



STORY OF THE WEEK – December 10, 2005

VELCRO PETS by Ann Marie Glaviano

In June of 2000, I was diagnosed with an aggressive and life threatening case of systemic lupus. Immediately my life was impacted, and the lives of my pets was going to change. I experienced intense immune suppression and had little energy to care for any of my pets.

Our two dwarf bunnies, three guinea pigs, and four cockatiels needed foster homes, because I had to avoid the incidence of a scratch or bite. Bacteria on top of strong chemotherapy could risk it all for me. My three cats were also at risk of being displaced, until I found that people in my Naperville community were willing to come to the house to care and feed them while I rested.

Suddenly my dog Medici, a tiny Papillion pup of about a year, started to pull my socks off at night before I went to bed or anytime I got home from numerous medical appointments. At times he would pull the cordless phone to me, like playing a game of dare. I suddenly realized the remaining pets knew something wasn't right with me, and that I needed their visitation and protection. They started watching me day and night, and I called them my Velcro pets! We have all along found signs of their love and faith!

I've now been blessed with a remarkable recovery since 2003. I decided to celebrate life with my dog Medici. Our kitties are always playing and making the endorphins soar! Many times, the only "person" I talked to was Nana, my Maine Coon mix cat. The year before, she also went through chemotherapy for lymphoma. On Feb 14, 2003 Nana had a reoccurrence of her cancer and died at home in my arms.

This spring, Medici was diagnosed with lupus too and underwent Immune suppressive chemo. It broke my heart, but he's hanging in there with me.

For this reason I am asking people in the Midwest with lupus and a pet, who provided lots of love to their recovery, to join me with inspirational stories of healing and love. I will document these stories and share them in an eighteen-month calendar for my new channel of energy, PetsNPatients™. Please consider joining this outreach to shout about your Tails of Recovery as I search for lupus patients and their pets.

Once printed, the majority of funds raised from the calendar will be used to help with lupus patients' pets. Please support the patients that are brave and kind enough to join me.



BIO:

Ann Marie Glaviano lives in Naperville, Illinois. E-mail Anne Marie at info@petsnpatients.com for information about her search For inspirational stories of healing and love to be shared in an 18-month-calendar. Prior to her disability Ann Marie was in executive management for special event planning, exhibits and tradeshow, promotion and public relations. Blessed with a remarkable recovery, she is now active in advocacy and outreach initiatives, project development; grant-writing, and fundraising with several charitable organizations.