

Something to Howl About

JULY 2023

PATRIOT PUPPY PRESS



What's Inside

Meet the SMSD Family
Veteran News
Kennel Update
Volunteer Happenings and Events
What's in a Name?

Puppy Raiser Whitney with SMSDiT Sam

Click on the YouTube video below
to meet our SMSD Family.



Created by Volunteer Photographer
Dick Shusha

VETERAN NEWS



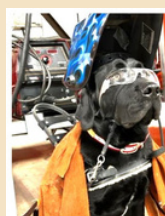
Tucker recently celebrated his 6th birthday.

Mike and Crockett took a trip to Mt. Rushmore in June



May 17 - Jim and Maverick Graduated!

Cut and paste or click below:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=826_Oyb3DXU



Since graduating, Maverick has been attending iron workers' contests to watch his veteran's daughter compete at the local level and regional levels (she came in 7th place!) The contest included cutting metal with a plasma torch, welding, tying rebar, installing industrial windows, surveying, knot tying, and climbing a 35-foot I-beam. Maverick was impressed and decided he wanted to be a welder also. So here he is in his PPE (personal protective equipment).

May 26 - Passing of the Leash for Stephanie and Bentley

See the video here: ----->



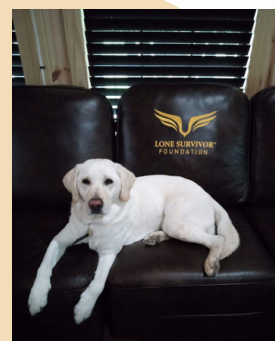
Shortly after graduation, Stephanie celebrated by JUMPING OUT OF A PLANE!



Brad and Jumper at the 2023 Freedom Run



Brian and York attending an Operation Red Wings event.



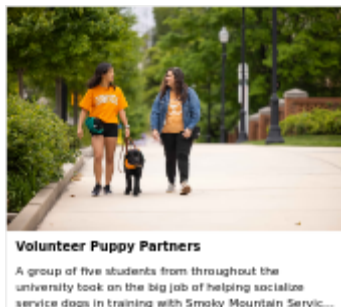
KENNEL NEWS

Welcome New Staff Trainer

Miranda has trained service dogs for seizures, diabetes, and physical disabilities for over nine years. She previously spent time training pet dogs and worked as a puppy nanny. Miranda is a down-to-earth soul who's all about enjoying the simple pleasures in life. After proudly graduating from Maryville College, she found her calling in the delightful world of dogs, spending over nine incredible years building bonds with furry friends. When she's not busy training dogs, you can catch Miranda indulging in the fantastic realms of AI and 3D art. She loves creating digital wonders that bring joy and laughter to those who stumble upon them. Miranda says "grab a seat, share some laughter, and celebrate the beauty of life together!"



New Puppies Wrigley, Noble, JoJo 2 & Kip Joined the SMSD Family this Quarter



Excellent article in University of Tennessee's Magazine *The Torchbearer* about our newly revived UT Volunteer Puppy Partners Program. Double Click on the photo to the left or copy and paste this web address: <https://torchbearer.utk.edu/2023/06/volunteer-puppy-partners/>

Our students finished their hands-on training April 25 and will start socializing our puppies on campus. We are thrilled to have this program underway and are calling it UT Volunteer Puppy Partners.

Puppy Raiser Coordinator Deb S. played a monumental role in getting all of the administrative tasks related to new volunteers done, as well as serving as a phenomenal support person. In addition, Professor Amy Engstrom-Clugg has been instrumental in garnering support from the university on the administrative side and we are appreciative of her help to us. Melissa Marti is really stepping into her part-time role and did a great job assisting and guiding the students through every training class. Our trainers are conducting classes on campus to make the onboarding easier for the students.

We are looking forward to seeing the puppies on campus, as well as hopefully having some of the students grow into puppy raising and other volunteer roles.



NEWS FROM YOUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR TEAM

Message from Carla Navas, Volunteer Director



This has been a very busy first half of 2023 and we have many of you to thank for your ongoing volunteer spirit.

We onboarded 27 new volunteers the first six months of 2023! I can't emphasize enough how much we rely on and appreciate all of our volunteers. We truly could not do what we do at SMSD without the work of 'many hands'. Please note that we continue to have classes occurring at the kennel, for both puppies and advanced dogs, we'd love for you to attend, even if you're not a dog handler but would like to see what it is all about. If you're interested in attending, please email the trainers at smsdtrainers@smokymountain servicedogs.org Thank you!!

Spotlight on Sewing Team

SMSD has so many volunteers with a wide variety of talents. They contribute their talents in areas other than dog handling. We have a Sewing Team that makes a significant and visible contribution by sewing all SMSD dog vests. Gayle Thomasson was the first volunteer to sew the vests, and last year Gayle passed the torch to Rose Remund, our current Sewing Team Leader. We are fortunate to have Rose, as she is an award winning quilter and also volunteers for Quilts of Valor. The sewing team is assisted by the Tellico Village Quilters Embroidery Group. Rose and her team, Joyce Bartolone and Nancy Hutchins, sew the green vests in all sizes; small for puppies, medium and large for kennel, and advanced foster dogs. In addition, they sew the VERY special red vests with unique patches for dogs that have been placed with their recipient. They sew and embroider two special and unique vests for Hooligan, our Canine Ambassador and Winston, our Junior Ambassador. It takes about three hours to complete one vest. Watching the sewing teamwork, it is clear that they are talented and dedicated to the SMSD Mission. We thank Gayle, Rose, Joyce and Nancy for volunteering their time to SMSD Mission.

Suzy Kitchens works closely with the Sewing Team, her comments about their contribution to SMSD:

"We are SO fortunate to have a group of ladies who use their sewing skills to make the handsome green cloth vests you see on all the SMSD dogs in training. In the past, Gayle Thomasson organized patterns, fabric, strap material et cetera and made the vests. She passed the leadership torch to Rose Remund who now heads this Sewing Team. She is assisted by Nancy Hutchins and Joyce Bartolone. A huge thank you to these ladies as they utilize their time and skills to keep our dogs looking great."



Joyce Bartolone



Rose Remund, Team Leader



Nancy Hutchins

NEWS FROM YOUR VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR TEAM

Spotlight on Pat Chappell

Pat Chappell is one of many special volunteers whose commitment to the SMSD community is evident in everything she does. Pat has been a volunteer for nine years during which time she served on the SMSD Board of Directors. As the organization grew there was almost nothing that Pat did not get involved in, including being a volunteer coordinator, doing home visits and setting up lessons for volunteers, tracking donations, and serving on the building committee. Pat has contributed in a significant way with her dog handling skills as a respite home, socializer, and advance foster home. As an advanced foster, she experiences firsthand how the dogs change the lives of our recipients. While she says it is “heart wrenching” to give up a dog when they are placed, she considers it a privilege and gets back more than she gives when she sees the connection the SMSD dog has with their veteran. When Pat talks about SMSD, she says “it is not just WHAT we do, it is HOW we do it. The HOW is ... How the veterans become part of our SMSD family for Life.” Pat has changed the lives of our recipients through her dedication as an advanced foster home to seven dogs. Her commitment is evident in everything she has done for the last nine years. Pat is truly an exceptional person; she is enthusiastic, committed, reliable, warm and selfless. She is respected and trusted by the Board, trainers, and volunteers. Her generosity with her time and talent is seemingly endless. She is an inspiration to other volunteers. Thank you Pat!

What Mike Kitchens, Volunteer Chair, has to say about Pat:

Pat served on the SMSD Board of Directors for 9 years, 2013-2022 as Officer/Secretary. These were years of significant growth and Pat played a major role in making the organization what it is today. Pat is always engaged and willing to do whatever is needed. Pat left her mark on SMSD and continues to do so.

What Heather Wilkerson, SMSD Program Manager, has to say about Pat:

Pat has served in almost every volunteer canine handler role that our organization offers. She always offers to assist our staff and mentor new volunteers. Pat has socialized, provided respite care, advanced fostering of dogs in training. Pat has spent countless hours assisting the Board of Directors in fundraising activities. She is always smiling and I cannot begin to express my gratitude for her countless hours contributing to our organization.



Pat with husband
Richard at Blair's POL



Pat with SMSD Brice

Welcome New SMSD Volunteers!



Juliana Budriss UT campus socializer
Kathy DeBoer, Transport
Brian Goad, Board of Directors
Amber & Nick Haggerman, Respite and Transport
Lauren Haggerson, UT campus socializer
Julie & Mark Hart, Respite
Rick Hoban, Respite and Transport
Amy Li, UT campus socializer
Suzy McCloskey, Transport
Grace Nystrom, UT campus socializer and puppy raiser
Pauline and Doug Orton, Respite and Transport
Mikalya Rodriguez, UT campus socializer
Cindi Stapleton, Respite and Transport
Cindi Stepp Respite and Transport
Deborah Wesoloski, Fundraising

BRIAN LIEBENOW

Brian Liebenow, Retired Air Force Maj, SMSD Volunteer Advance Foster, and Man on the move!

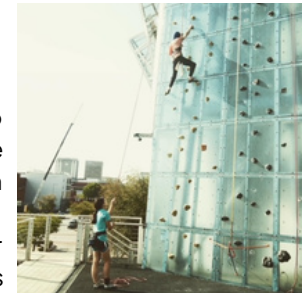
Brian and Betsy Liebenow are preparing for a trip to Bern, Switzerland as Brian competes in the Paraclimbing World Championships representing the United States as one of only 5 or 6 athletes in the RP1 (Range and Power) division. Brian only began climbing 2 years ago after he was inspired by watching his daughter Grace, age 16, participate in the sport at Bearden High School. He trains three to four days a week at one of two gyms in Knoxville and also does finger exercises at home to develop grip strength.

Brian qualified to represent the USA by competing in the National Championships in Austin, Texas, in March of this year. His placement in the RP1 category pits him against more able-bodied competitors but he's ready to take them on in spite of his multiple challenges brought about by his deployment to an old Soviet airbase in Uzbekistan where they used to dump chemical weapons, as a result of which, in Brian's words, "I now live with an amputated arm, clavicle, and three ribs, gastroparesis, and I eat through a feeding tube."

This is truly a family affair as Betsy is his chief cheerleader, although it's tough for her to watch him up so high. She is his travel companion and makes sure he is eating well while on the road, not easy with a feeding tube. Grace, who is belay certified, belays him whenever he trains in Knoxville.

Brian is grateful to Catalyst Sports which has supported him along the way. They offer adaptive climbing, kayaking and biking activities for all ages and also have a veterans climbing initiative. You can visit CatalystSports.org to learn more about this organization, donate, or volunteer to help at one of their events.

We are all very proud of you, Brian, and wish you the best in Switzerland! You are already a winner in our book!



New Member of the Board of Directors - BRIAN GOAD



Brian Goad resides in Lenoir City, TN. He is the managing partner of Fidem Interop, LLC. The company is a software and services company for the healthcare industry nationally. Brian has a BS in Computer Engineering from Troy University, served on boards for Keep Blount Beautiful and served with the Boy Scouts of America as Camping Chair and Scout Master. He is a Veteran of the US Army where he was a Military Policeman and served in that capacity as a member of the SRT team and a Military Police Investigator. He is married to Diana and they have two adult children in the area. Brian's passions include Veterans and Dogs, so SMSD is a perfect fit.

The Tellico Village Singers did it again! They performed a wonderful concert of patriotic music July 2 and 3 at the Community Church at Tellico Village. There was no charge for admission but the audience was asked to make a donation to go to SMSD.

The community and choir members came through to the tune of \$15,000! That's what I call ending on a high note!

Pictured are Dennis Loy, Mike Kitchens and Jan Sampson, along with SMSDs Hooligan, Winston and JoJo.



2023 FREEDOM RUN/Walk

Many thanks to Fleet Feet Knoxville for another successful event on July 4. SMSD has a walking team that follows the 1- and 2-mile runners for 1 mile along the Farragut Parade route. It's great fun and Fleet Feet Knoxville was able to make a donation to SMSD in the amount of \$3,000! Plan to join in next year!

2023 SMSD GOLF CHALLENGE

The Smoky Mountain Service Dogs Golf Challenge of 2023 took place on 24 June at the Tellico Village Toqua Golf Course. The event was another success for SMSD and raised almost \$35,000. This amount covers all the costs of acquiring, raising, and training a mobility assistance service dog -over a two-year period! – for a disabled Veteran.

The Golf Committee (consisting of 9 volunteers) organized the event, supported by 60+ volunteers to help execute the event. The Golf Challenge is probably one of the most unconventional golf tournaments played on any of the Tellico Village courses. Barry Corle is responsible for designing the ‘challenges’ on the course, which include sitting on a toilet while teeing from hole #13 and then chipping into kiddie pools filled with water on hole #18.

More than 95% of each donation SMSD receives is directed to making a difference in a Veteran’s life and at no cost to the Veteran. We extend our most grateful thanks to everyone who stepped up and chose to make a difference.

Thank you, Regions Bank for being the event sponsor.

The following individuals and businesses helped make this event successful:

Chrissi Callaghan Family Giving Fund*Gary Stuart of Edward Jones* Patriot Investment Management*Jackman Family Foundation*Brian and Sharon Wethington*Fidem Interop of Lenoir City*Ron and Tim Kukla: The Land Sharks*Bill and Pam Cooley*Chic-Fil-A of Lenoir City*Simmons Bank*United Community Bank*Volunteer Federal Savings Bank*Pinnacle Partners*Emerson*Tom Christman*Gary Henley of Village Kitchen Design*Brethen Foundation*Weigel’s* Head Investment Partners*Rocky Top Wine Trail*AWE Hospitality* Top Golf*BHHS Lakeside Realty* Sloan’s*Connor’s*Aubrey’s*

Finally, we couldn’t succeed in this endeavor without all the volunteers who give so much of themselves. From the entire SMSD family, thank you, thank you, thank you!

The SMSD Golf Committee: Tom Bradley, Barry Corle, Neil Cowley, John Fearn, John Nametz, Carla Navas, Dick Shusha, Romano Sims, Joe Tedesco.

A special shout out to Canine Ambassadors Hooligan and Winston for raising \$246 by holding a ball cap to collect donations!



You can still order this heartwarming children's book written by our volunteer Haylee about SMSD Cowboy. Available at Barnes and Noble or Amazon dot com

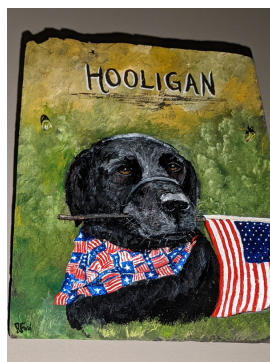


Do you have your SMSD Specialty Plate yet? Available to all registered cars in TN - just go to your local county clerk to get one. No need to wait for your tag to expire - they will prorate it for you.!

WHAT'S IN A NAME???

We thought you'd like to hear about how our dogs get their names. This will be a regular feature so feel free to ask about some of your favorites so we can include them in a future issue.

Canine Ambassador **Hooligan** was named by the parents of Spc. John Hargreaves, Paul and MaryLynn Hargreaves. Suzy Kitchens happened to meet MaryLynn as they were both waiting in a local bank lobby. During their conversation, Suzy shared her work with SMSD and MaryLynn shared that her son John had recently lost his life while enlisted in the Army. Out of that meeting, the Hargreaves decided one way they would honor their son's memory and service would be to sponsor a Smoky Mountain Service Dog. When they were given the opportunity to name a dog, they chose to name it after their son's platoon. The Hargreaves became loyal supporters of SMSD and even invited SMSD Hooligan to meet many members of the Hooligan Platoon as they hosted an annual gathering at their home. They were a wonderful couple and we miss them greatly.



Hooligan Platoon Members
MaryLynn Hargreaves



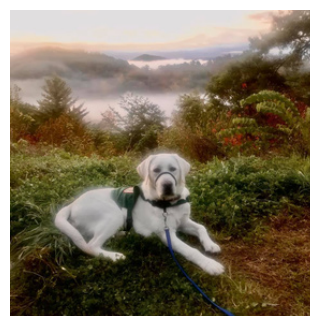
Billy and **Boomer**

In June of 2013, Air Force Veteran Billy Marshall graduated with his first service dog "Lucy." Lucy was Billy's "battle buddy" for seven years until this wonderful canine crossed the Rainbow Bridge due to cancer. Two years prior, SMSD reached out to all of our Veteran Recipients and asked if they would like to suggest names for an incoming puppy. Lots of wonderful names were submitted including Billy's suggestion of "Boomer." Soon puppy Boomer was in training as a future mobility assistance service dog. Amazing that an Air Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal Specialist, who sacrificed an arm and a leg for his nation, would name a puppy Boomer. Two years later, as Lucy was retired due to illness, the Marshall family was ready to take on a second service dog into the family. After the SMSD Team reviewed our inventory of canines and which might be the best choice for Billy, it was determined that Boomer, the puppy he had named two years earlier, would be the match. Billy and Boomer are now in their third year together and are a great team. Lucy will always be remembered by all as a most incredible, canine but it is heartwarming to see Boomer and Billy doing so well.

Kola was named by our friend Mary Brown. The word "Kola" comes from the Lakota Native American Sioux tribe. The term "friend" does not describe the true meaning of the Lakota concept of Kola. A Kola was much more than a friend. It was a term that meant your Kola was closer to you than your brother. If the opportunity ever arose, you would literally lay down your life for your Kola.

The World War II story of Buddy Red Bird and Red Thunder illustrates this concept. Buddy and Red Bird met while in boot camp during World War II and fought in five major battles. To understand how significant five battles were, the men of the 101st Airborne Division upon which the book and series *Band of Brothers* is based were in three battles.

Before each battle Red Thunder would say to Buddy Red Bird, "Kola, if anything happens to me I want you to marry my wife and raise my son." Buddy would always tell Red that he would be all right and that they would both make it home together. Well, Red Thunder did not make it home, having lost his life in the last battle they were in. Being the true Lakota and living up to the true concept of the Kola, when he returned home and was discharged, he went to Montana, married Red Thunder's wife and raised his son.



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Send comments, suggestions and critiques to Laurie.B@smokymountain servicedogs.org