

The Adventures of Scout

by *Cassandra de la Rosa*

Below is a chronicle of therapy dog Scout, aka GCH MyTy Rainbow Suntory Scout.

Scout came to us when her breeder, Pat Collier, died. We were co-breeders and we finished a grand championship on her along with a group placement.

Motherhood was not in the cards for Scout, who resorbed every pregnancy at 37 days, so we looked for a retirement home for her. Little did we know that the "retirement" was to become a wonderful and fulfilling career as a therapy dog.

Scout went to Teena in 2014. Most of what follows are reports from Teena on Scout' progress. Missing is the serious work Teena did to get this lovable but typically stubborn Lhasa Apso certified as a therapy dog, including passing CGC and obedience classes plus therapy certification.

2015

She follows me around the house like my shadow. She's been going a lot of places with me as I want her to be exposed to all different kinds of noises and things as it will help when we go out as a therapy team. Right now we go up to the Evergreen Health Hospice Center every Friday 10-12. She has done wonders up there and the people, family members, and staff just love her. Because of her size it makes it easy for me to hold her up for the patient or put her on the bed. I've seen some wonderful reactions from the patients even those who are somewhat comatose. What a jewel she is!

My little girl is definitely giving back and it is wonderful that we get to do it together! We are now listed on their website under volunteer, AAT (Animal Assisted Therapy). Also on their Facebook a couple of weeks ago, she is a star!

2016

We are still doing the hospice every Friday, and the hospital two Wednesdays a month. She is really making a name for herself in the hospital. She prances through the main galleria like she owns the place. Just trying to walk through the main sections can take a long time as everyone wants to stop us and see her. She gets lots of smiles from people also. We saw one lady right before she went into surgery who wanted to see Scout. I took her over to her and put her on the lady's lap. The lady had really been shaking before Scout got on her lap and when I went to take her off as they were ready to wheel her into the OR, the lady was not shaking at all. It has been really amazing what that little pup has done for people. The connection is awesome!

Recently we joined what is called "College Dogs". It's a group of people who visit the University of Washington and dormitories to give the students some de-stressing time with the dogs. Last week we went to the UW school of public health and saw about 250 students. They hugged her and petted her and were so excited to see the dogs. She was the only small dog there so I said she was definitely the "cutest". Had a lot of fun.

2017

We are still doing a lot of stuff as a therapy team. We do hospice, the hospital (waiting rooms for family waiting for someone in surgery and the waiting room for mammogram patients), a local nursing home, and of course the colleges. Most of those are at the U of W but we have gone to Seattle U and local community colleges.

People just love her, especially after she bats her little eyes at them. What a doll baby and I am

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having such fun with her. I know I have said it before but thank you for giving her to me! I cannot imagine life with out her.

2018

We ended the school year with College Dogs doing numerous visits at the UW. Lots of fun but a lot of visits in a couple of weeks. I had one young man who fell in love with her and wanted to borrow her to take with him when he gave his speech in his medical class. Also went to a fraternity for the first time, the kids were very respectful and the visit was great. We ended the year by visiting Mercer Island High School and what an experience! We had 7 teams there and there was a line out the door of the room of kids waiting to get in to see the dogs. We must have seen about 200 kids in an hour. They stood in-line during their lunch hour and were just so excited. Was a lot of fun.

2019

I wanted to send you a picture of Scout's hospital badge.

Scout now has her picture in a book that is for traveling and doing things with your dog in the northwest. She is a star.

She has also been a part of a film that some producers and reporters from South Korea are creating on an animal therapy program in the US. It took place at the UW and with the help of some of the students there and interpreters the filming was so much fun. Hopefully we will get to view the final copy. At least we are trying to work at getting a copy. They took pictures of each team as they came into the room and each one as they interacted with the students. Got asked a ton of questions about Scout and about how we came to get into the program and what it entailed to get there. They whole thing took about an hour and a half. One reason that I made a special effort to be there was that the gal in at the UW that planned this sent out a special request for "that little adorable Scout" to be there. I couldn't pass that up!

We are still doing the 2 nursing homes, hospice, the hospital and colleges so our lives are so full of fun things to do. I just love to watch her interact with people and how much enjoyment she gives out. I am not sure if I told you or not but at the Mercer Island High School event we went to at the close of their year in early June, I even had one young girl start to cry when she saw her. She said that she was just too cute!

Late 2019

We are ending our time of volunteering as a therapy team at the hospital and hospice on the 31st. We have been doing it for 5 years and it is time for both of us. Can not believe she will be 13 years old in 2020 and there is a lot of walking when we go to the hospital to visit. I end up carrying her back to the car, so yes it is time to stop. We are leaving with 340 hours done and people are just so upset as they cannot believe Scout will not be there after the 1st. One of the volunteer coordinators even started crying. I was told by many of them that she is their favorite therapy dog out of all of the 13 teams. Does not surprise me with the way she prances through the hospital. The nurses just all laugh at her as she acts like she owns the whole place. She got a bag of cheese as her goodbye gift (she loves cheese, but only gets a small amount everyday). I got flowers but am sharing them with her.

We will continue with the 2 nursing homes as it is only 1 time per month. We will also keep up the College Dog group as I can pick the events we can attend, more flexibility. College Dogs is also doing disaster visits so we will be doing that too. Once in a while there is a student suicide or other type of

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death affecting the students and we go in to provide comfort.

2020

Scout and Teena are retired due to the pandemic.

