

Bodacious' Story



Who knew that 10 pounds of fluff could make such a huge difference in one's life! Bodacious is my first dog and I never dreamed that I'd love him so much!

My husband and I found our boy at a dog show. He was playing with his brother, a show dog in training. Bodacious had all of the qualities required for show, but his legs were a little too long. His owners called him "Trouble." We should have known.

We named him Bodacious, after the most famous bull of all time in the rodeo circuit. Quite a name

for a little guy with a big personality!

Being a small dog, we didn't think we'd need to worry about him getting on the furniture. Wrong! He's Olympic in his ability to leap tall structures, so there he is, every night, in bed, nestled on the pillows. He prefers to have a little cup of water served to him before he settles in for the night and since we trained him to use kitty litter, he's self-service at night!



Our first assignment was at the Bridge Project where Bodacious was a READ dog. That was a powerful experience; we realized how important it is to help others, how much it means to them and us. It was so rewarding to learn that our kids improved their reading skills, their retention, their vocabularies, their social skills, and their self-esteem. They were more important than anyone else at the facility because Bodacious was there to see them.

Our service worked just the way it should: I was invisible and he was the star. He became "Bo" to many of the kids who couldn't put that many syllables together. The kids couldn't wait for him to get there, they'd run out to greet him at the car, shouting, "Bodacious is here!" But they didn't remember my name!



Then we became a volunteer team at Aurora Medical Center South. On Saturdays, when I ask him if he wants to go to work - he runs to the door, barks and makes a scene until he's in the car. We're often stopped before we enter the facility by kids and people of all ages asking if I'm really taking "that dog" into the hospital. His presence encourages stories and shared memories from the healthy as well as the patients. He knows when we arrive that he's working. He leads me from the parking lot to the Volunteer Office and then to the elevators. He likes elevators

that have doors on both sides. Whenever we're in elevators in other buildings, he enters through one and then heads to the other side to get out. Strangers don't realize that he has extensive elevator experience.

People always expect to see a huge animal enter the room when they hear the name "Bodacious"! It's funny seeing their expressions when they meet the pocket-sized pooch.



At 10 pounds, he is the smallest animal volunteer at TMCA. Animal lovers want him in their arms, in the bed or snuggled up next to him. He always has a smile on his face so his appearance always makes people smile, sometimes even if they don't want to.

He's been told he's too pretty to be a boy, and has been offered many chances to go to a new home. Everyone wants to share their meals with him and we have to

steer clear of the nurses who always have treats in their pockets!

A patient's son once followed us into the hall and thanked us for taking time out of our lives to visit his mother. She was very ill and wouldn't smile or talk before we arrived. She spoke to Bodacious and petted him as best she could. And she smiled. That meant the world to her son-- and to us!

Bodacious is my pet, my companion, my partner and my child. He is fiercely protective of his people and his playground, yet loving and wonderful to the strangers he meets when he's working. He loves to chase squirrels & birds out of the back yard, to ride in the car and eat ice cream at Dairy Queen. His nickname is "IRS" because he wants a bite of everything his people have!

Being a Pet Partner with Bodacious is one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. I can't imagine my life without him and our teamwork in making others smile.

