

By Caroline Zambrano

PIAA Member of the Month – May

Sarah Callis of Scoobydooz Doggy Day Care & Grooming



Sarah Callis left her family in England in 2004 to come to Australia and help build and run six childcare centres. A few years after starting her venture in the childcare industry, she put her dog Millie into Scoobydooz Doggy Day Care & Grooming in Brookvale, NSW. Little did she know, this decision would change the course of her intended career and bring so much joy and laughter into her life!

Sarah took over Scoobydooz in 2008 with her business partner Eleanor Sheedy. Together they built the business and expanded into larger premises, as well as introducing new features and services. Today, it is a successful day care that provides care for dogs of all ages, sizes, energy and temperament.

“I have always owned dogs and had a passion for animals,” says Sarah. “I wanted to turn Scoobydooz into a place where dogs came to have fun and learned new skills with other canine companions. The more that I ran Scoobydooz like a childcare centre, the more people seemed to love it, including the staff.”

Two years ago, Sarah sadly lost Millie to cancer at the age of 10. Millie left behind Chester, a short-legged mini Border Collie rescued from the Animal Welfare League at the age of four months. Chester was named after a city in the UK by Sarah’s brother Matt, who is in the British Air Force and currently placed in Canada.

“Chester attends day care with me five days a week and can often be seen meeting and greeting in reception with his best friend, Lexie the Shih Tzu,” says Sarah. “He keeps me on my toes and really is one smart cookie. There can be no grey area when it comes to his training. Chester is a very loyal and loving companion and usually makes me laugh every day.”

Hobbies and interests

Sarah doesn’t just care for dogs; she is also a qualified holistic therapist for humans. However, she did study canine massage and is just as interested in alternative therapy for dogs as she is in their owners. She is also avidly involved in fitness training.

“I spend a lot of time with my dog whether it is dog training or hanging out with friends and their dogs,” says Sarah. “I like to get away to explore new places when time allows, whether that’s somewhere fairly local or new parts of Australia.”

This keen traveller is also writing a book – a fictional romantic comedy for teenage readers – which she hopes to finalise and publish sometime this year. “I wrote it seven years ago and have never got around to editing it, as I’m such a perfectionist, but made a pact to do it this year,” she says.

This ambitious Capricorn says she is much like her star sign – practical, down-to-earth and a bit stubborn – all the great qualities that ensure her furry clients go home at the end of the day happy and tails wagging.

What would Chester say if he could talk? “He would say a lot,” says Sarah, “but probably the most common would be ‘Mum, you’re embarrassing me in front of my friends!’”

Q. What is your favourite book?

Unfortunately don’t really have time for reading; however, obviously loved *Marley and Me*...didn’t everyone?

Q. Tell something that people don’t know about you?

I’m extremely spiritual. I believe in Karma, positive thinking and that we are all on a journey in life that is set out for us and which we are guided along. I try to apply this way of thought to most of my life, especially the tough times!

Q. If you could meet anyone in the world dead or alive, who would it be and what would say to them?

Dalai Lama – I just think he is inspirational and would love to spend one day with him and see how he views and lives his life.

Q. What are three things you can’t live without?

Chester, friends and family, and erm ... would need to be a decision between coffee and my mobile phone! Tough!!

Q. What or who has influenced you in your life?

My brother. Growing up I remember his sheer determination to succeed at his dream. Even when things got hard for him and he was challenged every day, he still put everything he had into his goal and got to where he wanted to be. He never gave up. He is always very encouraging in everything I do and will often come up with solutions to things when I don’t manage to see them myself.

PIAA Member of the Month articles are researched by Caroline Zambrano. Caroline is a PIAA member and award-winning pet journalist. She creates specialist pet content and editing for magazines, newspapers, media releases, websites, e-newsletters and brochures. Visit www.petjournalist.com.au