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Charlie (& Bob) win big at the Potteries Pooches show.

As you may know every second Sunday in the month a small team from the church hold a short service at the Potteries Care Home which has been very well received by the residents. However, there is another regular event at which we have representation and that is the "doggy café" which takes place on the second Wednesday of every month from 10.30am to 12.00 noon.

It provides an opportunity for residents, who want to, to interact with pet dogs and their owners in the ground floor coffee area. They sometimes have visiting "experts" from dog related charities (e.g. Guide Dogs for the Blind, Waggy Tails rescue and, on one occasion had a veterinary nurse speak on animal psychology and behavioural training.)

This month, to coincide with the annual Crufts event, they decided to organise a "Potteries Pooches Dog Show" of their own. They encouraged members of the public who had not been before to come with their dogs as well as regulars (like Charlie) and also invited Waggy Tails and some other "expert" friends to come along.



Bob Travers tells us: "I have been taking my Labrador Charlie along since June 23 and normally there might be up to half a dozen dogs attend (less sometimes) but this month, there was probably nearer 20 canines in attendance. They ranged from Yorkshire Terriers and Dachshunds, through Spaniels and Poodles to Golden Retrievers and Labradors. There were plenty of treats on hand for the dogs and tea/coffee and cakes for us two legged visitors. At the event there were three competition events – (for the dogs not the owners!). One or two of the "experts" at the event were asked to be judges. There was a rosette and a packet of chews for the winner of each category." *continued overleaf*

The three judged categories were as follows:-

- **Agility** (which was planned for outdoors but had to be held inside because of the rain) a course was laid out in the reception area for dogs to negotiate one at a time.
- **Best Waggy Tail** – this is the event that Charlie won.
- **Best dog in the show.**



The show was judged to be a great success by all concerned.

More about Bob's companion 'Charlie' the Labrador.

Charlie was born in Bangalore in June 2015. He was given to Gill's son John (my stepson) by his wife Diana as a puppy. The plan was that Charlie would be trained to walk the fields with John, who was an agriculturalist, to spot snakes when John was working his fields.

Sadly, John contracted oesophageal cancer and died in March 2016. Charlie was flown over from India in June 2016 to join Diana, who had secured a job in London.

Charlie came to live with us in Poole and Diana visited most weekends. After just over a year, Diana had to return to India, but Charlie stayed with us. Diana eventually remarried and is now living in the USA with her husband Matthew and 5-month-old son. They are planning to visit UK at the end of March and are expecting to attend the Easter Sunday morning service with us at BBC.

Charlie makes it his aim to be friends with everyone in the world and is far better known locally than Bob is! His biggest claim to fame is that he lost over 40% of his original body weight on a boiled chicken and boiled mix veg diet between December 2020 and March 2023. He still has the same diet and goes to the vets for a weekly weigh-in on the weeks he is not at the Potteries doggy café.

Bob is currently awaiting the outcome of a safeguarding check before becoming a volunteer at the Potteries. Charlie, apparently, doesn't require one, so is ready to start!!