tales.

Leonard wanted to get close to Ralph and give him a bit of rough of tumble – one of the few times I allowed Ralphie to jump up.



happy and sad day.

I am so happy he enjoyed our visit so much but sad because he passed away shortly afterwards and we never met him again.

Saffy and Ralphie's hospice visiting has been a wonderful time tinged with such sadness of course but I hope I can continue for a long time yet with Ralphie and keep up what Saffy started over ten years ago.. !

The Staffordshire Bull Terrier gets so much bad press. ... but normally I find its not a bad dog but a very irresponsible owner and I hope by showing off my two dogs people may see this wonderful breed in their true light.

We only met this gentleman once. He could not move or speak but typed out words very slowly with his right hand on a little word processor gadget on his lap. He typed out he had owned Staffords as a young man. So I lifted up Ralphie to give him a better look. His eyes welled up and a tear rolled down his cheek. It was a



For further information on Pets as Therapy have a look on their website, its so interesting especially if you have a Staffordshire Bull Terrier that you think would make a Pat Dog

www.petsastherapy.org.

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depending upon YOU!



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