

Up

ISSUE 4

hope
takes
flight



Denver and
Skilled Companion
Dog Tammy

Up



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Hudson pops in to say "Hello!"



Dear Friend,

Hope isn't still.

It climbs, builds, and reaches for something just beyond where you are.

You can feel it in the shift from hesitation to trust. In the moment the world opens up again.

Because of you, it keeps going, gaining momentum. It becomes a life lifted up and forward.

Thank you for helping hope take flight.

Colleen Flaherty

Colleen Flaherty
Acting CEO

Up

ISSUE 4

A Publication of Dogs Inc

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and volunteers, we provide our dogs, expert instruction, and alumni support—at no cost to our clients.

Top-tier pedigrees, decades of research, and thousands of hours of training and love prepare our dogs for life-changing destinies.

Guide dogs lead. Service dogs heal. Skilled companion dogs comfort. And therapy dogs uplift.

dogsinc.org

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HERITAGE SOCIETY | WHY WE GIVE

“We’ve been involved with Dogs Inc since 2004 and have raised 16 puppies—and there’s one moment we still think about today. It was the time we watched a dog we raised stop his person before she stepped into traffic.

That’s the moment we saw firsthand how these dogs change lives.

Joining the Heritage Society felt like a natural way to make sure more people have that kind of independence and hope—and to help this work continue for years to come.”



Sue Croley & Bob Minthorn
Heritage Society Members



“

Cody gives me the
FREEDOM

to step out
into the world. I feel

HAPPY.

I feel

EMPOWERED.

He's the
complete package.

You can see the

LOVE

in everything he does.

And no matter what, he
knows I'm his person.

”

—Dr. Nadia Esani



DR. NADIA ESANI & GUIDE DOG CODY

All The Way Up

Denver stands before the swing.
Unsure of what the sky might bring.

She squints to find her way.
Her vision flickers, fades to gray.
The dark has taken things before.
What if it takes a little more?

She traces chain to waiting seat,
And feels the rubber at her feet.
She rises. Dips. Climbs back again.
The world tilts back and forth, and then...

On the ground, a tail beats time
Tammy's promise through each climb.
"Go on," her playmate seems to say,
"I'm right here. It's okay."

She soars.
She steadies.
With each sway,
Her doubt loosens, slips away.

Above, her heartbeat slows,
Below, her friend stays close.
Hope, in motion.
Love, devotion.



"I'd hoped that Denver would
always have a forever friend that
could comfort her when she was
sad, and with Tammy, she does."

—Jaclyn, Denver's mom



THE LIGHT THAT ECHOES

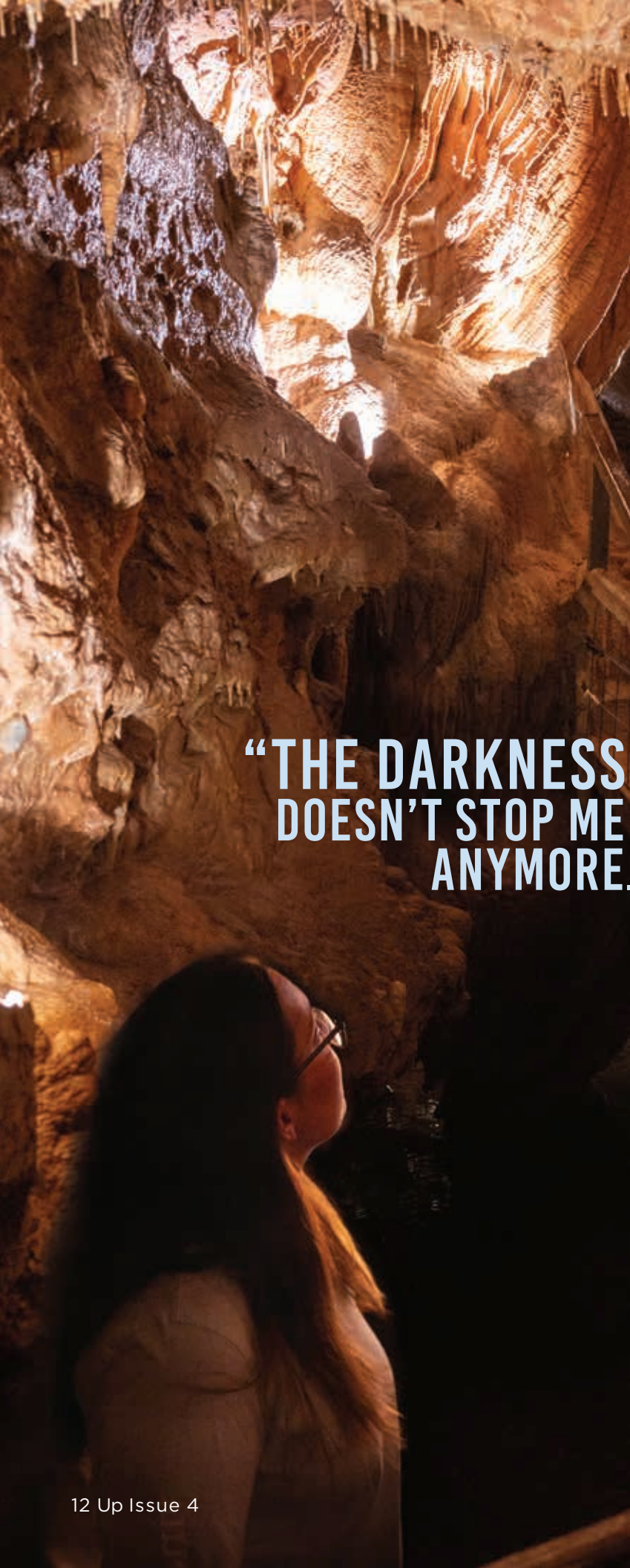
The water drips in a slow, steady rhythm like a leaky faucet. It echoes into small puddles on uneven earth.

I feel the ground slick under my sneakers as I take another step into the cave. I can almost hear my breath speak back to me as it bounces off the stone corridor.

I lift my arm to bring my fingertips to the damp wall, letting my hand slide along cold limestone.

BECCA AND GUIDE DOG BEAR EXPLORING THE CAVE STATE

Talking Rocks Cavern,
Branson West, Missouri



**“THE DARKNESS
DOESN’T STOP ME
ANYMORE.”**

With a few more steps,
the last bit of light slips
away as the cave’s mouth
seems to close behind us.

The edge of darkness.

On the tip of my tongue sits a
number. Count your steps. Always
count your steps.

And just as my voice cracks into
the hollowness of the underground
world ready to count my pace, I feel
a pull in my right hand. The harness.

Bear.

My guide.

My light.

I let out a laugh and let it dance along
the jagged walls as I tip my chin up to
the damp air and feel her paws pad along
the rocky ground.

She wags her tail, stepping in the shallow
puddles, illuminating a way through the
dark. A place that once sent me into a panic,
now my favorite tunnels to adventure—
with Bear at my side.

We move freely. I’m not counting my steps.
I’m feeling the wonders of the cave with my
best friend as my guide.

The darkness doesn’t stop me anymore.

Bear is the light. And the world
is ours to explore.



“Having Surfer means starting a new chapter, outlined by freedom instead of fear.”
—Zane Rich



FREEDOM

Zane Rich & Guide Dog Surfer

Filled with Purpose

U.S. Navy and Army Veteran Chris and Service Dog Brent

When the memories become too painful, you find a way to empty them.

It left Chris as a shell of a person.

No feelings of joy, no feelings of sadness—because feeling nothing at all was the only way to get through.

The mass casualties, the blasts, the faces that stuck in his mind with vengeance. They couldn't stay, so Chris emptied the His life compartmentalized.

"You put them all in a safe," Chris says.

"And you lock that safe door.

And you don't open it.

Ever."



“
The way
Brent
looks
at me.
Leans on me.
It opens the
floodgates.”

But his subconscious whispered to him, and as much as he tried to erase his memories, his body told his secrets through symptoms. Panic attacks, spiraling thoughts, impending doom . . . the wreckage in his mind as complex as the explosives he’d been trained to disarm. But there was no protocol for defusing his thoughts.

Lock them away.

“My nervous system was constantly overloaded,” he says. “I couldn’t be present in the moment.”

He knew something was wrong, and he

needed help. Deep therapy helped him unlock the safe and find a way out—to a place where service dog Brent had been waiting, tail wagging and paws ready to stay close.

With the firm pressure of his soft chin on Chris’s knee, Brent pulls his person out of the patterns of his mind and into a life that no longer passes him by.

“The way Brent looks at me. Leans on me. It opens the floodgates.”

Brent fills Chris with purpose, teaching him to be present and welcome emotion and connection.

What once felt empty now overflows with hope.

today, I'm chasing toys, making friends, and discovering the world one paw at a time.

Behind every Puppy Academy lesson is a future full of purpose.

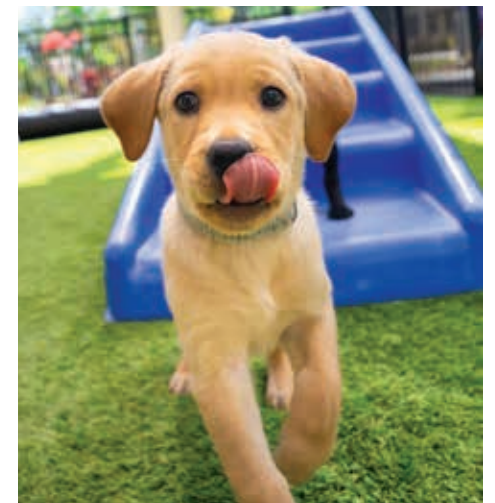
One day, I'll help someone navigate the world with greater confidence, independence, and hope.

Right now, I'm still a puppy.

But someday, I'll be someone's everything.



More than a puppy



HELP US REACH OUR \$500,000 GOAL

GIVE THE
College
Experience

Campus is buzzing with new furry students and a syllabus of learning and play.

As our dogs focus on their studies, they need your support to cover everything from meals to training, enrichment, and campus life.

Your encouragement tells them to dream big.

Your generosity gives them the chance at a bright future.

And one day, when they step onto that graduation stage next to the one who needs them most, it'll be because your help made every lesson possible.



DOGS INC

Learning advanced cues

Having fun and staying fit

Getting in my practice

Working with amazing trainers

GIVE TODAY

Every dollar you give by SEPTEMBER 1 will support the care and training our dogs need on their journeys to life-changing careers.

dogsinc.org/college



LATHA DAWN SULLIVAN AND SERVICE DOG RITA

A SENSE OF hope

She felt the weight every day.

The backpack, digging into her shoulders, filled to the brim with her glucose monitor, insulin, emergency pumps, apple juice. Everything Latha Dawn needed to survive.

It was the burden she'd carried ever since she could remember. A bit of sweetness for the moments when her sugar dropped too fast, hands cold and clammy. Insulin for the spikes.

Her bag was always packed with supplies, but the heaviest weight wouldn't quite fit.

She couldn't zip up the feeling of being different from the age of three. The constant awareness, measuring how much she could eat, how hard she could laugh, controlling every emotion and risk that might send her into danger.

"Diabetes doesn't allow days off. Diabetes is every day, every minute of

LOVE
THROUGH
THE
HIGHS
AND
LOWS.



the day," Latha Dawn says. "Any emotion I have controls my blood sugar."

And at night, when everything else settled, the weight pressed in the most. The fear of missing an alert from her monitor . . . and never waking up.

Now, before the alert can pierce the air, she feels the gentle pressure of a paw already there—Rita knows.

She senses the change in Latha Dawn, sometimes 30 minutes before technology even registers the subtle shift.

"Rita lets me know, and she doesn't stop until I wake up," she says. "And that takes my fear away."

Through life's highs and lows, Rita is by her side. And though the backpack is still there, the weight no longer rests on Latha Dawn alone.

With Rita the burden softens, and Latha Dawn feels lighter as the heaviness begins to lift.

Ways to Give



Put your annual giving to work—deepening your involvement and shaping something that lasts.

Donor-Advised Fund

Put funds already earmarked for philanthropy to great use by supporting our dogs.

Appreciated Stock

Turn appreciated assets into good—avoiding capital gains tax while creating new possibilities.



Get a monthly dose of puppy love delivered right to your inbox.

Every way you give is a step closer to hope.



Change the future through your will—sustaining the mission now and beyond.



Send a

Celebrate milestones, say thanks, or show sympathy with a little bit of puppy love.

IRA Distribution

Make your required distribution count—reducing taxable income and creating immediate results.



The distance from me to you.
A path paved by love and guided by hope.

Discover all the ways to give at dogsinc.org/give



A close-up photograph of a black dog, likely a Labrador Retriever, looking up at a person's hand. The dog's mouth is slightly open, showing its teeth and pink tongue. The person's hand is gently holding the dog's face. The person is wearing a blue plaid shirt and a silver metal watch. The background is a brick-paved surface.

Love
looks
up.

Chris and Service Dog Brent