



Watchman V

by Helen Reaney

This year has been a very difficult one for our beloved Breed with a lot of negative press both in the UK and overseas. However I feel compelled to write about this subject because it shows the Breed at its very best.

The Staffordshire Regiment based in Lichfield Staffordshire, not far from where I live, have its mascot as the Staffordshire Bull Terrier. The current Watchman is Watchman V who was bred by my best friends, Karon and Wayne Jackson. What a truly remarkable honour. This dog has for many years served his country at many events promoting the Regiment. but also the Breed.

In one of the photos you will see Karon with the young Watchman V with the outgoing Watchman IV who was

bred by another couple of good friends, Steve and Christine Whitehouse.

Earlier this year Watchman V, along with his handler, Greg Hedges, was put forward for the Westminster Dog of the Year and anyone could vote on-line for him. Everyone on social media shared the post to encourage people to vote and as the day drew close no one knew how he and his handler Greg would do.

Social Media went into meltdown when the results were announced. He'd gone and won it. What a truly fantastic achievement for the Breed, the handler, for Watchman, and of course for Karon and Wayne Jackson.





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STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER SGT WATCHMAN V IS CROWNED POOCH OF THE PEOPLE AT WESTMINSTER DOG OF THE YEAR



There was a worthy winner in Westminster today as Sgt Watchman V, a six year old Staffordshire Bull Terrier who is the mascot of the Staffordshire Regiment, won a convincing victory after being voted for by the public in the annual Westminster Dog of the Year competition's 'paw-blic' vote category.

Sgt Watchman V, who is much loved by the people of Staffordshire, entered the event with Amanda Milling MP for Cannock Chase, but was also supported by Andrew Griffiths MP for Burton, Gavin Williamson MP for South Staffordshire, Michael Fabricant MP for Lichfield, Christopher Pincher MP for Tamworth and Jeremy Lefroy MP for Stafford.

The competition, organised by the Kennel Club and Dogs Trust, took place today (Thursday, 8th September), in Victoria Tower Gardens, Westminster, where the winner of the Paw-blic vote was crowned alongside the overall competition winner. Sgt Watchman V

showed he really is the people's pooch after receiving a staggering number of votes via the Kennel Club's website. This year was the toughest year yet for MPs and their canine candidates with a record number of votes in the run up to the big event. The worthy winner, Sgt Watchman V, beat over 20 paw-litical opponents to scoop the paw-blic vote title, following a well-fought social media battle for victory.

The MPs entering the competition campaigned hard, canvassing for votes from the public. This year, the event focused on the need for education to ensure that children understand how to act safely around dogs.

The public was asked to vote for the political pooch they deemed to be the most deserving based on their canine credentials through their canine CVs which include a series of questions put to the MP and their dog.



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Amanda Milling, MP for Cannock Chase, said:

“Watchman did a fantastic job and did the county proud. Winning the public vote was by no means a small task. It is a testament to his importance to the people of Staffordshire and the Black Country, including veterans of the Staffordshire Regiment and 3 Mercian. He also has a very local connection to Cannock Chase as his family line is from Cannock.”

Watchman handler, Greg Hedges, said: “Taking part in the event has been a great experience and the competition has done important work to raise the profile of many of the issues facing Watchman’s four legged friends. Thank you to everyone who voted for Watchman, it is such a joy to know so many people gave him their support.”

Watchman has also won local praise. Michael Perks, owner

of Head 2 Tails Grooming and Pet Supplies in Hednesford, offered his congratulations on winning first place and has offered Sgt Watchman V free grooming and food for the rest of his life.

Leading the opposition in second place at the event was nine month old Lurcher Milo, belonging to Rebecca Harris, MP for Castle Point, with a place in the (trophy) cabinet awarded to a Dogs Trust rescue Dachshund puppy, Fiona, and Liz Saville-Roberts, MP for Dwyfor Meirionnydd in third.

Press release from the Kennel club for further information www.thekennelclub.org.uk