

08-18

Scottish Terriers

Only the Nose knows!

Dear readers, I am very pleased to have a guest columnist for this issue, STCA Historian Janet Tomlinson. She has shared a wonderful story about how amazing our pups can be. Enjoy – Kathy.

My husband and I have a strong relationship with a couple of our family members, Ainsley, a Scottish Terrier and Chloe, a West Highland White Terrier. Our story starts a few years back. For some reason Ainsley started placing her nose on Chuck's stomach every night when we would sit down to watch TV. We found it odd and brushed it off to her just being a typical pup. After a routine visit to his doctor, Chuck was told that he had colon cancer. The incredible thing is that it was right where she was alerting. The mystery sniffing was solved. We thought it was simply a coincidence. However, when he returned home from the hospital and was able to sit on the couch, she jumped up, sniffed the spot, turned and stared at me and has never sniffed that area since. Certainly, left me thinking.

A year or so later she started sniffing his crotch. He said, "Get your dog away from me." "What is wrong with her? I had a shower today." Recalling her last sniffing I said to him, "Chuck, it's time to go to the doctor and get checked out. I believe she is alerting again." It was the same sniffing and holding her nose in place as before. He went and sure enough, he had a very aggressive cancer. Because of Ainsley's alerting it was discovered in its very early stage, and they were able to treat him. Chuck is considered cancer free today with the PSA of a 7-year old.

A couple of years ago, I brought Ainsley with me to participate at the "Meet the Breed" booth at Eukanuba, in Orlando, Florida. She was amazing, doing a fine job representing our breed, enjoying all strangers, adults and children alike. I had her seated on a table at my waist height. Late in the day, a tall, thin lady came to say hello. Ainsley, with lightning speed, stuck her nose on the woman's stomach, whipped around, stared at me, and whipped around again and stuck and held her nose on the lady's stomach. The woman was taken aback and so was I. She left hurriedly. All I could think as she walked away - was she alerting? I regret to this day not being able to say something to her. I hope she reads this and remembers and gets checked out.

About six months ago, Ainsley was at it again. She started sniffing my arm every night. I didn't think twice I went to the dermatologist and mentioned it to him. He checked. Nothing. I returned a few weeks ago for a checkup and mentioned it again, as she was still sniffing. He said, "We checked it last time, but let me see it." "When a dog sniffs ..." "Oh, yes, you do have something," and continued with a biopsy. Thanks again to her amazing nose I will be fine. She has also found cancer under the skin on my nose. It most likely is just a straggler root from the tumor removed from under my cheek, also found by this darling dog.

Recently I was getting ready to attend a local show. The night before leaving, my Westie girl jumped up on the couch and went directly to my arm and then to my nose and then back to my arm. She stepped back and stared at me. She then jumped down and went back to playing with her toys. I was absolutely flabbergasted and said, "Chuck, I believe Ainsley had a talk with Chloe about smelling cancer and was listening to our conversation about it." "We really have to pay more attention to what they try to tell us."

Chuck and I are enjoying good health thanks in great part to our wonderful companions, Ainsley and Chloe. My advice for all of you is to listen to your pups. They are the most incredible creatures and may be trying to tell you something special.

Kathleen J. Ferris
kajalene@gmail.com
215-357-3563