



People's Choice Award

Daphne, Tibetan Spaniel, Melbourne VIC

Nominated Charity Recipient: Second Chance Animal Rescue

Daphne is a 12-year-old former therapy dog who suffered a severe brain injury after being hit by two cars on Boxing Day 2023. She wasn't expected to survive, let alone walk, see or eat independently again, says her guardian, Michelle Jackel.

But Daphne defied the odds – within a week, she began eating on her own, and within months, she was walking, running, and even jumping! She regained vision in her right eye and maintained her signature sassy, stubborn personality, proving her indomitable spirit.

Before her accident, Daphne was a Pet Therapy dog at Lort Smith. Michelle hopes they can return to this role, inspiring

others with brain injuries and showing that recovery is possible.

"I hope people are inspired by Daphne's story and are not as quick to lose hope in challenging circumstances, even if the prognosis is grim. And that miracles can happen. Daphne's head injuries were so severe that we were told she wouldn't make it through the day. And yet here she is a year later, proving everyone wrong," she says.

Daphne's journey continues to give hope to everyone she meets, including her vets and physiotherapists, who now see new possibilities for dogs with severe brain injuries.

Awards Founder Kerry Martin says, "The People's Choice Award is a celebration of community spirit and love for our incredible dogs. Daphne holds a special place in the hearts of so many, showcasing the power of connection between dogs and their people. Daphne's story is one of incredible determination and resilience, reminding us all that the bond we share with our dogs can inspire hope and healing."