

Paws of Allegiance

Spring 2022 Newsletter - Southwest Region



**PAWS FOR
PURPLE HEARTS**
WARRIORS HELPING WARRIORS®

IN THIS ISSUE

PAWSOME EXPANSION

**OUR SUPPORTERS ARE
EXTRAORDINARY**

**SIX MONTHS OF SERVICE,
COMPANIONSHIP AND
TEAMWORK**

**THE TOP FIVE THINGS TO
START TRAINING YOUR
PUPPY**

**ONE YEAR INTO
TRAINING**

**PPH MENLO PARK TO
PPH BAY AREA**

DIY SNUFFLE MAT

UPDATE ON LIBERTY

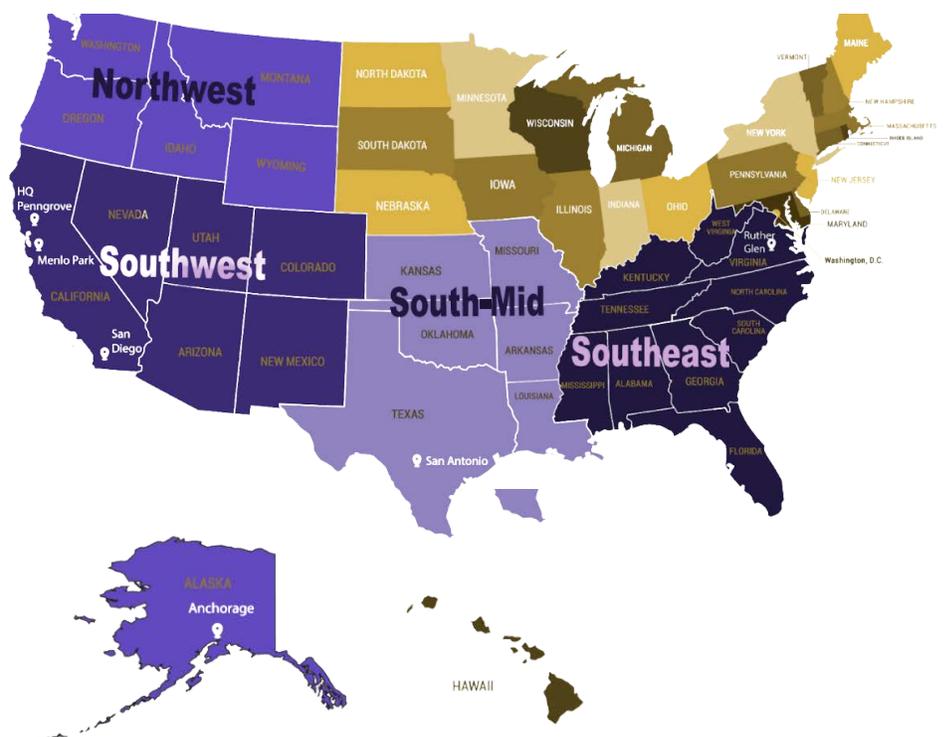
**BAY AREA UPCOMING
EVENTS**

Pawsome Expansion

By: Claire Richardson, Advancement Associate

As Paws for Purple Hearts continues to grow and provide services to Warriors throughout the United States, we are excited to announce the opening of our new Northwest Regional field site in the Seattle/Tacoma, Washington area.

Many of our donors, volunteers, and readers know that Paws for Purple Hearts has already been serving the Northwest region through our Anchorage, Alaska operation.

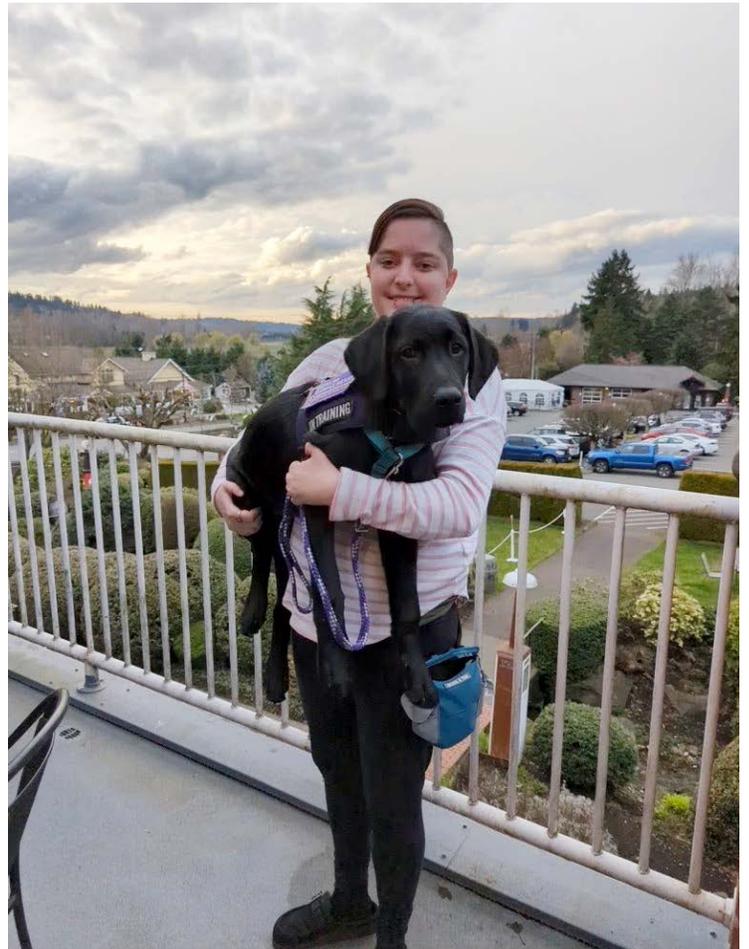


Cont. Pawsome Expansion

The implementation of Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® and Assistance Dog placement in the Northwest have been extremely successful, however the need our Warriors have for these life-changing programs is larger still. For this reason, Paws for Purple Hearts is proud to bring its programming to the large military community in Washington.



PPH "E" Litter Ericson



Cassidy and Ericson

Leading the opening of this new facility is Bergin University of Canine Studies Masters of Science graduate, Cassidy Cooley. Cassidy is a United States Marine Corps Veteran and comes to us with many years of experience within the Assistance Dog Industry. With multiple years of training under her belt, we are delighted to have her assist with the expansion of Paws for Purple Hearts. Cassidy is extremely excited to facilitate the opening of this new location in the Seattle/Tacoma area with Ericson, one of the puppies from the PPH "E" Litter.

In addition to this growth in our Northwest Region, in the near future, Paws for Purple Hearts will also be opening new locations in our last two untouched regions in the United States: the North-Mid and Northeast. We plan to expand into Detroit, Michigan for our North-Mid location. We are planning to open our Northeast site in the New York/New Jersey area. It is our mission here at Paws for Purple Hearts to bring these therapeutic programs to Veterans and Active Duty Service Members throughout the country, and with these openings, we are furthering this mission. You can help in many ways. Please consider telling any Warriors you know who might benefit from our services about our programs or just help spread the word in your general community about the difference we make. You can also stop by your local VA and ask them to contact us to find out about how we can work with them to help their Veterans recover from PTSD or TBI. If you are near one of our sites, please consider volunteering with us. You can also help by donating or by purchasing items on our Wish Lists.

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Southwest Region

Our Supporters are Extraordinary

By: Kerry Blum, Southwest Regional Director

Merely saying thank you seems inadequate when expressing our gratitude for the support we receive from all the Paws for Purple Hearts Donors and Volunteers. On behalf of PPH and the entire Southwest Regional Staff, we thank you for your incredible support and dedication to the organization. During the past year, over a quarter million dollars were raised, and dozens of volunteers worked thousands of hours serving our Veterans & families. More importantly, is the immeasurable amount of goodwill all of you created for Paws For Purple Hearts through your positive interaction with the Veterans, community supporters, and dog enthusiasts.

Your support and participation in Paws For Purple Hearts special events, therapy sessions, outreach programs, volunteer activities, and interactions with us in the community have been one of our best opportunities to spread the great work that PPH provides. Through the generous donation of your time, your tireless efforts in the kennels, your boundless enthusiasm in the training room, and your welcoming attitude toward the public, you showcase Paws For Purple Hearts in the best possible light and help ensure the continued success of our organization.

We greatly appreciate your continued support.

Paws For Purple Hearts Donors & Volunteers

Are just ordinary people with extraordinary hearts.

They offer the gift of their time and support, to teach, to listen, to help,
to inspire, to build, to grow, to learn, to succeed.

They expect no pay,

Yet the VALUE of their work and support knows no limit...

They've known the unexpected joy of a simple puppy kiss.

They have planted the tiny seeds of love in countless lives.

Paws For Purple Hearts Donors & Volunteers

Are just ordinary people who reach out

and take a paw

and together

Make a ***difference***

That lasts a ***lifetime.***

Thank You!

To donate, text PURPLEPAWS to 707070 or visit www.paws4ph.org/donate

Southwest Region

San Diego Updates

Six Months Of Service, Companionship And Teamwork

By: Randi Tuell, Advancement Associate



Michael and Drew during Team Training

On August 7th, 2021, Paws for Purple Hearts San Diego had the honor of placing one of our Service Dogs-in-Training with Michael, a local United States Marine Corps Veteran. Michael has been an advocate, volunteer, and friend of Paws for

Purple Hearts since 2016 when he heard about our Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® program. After participating in the program, he realized he loved spending time with our dogs and strongly identified with the PPH mission, so he decided to become a volunteer Puppy Parent. He was always excited to volunteer and played a key role in helping us successfully raise one of our future Service Dogs. After seeing how truly beneficial a Service Dog can be, Michael decided to fill out an application to become a recipient.

It was apparent from an early stage that Michael and Drew had a connection, so the PPH team was elated to announce that they were a successful match. After six months of officially being a Service team, Michael says, "My favorite part of having my own Service Dog is definitely the companionship. Volunteering did a lot for me. I had never owned a dog before, my parents did, but I never had my own. I have always loved animals and when I encountered PPH it just shed light on my personal life and how satisfying the companionship would be.

Learning to understand the animal was really helpful in preparing me for having my own Service Dog and what they would be able to do for me."

Michael and Drew have created some incredible memories since being matched. "Drew and I have had a lot of impactful moments together, but the most impactful would be when I introduced him to my daughter. It was her first time seeing us as a team together, and I took Drew bowling with my whole family. He was so well behaved, and he just made me feel very proud. He fit in with my family and the kids really well. My favorite quality about him is his jolly nature; everybody loves him." He described Drew as incredibly intuitive and said, "I think service animals are very, very special animals, and the intuitive companionship can even surprise you with how they forecast your moves."

A Service Dog can be an invaluable tool in a Veteran's healing journey, but the process of applying can be overwhelming. Michael's advice: "If there's any trepidation, I would encourage Veterans to try the Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® programs so they can learn more about the benefits." It has been our privilege to watch Michael and Drew grow as a team, and we look forward to watching them continue to find joy in every day together.



Michael and Drew after being matched

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San Diego Updates

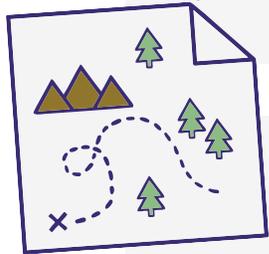
The Top Five Things to Start Training Your Puppy

By: Selah Marting, Senior Program Instructor



#1 ENRICHMENT

All puppies need plenty of physical and mental exercise! Snuffle mats, dog puzzles, and Kongs are great ways to allow your puppy to use their nose and problem solve. Our lab puppies are known to inhale their kibble, so using a variety of feeding methods ensures they eat slower, and keeps them productively busy for longer.



#2 EXPOSURE

Try to let your puppy explore a few new places, items, and/or sounds each week. Experiencing new things in a positive way when young can prevent fear when they're older. However, the key is to let them go at their own pace!

#3 RELAXATION PROTOCOL

Karen Overall created a structured method for teaching a prolonged "down/stay." It's a great way to transition into crate training, resulting in a more relaxed pup that actually enjoys its crate.



#4 COOPERATIVE CARE

There are multiple simple training activities to practice with your puppy that will pay off 10 times over throughout their life. Your puppy having positive experiences with different handling will make a big difference when those dreaded vet visits come around.

#5 WALKS

Teaching a nice, loose leash walk can be a great way to exercise your young dog. However, even better is letting them enjoy a sniff walk. This is an easy way to grow their confidence while exploring the world and smells around them, as well as providing mental and physical exercise.

To donate, text PURPLEPAWS to 707070 or visit www.paws4ph.org/donate

Southwest Region

San Diego Updates

One Year Into Training

By: Randi Tuell, Advancement Associate



Reid and Jilly complete one year of training

Paws for Purple Hearts works with golden retrievers, labrador retrievers, and mixes of the two breeds who are purpose-bred to be trained as Service Dogs. The puppies are received at each facility to begin training between eight to twelve weeks old. They will train for a total of two to three years. These two to three years are full of milestones, development, and so many memories with these special dogs.

Here at our San Diego location, we currently have six Service Dogs-In-Training, and two of them recently hit a big milestone: their first birthday and a whole year of training completed. Jilk was born on December 14, 2020, and Reid was born just days later on December 17, 2020. Reid started his training in San Diego in March of 2021 and has grown so much throughout his

first year. Jilk, who we also call Jilly, began her training in Menlo Park, California, before being transferred to our San Diego location with her trainer in July of 2021. Joey is Jilly's brother and was also in our program for a year. He has since been career-changed and adopted as a pet since he has always thrived best in a home environment. He will continue to make memories with his loving puppy parents who have played a role in raising him since we received him in San Diego.

Although these dogs are very similar, they are such unique individuals. Reid is a black lab who has a gentle personality and thrives off of connection. He loves being around his pack of dog friends and is working on building confidence to perform tasks in public. His favorite command is "lay on" where he applies deep pressure by laying on a Warrior's chest to provide a moment of connection and relief. Jilly is also a black lab. She loves giving kisses and impresses us with her eagerness to train. Her favorite command is a retrieval sequence that includes getting items from a refrigerator. First, she opens the door, retrieves an item such as water or medicine, brings it to her Warrior, then closes the refrigerator. We are so proud of all the dogs' progress and look forward to witnessing their future successes.

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Southwest Region

Bay Area Updates

PPH Menlo Park to PPH Bay Area

By: Olivia Hughes, Advancement Associate

At the start of 2022, Paws for Purple Hearts Menlo Park faced an exciting change, we expanded into "Paws for Purple Hearts Bay Area". This momentous change empowered us to take a stroll down memory lane and to look at the rich history of our location. The Welcome Center was originally donated as the first official Paws for Purple Hearts facility after our pilot program took place at the Menlo Park VA. Since PPH Menlo Park's founding, we have seen five other locations open to expand PPH's impact on Warriors across the country. We are so grateful for how far our organization has grown and are thrilled to see what is to come.

With this change, we have immense plans to expand our programs across the San Francisco Bay Area which will allow us to help more Warriors in our region than ever before. We are currently looking for a new facility to allow us to expand our capacity for an increase in staff and in-training dogs. As of now, we plan to hire a new Program Instructor as we continue to increase our programs in the Bay Area. With a new staff member and a greater capacity, we plan to nearly double the number of in-training dogs at our site.

We plan to hold outpatient Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® sessions in our new facility along with a potential expansion towards Warrior pet obedience training.



The Bay Area Team

We hope to bring inpatient Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® sessions to our facility using all our supplies and equipment to assist inpatient Warriors on site. Our programs will also include an increase in sessions at the San Francisco VA, Palo Alto VA, and Menlo Park VA.

Volunteers are an integral part of our organization and play a key part in bringing our mission to life. A new facility will allow PPH to increase community involvement in the Bay Area by hosting fundraising events, open houses, and allowing larger groups of volunteers to assist in various projects. We look forward to the opportunity to not only deepen our connections within the community but to further our mission's reach. As we continue into 2022, we feel it could be the biggest year for our location yet. The PPH Bay Area facility is on track for an optimistic year of growth ahead. Stay tuned for more updates!

"We are so grateful for John Arrillaga and his initial support for Paws for Purple Hearts. His donation helped us thrive, along with the amazing support from the VA Staff we have here at the Menlo Park VA. The last nine years in the Menlo Park VA have been significant in our growth and helped us to now be able to expand our reach to more deserving Warriors throughout the Bay Area."

- Megan Franke, Program Instructor, PPH Bay Area

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Southwest Region

Bay Area Updates

DIY Snuffle Mat

By: Olivia Hughes, Advancement Associate

Enrichment is a vital part of our Service Dog training program. Enrichment activities allow our dogs-in-training to entertain themselves in a non-destructive way and have an overall positive impact on their happiness. Snuffle mats, and enrichment activities in general, allow dogs to use their critical thinking skills to figure out how to get treats. For Service Dogs, in particular, activities that allow for critical thinking are vital in their training and allow them to have a successful career.



Lofty with a Snuffle Mat

Snuffle mats are an easy enrichment tool to make at home and benefit all dogs. In order to create a snuffle mat, simply gather a sink mat, 2 yards of fleece, scissors, a ruler, a marker, and some treats for later. Begin by cutting the fleece into strips of varying sizes around the size of 1.5 in x 7 in. You'll need a lot of strips to fill your snuffle mat base, so you'll need to cut approximately 200 strips depending on your base size.

Once you have your strips, it's time to create your snuffle mat. Take a strip of fabric and fold it in half before pushing through one of the holes in the sink mat. In order to secure it to the base, tie the folded middle section of the fabric in a knot on the back of the base. Repeat this step until you fill the base.

When looking for a snuffle mat or if you're making your own, the most important element is to make sure that they are sturdy. They are meant for dogs to rummage through and must hold up as they nibble through them. Snuffle mats can be used daily and are an amazing enrichment exercise to use while feeding your dogs. It allows them to use their critical thinking skills to find their food and makes their feeding time last much longer. Now, get crafty and create your own. We would love to see your snuffle mats, tag us on Instagram @pphsouthwest with your creations!

Bay Area Upcoming Events

By: Olivia Hughes, Advancement Associate

As the weather warms up, we continue to see a bright light at the end of the tunnel in terms of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have already begun to expand our events across the Bay Area and are hopeful for more events in the future. In the past few months, we have been able to attend a variety of events, such as a parade, presentation, and a Neurodivergence Summit that allowed us to form relationships with a variety of local groups. In April, we gave a presentation to the South San Francisco Women's Club about our Service Dog program and mission.

In May, we will be attending WAG Fest, a dog-friendly festival. We will have a table set up with information about our organization, we will provide demos, and we look forward to connecting with our local dog lovers. As we approach the summer, we are looking into many other opportunities to connect to the different populations within the Bay Area. We can't wait to continue to foster relationships with local communities. As our calendar continues to grow, we can't help but be excited for what the rest of this year has to offer.

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Southwest Region

Bay Area Updates

Update on Liberty

By: Olivia Hughes, Advancement Associate

Our mission to support Warriors is a lifetime commitment. We remain in continual contact with our Veterans after placement to ensure that they have all the support they need beyond our training program. We check in with the Service Dog and Veteran two weeks after placement and do an Assistance Dog International Public Access Test at three months, 6 months, and 1 year following placement. We are incredibly proud to have the opportunity to share an update on Liberty since her placement as a PTSD Service Dog last summer. Upon graduation, Liberty was placed with Army Veteran Carlos.

From a young age, it was clear that Liberty was meant to be a Service Dog. Throughout her training, she helped Veterans and Active Duty Service Members in the Men and Women's Trauma Recovery Program at the Menlo Park VA. Liberty and her brother, Drew, graduated from our program at our San Diego facility in August of 2021.

Since graduating, she has continued to show that she truly is meant to be a Service Dog. Carlos and Liberty have been doing well since her placement. Liberty has increased Carlos' quality of life through both her commands and companionship. His favorites of her many, incredible qualities are her loyalty and compassion. During his last ADI test on February 11th, Carlos said:

"I can't believe it's already been six months since I got Liberty, she compliments me so well and I can't picture my life without her."

Carlos and Liberty have grown an unbreakable bond and work extremely well as a team. Carlos' favorite activity with Liberty is to go to the beach. He absolutely loves their beach time as it allows her to have some downtime from her invaluable work as a Service Dog. We are beyond proud to see that they are doing well together and are looking forward to witnessing their journey.



Liberty in her Service Dog Vest



Service Dog Liberty and Army Veteran Carlos



Liberty and Carlos love playing fetch and going to the beach!

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Southwest Region

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