



# **OPERATION FREEDOM PAWS**

**2025 - NEWSLETTER - Q1**





# Merging Paths

## Tyler and Tucson's Journey



### Have you ever wondered how an OFP journey begins?

Meet Tucson! Tucson was found with a litter of puppies in central California. The puppies were brought to a rescue in hopes of finding them homes. The rescue recognized something special and reached out to Mary. After going through a criteria screening not one but two puppies were selected to be service dogs! Tucson and Memphis then began their journey to Operation Freedom Paws to “meet their match”.

An Army veteran, Tyler, served seven years of active-duty service including a one-and-a-half-year deployment to Guantanamo Bay as a Security Officer. Upon leaving the Army Tyler immediately joined CAL FIRE, but quickly realized he was struggling with returning to civilian life. Anxiety, difficult memories, and PTSD symptoms pushed him to reach out to the VA for help. His psychiatrist prescribed a service dog as the best path forward for Tyler and recommended Operation Freedom Paws.



Tyler reached out to OFP for help, and after entering the program Mary helped Tyler to match with Tucson!

*“Tucson provided me with support and centering in more ways than I could explain. As the bond and relationship grows I find myself steadier every day,”* said Tyler. In January of 2025 Tyler was deployed to the L.A. wildfires for three months leaving his family and Tucson behind. *“Returning to Tucson was such a joy, and we are back in training together.”*

Tyler and Tucson have resumed their training program and working towards certification.





## Message From Mary

### "Tails" of Change

2025 has proven to be a challenging year on so many fronts. Just as the country has and is going through changes, so have we here at OFP. We have had a change in staff, some have left, which allowed us to bring in new staff members with new fresh ideas, which is actually a very exciting time for us. WE are strong and growing. The need for our services will only increase as more changes are made to the services the government offers or cuts that they make. It will take a village made of community non profits to help make the world better for those who truly need and deserve our support. We continue to pull dogs from shelters and add new clients. The year got off to a slow start, yet we still managed to add 4 new clients and their families.

In 2016 we had 260 clients, 9 years later, we added our 579 Client and are on track to add at least 20 to 25 more this year. We could not do it without you.

We are asking you, our readers and donors, to contribute to sustain us while we continue to grow as a nonprofit, and help us expand our impact. Thanks to your support, we will achieve our 2025 goals. With all the changes in our country, we need you more than ever.

We are excited about everything our program and mission can offer our clients, their families and the public. Your support over the years has meant the world to OFP, our staff and most of all our clients and their families. You are helping us change and save lives.

To our clients: may your adventures grow; may life's challenges be less mountains and more speedbumps; and may your heart be ever full because you know your service dog has your six!

Mary Cortani

Founder and Executive Director



# Ongoing at OFP

## What We have Been Up To

- 4 clients have been matched with dogs!
- You may have noticed work on the relay field is under way! It has been a huge undertaking but we are nearing completion. Soon we will have new grass!

Building “B” is looking and feeling fresh! With insulation being installed in January it has improved quality of life and comfort. We’re grateful for everyone’s patience while the install took place.

## Building “B” Insulation Install



## Jersey Mike's Day of Giving



Thank you to the 7 Jersey Mike's locations that chose OFP as their charity last month, and to their many customers who supported our service dog teams.

Gilroy, Watsonville, Salinas, Danville, Pleasanton, Dublin & San Mateo—you ROCKED it!

# Event Highlights

## Crab Feed



A huge thank you to everyone who bid, donated, volunteered, and joined us for an unforgettable evening of impact, community, and—of course—delicious crab!

A special thank you to Old City Hall Restaurant!

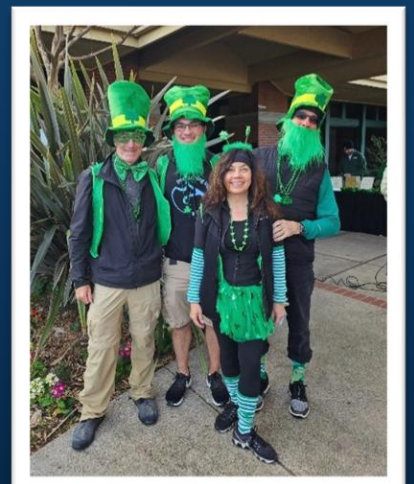
We're especially grateful to our Founder and Executive Director, Mary Cortani, and to our veteran client Saagar. Your words moved everyone in the room!

## Shamrock Open



Thank you to the Coyote Creek Golf Club for supporting us at their 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Shamrock Open Golf Tournament!

The proceeds raised by The Touchstone Foundation will go towards supporting our mission!





# Upcoming Events

## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Golf Tournament

OPERATION FREEDOM PAWS  
**14th Annual Charity Golf  
Tournament & Awards Luncheon**

Friday, May 9, 2025 • Coyote Creek Golf Club • 8:30am Shotgun Start

Come join us for a 4-person  
Shotgun Scramble,  
Awards Luncheon, and  
Silent Auction!

**18-Hole Round • Range Balls • Cart • Light Breakfast • Goodie Bag**

**Premium Luncheon Buffet • Winner Prizes • and more!**

Proceeds go to funding lifesaving service dog teams to empower veterans, first responders, children and others with disabilities.

**For more information:** <https://swing2savelives.givesmart.com>

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## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual “Paws With Patriots” Wine Gala

We are excited for this year’s Wine Gala! Due to the ongoing work along the Llagas Creek and in our relay field this year’s Wine Gala will be **October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025**. Stay tuned for more to come!

# New Year's Resolutions

From Our Daycare and Boarding Friends



Teddy & Rosie

Run 10 more laps!



Echo

Audition for American Idol



Abigail

Find more tennis balls



Winnie

Have a dry 2025



Ruthie

Eat less carbs!



Beau & Belle

Share more with each other

We offer a variety of services to the public including boarding, daycare, and training. The money we make from these services goes to supporting our mission!

For more information call **(408)-683-9010** or visit  
[www.operationfreedompaws.org](http://www.operationfreedompaws.org)



# How Operation Freedom Paws Supports the Community

Operation Freedom Paws (OFP) empowers veterans, first responders, children, and adults with disabilities by teaching them to train their own service dogs. This unique 48-week program fosters a deep bond between the individual and their dog, promoting healing and independence. Most of the dogs are rescues, matched carefully to meet each client's physical and psychological needs. The program is offered at no cost to clients, requiring only their commitment to the training process.

## How You Can Support Operation Freedom Paws



Every contribution, big or small, makes a difference. Join us in empowering individuals to lead more independent and fulfilling lives. **Visit our website and donate today.**

Stay connected—follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn for the latest news, inspiring stories, and upcoming events.

- **Donate:** Your financial contributions help cover the costs of training service dog teams and providing comprehensive support services.  
<https://operationfreedompaws.org/support-us/#waystogive>
- **Attend Fundraising Events:** Participate in events like the annual Crab Feed, Golf Tournament or Wine Gala. These events raise crucial funds and awareness for OFP's mission.
- **Volunteer:** Offer your time and skills to support various aspects of OFP's programs and operations.
- **Spread the Word:** Share OFP's mission and success stories with your network to increase awareness and support.



**OPERATION  
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