

Paws of Allegiance

Summer 2023 Newsletter - Southwest Region



IN THIS ISSUE

ASSISTANCE DOG
GRADUATION

UNITING FOR A CAUSE:
FIRST ANNUAL
CORNHOLE
TOURNAMENT

FINALS WEEK!

THE DYNAMIC DUO IN
TRAINING

Assistance Dog Graduation

By: Olivia Hughes, Marketing and Communication Specialist

Here come the graduates! We are thrilled to announce that we will be hosting an Assistance Dog Graduation right here in the Bay Area this Summer. Join us on July 22nd at 11am aboard the one and only USS Hornet to witness our graduate teams take their first steps together.

The USS Hornet was originally commissioned as a Navy vessel in 1943. Throughout its years in service for the United States, it accumulated 9 Battle Stars for Pacific Services during World War II and Presidential Awards for 10 operations. In 1969, the USS Hornet was also the primary ship for recovery of the Apollo 11 mission, where Buzz Aldrin, Neil Armstrong and Mike Collins took their first steps back on Earth and quarantined upon their arrival home. President Nixon



Service Dogs In-Training Oakley
aboard the USS Hornet

was even aboard the Hornet to watch the historic landing and celebrate the arrival of the Apollo 11 team. Four months later, the USS Hornet was chosen again to secure the returning members of the monumental Apollo 12 mission (USS Hornet). Today, the USS Hornet stands as a museum in Alameda highlighting its deep history.

With such a rich history, we feel that the USS Hornet is the perfect place to hold our Assistance Dog Graduation. Our Assistance Dog teams will be able to take their first steps as a team on the Hornet, mirroring the steps of so many influential historical figures who came before them. As these graduates cross the stage, every single Warrior, volunteer, donor, Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® participant, and staff member that touched their lives throughout their training will also be walking with them.

Join us on July 22nd at 11am for the Graduation! To RSVP, please email oliviah@pawsforpurplehearts.org. We can't wait to see you for this momentous event.

Uniting for a Cause: First Annual Cornhole Tournament

By: Greg DeSantis, Marketing and Communication Specialist

In an unforgettable day of spirited competition, our San Diego site proudly hosted its First Annual Cornhole Tournament on May 20th. The event marked a significant milestone for us in 2023 as we expanded our efforts to bring together Veterans, community members, and supporters in a fun-filled day of camaraderie and fundraising.

The tournament not only showcased competitiveness but also served as celebration of unity and dedication for our nation's Veterans. The unwavering support of our sponsors played a pivotal role in bringing us all together, and we extend our heartfelt gratitude to OCS Lighting and Control, BioMed Realty, Ballast Point, LifeWorks Restaurant Group, Rotary Club of Santee Lakeside, AllCornhole, and the American Cornhole League for their invaluable partnership. Furthermore, the enthusiasm and devotion of our volunteers from Boys Team Charity, National Charity League, and Cypher Analytics made a impact. Their efforts behind the scenes and during the event enabled us to create a memorable and impactful event for all those involved!



Service Dog-in-training, Penny, with the championship trophy.

Finals Week!

By: Olivia Hughes, Marketing and Communication Specialist

In the midst of Spring becoming Summer, the students at Cañada College were hard at work preparing for finals. We were delighted to have the opportunity to visit students in the Cañada College Veteran Resource Center.

As we walked in the center, Oakley and Schatzie immediately began to do their thing. One of the amazing qualities of our Service Dogs-in-training and Ambassador Dogs is their empathy.



Ambassador Dog, Schatzie, at the Cañada College Veteran Resource Center

Each and every one of them knows what the person they are interacting with needs and adjusts to interact on their level. Whether it is giving kisses or calmly sitting next to their leg getting pets, they know how to change their excitement level to meet where the person they are interacting with is at.

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Thank you to the Cañada College Veteran Resource Center for all that they do for student Veterans as well as for allowing us to be a small part of it!

A Dynamic Duo in Training

By: Greg DeSantis, Marketing and Communication Specialist



Before and After: Service Dogs-in-training Michael and Penny

Since their humble beginnings as 8-week-old puppies, Michael and Penny now approach their first birthdays and have displayed dedication, spirit, and remarkable growth as they strive to become reliable and life-changing companions.

From their initial triumphs in mastering fundamental commands to their current endeavors in tackling increasingly complex tasks, their progress and development have not gone unnoticed. Every milestone achieved and hurdle overcome serves as a testament to their dedication and pursuit of excellence.

Both Michael and Penny share endearing qualities that have captured hearts - their affectionate, attentive, and diligent nature shines through in every interaction during our Canine-Assisted Warrior Therapy® and Social Therapy Sessions. Acquiring the essential skills required to positively impact Veterans' lives fills us with a gratifying sense of accomplishment.

As Michael and Penny continue their journey, we eagerly look forward to witnessing their growth, ever-expanding skill set, and commitment to improving the lives of our nation's warriors. Together, they serve as an inspiration and reminder of the boundless potential that lies within each and every Service Dog-In-Training.



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