

# **K9 Care Montana, LLC**

## **Annual Report for the Year 2022**



**As we expanded our work over the past few years it became increasingly clear that we needed an indoor training facility...that Montana winter thing we all know and love. Blessedly, we had generous supporters who agreed and now it's a reality. Details included in the report.**

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**This is the annual report for calendar year 2022. Its purpose is to update our board and supporters regarding our accomplishments in 2022 and outline the focus of efforts in 2023.**

**Remembrance:** The scourge of suicide continues almost unabated. There are scores of men and women in America who choose to take their lives every day. According to one source, the average daily count is 132 which includes 44 veterans. Each fatal choice is deeply and exclusively personal and I would not begin to suggest I understand the complexities or can offer broad solutions. What K9CMT has done and will continue to do is introduce its service dogs into situations where the dog might help bring lifesaving balance to the veteran's life.

*“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.”*

**Joshua 1:9**

**Losses close to my heart:** A friend of mine sometimes remarks when he loses a friend, “the circle keeps getting smaller.”



Well, it got a little smaller for K9CMT and me personally in 2022. Sapphire was the very first of our service dogs. She took up her duties in January 2012. We released her from her pain this past December. She was a righteous dog and will forever be missed.



Sadly, one of our veteran recipients passed in the spring of 2022, Lynessa Van Kirk, SGT, USA. She had named her dog “Hero” honoring those with whom she deployed. I attended her burial in Bozeman on behalf of K9CMT.



Paul Newman and Tom Cruise starred in the movie “Color of Money.” It was about pool sharks. Elaine Cross wasn't in that movie but, she was a heck of a pool shooter and my partner in a bunch of friendly games. She came up with the name “K9 Care Montana” and was a member of the board. She left us this past May. What a great lady.

**At the end of the day, 2022 was a good year for K9CMT.** Here are a few of the more significant highlights:



- We have ten new service dogs in training including two in cooperation with Heart of the Valley animal shelter in Bozeman. Two of those projects are dogs which will help mitigate the effects of autism in children.

- We have secured **volunteer air transport** for some of our projects that reach east of the Mississippi. The pilot is a West Point graduate, Adam Lary (USA CPT, Ret.) who has already flown two missions at no cost to K9CMT.



- Speaking of flying, we celebrated a Missoula TSA who graciously for our participants. Bozeman TSA is well. This is more than just process confidence and lessens stress for both handler by familiarizing them with boarding.



ten-year relationship with provided relevant training extending that courtesy as stuff, it increases team's the service dog and its what to expect on



- Our 2250 square foot indoor training facility is complete and up and running at our operational center in Livingston. Beyond serving our training needs, we expect to make this facility available for use by like minded not for profit organizations focused on healing veterans. Neither K9CMT nor others permitted use of the building will be charged rent or a fee. In addition to our trainers and recipients we will use the new training facility for events and activities that are beneficial to our mutual needs on a year-round basis.

**A fuller life or looking for normal:** The traumas of war rob some veterans of many things, their mobility and feeling secure in their own skins are probably the most acute among their losses. Service dogs can only help so much. That's why K9CMT works with the good folks of Montana to create outdoor experiences that become part of the path back to normal.



- **The state of Montana continues to validate our status as one of the “Great Nonprofits”.** This and many similar endorsements are part of our growing reputation:

*“Macy has brought so much joy in my life from the day I held her in my arms to foster her as a pup. Now as a trained service dog, she is able to help me mitigate my PTS symptoms and slowly incorporate myself back into society, knowing she has my 6.”*



- **Turning to 2023.** When you examine the attached 2022 P&L you’ll note the largest expression of revenue we have ever experienced, but that number was achieved through the extraordinary generosity of a few family foundations and individuals (to protect their privacy we never identify them) and it blessedly replaced funds closed off to us by Covid. Previously, we staged public events at various venues that served to spread awareness and grow the donor base. Those have not taken place in almost two years now. So, in the months ahead here are a few of the approaches we intend to follow.
  - We’ll reignite our media campaign regarding the state service dog law signed by Governor Bullock in 2019. It’s a beneficial bill and K9CMT is obliged to help with its implementation through statewide PSA among other things. We’ll be careful and our approach and public statements vetted by an attorney.
  - We will model a program here in Park County that we began in Philipsburg by seeking out highschoolers for a “Junior Trainer Program;” and we will reach out to MSU students hoping to interest those in related fields in volunteering for positions with us such ‘as animal behaviorist’, ‘not for profit sector marketing,’ and such.
  - We will design and stage a few public events that will serve to increase community knowledge of who we are and the importance of our work. If we do it well, we’ll grow our volunteer base and donor base.

- Finally, we are going to take a careful look at ourselves. You have enabled us through your generous giving and K9CMT should and will insure the diligent and productive use of those donations. Here are just some of the reevaluations that will occur, not with elimination in mind, rather optimization.
  - Autism service dog program: We are the only non profit service dog provider who gifts service dogs to children and families challenged by autism . Can we do it better? Can we grow the program?
  - Mobility service dog program: Again we are the only not for profit in the state who provided these highly trained dogs. Same questions. Is there a better way to do it? Can we grow it?
  - Fund raising, volunteerism, cooperating with like-minded organizations. It's all on the table for reevaluation.

We're in our second decade of service now. Enabled by those who continue to see value in our work. I suppose that just about every day I puzzle through the question of "successorship." God eased me through a pretty big medical scare this past summer. That event caused me to focus more tightly on the question, " who will take up the leash when that dog's pull is just too much for me?" Don't worry, we'll get it right when the time comes, it's too important not to.

Blessings and thanks to you all.

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Founder and CEO  
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Enclosure: 2022 P&L