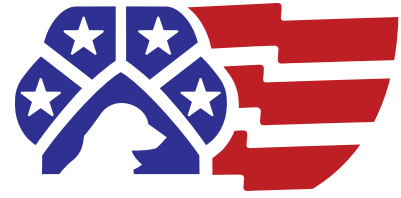


# PATRIOTPAWS

SERVICE DOGS



## AT LAST...

**Tails are wagging here at Patriot PAWS!** Although ground was broken on our new kennel facility in February 2016 with an expected completion window of 9 months, weather delays and numerous construction problems turned 9 months into 18. But the day finally arrived when the dogs could move in, and a new era at Patriot PAWS began. When asked what she thought about the new kennels, Founder and Executive Director Lori Stevens replied, "They're pretty dog-gone amazing!"

With almost 4,000 square feet indoors, this wheelchair-accessible facility features some outstanding amenities: 16 indoor/outdoor runs, half with artificial turf on the outer part to protect developing puppy feet, and all with dog doors donated by PlexiDor; 7 additional isolation runs for new or sick dogs; skylights, a small window above each run and larger windows in the side roll-up door to let in natural light; 4 play yards dubbed the Army yard, Navy yard, Air Force yard and Marine Corps yard with artificial turf and fence-top "coyote rollers" to keep out the coyotes and bobcats that frequent the area; a veterinary medical room; power washers to clean the runs which drain into a septic system below; an HVAC system such as hospitals use which pumps in fresh air 7 times per hour instead of recirculating the air inside; and a fire alarm system with sprinklers, the only building on campus that has one, to safeguard our most precious asset, the dogs. Every effort was made to provide a healthy and safe environment that is also a comfortable and happy place for them to reside when not actively training.

We are currently seeking additional funding to further equip the medical room to enable Dr. Rhonda to provide all routine care, including minor surgeries, on site. And because of recent suspicious activity that occurred on our property, we are also in need of a security camera system to

ensure the safety of the dogs. Any assistance with either of these would be greatly appreciated.

Our Fall graduation ceremony followed by the official grand opening of the kennels is set for November 4, 2017 at 10:00 A.M., and anyone who would like to attend is welcome. In the meantime, here are a few photos to give you a sneak peek with more to come in our Spring 2018 newsletter.





**LETTER FROM LORI**

In just a few short years, Patriot PAWS has grown from a tiny rented storefront to today's sprawling campus that is slowly being transformed into a professional facility to train our dogs and provide amenities for our veterans both before and after they receive their dogs. There's still a lot of work to be done, but our new kennels are a turning point, and we never could have gotten this far without **you, our loyal supporters and volunteers.** It took all of you... all the children and the 100-year-old WWII veteran who turned their birthday parties into fundraisers, the individual who sent us \$5, the foundation that gave us a major grant, every donation and fundraiser of every size and kind...plus our many volunteers who give countless hours of their time and talents. Thank you just doesn't seem like enough, but from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of every veteran still waiting for a dog, I thank you all.

**SPOTLIGHT**

**DR. RHONDA**

Dr. Rhonda Phillips Black is the primary veterinarian for Patriot PAWS and has been since its inception. She and Lori have known each other for many years, and from the beginning, Dr. Rhonda has been there every step of the way taking care of the dogs and helping Lori to develop and tweak the veterinary protocols that are in place today. Dr. Rhonda is an original as well as current member of the Patriot PAWS Board of Directors and volunteers one day of her time and talents each week at no charge to the organization. She has a passion not only for her profession, but for the mission of Patriot PAWS as well. "I have loved the experience of starting, supporting and growing with Lori and her vision over the years. She is a heart-driven, gifted blessing to all those who know and work with her. Working with

Patriot PAWS has allowed me to use my professional ability to...give back to my heroes (the veterans) and hopefully make an impact on inmates and others involved in the program."

**Thank you, Dr. Rhonda! We love you!**



**ELI'S CORNER**

There's an old saying that "home is where the heart is". I recently heard someone talking about our new kennels say how glad she is that our dogs have a new home. True, our kennels are their home for the periods of time when they live at the training center, but during their 18-24 months of training, they also live at the prisons and with puppy raisers. So, if home is where the heart is, where do these pups call home? The answer to that is, they don't call any of those places home because they haven't yet given their hearts away. Each dog saves his heart for that one special veteran that he will one day serve. And when that day finally arrives, and the dog chooses his veteran, he gives himself completely to that person to serve with all his abilities and to love with all his heart. Home is with his veteran, wherever that may be.



As for Leo and me, we call the training center home because our hearts are here with every dog we train. And the food's good.

Until next time, dear friends.

*Eli*

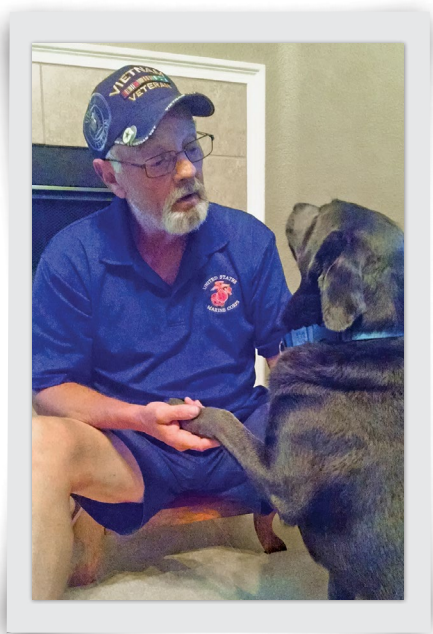
## WHEN A DOG IS RELEASED FROM THE SERVICE DOG PROGRAM...

...that dog is never considered a failure. A new career is chosen for the dog based upon his or her abilities and personality. PAWS dogs have gone on to do everything from sniffing out illegal drugs for law enforcement to working as therapy dogs for children taken into protective custody. And many go on to be placed as social companions with veterans and non-veterans alike.

The mission statement of Patriot PAWS includes “disabled American veterans and others”, and although our priority is veterans, sometimes the right fit for one of our dogs is with

a non-veteran. A social companion is not afforded the same rights as service dogs under the Americans With Disabilities Act and therefore is not allowed into public establishments that typically do not allow dogs. Their primary function is to provide emotional support through companionship, and while any dog can potentially fill this role, PAWS dogs have the added benefit of service dog training and can often help their person in ways that an untrained pet could not.

Here are three examples of how social companions have made a difference.



### VETERAN WILLIAM COFFEE & VIRGINIA

United States Marine Corps Sgt **William (Bill) Coffee** of Texas is a Vietnam combat veteran. Bill has no physical disabilities but deals with PTSD issues including nightmares and anger. He found Patriot PAWS online and applied hoping to receive a dog to help him.

In late 2016, Bill was offered Virginia, a female silver Lab. Virginia had been released from the service dog program to become a social companion and was just what Bill needed. “Virginia has definitely changed my life. I am retired with not a lot to do, and she fills my days. She calms me and wakes me up from my nightmares. The time I spend with her mentally takes me away from the past.”



### RAYMOND HOOD & SAMMY

**Raymond Hood**, an employee of the Lane Murray Unit in Gatesville, knew all about Patriot PAWS. He would watch as the inmate trainers worked the dogs, but then one of the dogs started watching him back. A male Golden Retriever named Sam (Sammy) would pull on his leash trying to go to Raymond whenever he saw him. Raymond would have to hide to avoid being a distraction for Sammy who was already struggling with his training. Sammy was eventually released to become a social companion, and much to Raymond's surprise, in January 2017, he was offered Sammy.

Raymond has a back problem and deals with stress-related issues. Sammy's training kicks in every time Raymond drops something or needs help in getting up, and he can tell when Raymond is becoming stressed and is there to calm him. Raymond says that he and his wife Chris are grateful for Sammy. “He's such a great dog and is doing more for me than I ever thought possible.”



### MARILYN PEARSON & ALEX

**Marilyn Pearson**, a paraplegic, found Patriot PAWS while researching organizations that train dogs to help humans. Although she read that we focus on helping veterans, she called asking if we ever give dogs to non-veterans, even dogs that aren't full service dogs. She was told sometimes, no promises, but go ahead and submit an application. Marilyn did, and much to her delight, she later received a call telling her that there might be a dog for her.

That dog was Alex, a female yellow Lab. Alex had been released from the service dog program to become a social companion, and after some additional customization training by the inmate trainers to accommodate Marilyn's needs, Marilyn received Alex in October 2016. Alex helps Marilyn with many things including getting dressed and transferring from the shower to her wheelchair. “Dogs that don't fit in elsewhere can make a major difference in a special needs person's life. I feel so blessed in getting Alex.”

# OUR NEW WEBSITE IS HERE!

WE APOLOGIZE FOR THE DELAY, BUT WE'RE UP AND RUNNING NOW  
AND HOPE YOU'LL PAY US A VISIT: [WWW.PATRIOTPAWS.ORG](http://WWW.PATRIOTPAWS.ORG)

## WELCOME WEDNESDAYS

- **WELCOME WEDNESDAYS ARE HERE!** Do you or a group you're in want to come see the Patriot PAWS campus? We are now offering pre-arranged tours on Wednesdays, so just give us a call and set up a tour. We'd love to meet you!

## PATRIOT PAWS ENGRAVED BRICKS!

- **JUST IN TIME FOR HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING...** Patriot PAWS engraved bricks! Watch your mailbox or in-box in November for details on how to order one in honor of or in memory of your loved ones, both two-legged and four-legged. Each brick will be laid as part of a walkway to be constructed on the Patriot PAWS campus. What a unique and meaningful gift for everyone on your Holiday gift list!



## COMING SOON

Look for our new column, "From The Kennels", starting with our Spring 2018 issue! It's something to woof about!



**NEW TO OUR NEWSLETTERS?** Every past Patriot PAWS newsletter is archived on our website. Just go to [www.patriotpaws.org](http://www.patriotpaws.org) and click on News/Newsletters to read what you've missed and see how we've grown!

• 972-772-3282 •

**Consider today what you can do to help us help them...**



*"The atmosphere here is unreal and reinforces the fact of how great it is to be an American veteran! What is really amazing is how the commitment of Patriot PAWS never ends. They are here forever for each veteran who receives one of their great animals..."* – Arlie Matthews, 2016 Graduate

### PLEASE DONATE TODAY

- We accept all major credit cards on our website at [www.patriotpaws.org](http://www.patriotpaws.org)
- Cash, checks and money orders by mail or in person. **Address:**  
**254 Ranch Trail**  
**Rockwall, TX 75082**

### ALSO CONSIDER:

- Setting up a recurring donation
- Honoring or memorializing someone
- Matching your employee's donation
- Pledging for a 3-year period
- Becoming a PAWS ambassador

- Conducting a fundraiser
- Volunteering or becoming a puppy raiser
- If you are a Federal employee, you may make donations using our CFC# 35710
- Every time you shop at [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com), Amazon will donate .5% of the purchase price to Patriot PAWS at no cost to you.