DOGS FOR DIGNITY®
Stories of the Journey to Independence
FALL 2014 NEWSLETTER

ARTY IS MORE THAN A HANDSOME DOG; HE’S A PAWS® SERVICE DOG
Life-changing moments can come at any time, and in many shapes and sizes.

PAWS client Marie had one when she was 20 years old. While pursuing her physical education degree at Western Michigan University, Marie and her best friend were in a car accident.

“It wasn’t a major wreck,” Marie recalled. “But this was more than 20 years ago, when seat belts weren’t used the way they are now. If I’d been wearing one, I’d likely have been fine. But I wasn’t. I was thrown forward inside the car and slammed back hard enough to sustain a spinal cord injury.”

Marie had permanent quadriplegia, and spent six months recovering in the hospital. The bright, attractive young woman left in a wheelchair, her life forever altered.

Life-changing Assistance Dogs can also come at any time, and in many shapes and sizes. Marie was paired with PAWS Service Dog MISSY – a white, Standard Poodle – when she was 28 years old.

“It took a while for PAWS to find MISSY for me,” Marie shared. “But she was so worth the wait! We had an amazing bond. MISSY was every inch a ‘business lady’ and she took great care of me. We went everywhere together.”

Marie and MISSY were a team for 12 years before MISSY passed away in 2010. In 2011, Marie applied for a PAWS Successor Dog. PAWS knew another Poodle would be a good match in Marie’s household since her husband suffers from dog allergies. She received Service Dog

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ARTY about a year later. "ARTY is all boy and a total lover," smiled Marie. "He's so different from MISSY – I know he dislikes going shopping with me, for example, which MISSY loved – but I completely adore him!"

Marie explained that the difference ARTY makes in her life is enormous: "I can't count the number of times ARTY picks something up for me during the day! It may sound minor, but it's often truly impossible for me to pick something up from the floor myself. ARTY doesn't let me try. He can hear a hairpin drop from another room, and he's always there in a blink to get it for me."

"I literally couldn't leave my house without ARTY," she continued. "I need him to open and close the door behind me. Sometimes things gets tangled up in the wheels of my chair, and if I didn't have ARTY to get the phone for me, I'd be stuck waiting for someone to come to my rescue. He gives me – and my husband, too – a sense of security and peace of mind. I can't imagine being without him."

Whether Poodle or Labrador, Golden Retriever or Papillon, PAWS Assistance Dogs make a life-changing difference for their Clients. Thank you for helping to make stories like Marie and ARTY's possible!

PAWS FACTS

LEARN HOW YOUR GENEROSITY TRANSFORMS LIVES

DID YOU KNOW that – unlike many other Assistance Dog organizations – our clients do not have to pay anything to receive their PAWS Dogs?

Instead, PAWS promotes a "pay it forward" culture. Once a Client-Dog Team is certified, we encourage them to consider sharing their story and hosting a Personal Campaign online to raise funds that will benefit another client who is still waiting for a PAWS Dog.

DID YOU KNOW that it costs at least $30,000 to breed, raise, custom-train and provide ongoing service to each Team we place?

So, where do those funds come from? Well, the vast majority of gifts to PAWS are made by individual donors like you. Businesses, foundations and community groups also support our work.

DID YOU KNOW how grateful we are for every gift and giver? You've allowed PAWS to provide services this year that enhance the independence and quality of life for 470 Client-Dog Teams across the country.
INVESTING IN THE FUTURE

Libby spent her career advocating for people with disabilities in the workplace. But it was her love of ocean cruises that truly launched her journey with PAWS.

“I helped arrange and attended PAWS’ first Assistance Dog Cruise in 2010,” she shared. “Afterward, I wanted to be more involved, so I joined the Board of Directors.” She accepted the role of Board Chair in 2013. When you meet Libby in person, you’re struck by her petite size and soft-spoken style. Yet, as Shakespeare once wrote: “She may be little, but she is fierce.” Libby is a lady who gets things done.

And she leads by example – which is one reason she and her husband, Bob, have chosen to include PAWS in their estate plan.

“I know I can’t ask or expect others to give if I haven’t done so myself,” she explained. “I believe in PAWS’ mission work, and see our planned gift as an extension of that commitment.”

In her leadership position, Libby also sees the impact of planned gifts – about $750,000 in 2013 alone – on PAWS’ day-to-day operations. She noted, “Of course, you can’t anticipate when they will come. But they make a tremendous difference!”

Libby’s pleased that PAWS is putting a more intentional focus on planned giving, including forming a new legacy society, which will be introduced this fall. “Planned gifts are an investment in the future,” she stated, “and they’re vital because they help sustain PAWS’ work on a deeper level.”

We’re thankful for Libby and Bob’s forethought and generous support of PAWS. And we’re grateful for Libby’s leadership of Team PAWS.

If you’d like to follow her lead, or simply learn more about planned giving at PAWS, please contact Joe at 800-253-7297 or jdulin@pawswithacause.org.
Rachelle began volunteering for PAWS ten years ago as a Foster Puppy Raiser. "I saw a family at the grocery store with their PAWS Puppy one day," she recalled, "and I looked up Paws With A Cause online after I got home. I read about puppy raising and thought, 'Why not? I love dogs and it sounded like a wonderful opportunity.' But she wasn’t fully convinced until she met PAWS Client Bob and his Service Dog WEAVER at a Raiser Orientation. She explained, "I watched WEAVER pick up a dime off the floor, and I made up my mind. I was so moved and impressed – how could I not get involved?"

"I picked up my first PAWS Puppy, a male black Lab named FONZIE, in early December 2004. and, as most of us Raisers say, the rest is history," Rachelle laughed. In all, she has raised seven PAWS Puppies; she remembers every one: JINX, AVA, FRITO, HEINZ, ALLEY and SKYE.

In 2012, SKYE was selected to join PAWS’ Breeding program and became a PAWS Mama Dog. Rachelle continued as SKYE’s Breeding Dog Host, which she finds even more rewarding.

“What an amazing experience it has been!” she enthused. “SKYE and I have developed a team bond, too. Helping her bring into this world such beautiful puppies, caring for them, watching them begin their journey to make a difference in someone’s life...it’s very humbling.”

So far, SKYE has had two litters – 17 puppies in all. SKYE’s second litter, born in July, has the distinction of being PAWS’ first set of “sponsored” pups. All seven puppies were named by PAWS donors through our Name A Puppy program.

Like any proud "mama", Rachelle keeps a Facebook page for SKYE. If you’d like to learn more about the life of a PAWS Mama Dog – and get a healthy dose of adorable puppy pictures – you can follow her "SKYE PAWS Puppy Parent” page.

We are so fortunate to have Rachelle, and other PAWS Dog Volunteers like her, dedicated to caring for each and every PAWS Puppy, Mama and Papa Dog. Their effort lays the foundation for our mission work – we couldn’t do it without them!

You can learn more about becoming a PAWS Dog Volunteer at our website: pawswithacause.org.
This year, give thanks by changing a life. PAWS To Be Thankful, an online fundraising campaign, is back with a collective goal to raise $30,000 in 13 days! From November 20 through December 2, you can help Team PAWS raise enough money to match a future Client with a PAWS Assistance Dog.

Natalie, a PAWS Dog Volunteer now raising her 14th PAWS Puppy, first found PAWS after the loss of a loved one. Last year, Natalie shared that story on her Personal campaign page during PAWS To Be Thankful. In just ten days, she more than met her $1,000 goal. She remarked, “I sent a few emails and posted to Facebook every other day. Before I knew it, I was receiving donations!”

And she’s excited to participate again this year: “PAWS To Be Thankful is the one time a year when I can share my passion about PAWS with my friends and family and – hopefully – inspire them to support PAWS, too.”

Join others like Natalie and tell your PAWS story with a PAWS To Be Thankful Personal Campaign page. Then share your page and invite folks you know to support PAWS’ life-changing mission work. Can’t create a page? You can always make a gift to another person’s Campaign and help Team PAWS reach our $30,000 goal!

For more information, please visit: www.pawswithacause.donordrive.com/event/ptbt2014
Contact: Kelsey at khaledane@pawswithacause.org or 800-253-7297