

Paws of Allegiance

Fall 2022 Newsletter - Southwest Region



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A Service Dog Salute

By: Greg DeSantis, Advancement Associate

It should come as no surprise that PTSD Service Dogs are changing the lives of many Military Veterans across the country. With around 3.5 million Veterans suffering from PTSD, these dogs' services can be invaluable and necessary in helping reduce the severity of PTSD. To recognize the outstanding work of Service Dogs and highlight other ways to give back to those that have served, Purina Dog Chow launched its first-ever Visible Impact Award in partnership with the Association of Service Dog Providers for Military Veterans.

This September, Paws for Purple Hearts had the honor of having one of our own graduated Service Dogs, Liberty, be selected as one of five finalists for Purina's Visible Impact Award. The intention of the selection was made to illustrate Liberty's unique skillset and how she assists her United States Army Veteran, Carlos Perez, in everyday life. The nomination also highlighted the celebration of Carlos'



Veteran Carlos and
Liberty

services to our country in the two's most recent trip to the Los Angeles Dodger Stadium in April of 2022. Given a standing ovation by around 50,000 people, Liberty continuously checked in with Carlos by rubbing up against him to ensure that he focused solely on her and did not begin to feel overwhelmed. By building public awareness about Carlos & Liberty and their journey together, we're excited to show others the important role that these Service Dogs play in helping Warriors along their road to recovery.

Hospice Floor Visit

By: Olivia Hughes, Advancement Associate



Lofty at the Palo Alto VA

The Bay Area team had the honor of visiting the Hospice floor of the Palo Alto VA in late August. Oakley and Lofty joined Bay Area staff in visiting with residents and staff around the Hospice floor for Social Therapy. The residents enjoyed meeting the dogs, petting them, and learning about their progress as Service Dogs-In-Training for future Warriors. Staff were beyond excited to visit and play with the Lofty and Oakley, even gifting each a toy to play with. The visit helped to bring cheer all around the floor.

"Our team loved the time with you all. The Pandemic hit us hard, with many nurses/staff having to work on COVID units. The morale boost and smiles were something I haven't seen (or experienced) in years. Your presence lifted many spirits and touched many lives, mine included."

- Kimberly Hiroto, Palo Alto VA Clinical Psychologist

Bay Area staff walked away from the visit with the same sense of gratitude, with a huge appreciation for the visit and those they had the privilege to meet.

A Front Seat with the American Legion Riders

By: Greg DeSantis, Advancement Associate

Well-known for their outstanding and charitable work, the American Legion Riders are members of the American Legion Family that participate in many projects and events that support our local communities. The scope of these projects ranges from raising money for local children's hospitals, schools, and veteran homes to sponsoring and participating in motorcycle runs that benefit numerous state and national charities.

In early August, the American Legion Riders donated a generous \$2,000 to Paws for Purple Hearts at their Veterans of Foreign Wars Post in Santee, San Diego County. Accompanied by Jilk, Senior Program Instructor, Tamara Bell, met with former Chapter President Rod Slavin and current Vice Director George Glover to join their monthly meeting and give them a demonstration on a few of the many things that Jilk is able to perform to assist a disabled Veteran. With a battery-powered light switch, Tamara instructed Jilk to flip the switch with her nose – simulating a scenario in which a person had either entered a dark room on their own or was not able to physically flip the switch by themselves.



George Glover presenting check to Tamara Bell

Without moving, she also instructed Jilk to help take off her jacket by using her mouth. Each sleeve was pulled off of her arms, picked up off the ground, and handed right back into Tamara's hands. With Jilk helping Tamara physically, she also demonstrated how she could help mentally.

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Bouncing her leg up and down to simulate anxiety and stress, Jilk quickly came to her aid by applying pressure to Tamara's fidgeting leg until it subsided. In demonstrating just a few of the things our trainers have been hard at work on, we were very appreciative that the American Legion Riders had let us sit in on their meeting to give a demonstration and extremely thankful for their charitable donation to PPH.

To Our Supporters

By: Olivia Hughes and Greg DeSantis, Southwest Advancement Associates



Jilk, Kerry, Reid, Arri, LeMay, & Nina



Oakley, Schatzie, Timmy, & Lofty

As we advance towards the end of the year, we are grateful as we look back at the generosity we have received from our donors and partners. This year was full of amazing milestones made possible through the support of our donors, allowing us to touch more lives than ever!

Our Bay Area site held its first virtual auction containing entirely donated items, including: hand drawn portraits of Bay Area dogs from a local artist, Art in Rescue, tickets to the Oakland Zoo, tickets to the Walt Disney Family Museum, a BarkBox certificate, and abstracts created by their newest addition, Oakley. We would like to thank all of the amazing donors and auction participants for making this auction possible and supporting our mission!

Our San Diego site is extremely thankful to the numerous National Charity League volunteer groups that have come in to assist our trainers and staff by helping us around the facility in addition to the many volunteers that come in weekly and help regularly. We are also extremely appreciative to the American Legion Riders of Santee for the continuous and generous donations to support us in our mission to improve the lives of America's Warriors.

Thanks to your generosity we have been able to expand our reach across the Bay Area through by increasing the number of sessions and overcome the challenges of building issues including fire and water damage in our San Diego facility. Your generosity has allowed us to continue serving as many Warriors as possible across the Southwest Region, and for that, we are grateful.



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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.



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