

# Lucybella

Lucybella's owner shared this nice story with us:

"Hi, my name is Lucybella. I am a 15 1/2-year-old wired hair fox terrier. I love the outdoors and one of my favorite activities is going to the river and riding with my owner on our wave runner. You may have seen us; I'm the one wearing the little yellow life jacket with my paws draped over the handle bars. I also love our daily hour walks. People always comment on how happy I look prancing down the trails. They are right; this is the highlight of my day!

My owner is a retired teacher, and over the years has had many classroom pets including box turtles, a hedgehog, a chinchilla, and other rodents and reptiles. However, when I was a year old, I got to go to school, too! My owner was working on her master's degree, and the topic of her thesis was "Pets in the Classroom". The school board gave special permission for me to accompany her to school for two years. It was wonderful! I grew especially fond of one 4th grade boy who had trouble reading. He read at a 1st grade level and was embarrassed to read to anyone. His special reading teacher asked my owner if I could go with him when he went for extra reading help. So every day I would happily scamper down the hall to Remedial Reading class with him. We would sit together on a bean bag chair, and he would read all sorts of exciting stories to me. I didn't care if he stumbled over the words, and I could tell he felt very comfortable reading to me. Later, when his confidence improved, he would let his reading teacher listen, too.

I also remember a time when there was a bad thunderstorm. There was lots of lightning and booming thunder. I could tell one little boy was especially nervous. I went over and hopped up on his lap and stayed there until the storm was over. He hung on to me and buried his face in my fur. Days later, his

mother told my owner that her son was deathly afraid of storms, and she was worried about him that day. However, when he came home from school, he was calm and he told her that he wasn't afraid during the storm because I was there with him.

Probably the child that needed me the most was a little girl from Chicago who was sent to Galena to live with family friends after a terrible family tragedy. She was very angry and aggressive. The other children were afraid of her, and she didn't have any friends. I spent a great deal of time sitting on her lap during class. When I was with her, she would relax and calm down, petting and cuddling with me. Little by little, other children would approach her and ask if they could pet me, too. At first she was a little hesitant, but slowly she allowed the other children to join her. By the end of the year she was much happier and was accepted by the other children.

I think my funniest memories are of the rough tough boys. When it was their turn to brush me, put on my jacket or sweater, or take me for my walk, they were surprisingly gentle with me. I brought out their nurturing side.

It was a great two years!

Even though my owner had many classroom pet over the years, the one they loved the most and remembered the best was me!"