

Casey's Story



After our last dog passed away after a long life, we thought we would enjoy the freedom of being without a pet, however being pet-free meant that the deer and elk found our flower gardens a source of gourmet food. My fury reached the point that I announced we were going to the shelters and I WAS coming home with a dog! Enter Casey.

She was sitting quietly and patiently amidst the noise of the Denver Dumb Friends League. We asked to visit with her and though at about ten months old she was undisciplined, she was friendly, silent and trainable. She marked the boundaries of our property and kept the grazers away. Her second task evolved when my mother moved to a senior center. When we announced that we were coming she made it known that she wanted Casey to come too, You know the reaction she got. As we entered the reception area doors flew open and people came out of the wood work to see "the dog". It became apparent that Casey had a new career. We located Denver Pet Partners, attended the handler-training workshop, passed the evaluation and became a registered Pet Partners team. Soon after, we began visiting.

Casey is a hit at Total Long Term Care, where we see a prescreened group weekly. She enjoys their attention as much as they enjoy lavishing it on her. They think she is beautiful and so do I. They love the feel of her silky fur. They like to take her for



walks around the room, play ball and give her treats. While Casey patiently walks beside walkers or wheel chairs, her favorite activities with clients are being stroked, especially tummy rubs, getting treats and playing fetch. About our second or third visit one



woman called the staff member over and whispered in her ear, "Since Casey has been coming I haven't had any migraines and have stopped taking my migraine medicine!"



We have encountered some challenges visiting. Some clients are in high wheel chairs making reaching Casey difficult and uncomfortable. I found an exercise stair stepper that my husband modified with longer legs so Casey can stand on secure footing high enough to be reached. I also use this to cover the tender feet of a diabetic. And, the clients like to give her drinks but she often splashed their clothing so I made a waterproof lap cloth so they can hold the bowl in their lap and remain dry. I've experimented with a variety of fetch toys but Casey shuns anything plastic and seems to prefer a simple tennis ball.



Casey is six years old now and thinks that all people are here to pet and make a fuss over her. She also loves to go golfing with me. After getting permission from the course manager I began taking her with me where she heels to the cart and sit-stays while I hit my ball. She stimulates lots of conversation and questions. The starter told us that someone mentioned the dog on the course and his reply was, " That dog is so



well behaved that a fly could bite her on the nose and she wouldn't move." Another of her favorite activities is swimming. If I let her, I do believe she would swim after a ball until she dropped of exhaustion.

A good friend was surprised to hear we take her on car trips with us. My reply was that she is such good company and she is.

