

Patriot PAWS



Quarterly Newsletter

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

JUNE, 2011

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Average cost to train one service dog: \$28,000
- 40 Applicants are on our waiting list
- WELCOME! New Board Members: Christina Melton-Crain and Nate Crain
- NOW HIRING! Professional Dog Trainer—Gatesville, Tx

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Visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center

The day began for Lori Stevens by accompanying disabled veteran Sgt. Major Brent Jurgersen to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC for his first medical appointment since receiving his service dog, Houston. However, nothing in Lori's years of experience in training service dogs for disabled veterans prepared her for what she was about to see.

As they entered the therapy room, they were introduced to a group of Marines recently returned from Iraq. None were over 25 years old, and each had lost 3 or more limbs. Looking into their eyes, Lori could see the fear and the sadness, the uncertainty of what lay ahead, but most of all, the courage, determination and strength to come to grips with what happened to them and

how they would get beyond it.

Houston's presence brought smiles as he visited each bed and wheelchair. The simple act of petting him brought joy and serenity to these wounded warriors.



Sgt. Major Brent Jurgersen and Houston

As she was leaving, Lori wished that every single American could meet these young wounded warriors as she just had and see firsthand the price they paid to preserve our freedom. She knew then without a doubt she made the right decision to dedicate her life to helping our disabled American veterans, but her work was cut out for her if she were to provide a service dog for every disabled American veteran who needs one.

She is up to the challenge with your help. After all, our veterans were up to the challenge when we needed them.

"In war, there are no unwounded soldiers."

-Jose Narosky

Patriot PAWS Receives Award!

Patriot PAWS was selected to receive the prestigious Governor's Criminal Justice Volunteer Service Award. To be chosen is truly an honor. Patriot PAWS was recognized for the time and service we have given to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice through

our partnership. Lori Stevens and Dr. Bill Perkins were presented the award at the April board meeting on April 8, 2011 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Austin, Texas. The award was presented by Oliver J. Bell, Chairman of the Texas Board of Criminal Justice.



L to R: TBCJ Chairman Oliver Bell, Greater Houston Salvation Army Major Chris Flanagan, recipients of the Susan Cranford Award Lori Stevens, Jazz and Dr. Bill Perkins, and TDCJ Executive Director Brad Livingston.



Caricature drawn by
TDCJ inmate

Letter from Lori

I would like to take a moment to tell you about one of our success stories, Rhonda Lee.

I first met Rhonda when she was an inmate trainer at the Gatesville Prison. I have had the pleasure of watching her develop into a terrific trainer, parole from prison and come to work for Patriot PAWS. Rhonda celebrated her "freedom day", the successful completion of her parole, at the prison as a free woman working with veterans receiving their dogs.

Giving someone like Rhonda a

second chance is proving its worth. 80+ offenders have worked as trainers for Patriot PAWS, 20 have been released and 14 of those are working in dog-related fields.

Rhonda also created our Puppy Raiser Program. She coordinates 12 Puppy Raisers and conducts a class with an outing on Fridays.

We are all very proud of Rhonda and look forward to many more years of working together.

-Lori Stevens



Rhonda and Trooper

Mike received Capp at the same time as 3 disabled veterans and he tried to give Capp back saying "The veterans need this dog more than I do". Lori said "Why don't you keep Capp and go out and raise money so that we can help more veterans?"

And that is what Mike did!

THANK YOU MIKE AND CAPP!

SPOTLIGHT ON...Mike McHale

Mike McHale is a non-veteran who received his service dog from Patriot PAWS in 2008. Mike fell 30 ft. from a deer stand and is paralyzed. He was a high school football star and went on to play at Louisiana Tech, in Ruston, LA. So, almost everyone in Ruston knows and likes Mike; however, after his accident, he became isolated. Fortunately, he found Patriot PAWS, and a yellow lab named Cappuccino found him. Mike says he now has a renewed sense of

social freedom. He is no longer the guy in the wheel chair, he is now the guy with the cool dog. Mike wanted to give back to Patriot PAWS so that we could help more veterans. He and Capp quickly became one of our *most successful fundraisers*. He and Capp are always available for demonstrations or to attend events on Patriot PAWS' behalf, and to date, they have raised more than **\$40,000 !**



Mike, Capp, Lori and Ruston
Community Leaders

"Cats rule and dogs drool"

Sassy, in Homeward Bound



Eli's Corner

My name is Eli, and I am a dog trainer at Patriot PAWS. Many dogs believe that cats have been put on this earth for the sole purpose of being barked at and chased, and it is my job to teach them otherwise. Feline tolerance is a necessary part of service dog training because cat encounters are inevitable as he or she goes about in the world with their human. I interact with them and teach them that there is no reason to bark at

me or chase me just because my DNA is feline. Most of our dogs -in-training require only patience and understanding in order to learn this concept but, occasionally, a swipe of claws becomes necessary. Claw deployment is used only as a last resort, and I could probably count the number of times that I have had to employ this method on one hand, uh, paw. In each newsletter, with typing help from one of our volunteers (the lack of op-

posable thumbs can be a problem), I will be sharing with you the view from my little corner of our Rockwall training center. I will endeavor to enlighten and perhaps even amuse you as only a cat in a dog's world can. So until next time, dear supporters, farewell from Eli's Corner.

Veteran, Connie Rendon

A service for those who have served.



Connie and Blaze

Connie was an Army Reservist stationed north of Baghdad. Late on the night of September 8, 2004, on the way back from delivering supplies to Taji, the truck she was driving hit an IED. Connie was left with her right hand almost severed, her left hand broken, her face badly injured and burned and shrapnel imbedded in her body. The doctors at Walter Reed Army Medical Center saved her right hand, although it is now immobile, but after a total of more than 40 surgeries, Connie still has

nerve damage in her legs, sleep disorder, traumatic brain injury, PTSD, back pain and severe headaches. Blaze keeps her company at night when she cannot sleep, gives her confidence to go out in public and helps her do things that she can no longer do. Connie and her husband renewed their wedding vows in April, 2011, and her wish to receive her service dog in time to be a part of the ceremony came true.

Veteran, Juan Amaris

Juan was an Army Staff Sergeant who, in 2006, was only one month away from coming home from his second tour of duty in Iraq. As he walked over to a transport truck to investigate if a group of Iraqis hired by the base was stealing fuel, the Iraqis fled, and the truck exploded. Juan sustained third-degree burns on over 73% of his body, eventually lost both

arms and cannot bend his neck. After extensive treatment at Brooke Army Medical Center, he has learned to use his two prosthetic hands but still needs help with many things. Maverick assists Juan with dressing, picks up objects for him and generally gives him the confidence he needs to go out in public and be independent once again.



Juan and Maverick

There's an APP for that...

Patriot PAWS created an iPhone and Android APP that gives you fingertip access to all the state laws applicable to service dogs.

Great for handlers as well as businesses.

All proceeds are donated to Patriot PAWS!



Layla and Rockxi

Non-Veteran, Layla Sauer

Layla is a young college student who, like all college students, is working hard to earn a degree; however, Layla is doing it from a wheelchair.

Layla suffers from cerebral palsy and contacted Patriot PAWS for a service dog to help her. Help came in the form of a black Lab named

Rockxi. Rockxi assists Layla with transferring to and from her wheelchair, opening doors, picking up dropped items and countless other things that are difficult or even impossible to do from a wheelchair. Rockxi has also given Layla confidence in her abilities by

lessening the impact of her disability. Now that she has Rockxi, Layla is more socially active, has gotten a new car and is planning to move out of the dorm soon to a place of her own which will allow her to achieve a previously unattainable level of independence.



In Memoriam...
Of our recipients and service dogs who passed away.

Veteran, Dallas Smith
Veteran, Zilpha Hibner
Veteran, Roger Voss

Beau, founding service dog
Archie, 2009 ASPCA Dog of the Year

Earth has no sorrow that Heaven cannot heal.
-Author Unknown

Patriot PAWS Service Dogs is a 501 © (3) organization dedicated to providing service dogs to disabled American veterans as well as other disabled persons who could benefit from a highly –trained service animal.

This new quarterly newsletter is our way of showing you how your donations are being used to provide service dogs to our disabled veterans.

You can also SIGN UP to receive the newsletter via email by sending an email request to patriotpaws@aol.com.

Please visit our website at www.patriotpaws.org, and follow us on Facebook, Twitter and You Tube.



DID YOU KNOW?

- All our dogs are taught to pray
- Our dogs choose their person
- A service dog can be taught to pull up pants and zip zippers (we've trained 3)
- A dog can be taught to help make a bed (sorry we only train dogs, not kids and spouses)

New Puppies!



T. Boone



Yogi Bear

Donated by an Alaskan breeder, Carl Wesley, active duty Air Force

Please help us help our disabled American veterans

Donations can be made at:

www.patriotpaws.org

We accept: PayPal, credit cards, checks and money orders
(please use the enclosed envelope to mail your donation)

Also consider:

- Setting up a recurring donation
- Making a donation as a gift in someone's honor or memory
- Matching your employees/club members donations
- Conducting a fundraiser
- Becoming an Ambassador (we can send you as many brochures as you can hand out)
- Volunteering

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