



Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

Tiny World Travelers

“Twelve years ago,” said Gillian, “I accepted a teaching position in Thailand. At the time, I had a Toy Yorkie, Georgie, and two cats, Bijou and Kai. I flew Georgie over with me, and my best friend sent the cats after we were settled.

In Thailand, street dogs are everywhere, no matter if you live in a prestigious or poor area. I always carried dog treats with me to teach the feral dogs that I was their friend.

One day, with Georgie on his harness, we began descending our outside marble steps. A feral mother dog and her teen pup sat on each side of the steps. Without provocation they lunged and attacked Georgie, critically injuring him. I found the best veterinarian in Thailand, who had to remove one of his kidneys and spleen. Poor Georgie was sewed up from side to side. Amazingly he lived six more years.

After his surgery I bought him a pet stroller, but embarrassed, he refused to ride in it.

I promised him that if he lived, I would get him a little sister for company. He fulfilled his end of the bargain by living and I by adopting little sister, Sapphie, named after the precious Thai

sapphire gem.

I walked into a pet store and this tiny Tea Cup Yorkie puppy was sitting in a cage by herself. It is true! Dogs in Thailand understand Thai, not English. Just like you don't understand Thai. When I asked the pup, 'Are you for me?' Sapphie telepathically understood my heart and responded by looking up at me with big eyes that said, 'Hi Mom'. It felt like we already belonged together.

Then, unexpectedly, a week later, when Georgie and I were in a furniture store. A sales lady approached us and in broken English asked, 'You want to buy a Yorkie puppy?'

I said 'yes' and met little Emily, named after another precious gem of Thailand, the Emerald. Emily was so small, a Toy Yorkie, that I had to bottle-feed her along with Sapphie. Because I was now bottle-feeding two puppies, my sister flew overseas to help while I was at work. Oh! And Georgie's pet stroller? The baby girls loved it and wouldn't get out of it — to this day!

I taught for three years and realized that returning to North America was going to be difficult with coordinating five animals to fly overseas. Trying to decide which one was to fly inside the cabin with me felt like the movie, "Sophie's Choice".

It took weeks to figure out how to ship my furry family home! I thought I would put the three dogs together, and the two cats together, but with no direct flight and an eight-hour layover, I was worried that teenie-tiny Sapphie would not survive. Sapphie and Emily are strongly bonded, not having been a day apart since Emily's adoption.

Then I learned of Bangkok Air's crazy rule that does not allow dogs and cats on the same flight. What!? How does that make sense? The airlines would not break their rule, even though my pets are one big happy family that love each other.

In the end, I had to pay extra for the cats. Then the nightmare began! I was extorted for extra money, and the cats still did not arrive! It took five days before they landed and were safely in my arms! In this time, they had not been fed or watered. Unbelievable! It was so traumatic for us that I have never traveled since!

Now little Sapphie was a different story. Everyone considers Sapphie the baby of the family because dripping wet she is three pounds. She arrived in baggage claim soaking wet from a container of water someone had given her. Luckily she did not contract pneumonia. Now that my dogs are older,

Sapphie is blind. She was born with a genetic retinal atrophy disorder and Emily is lame and can only walk for a minute. Her tiny back legs have atrophied. It is a good thing we brought the pet stroller home from over seas. It gets a lot of use as my dogs safely experience the outside world. People have suggested that I have my girls 'put down,' but they are little angels who put joy into each day. It is not even a consideration."

And how cute is having both cats and dogs?

"My Himalayan cat, Kai, lived until she was 18 years old and to her final day, she considered herself Sapphie's 'other' mother. When we arrived home from walks, Kai would cradle Sapphie in her arms and wash her like a baby... and Sapphie would let her."

TIPS For Blind Pets

Put a different bell on each pets' collar to announce to the blind pet 'who' is approaching.

Keep furniture in same location.

Let them see with their feet... use floor runners and carpets to mark areas.

Outside use bark, paving stones, pebbles etc. to identify areas.

Make a clicking noise to lead



Photo by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

While Gillian was teaching in Thailand she adopted two teeny-tiny dogs that are now 11-1/2 year olds Emily and Sapphie. Life with itty-bitty dogs has its challenges and joys.

your pet where you want it to go.

Teach them the command "turn around" for when they are about to bump into a wall or "step" when there is a step or incline.

"Living With Blind Dogs: A

Resource Book and Training Guide for the Owners of Blind and Low-Vision Dogs" by Caroline D. Levin.

Tell us your fun FUR-tastic pet tale! angelscribe@msn.com

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