



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Two West Michigan Women Driving Life-Changing Impact for Paws With A Cause

West Michigan – For years, Anne Barea has dedicated her time to raising PAWS puppies destined to become life-changing companions for individuals with disabilities. With each of the seven future assistance dogs she raised, Anne’s connection to the mission of Paws With A Cause (PAWS) only deepened. After the first puppy she raised was placed with a client, Anne saw firsthand the incredible impact a PAWS dog can have and knew she wanted to do more.

That passion led her to launch the very first PAWS Battle Creek Classic in 2022—a golf outing organized and hosted by Anne to support the mission of PAWS: to transform lives and strengthen communities through partnerships with custom-trained working dogs. Since its inception, the event has brought together golfers, sponsors, volunteers, and dog-lovers from across the West Michigan community, raising more than \$10,000 annually to help fund the training and placement of custom-trained assistance dogs, provided completely free of charge to clients.

One of the individuals whose life was changed through a PAWS partnership was Dave Hoekstra, who was matched with a mobility assistance dog named SANTO. According to his wife, Diana, the partnership transformed their daily lives—providing greater confidence, independence, and peace of mind. Inspired not only by the impact of SANTO, but also by Anne’s dedication to supporting the mission, Diana launched the PAWS Holland Scramble in 2024.

Now, both women are inviting the community to join them for two special golf outings supporting the PAWS mission this summer.

PAWS Holland Scramble

Saturday, June 20 from 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Winding Creek Golf Club (4514 E Ottogan St, Holland, MI 49423)

PAWS Battle Creek Classic

Saturday, July 25 from 8:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Binder Park Golf Course (7255 B Dr S, Battle Creek, MI 49014)

“These outings are about so much more than golf,” shared Anne, PAWS Board of Directors Chair and Battle Creek Classic event coordinator. “Every dollar raised helps provide someone with a life-changing dog at no cost to them. Seeing the community rally around that mission year after year is incredibly moving.”

PAWS assistance dogs receive more than two years of specialized training before being matched with clients, and recipients never pay for their dog or training. Events like these help ensure PAWS can continue providing support to individuals and families in need.

Diana, PAWS Board Member and Holland Scramble event coordinator, shared, “PAWS gave our family so much more than a dog with SANTO. Hosting this outing is our way of giving back and helping make these life-changing partnerships possible for others.”

Each four-person scramble includes coffee, lunch, contests, raffle prizes, awards, and opportunities to meet PAWS dogs and puppies in training. PAWS is currently seeking golfers, sponsors, and community supporters for both events. Businesses and individuals interested in making an impact are encouraged to register a team or become an event sponsor.

To register, sponsor an event, or learn more, visit: pawswithacause.org/events/

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About Paws With A Cause: Since 1979, Paws With A Cause (PAWS) has been transforming lives and strengthening communities through partnerships with custom-trained working dogs. PAWS assistance and facility dogs have helped thousands of people thrive, providing opportunities to live with independence, confidence, and companionship. Serving over 20 states across the country, PAWS is accredited by Assistance Dogs International and a member of Animal Assisted Services International. To learn how you can get involved, please visit: pawswithacause.org