

CANINE LISTENER

DOGS FOR BETTER LIVES • APRIL 2024 • NO.145

MAKING INDEPENDENCE POSSIBLE



Certified Hearing Dog Barley



Unleashing Independence: The Journey of Liz and Certified Hearing Dog Barley

In April of 2021, Liz was celebrating her birthday. Little did she know, on that very day a special puppy was being born that would change her life for the better. His name was Barley.

Liz had not heard of a Hearing Assistance Dog before. The thought never crossed her mind, until she and her son were talking about issues she was experiencing with her hearing loss. Her son said, “wouldn’t it be great if there was such a thing as a ‘hearing dog’”? Liz decided to do a quick internet search. She found Dogs for Better Lives (DBL) and eagerly applied to receive a Certified Hearing Dog.

Barley’s Journey

Barley joined DBL at 8 weeks of age from the ABC Breeding Cooperative, along with three of his siblings. He headed up to the Seattle metro area where his Puppy Raiser, Savannah, helped him learn basic obedience and expose him to a multitude of surroundings. In her care, Barley passed the Canine Good Citizen test—an achievement that reflects both his innate abilities and Savannah’s diligent efforts.

In June of 2022, Barley began his professional training at Dogs for Better Lives with Assistance Dog Trainer, Dana. His impeccable behavior during his training period was noted by all the training and kennel staff. He was frequently used with dog introductions and became best buddies with several other dogs in training. Throughout his time in training, he worked hard to learn how to effectively alert people to sounds in the training apartment.

Once his training as a Certified Hearing Dog was complete, Liz was identified from our waitlist as a great fit for Barley.



Liz poses with Certified Hearing Dog Barley during their one-year follow-up visit with DBL

“ I was so happy when I was notified that he was available for me! I had assumed the wait would be a lot longer. As soon as I saw his picture, I fell in love with him! Barley is so handsome, and his eyes - swoon!”

Barley & Liz

The day Liz met Barley was unforgettable for her. “I looked down the sidewalk and here comes this gorgeous dog along with DBL’s Field Rep Laura walking towards me. Barley’s face lit up as he got closer, and my heart was instantly taken by him. He seemed to know I was his new person! Then, I found out that we share a birthday! I just knew we were supposed to be a team!”

Barley has been instrumental in the home, alerting Liz to the Alexa timer, cell phone, smoke alarm, and door knock. Out in public, Barley helps her feel more aware of her surroundings and acts as a social bridge.

Before Barley, when Liz was out and about for work or for fun, she would not hear if someone would walk up behind her and was constantly being startled. “I eventually stopped going out in public for my own safety pretty much.”

Field Rep, Laura, noticed this firsthand when visiting Liz and Barley for their one-year follow-up. “Liz seemed so nervous going out in public during placement. Not anymore! Her confidence being in public has increased,” said Laura. “During a neighborhood walk we stopped and talked to three different people. Barley is loved by all that he meets.”

When asked about her experiences with DBL and Barley, Liz was clear that Barley has changed her life.

“ If my son and I had not had that conversation, I probably would be in the same state today. Fearful to go out in public and always on edge. Barley has changed this sense of fear and I feel that I am gradually gaining back my self-confidence. I am so grateful to have Barley in my life!”

Former Shelter Dogs Find New Purpose as Service Dogs

The partnership between Dogs for Better Lives and Operation Kindness in Texas has resulted in the first two shelter dogs being placed as Service dogs. Walker, once an owner surrender at Operation Kindness, now serves as a Facility Dog. Annie has been trained as a Hearing Assistance Dog, and was placed with her client in late February. Through specialized training from DBL and the loving care of Operation Kindness foster homes, these dogs have had an amazing transformation from shelter dog to a life-changing Service Dog. Dogs for Better Lives has always used shelter dogs in our programs, and we're excited to see this partnership with Operation Kindness to make a difference in the lives of both dogs and people. We have already welcomed our next shelter dogs into the program and look forward to sharing their progress in the coming months.

To learn more about this unique program, visit dogsforbetterlives.org/shelter-to-service



Annie and Walker before placement

4 ways Autism Assistance Dogs Help Children

*SENSORY REGULATION

Autism Assistance Dogs provide deep pressure therapy when children struggle with sensory overload

*REDIRECT BEHAVIORS

Autism Assistance Dogs offer a gentle nudge to help redirect the child's attention to the dog

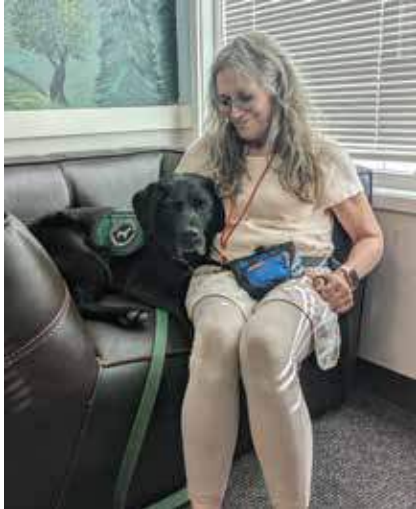
*EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

Autism Assistance Dogs provide a source of comfort during times of stress, anxiety or disruptions in daily schedule

*SOCIAL SKILLS

Autism Assistance Dogs can help bridge social gaps by being a non-judgmental friend who is always there to play and interact

Learn more and apply: dogsforbetterlives.org/autism-dogs



FD Fancy and Catherine

Catherine and Facility Dog Fancy recently celebrated seven years together, marking a remarkable journey of dedication and impact. Fancy, now skilled in commands like "say hi," "place," and "stay," has been instrumental at the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) in Medford, Oregon.

In the past fiscal year alone, Fancy participated in over 500 therapy sessions, aiding more than 100 different children. Catherine emphasized Fancy's pivotal role in creating a safe environment, making their work more accessible and comforting for the children they assist.

CHD Camber and Karan

In a touching one-year follow-up, Karan and her Certified Hearing Dog Camber in Oregon celebrated their strong

bond, with Karan appreciating Camber's playful nature and memorable beach outings. Camber assists Karan in various daily activities, including outings to different stores and public places, where he helps with tasks like door knocks and alerting to timers and alarms. For Karan, having Camber has been life-altering, providing both security and companionship after sudden hearing loss, and encouraging her to re-engage socially. She expressed heartfelt gratitude to donors, highlighting how Camber's presence has enriched her life and empowered her to embrace the world again.



CHD Belle and Lacie

In a heartwarming five-year follow-up, Lacie and her Certified Hearing Dog Belle in Oregon celebrated their strong partnership, with Lacie expressing how Belle has significantly improved her life by providing comfort and safety in public settings. Lacie adores Belle's playful personality and fondly recalls a favorite memory of their boat trip with family, where Belle's enthusiasm for swimming brought them joy. Belle's excellent behavior during plane travel also made trips to visit family enjoyable for Lacie. Currently assisting with various tasks like door alerts and alarms, Belle's presence has been life-changing for Lacie, who expressed profound gratitude to donors for their transformative impact on her life.

FD Major and Kristin

In their recent one-year follow-up, Kristin and Facility Dog Major reflected on their meaningful partnership. Kristin, a School Psychologist, shared how Major has enhanced her interactions with students, making them more open to discussing their concerns and reducing the stigma of visiting her office. Kristin fondly recalled memorable moments, such as the heartwarming goodbyes Major receives from students after school assemblies, highlighting the staff's adoration for him. Major's expanding repertoire of commands, including lap, place, settle, touch, roll over, shake, and spin, showcases the incredible bond and potential of this dynamic team as they look forward to future accomplishments.





CHD Enzo and Barbara

We recently followed up with Barbara and Hearing Assistance Dog Enzo. Enzo is 9 years old, but continues to approach his duties with the same enthusiasm as during training, showcasing his unwavering dedication to his role. Despite Barbara's retirement and undergoing surgeries, Enzo remains a steadfast companion, providing comfort and support. Barbara, now dedicated to assisting the homeless, relies on Enzo's assistance with various tasks like door knocks and alarms, expressing her profound gratitude for his presence, which brings her a sense of safety and security. She cherishes Enzo's companionship and hopes for many more years together.

CHD Norton and Chris

In a four-year follow-up with Chris and his Certified Hearing Dog Norton in Oregon, Chris expressed deep gratitude for Norton's companionship during the COVID-19 lockdowns and periods of isolation. Norton has been an invaluable companion, helping Chris locate sounds and providing a greater sense of safety. Currently assisting with tasks like name call, cell phone alerts, and guiding Chris to his wife when needed, Norton's presence has been cherished during trips to Portland for medical appointments and family visits. Chris fondly recalls the joy of showcasing Norton's skills at a DBL event, where they received praise for Norton's hard work, highlighting the profound impact Norton has had on their lives.



FD Lander and Jessica

In their one-year follow-up, Jessica, a School Psychologist, shared how Facility Dog Lander has transformed her job. Lander's presence has facilitated strong connections with adults, families, staff, and students, significantly improving attendance for some. Utilizing commands like squish, settle, lap, go say hi, place, and stay, Lander has become an indispensable part of Jessica's professional life. Personally, Jessica finds joy and comfort in Lander's companionship, emphasizing their strong bond and synchronization. With an impact on over 450 students, teachers, and families, Lander fosters a positive and joyful atmosphere at the school, aiding students in reading and offering vital unconditional love in Jessica's work.

CHD - Certified Hearing Dog: Certified Hearing Dogs respond to sounds in the home and have public access with their person.

AAD - Autism Assistance Dog: Autism Assistance Dogs are specially trained to enhance the safety and well-being of children and families living with Autism by providing a minimum of three tasks to assist with keeping children grounded and focused while presenting a social bridge for relationships and friendships.

HHD - Home Hearing Dog: Home Hearing Dogs are trained to respond to sounds in the home but are not trained/certified to accompany their person in public.

FD - Facility Dog: Facility Dogs go to work with and assist professionals such as physicians, teachers, counselors, police officers, and child advocates.

FEATURED PLACEMENTS



CHD Fennel and Marilyn

Certified Hearing Dog Fennel was paired with Marilyn from Maryland and their connection was instant! Throughout the week, Marilyn's confidence soared as she witnessed Fennel's remarkable abilities. Now, she ventures out into public spaces with a newfound assurance, thanks to Fennel's steadfast attention to her surroundings. Fennel seamlessly juggles tasks, serving as an oven timer, microwave alarm, refrigerator alert, cell phone notifier, doorbell, and even responds to Marilyn's name with precision. Together, they embark on adventures filled with endless possibilities and thrilling experiences.

CHD Jedi and Christina

Certified Hearing Dog Jedi found his perfect match in Christina from Tennessee, and what an extraordinary team they make! Christina (Tina) can't contain her excitement as she gushes about Jedi's serene demeanor and impeccable response to household sounds. Despite working from home, Tina eagerly includes Jedi in her outings to the VA and various errands where he shines like a true superstar, seamlessly adapting to their new lifestyle. Inside the home, Jedi takes on the role of a guardian angel, alerting Tina to important sounds such as phone calls, alarms, oven timers, and doorbells. With Jedi by her side, Tina experiences a newfound sense of tranquility, feeling more secure and relaxed even when navigating the house alone. Together, they embark on thrilling adventures, making each day an unforgettable journey filled with boundless joy and independence.



CHD Chowder and John

Certified Hearing Dog Chowder was recently placed with John, and it is clear this team is going to be amazing! John is captivated by Chowder's infectious enthusiasm for training and the tranquility he brings to the household, especially around John's children. Chowder's firm taps before leading John to a sound never fails to unleash bursts of laughter. At home, Chowder takes charge of crucial tasks like responding to the door knock, managing the oven timer, alerting to the smoke alarm, and waking up to the alarm clock. John eagerly anticipates the newfound independence that Chowder will bring to his life. As a middle school teacher, John is thrilled to have Chowder join him in the classroom, where Chowder will skillfully alert John to his cell phone alarm and the classroom phone. Beyond the practical assistance, John sees an exciting opportunity to educate his students about the invaluable role Service Dogs play in supporting individuals with disabilities. With Chowder by his side, John not only feels safer but also more empowered to request the accommodations he needs, marking a transformative and joyous chapter in their shared journey.

Road Tripping with Service Dogs

Transportation volunteers are often the unsung heroes behind Dogs for Better Lives (DBL)'s mission, facilitating the movement of dogs and puppies between locations nationwide. With puppy raisers and clients spanning the country and two campuses on opposite coasts, transportation volunteers provide a significant service that saves DBL time and resources.

"My car is my second home - I'm on the road all the time throughout New England! Signing up for puppy transport was a natural fit - so much goes into raising and training service dogs, I'm glad to be able to help out with the logistics." says Marie, a dedicated transport volunteer.

Whether by road or air, every journey counts in ensuring these future Service Dogs get one step closer to making a significant difference in the life of someone with a disability.

We are seeking flight partners in our Canine Copilots Program and Transportation volunteers with a valid driver's license. Learn more at dogsforbetterlives.org/get-involved.



DBL Assistance Dog in Training Cowboy with DBL Transportation Volunteer and RAB member Marie

Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Supports Veterinary Services



Hayes (left) and Harper (right) were named by Dr. Julie Ryan-Johnson and Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA as a thank you for their generous support.

We are thrilled to share that Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA Inc. has deepened their commitment to Dogs for Better Lives in 2024. The leader in animal health innovation has generously provided financial and product support for the DBL's veterinary service needs. Dr. Julie Ryan-Johnson of Boehringer Ingelheim said, "At Boehringer Ingelheim, we care about the work that Service Dog nonprofits are doing with animal shelters, particularly the work that Dogs for Better Lives is collaborating on with Operation Kindness in Texas, to train and place shelter dogs as Service Dogs." In total, Boehringer Ingelheim Animal Health USA providing more than \$35,000 in support to DBL in 2024.




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A benefit for Dogs for Better Lives

Saturday, May 18, 2024

Online Broadcast: 1:00 PM (PT) / 4:00 PM (ET)

RSVP at dogsforbetterlives.org/bone-appetreat