

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

PAWS FAMILY REUNION EDITION

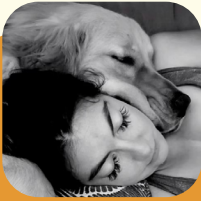


2023 SUMMER NEWSLETTER

CATCHING UP WITH OLD FRIENDS

PAWS loves to celebrate the amazing work of our PAWS Dogs and their people! We usually highlight Teams who recently earned their initial certifications, but PAWS makes a lifetime commitment to our Teams and we love to keep in touch as their bond deepens and grows.

In this second edition of “Where are they now?” read on to hear about PAWS family reunions. And if you want to read their original stories, you can find over a decade of our newsletters on our website [by clicking here!](#)



THE PERFECT FIT

TATER was featured on the cover of our [2020 Annual Impact Report](#). At the time, he was a puppy living with his Foster Puppy Raiser, Lisa, a Home Health Coordinator for nine different nursing and long-term care facilities. She often took TATER to work with her as part of his training, and TATER gave lots of love to healthcare workers and patients struggling through the early days of lockdown.

Lisa was sad to say goodbye to him in the fall of 2021, when TATER returned to PAWS headquarters for the next step in his training journey. But watching the impact TATER had on the people she worked with and the patients they served inspired Lisa, and she became determined to find a PAWS Facility Dog to join her work team and keep changing lives.

TATER had the same idea. After he completed his training in our PAWS Prison Partners program, he let the PAWS Trainers know that his career goal was to love and support as many people as possible as a PAWS Facility Dog. And PAWS knew that the best possible placement for him was back home with Lisa.

“Life is meant to be with TATER,” writes Lisa. “TATER continues to bring joy and make a huge impact every day. TATER joins me as I visit multiple Skilled Nursing Facilities where he greets staff and provides support to patients healing, or those that are grieving. TATER has provided sensory experiences to people with developmental disabilities, calmness to Memory Care patients, and grieving support to Hospice families. One patient was so cheered by



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TATER”

TATER’s visit that she told her son how happy she was. Her son came out of the room just to tell me it was the first time his mom had spoken in 6 months. It gave me chills.”

“I think God knew how much I needed TATER as well. After going through 6 rounds of in vitro fertilization, TATER helped me through all the physical and emotional pain. I’m over the moon to announce TATER will be a big brother this September. He has always been a comfort and a protector, and I am so grateful we have him in our lives.”



SOMETIMES THE BEST MAN HAS FOUR FEET

on recommendations to policymakers that help family caregivers of people with disabilities. “We have a big road trip ahead of us in September,” says James. “Stopping in Minneapolis to participate in a family caregiver forum hosted by the Minnesota Health Department.”

But their next big milestone? “We have a big summer planned— PHOENIX will be the best man at my wedding!” James and PHOENIX moved into a new apartment last fall with James’ fiancée, Caitie. “PHOENIX seems to like the change of scenery,” jokes James.

“Despite my preconceived doubts,” says James, “I can’t imagine life without him.”

When you met James and PHOENIX in our [2019 Annual Impact Report](#), he had just graduated from the University of Michigan with a Master’s degree in social work. Now, James reports, “I’m working as a therapist. And at times, PHOENIX serves as my personal therapist!”

This dynamic duo has been together since 2019, a few years after James experienced a spinal cord injury and began using a power chair. James has always been focused on helping people, and becoming a therapist is the realization of a dream he talked about back in the 2020 newsletter.

James is a man committed to serving others and has worked with the national RAISE Family Caregiving Council, advising

When you ask James what life has been like as a Team with a few years under their belt, he sums it up in one word: “Wonderful. I was so nervous when I was about to get him. I told myself things like ‘I don’t know if I can manage a dog’. And ‘Even though I’m a quadriplegic, there are people who probably need this dog more than I do’. But since the day we met, PHOENIX has been such a blessing and joy to my life. And he’s bailed me out quite a few times, especially when we lived alone in an apartment by picking up my keys and phone.”

WIDGET THE WONDER DOG

When we last saw WIDGET, she was flying to her new forever home on the cover of our [Fall 2020 Newsletter](#). Waiting for WIDGET a few states away was her new Client, Maxine. When we reached out to Maxine and WIDGET to see how they are doing in 2023, WIDGET responded:

“After an exciting airplane ride to meet Maxine, my human, I thought things could not be more thrilling... I had no clue how adventurous or how much fun being a Service Dog actually was going to be.”

“Every day I alert Maxine to all sorts of sounds, from people at the door to the smoke detector going off (that was a little scary!). Oh, and I always let her know when the mailman is here. In addition to providing very valuable services to my human, we have fun together too! She takes me everywhere. From restaurants and airplane rides to the barn and the beach, there is always something! Out of all the places we go, I think the beach is my favorite. There I always get some time off to run and do zoomies on the shore!”



“Thank you again for WIDGET, she is changing my life!”

WIDGET would also like you to know that you can follow her many adventures on Instagram [@Widget_TheWonderDog](#).

Maxine and WIDGET recently celebrated their second certification with PAWS. This is part of the promise of lifetime support you help PAWS keep, which you can read more about on the next page.

And Maxine has a special message for everyone who helped send her PAWS Dog home: “Thank you again for WIDGET, she is changing my life!”



Paws With A Cause
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WHAT DOES A LIFETIME COMMITMENT LOOK LIKE?

Here at PAWS, we often talk about your generosity helping us provide ongoing support for the lifetime of each PAWS Dog Team. But what does that mean in practice?

Once a Team earns their initial certification, their adventure really begins! The Team stays in touch with their local PAWS Field Representative, who can help them learn new skills or reinforce old ones. PAWS also recertifies the Team every two years, to make sure they are keeping up with their skills. At PAWS Headquarters, our Client Services department works with each Team to make sure that the PAWS Dog's medical records stay up to date, offer ongoing training for Teams who are near our Headquarters, and work with

our Clients when they hit a bump in the road related to the public access each Team is legally entitled to.

When it is time for their current PAWS Dog to retire, Clients are invited to join our Successor Client program. Applications from Successor Clients are prioritized, because once a person becomes a PAWS Client, we want to ensure they have a PAWS Dog by their side for as long as they need one.

You allow us to provide this crucial support. Thank you for helping PAWS keep this important promise!



STOCK PUP FOR PAWS!

PAWS Dogs are taught to go everywhere their Clients might — to movies, restaurants, museums, and on the bus! Completing their training in these places takes a lot of resources.

During International Assistance Dog Week, August 6 to 12, we are Stocking Pup resources for our training department. PAWS will be collecting:

- Gas gift cards to fuel up our training vans
- Certificates to restaurants where PAWS Dogs practice ignoring delicious smells
- Bus passes to learn to navigate public transportation
- Admission to museums, zoos, or theaters
- Many more items like peanut butter and treats from our Amazon Wishlist

Watch for more information closer to August to gift a PAWS Dog in training experiences to broaden their horizons!