

Courage and Sacrifice News Letter

January 2016



C&S Adopts Service Dogs to Be Trained for Veterans

Charles Darwin once said "It is scarcely possible to doubt that the love of man has become instinctive in the dog.", and anyone who has had the pleasure of dealing with service dogs would surely agree. Service dogs lend sight to the blind and add perspective to law enforcement; they provide emotional support to autistic children and break the falls of the epileptic. Most recently service dogs have been trained to help returning veterans cope with the symptoms of PTSD. These dogs can sense oncoming episodes and are trained to help our soldiers cope with their hardships, while guarding against personal security risks. Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, more commonly referred to as PTSD, is the most common injury among returning veterans. However, unlike severed limbs or jagged scars PTSD cannot be noticed by the naked eye. Instead it is a silent killer, whose carnage can be quantified by the eighteen veteran suicides that occur each day. Fortunately the suicide rate among veterans with this disorder falls to a fraction of a percent when paired with a service dog. K9's for warriors is a charity group that specializes in training and implementing these animals into the lives of veterans afflicted with this disability. In 2015 the committee at Courage and Sacrifice met with the leadership of K9's for Warriors and decided to pair with their organization in an effort to diminish the plight of Soldiers with PTSD. After the meeting our committee agreed to fund the adoption and training of one of these dogs. Since that time we have seen first hand that the impact of these animals goes far beyond the care of the soldier, and directly touches the families the soldiers come home to. It is not easy for any soldier to acclimate from the battle field back to civilian life, much less a soldier with PTSD, but the success rate of this program is undeniable. In August of 2015 we appropriated funds for the training of our first dog 'Dunkin', and after hearing the testimony of a surviving soldier at this years outing we immediately decided to fund the training of a second dog. At Courage and Sacrifice we applaud our veterans for the sacrifices they have made, and we applaud our sponsors for allowing us to help them.