



Paws of Allegiance

Newsletter of Paws for Purple Hearts

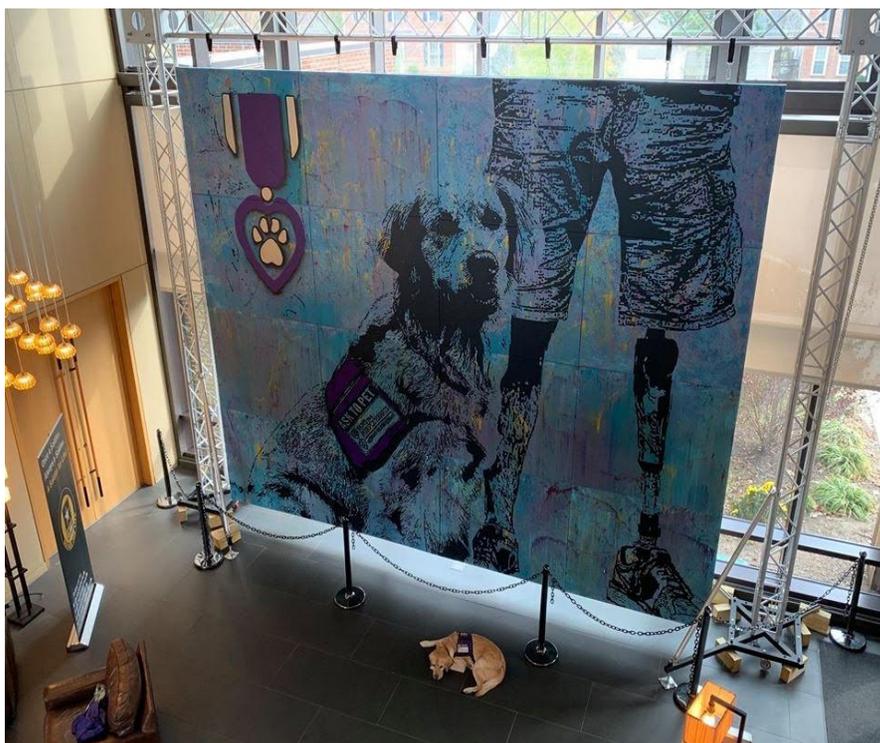
Honoring Our Warriors and Their Service Dogs!

Wow! One of our wonderful volunteers near Washington D.C. painted this beautiful piece of art honoring our Warriors and service dogs. But it isn't just 1 piece... it is sixteen 60" X 48" pieces of canvas "tiles".

Our deepest thanks to Jeff Miller of Jeff Miller Studios. This remarkable artist honored **Paws for Purple Hearts** by prominently including our logo on this painting.

This treasure was on display at the USO at Fort Belvoir, VA. in November. You appreciate the immense size of this art project when you see PPH dog Kolenko laying down in the foreground.

Jeff created this painting as a fundraiser for PPH. You can purchase individual 60" X 48" canvas tiles for \$1,000, with proceeds (after the cost of supplies) going to Paws for Purple Hearts! If you are interested in purchasing, please let us know!



Eastern Star California Picks PPH

Once again, the Grand Chapter of California, Order of the Eastern Star (OES) has selected Paws for Purple Hearts (PPH) as its charity of choice – for three years! They selected PPH in 2012 and presented a very significant check back then. On October 26, 2019, it was déjà vu as OES California presented another large check to PPH as one of the highlights of its annual meeting.

PPH was represented by its President/CEO, Dr. Bonnie Bergin, and its Clinical Director, Matt Decker. After they both spoke, the Worthy Grand Matron, Terri Ewing, and the Worthy Grand Patron, Paul Lacroix, jointly presented a significant check - the result of a year of fundraising by Eastern Star members for PPH. Special thanks goes to Suzanne Gallachio who led the OES effort to obtain charitable gifts!

Donate at www.pawsforpurplehearts.org/donate or Email to donate@pawsforpurplehearts.org

An update from Virginia

By Lindsey Stiefvater

Paws for Purple Hearts Virginia currently has 11 dogs in training, ranging from 8 months to 3 years. There are three Program Instructors; Heather, Alissa, and Mami and one Advancement Associate, Lindsey. We currently conduct 10 programs for our Warriors, with most of these programs taking place right in our facility.



Lenny with Buck

Recent warrior participant Lenny states “Being able to see these puppies go from one stage of learning to the next is absolutely amazing. More so than that, any bad day can be made better just being there and interacting with the pups.”

It is undeniable the imprint that the service dogs in training leave on our Warriors’ hearts. Lenny was paired with service dog in training, Buck, during his 8 weeks with us. Lenny stated, “I honestly believe that it was more therapy for me than training for the pup.”

Stories like Lenny’s are only possible with our amazing donors and volunteers. Special thanks to the Mary Ball Women’s Club in Fredericksburg, Manarc Borne -The Battle, The Best Western Plus -Thornburg, and to everyone who donated and helped PPH VA thrive this year. You are making a difference in our Warriors’ lives.

As 2019 comes to a close, we are excited to end this year with a service dog graduation. During this season of giving and cheer, we ask that you take a second and remember all the selfless Warriors who served our country, and those who continue to serve.

Text **PURPLEPAWS** to 707070 to make a gift or call (844) 700-PAWS (7297)

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Serving Warriors in Menlo Park

By Megan Franke

This year Menlo Park has helped 50 Warriors with PTSD and TBI and had over 400 hours of Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy[®]. Gregg J. is a veteran who participated in this program. He came back with memories and trauma from his experience overseas. He found Paws for Purple Hearts and it slowly helped him recover.

Gregg stated “Working with Paws for Purple Hearts was truly a blessing...It helped me understand how to gain trust and continue to work towards the big picture of working with an animal and how it helps...My favorite part was having a partner with me. I never felt alone and seeing the enjoyment in Ozzy’s emotions warmed my heart. I absolutely love PPH and what it has done for me.”

He enjoyed Ozzy’s goofy and fun-loving personality and in return it helped Gregg become more outgoing. The more Gregg worked with him the more they bonded. They were a team.

Tamara, Program Coordinator at Menlo Park, described her experience working with Gregg, “Ozzy made a huge impact on Gregg. He wanted to work on his patience for his children and working with Ozzy helped him do that. He learned to adapt, and that is something we are looking for in a



Ozzy

trainer. He was able to find the positive and towards the end of the program they were inseparable.”

All of our services are free of charge to Warriors and their families and we are very grateful for the support of our generous donors and volunteers. To follow Ozzy and his training, check out #pphOzzy on our Facebook and Instagram.

San Antonio News! *By Rosalyn Garcia*

Paws for Purple Hearts San Antonio would like to give a huge **thank you** to all of the individuals that make this organization tick. These participants, supporters, donors, and volunteers bring a passion to helping active duty military members, veterans, and their families.

Over 375 hours of Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® and 50+ hours of social therapy have occurred in 2019 because of the generosity of our volunteers and donors. These programs are extremely important to veterans who seek care for both mental health, and mobility/physical therapy at the Audie Murphy VA, Austin VA, and Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC).

One of our volunteers shared why he supports Paws Purple Heart's mission. "I volunteer for PPH because

as a veteran that has dealt with my own PTSD issues, I feel that it's important to help my fellow veterans do the same. PPH is a wonderful organization that trains dogs to assist veterans in dealing with their PTSD and anxiety. Without these dogs, I fear that veterans will turn to drugs or alcohol which could lead to an increase in the suicide rate." – Jason White (U.S. Army Veteran)

This year, Paws for Purple Hearts had the privilege of receiving generous donations from numerous individuals and multiple organizations that support our mission. These organizations include the Ken W. Davis Foundation, The Petco Foundation, and Rip It Energy Drinks. Without everyone's generosity, we would not be able to continue offering all of our therapeutic programs and assistance dogs for free to those who need them.

Expansion to Anchorage

By Rebecca Beltran

Elmendorf Air Force Base and Fort Richardson Army Base (now called the Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson) were established during World War II and served as a huge economic support until the big oil boom. It is safe to say that this Army and Air Force population has had a big impact on Alaska as a whole. Now Paws for Purple Hearts gets to support them! This summer PPH expanded into the largest city in Alaska to support Warriors through Canine Assisted Warrior Therapy®. Program instructors Debra and Melissa are based in Anchorage and supporting our veterans. Our hard-working service dogs in training love to introduce themselves to their new Warrior friends and new community.



Debra and Ralph say thanks!

Paws for Purple Hearts

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Paws for Purple Hearts is licensed by The Military Order of the Purple Heart and the Military Order of the Purple Heart Service Foundation, chartered by an Act of Congress for combat-wounded Veterans.



Paws for Purple Hearts

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Volunteer Susan
bathes George

Thank You San Diego Volunteers! By Caitlin Donahue

Paws for Purple Hearts San Diego is lucky to have such a dedicated and generous group of volunteers. Yes, they generally start because they want to play with and interact with our dogs, but they stay for so much more. Every day, the volunteers that visit spend time cleaning kennels, mopping floors, grooming our dogs, and asking what they can do to help our staff. In 2019 alone, we had over **9,000** volunteer hours from over **100** individuals!

Our volunteers donate their time, talents, and money to ensure our dogs are getting the best care and our volunteers helped us raise \$1,400 in just two weeks to purchase a new professional grooming bathtub! **Photoshoots:** From birthdays to holiday card photos, our volunteers have captured some of our pups most memorable moments and helped us document their journey to becoming service dogs.

Weekend Homes for Our Dogs: Every weekend, our dogs get to go home with loving families to get a glimpse of what life after training will be like. These volunteers, called puppy parents, come to bi-weekly trainings and are there for our dogs every weekend. This year our puppy parents have spent an impressive **8,511** hours caring for our dogs- all on a volunteer basis! Volunteers in San Diego have become a part of the Paws for Purple Hearts family. They check on our staff, they bond with our dogs, and they are passionate about their role. If you are a volunteer at Paws for Purple Hearts

San Diego, know that we are beyond grateful for your support. From one-time volunteer groups to every-weekend puppy parents, we could not do this life-changing work without you.