



Susan and Guy Wroble with Hathaway



Susan and Hathaway



Guy and Hathaway

Hathaway...Susan and Guy Wroble, Guardians

Hathaway joined our family when she was eight weeks old and a tiny ball of soft fur. As volunteer puppy raisers for Canine Companions for Independence (CCI) she had been sent to us to be fostered until she was ready for advance training. Her life's path had already been penciled in. She was supposed to spend 16 months with us, attend "Puppy College" and then go on to be an assistance dog for a person with mobility issues.

But life has a way of changing plans. Shortly after Hathaway arrived, Guy was diagnosed with cancer and Hathaway became his therapy companion. During chemo induced afternoon naps Guy would fall asleep on the couch with his hand resting on Hathaway. When he awoke hours later, she would still be there. They developed a deep and profound attachment to each other.

Although Hathaway completed advanced CCI training in California, she failed to match with an applicant and was released from the program (we like to think that she had already decided that her match was with Guy). On one hand we were sad that Hathaway did not match but on the other we were overjoyed that she would be able to return to Denver and rejoin our family.

We like to tell people that when Hathaway came back we sat her down in the living room and said, "Hathaway, you're a college graduate so you need to find a job." Actually with her wonderful personality, calm demeanor and demonstrated intelligence we knew it would be a disservice if her abundant talents were not put to good use.



In association with DPP, Hathaway has worked in a R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dog) program at an elementary school. Her photograph was displayed in the hall with the rest of the faculty along with the notation "Hathaway – Reading Specialist". Hathaway was perfectly suited for the work. She would snuggle in with a student, listen intently and never criticize. Some of her students, as confirmed by testing, made two years of reading progress in a single year. Her popularity was such that we had to arrange times when Hathaway would come into a classroom to be read to by a class in addition to her one-on-one work. We came to be known by the students as "Mr. and Mrs. Hathaway."

Hathaway has also worked at an alternative High School in the DPS system for at-risk-students. Some of the students had very little exposure to animals and those that had sometimes related to animals in a less than kind manner. Hathaway taught them that calm quiet consistency is a far better way to get an animal to respond than shouting or striking. Given the background from which some of the students came, this was nothing less than a revelation about both animal and human relations.

Hathaway has given back to DPP by being the neutral dog during evaluations. The evaluation staff always appreciates her assistance as she helps them to determine whether new applicant teams are up to the task of becoming a working therapy group.

Outside of DPP, Hathaway works as a therapy dog in the Prescription Pets program at Children's Hospital. She is one of the few dogs certified to work with the AAT program in the rehabilitation therapy gym. She loves her job and, as expected, does it well. Children seem to not realize that they are receiving therapy as they interact with Hathaway. Some may find this hard to believe, but for Hathaway children have literally gotten out of their wheelchairs and walked. A therapist said it best when she took us aside and told us, "When Hathaway's here, miracles happen."

We have been incredibly fortunate that the vicissitude of fate brought Hathaway to us as a puppy and returned her to us as a trained therapy dog. The work that she does is amazing and we hope it will continue for years to come. Because of her calm demeanor, quiet courage and willingness to help others, our friend Hathaway is truly one in a million.

