

DoveLewis
Canine Therapy Teams
PORTLAND AREA CANINE THERAPY TEAMS

**August 2023
Newsletter**

What a Par-Tee!









Celebrating 50 Years at the Block Party!











Unforgettable Honor Flights







A Little Bliss for Firefighters

Within a few months after bringing Bliss into my life, my home and entire community were nearly wiped out by the Riverside Fire in 2020. I don't know a single person here in Estacada that doesn't carry a little extra worry when summer comes, we learned all to quickly how fast a wildfire can spread, how far it can throw embers to start a new fire, how dangerous it can be, and how incredibly hard-working these crews are to keep us safe.

Many different groups put a lot on the line when these fires start. There's so much that goes into staffing, organizing, dispatching, and making sure crews are kept safe as they risk their lives for humans and nature alike. In 2020, remember seeing trucks coming from all over the country as well as Canada and Mexico. There were planes and helicopters buzzing overhead. My dogs and I evacuated quickly, and we were lucky to have friends who offered us a place to stay while we waited to hear if we had a house to come home to. Fortunately, we did. But some people we know were not as lucky as we were.

Fast forward to a few weeks ago. A fire broke out about 5 miles from town. Residents in our little community were quick to check on others, make sure they had a plan, and get ready even before we were told to. I had my bag ready; medications, dog food, chews etc. And then all we could do is wait. During this time, I had been checking online to see how it's going, as well as pacing from the front door to the back door to anxiously look up at the sky.

While on Facebook I came across the Department of Forestry's page. They were giving regular updates on the 224 Fire, keeping our community a little more informed and comforted. Fortunately for us, not many fires were going on at the time offering our area more resources, the weather cooperated, and crews were able to get it under control quickly. I couldn't feel more grateful, and this time I had a way to give back.

I reached out to the Department of Forestry via social media. By the end of the day, Bliss and I were showing up at fire camp to spread a little happiness.





At first, we greeted the people organizing, there were multiple departments there with multiple roles. Bliss stepped in, being her usual self, pressing her shoulder against people and nudging them with her nose insisting on pets. Then, we got to go to the camp area where most of the fire fighters were staying while off duty to eat and rest before going out again. I was surprised to find that most of the boots on the ground for this fire were filled by women in custody. As we approached the crews, the person from the Forest Service called out, "Therapy dog, anybody want to pet this dog?" Three women literally dropped everything and rushed over, Bliss stepped in, and I was immediately moved.

These women were tired, hot, sore, and seemingly emotionally tapped out as well. One got down on the ground with Bliss, another talking sweetly to her as she held Bliss' face between her hands.

But the third is the one that got me. She burst into tears as she petted Bliss, and turned to me and said, "You have no idea what a big deal this is, it's been so long since I've been able to pet a dog". And that was the moment when I realized I just had my most impactful visit to date, and absolutely felt like my goal to give back has been achieved.

At the end of our visit, we were asked to come back in the morning to greet the folks coming off the night shift. We arrived just before 6AM, and as soon as Bliss came out of the car, people were calling out to her. Bliss visited each person with enthusiasm, did her rounds while they did their debrief, and again visited the camp. There were a handful of contracted crews packing up, so we got to give them a little love, wish them safe travels, and thank them for all they do.

Providing visits to strangers is great, providing visits to strangers that impacted you personally brings it to a whole new level. We are proud to be part of the PACTT team, and so very grateful for an opportunity to give back in this way.

-Nancy & Bliss



Submit Your Back to School Photos for the October Newsletter!

How'd you spend your summer? What about your plans for going back to school? Share your pups' photos as we look forward to school being back in session.

[Click Here to Share Your Photos!](#)

Dogs, Beer, & A Whole Lot of Fun! Dogtoberfest 2023

September 30 | 12-4 PM | Lucky Lab Hawthorne

Show off your pup's one-of-a-kind personality in this year's Costume Contest, enjoy an exclusive Dogtoberfest brew from Lucky Lab, create art with your pup, and more. All in support of the DoveLewis Blood Bank!

[Click Here to Register for the Costume Contest](#)



PACTT Merchandise is Waiting for You!



Check out all the PACTT merchandise available for you including the polos with bright summer colors! [Click Here to Shop Now!](#)

*Merchandise is for certified PACTT teams only.



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