In “You Needed Me,” PAWS Assistance Dog ARCHER shares his journey from birth to being placed with his partner, Jill.

CELEBRATING ABILITY

BY RAISING $1 MILLION TO MATCH MORE PAWS TEAMS

PAWS Dog CHLOE acts as a brace to help Brianna up and retrieves the phone in case of emergencies.
Jane looked around the campsite, but didn’t see her son. “Noah?” she called, with a sinking feeling. She’d only turned her back for a moment. Yet her gut was telling her he had bolted.

As she and her husband Jon began to search for their child in earnest, Jane’s sinking feeling was replaced by rising panic. Noah was only four years old — getting lost in the woods at that age is bad enough. But Noah also has autism — and Jane knew in an unfamiliar situation he wouldn’t be able to explain that he was lost or where he belonged. “It was the most terrifying ten minutes of our lives,” Jane says of the time it took them to locate Noah.

“Jon and I have to be vigilant all the time because Noah’s form of autism decreases his inhibitions,” Jane explains. “He is fearless and doesn’t have the boundaries that children typically do.” That means once Noah gets going — and he goes fast — he doesn’t look back or stop.

They applied for a Service Dog for Children with Autism (SDA Dog) because their normally-excitable Noah adores and remains calm around dogs. An SDA Dog can be fitted with a special harness and trained to stop when a child tries to bolt away. Plus, an SDA Dog can help a child with autism build social skills — a benefit as Noah has to work at social interactions.

“We’re just waiting for that call to hear you’ve found the right dog for Noah. We understand it may take time, but we’re excited for what a dog will do for him. It’s going to change our lives.”
When you watch Brianna and PAWS Assistance Dog CHLOE together, you’d have no idea they were just paired last year. You’d never know Brianna used to hide behind her mother at church to avoid talking to anyone. Or that this January marked the first time the college student EVER went to school without her mother in the classroom because she had CHLOE’s assistance. Her mom is seeing her bloom and explains, “I can’t believe the difference in Brianna...She is finally able to be herself.”

When she was just eleven, Brianna was diagnosed with a neurological disorder that leaves her prone to sudden episodes — similar to seizures — which cause her to collapse and essentially lose consciousness for up to 90 minutes. When she comes to, she is disoriented and lethargic. It can take her all day to recover. Knowing that she can simply pass out at any time had a tremendous effect on Brianna’s confidence and independence. She didn’t feel safe being alone. She was hesitant and shy around others.

The length of Brianna’s episodes made finding the right dog for her particularly critical. She needed a dog that had the ability to focus on and stay by her side for more than an hour at a time without getting distracted.

CHLOE does all that, and more, for Brianna. CHLOE can retrieve Brianna’s phone, brace for her to stand up after she falls down and get help and return to her side during an episode. The changes in Brianna since she’s had CHLOE are unmistakable and remarkable. When a stranger asked her about CHLOE recently, Brianna spoke with them at length — something she’d never done before.

These two are a perfect match!

“I CAN’T BELIEVE THE DIFFERENCE IN BRIANNA. SHE IS FINALLY ABLE TO BE HERSELF”
MARK & DANTE

Adjusting to the limitations Multiple Sclerosis imposed was hard on Mark. Walking more than a few steps exhausted him. Reaching to pick something up could topple him off of his scooter. It was the most frustrating experience of his life.

Until he met DANTE, he had no idea the difference a Service Dog could make. Mark is still amazed by all that DANTE can do: pick up anything Mark drops, turn lights on and off, open and close the refrigerator and patio slider doors — even help pull Mark’s pants and socks off at night!

"I work from home as an engineer, so having DANTE with me makes everything better. He gives me the ability to remain independent. I don’t go anywhere without him!"

LIAM & GABE

Liam doesn’t say much — autism limits his verbal communication — but his smile speaks volumes. While he’s always been happy at home, something was missing. Liam spent most of his time alone, and often couldn’t express when he was feeling anxious or sick.

Now his Service Dog for Children with Autism, GABE, gives Liam the ability to soothe himself. When he’s feeling upset, Liam stops and puts his ear by GABE’s muzzle. GABE’s breathing calms him.

GABE is also helping Liam make social connections. His mom said, “The first person Liam ever let pet GABE was another boy with autism. It was like Liam knew and wanted to share GABE with him.”

JESSICA & PIPPIN

Before she received Hearing Dog PIPPEN, Jessica was an anxious mom of two young kids. A severe hearing loss kept her on constant high alert, unable to relax in her own home. She missed doorbells and phone calls. Dinners burned when timer alarms went unheard. Fears of a house fire brought sleepless nights.

With PIPPEN came confidence. His out-sized ears give Jessica the ability to wake up and get to work on time, cook tasty meals for her family and sleep peacefully knowing PIPPEN will alert her if ever there is an emergency. You can understand why Jessica calls him “8 ½ pounds of pure gold”!
Thank you so much for giving more than $200,000 on Ability Day to help raise and train more PAWS Dogs for people with disabilities!

We set a big goal for that day because our clients have big needs. And, while we didn’t reach our $1 million target, we did make real progress! The dollars you gave will match more teams like Brianna and CHLOE. Your support will shorten how long children with autism like Noah have to wait for their PAWS Dog. Your gift will transform disability into ability and change lives.

The Ability Day campaign continues because our clients’ needs didn’t end on June 24. We are working hard to increase our own ability to raise, train and place more PAWS Dogs with people who need them. And, just like our amazing dogs, we won’t stop until the work is done.

Please keep working with us. Your generosity makes it possible. If you haven’t yet given, or are able to give again, to our Ability Day campaign, you can do so using the envelope enclosed here or online at pawswithacause.org/donate

Ability Day — June 23 — celebrates the ways a person with a disability gains ability with a PAWS Assistance Dog.

We created the day to help raise funds and awareness of our mission work. People are waiting and we need to do more, more quickly, to meet their needs.

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Paws With A Cause®
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Paws With A Cause® enhances the independence and quality of life for people with disabilities nationally through custom-trained Assistance Dogs. PAWS® increases awareness of the rights and roles of Assistance Dog Teams through education and advocacy.

GO GREEN
To receive PAWS communications electronically, email your request and name to: gogreen@pawswithacause.org

YOU CAN HELP CHANGE THAT.
Open this issue of Dogs for Dignity to find out how!

2000 people each year are asking for a PAWS Dog. It could take 4 years to get one.