

PARAGON SERVICE DOGS



Paragon Press January 2025
Edition

❄️ Winter Reflections

We can't believe the new year is here! 2024 was a monumental year for Paragon, filled with countless memories and moments to cherish. We invite you to take a moment to settle in and reflect with us.

Our Moments and Memories!

One of the most significant milestones last year was our transformation into Paragon Service Dogs. The word "Paragon" represents excellence — a standard we are proud to uphold in training each of our pups, clients, dog handler/teams.



Last year we purchased our forever home. For the first time in our 45+ year history, we now own our own facility! It is an enchanting place on 5 acres in Longmont. It has been a profound gift for our dogs - allowing them so much space to train, exercise and play. It has a warm, welcoming and tranquil vibe for our wonderful volunteers, clients and community guests. We feel deeply blessed to call this home!

In 2024, one of our primary goals was to expand our volunteer program. The response was incredible! Last year, our volunteers contributed an astounding 48,000 hours of service. Their dedication and kindness continue to inspire us every day. We are profoundly grateful for everything our volunteers do, as their support is foundational to our mission. To our volunteers, thank you!



Celebration and Expansion of Our PAWS'abilities Program!

One of our programs we hold closest to our hearts is the PAWS'abilities program, in partnership with the Wyoming Medium Correctional Institute (WMCi) in Torrington, Wyoming.



Just before Christmas, we hosted a special Holiday Appreciation lunch to honor PAWS'abilites and THANK all of our dedicated Inmate Handlers. We are deeply grateful for their tireless guidance, support, training, commitment, and love for our puppies in their care. This event was an opportunity to celebrate and thank them for the invaluable role they play in our mission.





During the holiday gathering, we had the pleasure of celebrating the incredible accomplishments of the handlers. The event was filled with delicious food, holiday treats, joyful moments, and all of us – staff and handlers – to spend time together. As a token of appreciation, the handlers even gifted us a beautiful Paragon cutting board, making the celebration even more memorable.

Construction Completion!



We are absolutely thrilled to share some exciting news — our brand-new kennel space is officially complete! This bright, airy facility has been thoughtfully designed to meet

all the daily living needs of our dogs, from feeding and grooming to providing seamless access to an outdoor run and a spacious exercise yard beyond. This incredible new space allows us to *triple* the number of dogs in advanced training at any given time, while also enabling us to explore new and expanded training opportunities.

The journey to bring this kennel to life was truly a labor of love, and we are profoundly grateful to our amazing team of volunteers who made it possible. A special heartfelt *thank you* goes to volunteers Mike Heiden and Dale Clausnitzer for dedicating countless hours to designing, building, outfitting, and perfecting this space. Their unmatched attention to detail has given us a kennel that is not only functional and efficient but also comfortable, peaceful, and inviting for our dogs and team alike.





Astro's Las Vegas Adventures!

One of our incredible clients, Harvey, recently traveled to Las Vegas with his hearing dog, Astro. Harvey met Astro in 2023, his soon-to-be hearing dog, and a remarkable partnership began!

Since then, Harvey and Astro have embarked on many adventures together, including attending career fairs and, most recently, their trip to Las Vegas! Harvey wanted to share their story to highlight Astro's unwavering dedication, dependability, and exceptional training, which were on full display throughout their trip.

We were visiting family in Las Vegas, and Astro demonstrated exemplary service dog behavior during a full day of adventures.

The day began with a quick visit to a family member's house, followed by a stop at Trader Joe's. After a light lunch, we headed to the Mandalay Bay Aquarium. The aquarium was hot, humid, dark, and incredibly crowded! Despite the challenging environment, Astro calmly admired the smaller fish with quiet interest while ignoring the larger ones entirely.



Our next stop via the tram the Bellagio gardens and water display, where we faced bustling crowds. Surrounded by tempting dropped food and enthusiastic strangers reaching out to pet him, Astro stayed perfectly focused, keeping his attention and eye contact on me at all times.

After such a packed and exciting day, Astro was understandably exhausted. However, even in his tired state, he performed his duties flawlessly. When the smoke alarm went off, Astro alerted me immediately, proving once again that, no matter how draining the day, he prioritizes my safety above all else.

Astro's calm and focused behavior throughout the day was a testament to the incredible capabilities of service dogs. He truly shined as an example of the remarkable things a well-trained service dog can accomplish.

Happy New Year!

From,

Harvey and Astro

Puppy Raiser Spotlight: Heather and Dancer



Heather has worked tirelessly to care for Dancer, providing the foundational skills needed to become an exceptional service dog. Her dedication and hard work are truly inspiring!

Recently, our trainers hosted a puppy class at a local Starbucks, where they had the pleasure of seeing Dancer in action. The trainers were impressed by Dancer's intense focus amidst all the lively puppy energy. "That is what we like to see," one trainer remarked with pride.

Heather's contributions go beyond raising Dancer. She has been meticulously documenting each milestone with photos and videos, capturing Dancer's journey in a way that is both unique and priceless. From Dancer's love of sticks to her growth spurts, Heather's blackboard updates have given us, and Dancer's future partner, a rare and beautiful glimpse into her development.

We are grateful for Heather's dedication, love, and creativity. Her efforts have created cherished memories for all of us and laid the groundwork for Dancer to become a life-changing service dog.





We are looking forward to seeing her in advanced training!

Heather, we are so deeply grateful for all the commitment, support and guidance you have given Dancer. She is so blessed to have lived her puppyhood wrapped in your love and we are so blessed to have you as such an important member of the Paragon Team!

Dog Diaries: Dancer Edition





Hi Friends!

Guess what! I'm so excited to share that after months of hard work, I've officially started advanced training joining my half-sibling, Danny! 🐾

My first week has been busy, exciting and a little exhausting. I got to explore this gigantic store called Scheels, which had so many fascinating smells. Plus, I had a blast playing with all my service dog-in-training pals!

All the new sights, smells, and people can feel a bit overwhelming, but the trainers say I'm doing great and settling in wonderfully. They even complimented my loose-leash walking and said I'm doing an awesome job relaxing quietly in my comfy new bed.

I can't wait to see what fun and exciting things are ahead!

Thanks for Reading!

Thank you for taking the time to reflect on an incredible 2024 with us! This year was filled with meaningful changes and tremendous growth, all made possible by the support of individuals like you. We are so excited to see what the next year brings!

So, stay tune for more adventures!

With gratitude,
The Paragon Team 🐾❤️



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