

# Paws of Allegiance

Spring 2023 Newsletter - North-Mid Region



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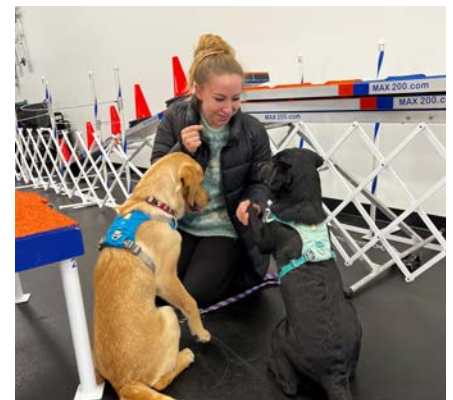
### WEATHERING THE WINTER IN THE NORTH-MID REGION

## North-Mid Update

By: Emma Coenen, Senior Program Instructor

Did you know there are over three million Veterans in the North-Mid Region? For Paws for Purple Hearts, that means a significant population of potential participants for Canine Assisted Warrior Therapy®, as well as Service Dog recipients. As our search for a facility to call home continues, we've already begun serving the Veterans in our communities and building a wonderful team of volunteers. From Veteran events to new puppy parents, we've had a successful first several months!

Our Puppy Parents are volunteers who graciously open their homes to our dogs both on weekdays and weekends. They play a critical role in socializing our dogs and giving them real world experiences in an environment, other than a trainer, that will prepare them for when they are placed with a Veteran. They take our puppies on field trips, help continue their training, and socialize them to many new people and environments.



Volunteer Puppy Parent with Pike and Mary

As we've gotten to know the area, we learned that there are a few other well known guide dog/Service Dog organizations in the region. This has been a huge benefit for our program instructors and dogs, since most individuals are already educated around Service Dog etiquette,

how to interact with Service Dogs, and are familiar with seeing Service Dogs-in-training in public. We have not only had a warm welcome everywhere we've taken our dogs on field trips, but people have been incredibly helpful not to distract the dogs when seen working in their vests.

## Veterans In Our Community

**By: Emma Coenen, Senior Program Instructor**

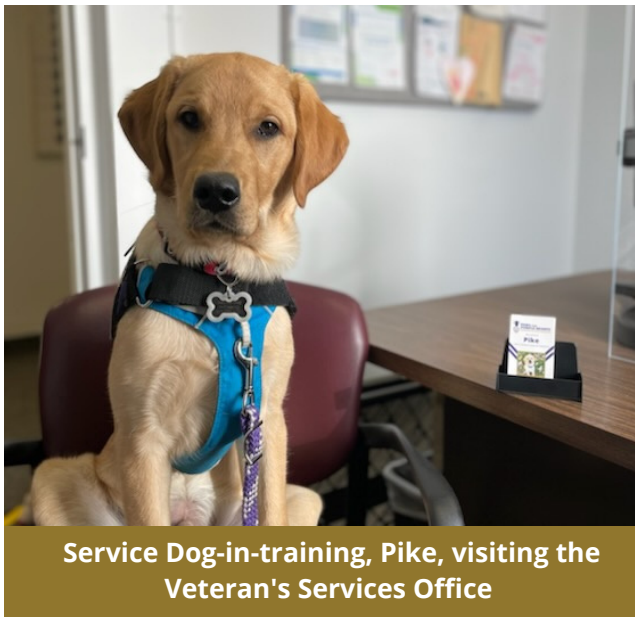
Though we are still in the process of confirming a facility to call home and getting Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® sessions up and running, we have already been able to make an impact on Veterans in our region. Veteran Resource Fairs have been supporting Paws for Purple Hearts North-Mid since the very start in August of 2022, and are helping us help more Veterans in our community. These events give our dogs an opportunity to offer social therapy benefits to the Veterans, and for staff to share everything that Paws for Purple Hearts has to offer our Warriors. In February we were featured as the "Vendor Spotlight", both at the Veterans Resource Fair and on their social media platforms. We're looking forward to many more events we have scheduled for 2023!



**Program Instructors, Emma and Holly with Service Dogs-in-training Pike and Mary**

## Pike's Favorite Field Trips

**By: Holly Hinote, Program Instructor**



**Service Dog-in-training, Pike, visiting the Veteran's Services Office**

Veterans' benefits are extremely important for anyone getting out of the military, and one of our puppies has started assisting their Puppy Parent in bringing these resources to Veterans. Pike goes into a Veterans' Services office several days a week, accompanying his Puppy Parent, Danielle, who works to assist Veterans in receiving their benefits. While on the job, Pike has the chance to meet Veterans at the door and escort them back to the meeting room before offering them a chance to pet him and receive support. He will often then settle behind Danielle's desk with a toy to chew on, but on some occasions, he has been able to recognize the need of the Veterans. He then will join them on their lap or by their side while they talk about their difficulties.

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Recently, with a Vietnam Veteran who came into the office, Pike noticed the man had a special interest in him. Instead of settling on his bed, Pike sat next to Danielle and stared between her and the Veteran. Once released, Pike immediately went up to the Veteran to comfort him and offer Deep Pressure Therapy on his lap during the length of the meeting, easing the burden of sharing his experience out loud.

## Weathering the Winter in the North-Mid Region

By: Emma Coenen, Senior Program Instructor

Though we've been lucky to have had a fairly mild first midwest winter, we are sure many more cold winters are ahead! Our dogs don't seem to mind the cold, but of course there are many safety precautions we take to keep them safe and healthy during these chilly months. We had plenty of time to prepare the dogs for wearing their winter jackets and booties, which are both great training opportunities.

One challenge during extreme cold/hot months is keeping the dogs busy when they're not training with our instructors, or at home with their puppy parents on weekends. Being new to the region, we've been very fortunate to make some connections with a local dog training facility that allows us to use their training and agility equipment to exercise our dogs. This has been an incredible resource for us overall, but especially when the weather isn't ideal.

The infographic is titled 'HOW TO KEEP YOUR DOG BUSY INDOORS' and is set against a light purple background. At the top right, there are several tan sugar bones. The Paws for Purple Hearts logo is in the top left. The main title is in large, bold, dark purple letters. Below the title are three sections: 'TRAINING' with a blue dog bowl full of brown treats, 'TOY ROTATIONS' with a brown stuffed dog toy, and 'PUZZLE TOYS' with a red Kong-style puzzle feeder. Each section contains text and a small illustration related to the topic.

**PAWS FOR PURPLE HEARTS**  
WARRIORS HELPING WARRIORS

### HOW TO KEEP YOUR DOG BUSY INDOORS

#### TRAINING

It's easy for dogs to get bored when they're just sitting inside, especially when it's raining or too hot or cold outside. Short training sessions or playing a game indoors is a great way to keep your dog from boredom! Try playing a game of hide-and-seek or teach your dog a new command. Don't forget the treats!

#### TOY ROTATIONS

The dog toy bin can get boring when nothing new is added. Try putting a few of your dog's toys away in the closet, then swap the old with the "new" every couple of weeks.

#### PUZZLE TOYS

Dogs are natural foragers, and by using a puzzle toy/feeder, we're allowing them to put those instincts to work! We recommend snuffle mats, lick mats, Kong Wobblers, and West Paw Toppls.

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