

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2007

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NEWS

February 13, 2007

Woman saved from fire by pit bull says her dog the best

By **LYDA LONGA**
Staff Writer

ORMOND-BY-THE-SEA -- This is a good story about a pit bull.

Alyssa Gould can't stop hugging Boone, a jet black beauty with a small patch of white on his chest and a perfect white marking between his eyes.

A little over a week ago, the 1 1/2-year-old blue diamond pit bull saved his owner from a burning bed. The heroic act occurred just a week after the county had labeled Boone a dangerous dog.

"Everybody always hears bad stories about pit bulls and this is a positive story," said Gould, 33, standing in front of her ravaged house on Monday. "Boone saved my life. We thank God that we have him."

The night of Feb. 3, Gould took a sleeping pill after some recent restless nights.

Her husband, Ted, 44, at work and her two daughters at their cousin's house, Gould climbed into bed with Boone and her rat terrier Skeeter.

About 2 a.m., Gould said Boone licked wildly at her face. She tried to ignore him, but then the dog began tugging at her pajama sleeve with his teeth.

"I opened my eyes and there were flames everywhere," Gould said. "My bed was on fire."

Stumbling out of bed, Gould reached for the doorknob and jumped back when the metal seared her hand. Then Boone began pulling her by her pajama pant leg, attempting to herd her out of the blazing bedroom.

"I couldn't see because of the smoke," Gould said. "He was trying to pull me out. We got to the living room, I grabbed his leash, and we ran out the door."

Skeeter bolted from the room the moment the door opened.

"He ran through the kitchen and through the doggie door in the back," she said smiling. "He hid under a Jet Ski outside."

A week before Boone's good deed, the pit bull had been deemed dangerous by Volusia County Animal Control, the Goulds said. A friend of the family had left the dog out by mistake and he barked at the mail carrier in the front yard.

"He never went near (the postal worker), but she was scared and I can't blame her," Gould said. "But Boone is not a bad dog. We didn't raise him that way. He's part of our family."

The Goulds' one-story house is a total loss, the cause of the blaze an electrical outlet next to the bed. The family plans to rebuild with insurance money.

Monday afternoon as Gould, her husband and Boone walked through the charred remains of the three-bedroom house on Poinsettia Drive, the pit bull was uneasy.

"The smell of smoke is uncomfortable," Ted Gould said. "It's reminding him of the fire."

His wife agreed: "He wanted to get out of the house that night and he wanted me to come with him. He doesn't want to go back in there."

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