



Carolina enjoys weekend in the Bay

by Sharon Macredie

Seven-year-old Carolina Anderson and her parents enjoyed a weekend in Whitianga strolling on the beach, visiting the shops and being with friends – a quiet time for a family that has faced enormous upheaval in the past six months.

They were in Whitianga a month earlier having won a weekend away after friends entered them into a competition. Then they cruised Mercury Bay on the Blue Boat, went horse riding at Twin Oaks, received a pink Whitianga T-shirt for Carolina courtesy of the information center

Carolina is still recovering from injuries she got when a dog attacked her at Auckland's Cox's Bay reserve on January 31. The attack thrust the family into the public gaze and brought calls for tougher laws governing dog ownership.

The park was a place the family visited regularly and considered safe. They don't go there now. But they are not anti-dogs. Carolina still loves dogs and points out every dog she sees. She is very careful with dogs she doesn't know but once she is sure that they are ok she is happy to be around them, says Mr Anderson.



And she still wants to have a puppy of her own

Next week she starts skin expansion surgery that will last 12 weeks and repair damage to her cheek and head

It will be months before doctors even consider operating on her damaged eye. First they want to see what healing will happen naturally.

Her father John says that the Whitianga holidays have been

a welcome break for him, his wife Sandra Fresia and their daughter.

They stayed at Villa Toscana Lodge where they have become friends with owners Giorgio Allemano and Margherita Giampietri and their two children Giorma and Fiamma. Mr Anderson says that the past months have been a hectic time and the two trips to Whitianga are the only breaks that they have had.

Sandra Fresia and John Anderson with Carolina (centre) and friends Fiamma Allemano and Cosette O'Connell

He says that Carolina is a happy child and that has helped her parents through the past months.

And she is happy to be back at school where a teacher aide helps her through the days.