

Decades of Independence:
Paul and Anne's Story



THE **COMPANION** ISSUE **49**

50
Canine Companions®
Spring 2025

CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF INDEPENDENCE

The world has changed dramatically since 1975, the year Canine Companions was founded. Yet, our guiding mission remains steadfast: empowering people with disabilities to live with greater independence through the help of a service dog.

As we enter 2025, our 50th anniversary is a time for celebration, reflection and envisioning the future. This milestone is built on a foundation of success, and at the heart of that foundation is you—our dedicated community of supporters. Whether you've been with us for decades or are joining us now, thank you for making our mission possible.

2024 was a year of remarkable achievements, thanks to your support. We placed 547 exceptional working dogs—service dogs, facility dogs, therapy dogs and others working in critical roles. We exceeded our revenue goals, raising \$49.6 million, opened the state-of-the-art Canine Health and Wellness Center, premiered “Andy: a Dog’s Tale,” our award-winning short, and were featured in a top-10-rated Netflix documentary.

We want to thank Bill White for completing his term as board chair, and we look forward to his continued support as our board treasurer. As John Sabo begins his two-year term as board chair, we are excited to work together to lead this mission. Under the guidance of our dedicated board, we remain focused on our ultimate goal: ensuring that every qualified individual in need of a service dog receives one with as few barriers as possible.

Throughout this year, we'll share the stories of those who have shaped Canine Companions from the early days, offering first-hand accounts of how we became the leading provider of service dogs. These stories highlight the loyalty and pride inspired by our modest beginnings and our bright future.

Your continued support is helping us reduce wait times, increase placements and reach more people than ever. Since inventing the modern service dog, we've built an industry that changes lives—and with you by our side, we're ready to lead for the next 50 years.

Thank you for being part of our family.

Kind regards,



Paige Mazzoni
Chief Executive Officer



John Sabo
Board Chair





Our GOLDEN Anniversary

In 1975, Canine Companions made history as the creator of the modern service dog. Never before had a dog been used to assist a person with physical disabilities with daily tasks. This idea grew from a hope to an industry, with thousands now relying on service dogs for independence. Over the past five decades, Canine Companions has grown, accomplishing many “firsts” that continue to strengthen the service dog industry – all while prioritizing the placement and support for service dog teams.

As we celebrate our 50th “golden” anniversary in 2025, we’re taking a moment to reflect on the major milestones that brought us to where we are today, upholding our role as an industry leader. From placing the first-ever service dog team to expanding canine health and cognition research, our work supports a growing service dog industry to assist all people who can benefit from the help of a service dog.

Showcasing 50 Years – Past and Future

On July 4, the countdown to our anniversary culminates and our celebration continues throughout the year. We invite you to join us on this journey as we commemorate our accomplishments – and the people and dogs who have made them possible – and look toward the next 50 years leading with independence.

We are proud to celebrate the anniversaries of the construction of three of our campuses, helping expand the reach and support of the regions in which they reside.

The Southeast Region SeaWorld Campus:

25 years

The South Central Region Baylor, Scott & White Health Kinkeade Campus:

10 years

The North Central Region Campus, New Albany, Ohio:

5 years





THROUGH A DOG'S EARS

Confidence and Safety

In 1985, a newspaper article introduced Paul Ogden to a bridge between his silent world and the bustling environment around him—Canine Companions. The organization would become a lifelong partner in independence.

Paul and his wife, Anne, are both trailblazers – Paul, who was born deaf, is a professor emeritus at Fresno State University, and Anne was one of the first hard-of-hearing registered nurses.

They were drawn to Canine Companions' innovative two-week Team Training program, which emphasizes customized training for the handler and their dog. That decision brought Chelsea, Paul's first hearing dog, into their lives, setting him on a path where many sets of furry ears made life more accessible.

Chelsea, a Belgian Shepherd, quickly became indispensable. She alerted Paul to fire alarms, doorbells, and even people calling his name. Camping trips and hotel stays felt safer, and she loved to deliver handwritten notes between Paul and Anne from across the house.

"Chelsea gave me so much more than sound awareness—she gave me confidence," Paul recalls.



"Chelsea gave me so much more than sound awareness—she gave me confidence," Paul recalls.

After Chelsea's passing, Paul and Anne returned to Canine Companions many times over, confident that the program's expertise and community made it the perfect fit. Over the years, Paul was partnered with Hearing Dog Avalanche, Bree, Frisbee, and, most recently, Prudie in 2021.

According to Paul, each new dog feels like they have even more training and professionalism than the last. Prudie's calm demeanor, shaped by trainers and puppy raisers, makes her an invaluable partner. Beyond alerting to important sounds, Prudie acts as an icebreaker, easing social interactions.

"If I travel without Prudie, people are less comfortable writing notes back and forth with me," Paul explains. "Her presence makes it easier for people to connect with me."

Reflecting on his 40 years with Canine Companions and his role as the longest active graduate of our program, Paul feels honored to be a pioneer. "Having a hearing dog allows me to have adventures and accessibility to the world," he shares. "I couldn't do it without them. Anne and I are endlessly grateful to Canine Companions, the puppy raisers, donors and volunteers who make these partnerships possible."

CHANGING LIVES Since 1975

CANINE COMPANION GRADUATES 1983 Classes of June and October



GUY THOMAS and ISIAH
Oakland, CA
Isiah was raised by
Monika Brand



SHOSHANA BRAND and IVAN
El Centro, CA
Ivan was raised by
Rosemary Gregor



DAVID DEFFEN and KONYA
Emeryville, CA
Konya was raised by
Jessica Barnett



**JEAN-MARIE STACHELRODT
and HEATHER**
Holliston, CA
Heather was raised by
Lisa Martin



**RICKY KLAMÁN and
FREEDOM**
Sacramento, CA
Freedom was raised by
Emily Montague



LOUISE SOUSA and BREEZE
San Rafael, CA
Breeze was raised by
Lisa Martin



DEAN KINGHORN and KURLA
Pacatoia, ID
Kurla was raised by
Dan Kinghorn



GLORIA BERGSON and TEDDY
Santa Rosa, CA
Teddy was raised by
Dr. & Mrs. J. E. Mason



VINCENT PINTO and EBED
Martinez, CA
Ebed was raised by
Sara Breeze



RITA ROBERSON and IGOR
Northridge, CA
Igor was raised by Kevin
Roberson and the Montague
family



KRIS LEDWITH and IVY
Santa Rosa, CA
Ivy was raised by Carol Smith
and the Montague family



**LEE ANN LARAWAY and
ISAAC**
San Jose, CA
Isaac was raised by
Nick Massaroni



TOM ROUD and ANKARA
Santa Rosa, CA
Ankara was raised by
Sue Martin



IRIS COOVER and ANKA
Berkeley, CA
Anka was raised by
the Roud and Anka family



MICHAEL CHAFEE and ALFIE
Santa Barbara, CA
Alfie was raised by
David Lewton



**TERRY GUINNELL and
KAPTAIN**
San Jose, CA
Kaptain was raised by
Janice Montague



MAX ARGUELLES and ALIBI
Berkeley, CA
Alibi was raised by
the Arguelles family



DERILYN SESSA and JESSIE
Pacifica, CA
Jessie was raised by
Kris Ledwith



**NEAL SMITHER and INDIANA
JONES**
E. Sycamore, CA
Indiana was raised by
Bunny Wolf



SHERRY ZEARFALS and BUCK
Garland, TX
Buck was owned by
A. Zuzani



**HACIENDA CARE CENTER and
ARTIE**
Petaluma, CA
Artie was raised by
Linda and John Johnson



**SARELLE PESHALL and
JACKSON**
Redwood, CA
Jackson was raised by
Dorothy Sargent



BRUCE NICOLAISEN and DALIB
Fresnoville, CA
Dalib was raised by
Cover Dog Connection



KIM FREEMAN and JOKER
Fresno, CA
Joker was raised by
Patricia Freeman



**MONTGOMERY MANOR and
SADIE**
Santa Rosa, CA
Sadie was raised by
John and Ann Kagan

DECEMBER GRADUATION

You are cordially invited to attend our next graduation, which will be held Sunday, December 18, at 4:00 at the Druids Hall (College and King). Ten dogs and their new masters will formally begin their new lives together. This festive occasion will be followed (at 5:30) by a dinner complete with no-host bar. **(rsvp)**. For further information, phone 528-0830.

rottweiler

smooth collie

german shepherd

border collie

*corgi**

*Read more about Freedom on page 8.

german shepherd

border collie

border collie

poodle

**2024
RECAP**

8,000th Service Dog Placed

547 Working Dogs Placed

Since 1975: 8,163 Service and Facility Dogs Placed and 547 Veterans Served

936 Puppies Born

1,458 Graduate Follow-Ups

Over the past five decades, a lot of changes have occurred at Canine Companions. It's not just the clothing and hairstyles – our equipment and breeding programs have been streamlined to make the happiest and healthiest service dogs possible. One thing that hasn't changed is our commitment to providing the highest quality service dogs to enhance independence for people with disabilities.

From Shetland Sheepdogs (and More!) to Lab/Golden Retrievers



Equipment Over the Years



Did You Know?

- > In 1986, Katie Malone became the first puppy raiser to live outside of California. She lived in Alaska!
- > Canine Companions placed service dogs in Israel, Haiti and Holland.
- > The original saddlebag backpack dog harnesses had 19 pockets. It's easy to imagine when you see the image in the equipment timeline above!
- > Canine Companions used a wide range of dog breeds as service dogs in the 1980s. In the 1983 yearbook pictured to the left, graduate dogs were breeds from Collies to Rottweilers. By 1988, Canine Companions was only breeding Labradors, Golden Retrievers, Lab/Golden crosses and a small number of Corgis before the breed was phased out in the 1990s.





Pioneering Puppy Raisers



Emory and Freedom



Cherie and Happy

The Montague Family of Santa Rosa, California, holds a special place in Canine Companions' history as the organization's first volunteer puppy raisers and breeder caretakers.

In 1981, Connie and Ed Montague discovered Canine Companions through a local meeting and decided to volunteer as a family. With their parents' support, 10-year-old Cherie raised a Canine Companions German Shepherd named Happy, and 7-year-old Emory raised a Corgi named Freedom.

Over the years, the Montagues raised nine Canine Companions puppies, including German Shepherds, Corgis, Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retrievers. When one of their dogs, Marin, was selected as a breeder dog, they became Canine Companions' first breeder caretakers, raising four litters of future service dogs. They also cared for a male breeder dog, a Corgi named Nuts 'N Bolts.

The family's generosity extended beyond puppy raising. Before on-campus dorms were available, they hosted multiple clients in their home during their two-week Team Training class.

Connie reflects, "We felt it was important to teach our children that there's a lot of diversity in the world. We wanted them to experience that and to teach them about people with disabilities." Cherie adds, "It shaped who I am today. Puppy raising taught me perseverance and courage. There were times when I wanted to give up, but I learned how capable I could be; I learned responsibility and I learned compassion."

Cherie recently returned to Canine Companions to open her heart to raise another puppy, Larue, with her husband, Craig Staller. The Montagues remain an inspiring part of Canine Companions' history and community.

Volunteer with us
canine.org/volunteer



Number of active breeder
caretakers and breeder
dogs in 2025:
135
Breeder Dogs
160
Breeder Caretakers



Legislative Wins in Texas

In 2024, the state of Texas passed legislation aimed to fund service dog programs for veterans. The bill, H.B. 2851, had restrictive guidelines that would exclude many organizations from receiving funding. Canine Companions is pleased to have played a key role in amending this bill to serve more organizations and advancing this legislation.

After its passage, the Texas Veterans Coalition invited us to apply for and ultimately receive a \$100,000 grant. Through testimony before the Texas committee, we helped refine the grant process to maximize its impact. This victory ensures more veterans receive life-changing service dogs, reinforcing our commitment to advocacy and inclusion in the service dog community.

Advocacy in 2024

During each year, our grassroots advocates – volunteers who use their voices to amplify the benefits of service dogs – come together in many important ways. In 2024, our advocates added over 150 individuals to their ranks for a total of nearly 13,000 Canine Companions advocates.

We're also joined by members of the public who choose to support our causes on specific issues. Last year, 2,667 individuals chose to raise their hand to make change – from receiving 128 National Service Dog Month proclamations from legislators to signing petitions for change in the language of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

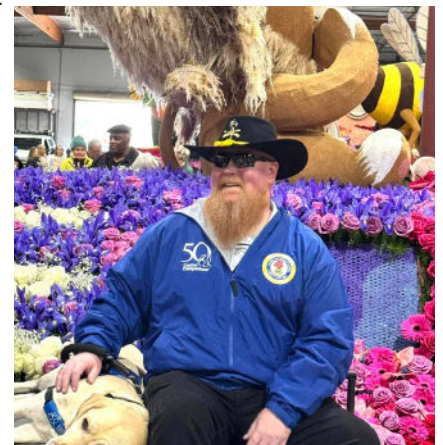
For over 45 years, Canine Companions has been advocating for the rights of service dog users. But the issues change over time and we need the help of our community. Become an advocate today at canine.org/advocacy.

Celebrating at the Rose Parade

Canine Companions kicked off its 50th anniversary celebrations at the 136th Rose Parade on New Year's Day in Pasadena, California. This incredible opportunity was possible thanks to Lions Clubs International and the Lions Project for Canine Companions (LPCC).

Lions Project for Canine Companions volunteers walked alongside future service dogs, while U.S. Army Veteran Sergeant Steve Blackman rode on the float with his service dog, Priscilla. "Together, with partners like the Lions, we can reach so much farther than we ever could on our own," he shared.

The event aired on eight networks, reaching 56 million viewers worldwide and 800,000 attendees, with media coverage in 56 outlets reaching 13.4 million people.





FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT FOR 45 Years

In 1980, John and Terry Levin stopped by a “startup” called Canine Companions for Independence to learn about some incredible dogs. They were joined by John’s mother, who lived with quadriplegia after surviving polio when John was a toddler. The innovative vision they encountered struck a chord that would ring for a lifetime.

“It was the vision of what Canine Companions could be that brought us to support the mission,” John reflects. “We liked the potential and decided to do what we could to be helpful.”

Terry eventually joined the national board, a role she cherished deeply. She loved the work, the people and her colleagues. She was unfailingly inspired by the mission.

John says, “Terry was gratified to see the organization gain traction, grow and expand. It was really satisfying to see that vision from the earliest days actualize into such profound, meaningful impacts on people’s lives.”

Terry passed away in 2022, but her legacy and John’s passion remain strong after 45 years. John and Terry have happily provided philanthropic support over the years and John and his children plan to continue to do so for years to come.

“I continue to believe in the mission. If anything, it’s more exciting than ever,” remarks John. “Now, Canine Companions is impacting more and more lives with the best practices in breeding, training and identifying qualified applicants. Every individual who gets access to a service dog is a win. There are a lot more wins ahead.”

Good Morning America Honors Canine Companions Volunteers

Wendy and Tom Pascale have made giving back a way of life through Canine Companions. On GivingTuesday, Good Morning America honored the seven-time puppy raisers for their kindness. During the interview, graduate Sharon Bosch and her service dog, Taffy—one of their former puppies—made a surprise appearance.

Wendy discovered Canine Companions at the New York City Auto Show and quickly fell in love with the mission. Now, she’s preparing to raise her eighth puppy.

Tom shares, “When you see a dog matched with a client, you understand why you’re doing it. There’s no better feeling—it’s incredible!”





A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP FOR INDEPENDENCE

Canine Companions is grateful for Bread Financial, whose commitment is making a meaningful difference in the lives of people with disabilities. Their financial contribution directly supports our mission, funding team training classes across all six regions and helping to unite more clients with life-changing service dogs.

But the company's impact goes beyond financial support. Bread Financial employees across the country are also supporting our mission with generous donations and volunteering their time to work on campus projects. They've even helped serve lunches to our students in Team Training. Their enthusiasm and hands-on involvement bring new energy to our community and strengthen the bond between our organizations.

We are truly thankful for Bread Financial's dedication to our mission. With their support, we're creating more opportunities for independence, confidence and connection—one service dog team at a time.



PARTNERS IN MOBILITY

Canine Companions is proud to partner with Adequan® Canine (polysulfated glycosaminoglycan), a leader in canine joint health.

Together, we're dedicated to improving the well-being of dogs and enriching the lives of the people who rely on them.

Adequan® Canine offers a trusted solution for dogs experiencing joint issues, helping them stay active and engaged in the world around them. As part of this collaboration, Adequan® Canine has provided a special rebate offer to Canine Companions clients and supports our mission through financial contributions. Their commitment helps ensure that more people with disabilities can experience the life-changing benefits of expertly trained service dogs.

Through this ongoing partnership, we're empowering more service dogs to move comfortably and continue supporting the children, adults and veterans who depend on their assistance. We're excited to continue making a positive impact together.



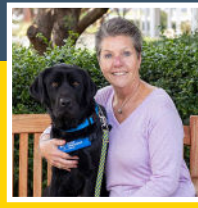
Learn more about partnerships at
canine.org/partners.

BOARD LEADERSHIP



John Sabo
Chair

As vice president and general counsel of Thermo Fisher Scientific, John brings a valuable perspective to Canine Companions. He joined the Board of Directors in 2022. John and his family are highly involved with Canine Companions, from events and puppy raising to advancing awareness through media.



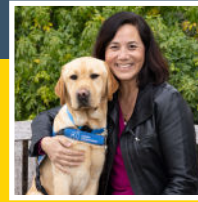
Cathy Fischer
Vice Chair

Cathy has been involved with Canine Companions for over 20 years, along with her husband, Marty. She is the senior vice president of parks global merchandise for Universal Destinations & Experiences. Cathy is a long-time puppy raiser and the recipient of the 2017 Jack Warnock Award for Outstanding Volunteerism.



Bill White
Treasurer

Bill White first became involved with Canine Companions in the mid-1990's in the Southeast Region. Over the years, Bill became the Southeast regional board president and led the capital campaign that culminated in the opening of the training center in the year 2000. Bill recently completed his term as our national board chair, transitioning into the role of treasurer of the board.



Collette Bunton
Secretary

Collette came to Canine Companions as a tech advisor through our partnership with Whistle Labs, where she held the position of CEO. She is a seasoned executive and brings her wealth of experience to our national board, including as an author on our patent for CanineAlert™. Collette is a resident of the San Francisco Bay Area.

50 Years of Independence

We're celebrating 50 years of Canine Companions with something unforgettable happening where it all began in Santa Rosa, California. A special gathering, the National Conference, is coming, and we can't wait to share more details with you soon!

CHEERS TO 50 YEARS!

St. Francis Winery & Vineyards is proud to support Canine Companions with \$500,000 donated since our partnership began in 2021.



2025 Events

Independence is Golden

South Fork Ranch, Texas – March 22

Chip in for Canines

Atlanta, GA – April 1

Mathews, Virginia Grand Opening

Mathews, VA – April 5

Independence is Golden

Medford, New York – May 10

National Graduation Day

May 9

Putting for Pups Golf Tournament

San Jose, CA – May 30

Independence is Golden

New Albany, Ohio – June 12

Independence is Golden

Santa Rosa, California – June 14

Southeast Region Campus Anniversary BBQ

Orlando, FL – June 20

Independence is Golden

Newport Beach, California – June 21

New Mexico Enchanted Canines Golf Tournament

Albuquerque, NM – June 30

National Graduation Day

August 8

Independence is Golden

Orlando, Florida – October 25

Independence is Golden

Seattle, WA – November 1

Independence is Golden

Join us in celebrating
50 years at a gala near you!

canine.org/50thanniversary



STAFF UPDATES



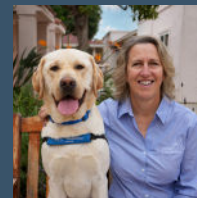
JESSE MACKEY

With 19 years in finance and accounting, Jesse brings expertise to Canine Companions as CFO, ensuring financial health and sustainability. He previously held leadership roles in the wine industry and worked as a CPA at Big 4 and regional firms, leading strategic initiatives. Passionate about our mission, he values transparency and accountability.



ADELE MOSES

Adele Moses is our Southeast Region program director. Adele joined Canine Companions in 2010, progressing through roles from instructor assistant to training manager. With a BS in Animal Science and a personal connection to the mission, Adele brings dedication and expertise to her role.



NATALIE NUCE

We are pleased to welcome Natalie Nuce to the Canine Companions team as our new Southwest Region executive director. Natalie has over 30 years of experience as a philanthropy professional and joins us from Habitat for Humanity International where she spent the last 15 years.

During my last 30 years on staff, I'm motivated by remembering the positive impact I have on the people we serve through our work.

–KEN REID, SENIOR INSTRUCTOR SINCE 1994



50 YEARS OF Firsts

As the creator of the modern service dog, Canine Companions has achieved many “firsts.” The impact of these milestone moments has reached farther than could’ve been imagined 50 years ago. The working dog industry has flourished since our first placements, with Canine Companions leading the way.

FIRST SERVICE DOG GRADUATES – 1976

5,936 Canine Companions service dogs for adults and children placed all-time

1,171 active Canine Companions service dogs for adults and children teams

7,911 total teams from accredited programs currently working in North America

FIRST HEARING DOG GRADUATES – 1978

764 Canine Companions hearing dogs placed all-time

324 active Canine Companions hearing dogs

936 total teams from accredited programs currently working in North America

1977 – FIRST FACILITY DOG GRADUATES

1,128 Canine Companions facility dogs placed all-time

530 active Canine Companions facility dog teams

2,132 total teams from accredited programs currently working in North America

2014 – FIRST SERVICE DOG FOR PTSD GRADUATES

255 Canine Companions service dogs for veterans with PTSD placed all-time

199 active Canine Companions service dogs for veterans with PTSD

2,300 total teams from accredited programs currently working in North America

Looking for the Team Training Yearbook? Explore our online yearbook now!





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By Canine
Companions
for Independence



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Training Locations

**Headquarters
& Northwest Region**

Santa Rosa, CA

Southwest Region

Oceanside, CA

Southeast Region

Orlando, FL

Northeast Region

Medford, NY

North Central Region

New Albany, OH

South Central Region

Irving, TX

Puget Sound Field Office

Seattle, WA

Email: info@canine.org Website: canine.org

Phone: 1-800-572-BARK (2275)

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Eukanuba