

STARTING OFF ON THE RIGHT PAW

Stories of the Journey to Independence – Summer 2021



Read more about the Hansen family
and their legacy of service on page 6.



FROM THE



Dear Friends,

We often describe PAWS as a family. And that is true - PAWS is a family but it is also a “Family Affair.” For me, summer always brings to mind the joy of youth - summer vacation, ice cream cones with friends, and free hours to play with my dog in the backyard. That is why I am so excited that our summer newsletter is celebrating the young people and puppies of PAWS!

One of the things that makes PAWS unique is that we breed, raise, and train Papillons as Hearing Dogs. Most Assistance Dog agencies limit their training to large dogs, like Labrador and Golden Retrievers. But Papillons make fantastic hearing dogs with their small size and big ears! They are a wonderful option for our clients, especially those that live in smaller apartments. On the opposite page, you will meet one of our Papillon mamas, MISSY, and her beautiful babies.

From their mama, our puppies then begin their journeys as Foster Puppies. Many of our puppies are raised by young people and families. Recently, I had the privilege to speak with one of our volunteers. Her daughter Naomi, who is in high school, made the decision (and then convinced her parents!) to give back by raising a puppy for PAWS. Last summer, with all her teenage excitement and joy, they took Foster Puppy HAVEN into their

home. Naomi’s mom shared the joy of watching her daughter devote her heart and time into this project of love. With the challenges of the pandemic this past year, it hasn’t always been easy. Many puppy classes have been virtual, but still, they practiced their lessons together. And this spring, the whole family, including HAVEN, traveled to Disney for spring break! Mom’s pride in her daughter is evident and well deserved. What a wonderful gift she is giving to make the world a better place!

Also in this issue, you will meet the amazing Hansen Family. From the littlest Hansen at the age of 3 up to Matt, who now works at PAWS as he goes to college, every member of the family has a PAWS job. Read how the family’s many hands have gone into raising nine puppies for PAWS since 2015!

PAWS truly is a family affair - united behind a common purpose of providing opportunities for people to live with dignity, companionship, and confidence. Thank you for being on this journey with us!

Michele Suchovsky
Chief Executive Officer



Michele at PAWS To Celebrate event

STARTING STRONG



Ken and Debbie Sunden started Puppywarmer with a goal so straightforward, they turned it into their slogan: “Simply saving puppies.” Puppywarmer specializes in puppy incubators, creating the perfect environment for puppies who need a little extra help to grow big and strong.

Ken began sketching his first puppy incubator shortly after adopting a pup that was among a litter that struggled at birth. With his background in thermal solutions for medical devices, Ken was sure he could find a way to assist neonatal puppies. His Puppywarmer incubators are a success, beloved by veterinarians, rescue groups, and now, Paws With A Cause.

**“Saving puppies makes
us happier humans.”**

–www.puppywarmer.com



Puppywarmer donated two incubators to PAWS in early 2021. One stays at PAWS, and the other is a mobile model that came in handy almost as soon as it arrived. MISSY, a spunky and experienced Papillion mama dog, was having a tough pregnancy. And her puppies arrived a little earlier than expected.

MISSY’s pups were immediately whisked into the mobile Puppywarmer unit, where they stayed nice and warm until they grew big enough to regulate their own temperatures while Mama MISSY watched over them. Now the whole litter is happy, healthy, and living with their Foster Puppy Raisers.

STARTING A NEW ADVENTURE



Emily has two dreams. One day, she is going to become a writer for the Disney Channel. During the pandemic she kept busy writing scripts for her own original show, *The Rainforest Kids*. Her other dream? “To be independent. Like all the other kids, the able-bodied kids. And SWEETPEA is helping.”

Emily has cerebral palsy, and her PAWS Dog SWEETPEA, a black Labrador Retriever, is a big part of her plan to go to college in a few years and then take the screenwriting world by storm. SWEETPEA’s job is to be Emily’s assistant, remind her to keep hydrated, and to charm the socks off anyone and everyone they meet. Together they go on adventures to the aquarium and Dairy Queen, and they are practicing hard for the return to in-person learning at Emily’s high school.

High school has had extra challenges for Emily. The hallways are difficult to navigate, and she is often the last person to arrive for class. Last year one of her teachers regularly closed his classroom door before Emily arrived, leaving her stuck in the hall. “I do not like to ask other kids to help me, because it makes me feel bad. I feel less independent, and it makes me depressed.” But SWEETPEA loves to open (and close) doors of any kind! They have been practicing with doors, as well as SWEETPEA giving papers to the teachers and grabbing Emily’s cell phone when she drops it. SWEETPEA will also use special straps attached to the back of classroom chairs to move them out of Emily’s way so she can get to her spot in the classroom more quickly.

Of course, life is not just about school. Emily is a bubbly, brilliant teenager who is always up for an adventure. And in typical teenager style, she and SWEETPEA love to go to the mall. While at the mall, people often rudely walk in front of Emily’s chair, but now Emily has SWEETPEA to clear the way.

Emily and SWEETPEA also travel together for Emily’s medical treatments. “SWEETPEA takes her job very seriously,” says Emily’s mom Michelle. “Every time a doctor or nurse enters the room, if SWEETPEA does not know them she will stand in front of Emily’s chair and watch everything carefully.”

“She’s my bodyguard,” confirms Emily with a smile.

College is Emily’s next big goal, and SWEETPEA is going to make that an interesting experience. “They

are a perfect match, because they both like sleep,” laughs Michelle. SWEETPEA has firm ideas about bedtime. “At about 8:00 p.m., SWEETPEA is ready for bed. She will sometimes go find Emily and follow her around to tell her it is time for bed. I do not know how they are going to go to any parties at college!”

But between Emily’s determination and SWEETPEA’s love for Emily, this perfect pair will definitely find a way to build a life of adventure that will surely rival the TV scripts Emily plans to write.





STARTING YOUNG

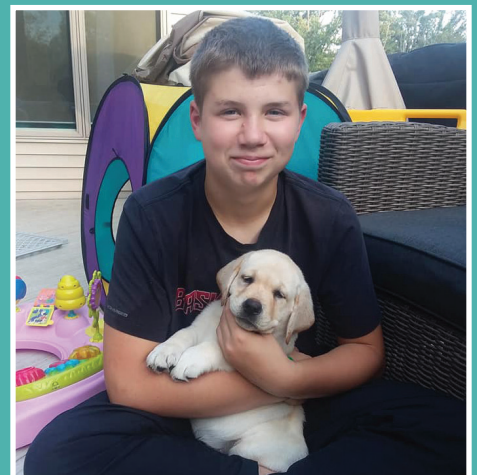
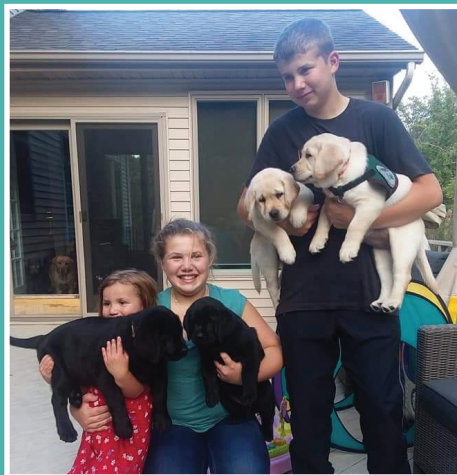
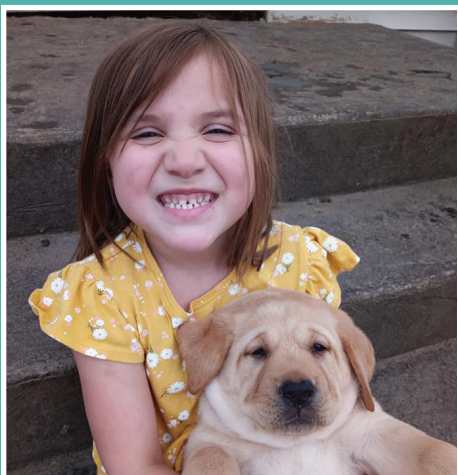
Shari's family home is full of kids, PAWS Dogs, and love. Her nine children have raised nine PAWS foster puppies so far and helped bring more puppies into the world as a Breeding Host Home. "I have enough kiddos that they usually handle the puppies" laughs mom Shari. "I just drive them to the puppy classes."

Her oldest son, Matt was 13 when he spotted a sign advertising a PAWS presentation at a local library. The rest is history. Matt has raised five PAWS Dogs so far, and now works for PAWS full-time. His younger brothers Adam and Timothy are carrying on the proud family tradition and have raised three more PAWS Dogs between the two of them.

"We just think that PAWS and the dogs are absolutely amazing," says Shari. "Whether these dogs become Service Dogs or Arson Detection

Dogs or Facility Dogs, they are changing people's lives and doing great things. And I think it is amazing how all the different volunteers we have met over the years literally become one big family. You can always count on them to be there for one another. How can you not want to be part of that?"

Shari and her family think of volunteering as, "a blessing that you get back." Her whole family pitches in with each mama dog and puppy, giving them lots of love, a wealth of experience, and the best possible start in life. Some of her favorite memories are the smiles on her kids' faces as they work hard with each dog to teach them basic commands. "PAWS teaches people to train dogs in a way that is exciting. It is done lovingly, with praise and encouragement for the dog so that the dog and the Foster Puppy Raiser learn together."





At Masco, we believe in delivering better living possibilities. That's why we are proud to support Paws With A Cause and its mission to enhance the independence and quality of life for people with disabilities: because through organizations like PAWS, the possibilities are endless.



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STARTING SCHOOL

DUBLIN is the most popular guy at his high school - just ask him. "He is such a ham," says Lisa, his official handler and a special education teacher at the school. DUBLIN is also a dog on a mission: to soothe anxious kids navigating high school. He has a special schedule designed to make sure that everyone who needs some time with him gets it.

Every morning, DUBLIN works with the principal to greet kids coming into the building. Then it is off to work with one of the counselors in the school's restorative justice program, where he helps kids work through conflicts by providing a calming presence. Then he and the Dean of Students attend both lunch periods, making the

rounds to his adoring fans, followed by a quick nap. To finish his day, DUBLIN is either giving kids some one-on-one time when they are working with the school social worker, or he goes to lend a paw at different classes that have stressful tests scheduled.

“DUBLIN brings a sense of calmness to the room, and he’s very, very chill,” Lisa explains. “He makes the stress go away.”

And he makes a big difference for the kids. Some students feel especially anxious at school and knowing they will get to see DUBLIN every day helps them find the courage to attend. One student recalled DUBLIN visiting her when she was having a particularly tough day. Working through training commands with him created an opportunity for her to talk to classmates, which helped perk her up.

“We are all trying to make students feel welcome and that this is a safe environment. Maybe their home life is not good, but school can be a place where all of us, including DUBLIN, care about them.” Lisa says having DUBLIN at her school has been an amazing experience, and she has been fielding questions from other schools eager to have their own DUBLIN.

PAWS is working hard to expand our Facility Dog program, and we hope to place more dogs in more schools every year!

Please visit www.pawswithacause.org/facilitydogs to learn even more about the program.

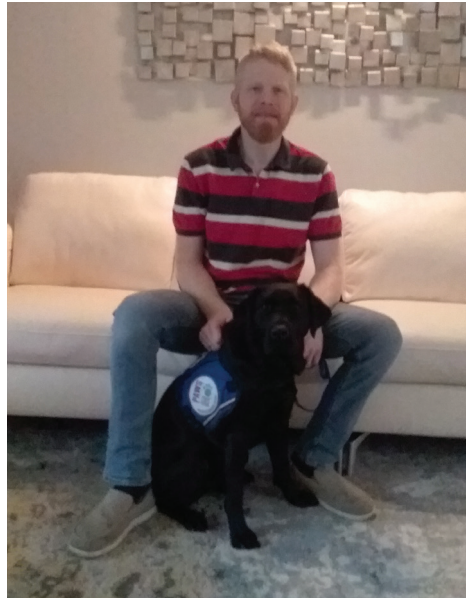


MEET OUR CLIENTS

Cooper & BONSAI



Dan & QUIGLEY



Dan & QUILL



Deshawnda & NIKE



Daina & SPUNKY



James & SPARROW



Jana & DUFFIE



Janet & VITA



Katlyn & LOVEY



“The joy CASS brings to me and my husband is immeasurable. For me, he makes doing everyday tasks easier and more fun. Do not let his cute, playful personality fool you. From day one, he has been very protective of me at home as shown by his fierce bark when he hears something out of the ordinary or unexpected visitors are at the door. I am grateful for the security and independence I feel when I am alone at home or in the community with CASS by my side. Thank you Paws With A Cause for this special gift.”

Ann & CASS



Leona & LILY



Luanne & PASHA



Nancy & WINGER





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RETRIEVER FEVER



SEPT. 11

GRAND RAVINES DOG PARK
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www.pawswithacause.org/rf



Retriever Fever will allow dog owners to meet up, learn about PAWS, and participate in a friendly competition between Labrador Retriever and Golden Retriever owners to see who can raise the most support for PAWS in one afternoon. There will be tables with vendors, demonstrations, a 50/50 raffle, merchandise, and food trucks. But most importantly, there will be LOTS of retrievers and their hoomans!