A Wirlwind Evening

Believet celebrated an incredible 5th annual Spring Fundraiser hosted by The Grand in Northfield, Minnesota on March 29th. Every year, the fundraiser attracts new supporters and dog lovers making, this year reach the venue's maximum capacity. The night started off with a silent auction featuring exclusive items such as a Believet logo bean bag board set. Guests also enjoyed appetizers, a live auction, and musical entertainment by Bernie King and the Guilty Pleasures.

For the first year, Believet introduced a live auction at the fundraiser, and the result was absolutely stunning. The live auction, “Cash for Canines”, included a Tasting Tour of 10,000 Drops Craft Distillers, a two-hour in-home dog behavior consultation, and the opportunity to sponsor two Believet dogs, Sonny and Wags.

The room roared with excitement as the bids flew in. The auction spotters could not keep up with paddles lifting in every direction. Two bidders must have had very problematic dogs at home to start a bid war over the in-home dog behavior consultation! Guests melted when it was time to bring out Wags, an 8-week-old golden retriever puppy who was born without a tail. The goal was to raise $30,000 to cover Wags’ entire service training cost. An incredible $37,445 was raised from the Cash for Canines live auction which will be used to cover training costs, veterinary needs, and to adopt new service dog prospects from shelters.

Believet volunteers were in awe as the donations flowed, raising well over the night’s goal and amounting to more than $63,000. Executive director, Sam Daly, called it a “whirlwind night”, holding back tears of gratitude.

Believet is so thankful for all of the community support for the program as each spring fundraiser continues to exceed expectations.
Volunteer Spotlight

You don’t have to be a psychology major to outsmart a dog, but it sure helps! Brittany Kvittem-Barr, of Wanamingo, Minnesota, interned this summer at Believet’s training facility in Northfield. A senior at Wartburg College in Iowa, she says, “I became interested in training dogs from a leadership class I took in the fall which involved caring for a single dog”. From that class, Brittany got involved with training service dogs for an Iowa-based service dog group called Retrieving Freedom.

Brittany heard about Believet from a friend and started volunteering five days a week after Memorial Day. What she likes about training at Believet is that she gets to work with more than one dog and see the veterans who will one day be recipients of her work.

Believet would like to thank Brittany for all her hard work and wish her success in her future studies.

Featured Dog: Oscar

In December 2018, Oscar made his way from an animal shelter in Arkansas to Golden Valley Humane Society in Minnesota.

Before being adopted, Believet volunteers began watching Oscar on the shelter’s live-cam and quickly decided it was worth evaluating him.

Oscar was adopted December 6th and started his journey to become a service dog. In the weeks after adoption, Oscar began to show his happy, playful personality. He is motivated by affection and praise, preferring belly rubs over treats. Oscar’s favorite pastime is sunbathing in the grass.

Currently, Oscar spends a lot of time training at Menards to improve his service skills. He is an easy going, non-reactive, affectionate dog. With the proper skills he has the potential to be a great service dog.

A Change of Pace

After serving on Believet’s Board of Directors since 2016, Believet is saying farewell to Board Chair and prior Board Secretary, Ann Gosack. Ann has been a great asset to the organization. Ann initiated several improvements to the board’s operations including the revamping of the website making it more user friendly. She was instrumental in bringing greater attention to our mission through various fundraiser events - including our annual spring fundraiser at The Grand in Northfield.

Being an advocate for rescue animals, Ann was moved by the story of Marine Sargeant Craig Grossi and his dog, Fred, whom he rescued from the desert of Afghanistan. She organized a presentation inviting them to Bloomington, Minnesota, for “An Evening with Craig and Fred”. Her leadership, enthusiasm, and passion for dogs will be greatly missed.

Stepping Forward

Charles Kenow

Believet welcomes new Board member Charles Kenow. Charles is a retired US Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel and past administrator for the Minnesota Department of Public Safety. He is a graduate of the University of Minnesota and Minnesota State University Mankato. Charles volunteers his time several days a week to work with the service dogs, trainers, and veteran clients - giving him valuable insight to Believet’s daily operations. As a dog lover, he “enjoys the opportunity to help train a variety of dogs and contribute to serving our veterans in any way I can”.

New Board Member Charles Kenow and Service dog in training Auggie.

Believet™ Canine Service Partners specializes in freedom for veterans, dogs with a mission by providing highly skilled assistance dogs, free of charge, to disabled military veterans.

3885 100th Street East Northfield, Minnesota
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**Past Events (cont.)**

**Fred the Afghan**
On May 3rd, Believet had the opportunity to invite Craig and Fred to the Masonic Heritage Center in Bloomington, Minnesota. His story told the true power of a dog, and how strong the human-dog connection can be.

**Stepping Forward (cont.)**

**Shirley Rosett**
As a new board member, Shirley Rosett brings more than 30 years experience working with non-profit organizations in fundraising. It’s Shirley’s hope to carry forward the incredible mission of Believet and the positive impact it has brought to the lives of the veterans who’ve given so much to us all. Shirley’s husband, Ron, served his military duty as a veterinary technician in Vietnam. Together they enjoy a great love of dogs and are astounded at what the Believet organization has been able to accomplish in its work to support our military veterans. Shirley, and her husband Ron, reside in Faribault, Minnesota, with their dog Roxy.

**George Wickstrom**
George is a graduate of Drake University with a Bachelor of Science degree in business and engineering. In 1965, George moved from Chicago, Illinois, to Faribault, Minnesota. He has a variety of managerial experiences in manufacturing, including working at Nuttings in Faribault. Before retiring, George became a financial advisor at Northwestern Mutual. George is active in several organizations including Hope Center, Salvation Army, and Rotary. An animal lover, he is a strong supporter of the Believet mission.

**Past Events**

**Fred the Afghan**
Believet was inspired by the story of veteran sergeant Craig Grossi. While on patrol with his Marine RECON team in Afghanistan, Grossi came across a scruffy, matted, and stumpy legged dog out in the desert. Curious about the dog’s happy, friendly demeanor (that was not common in other feral dogs), Grossi offered the dog a piece of jerky and instantly made a friend. After naming the dog Fred, Grossi knew he had to get the dog back stateside. Craig and Fred now tour America appearing on talk shows including Good Morning America, radio shows, and venues to tell his story of what he calls “stubborn positivity”.

**10,000 Drops**
The Flip Flop Formal hosted by 10,000 Drops Craft Distillers and Corks & Pints in Faribault, Minnesota brought in a crowd to support Believet on July 27th. The Luau themed fundraiser included tiki torches, palm trees, a Hawaiian hog roast donated by Nelson Meats, live music from Allen & The Brothers Whiskey band and a pool for the dogs to enjoy their own tropical vacation. Thank you to all who came out to support Believet!
Believet Motorcycle Ride

Believet volunteer and Army veteran, David Benson, also a St. Paul Fire Fighter, was on an emergency search and rescue. While on his search, David saw a dog laying in a 10’ gully and went in to investigate. The dog had been missing for almost 24 hours, was in shock, and dehydrated. Thankfully, with some care, water, and a scan of his microchip ID, the dog was returned to his owners.

Dave to the Rescue

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The day of the motorcycle ride, David was surprised to see the dog, Ace, with his grateful family. The family knew about the ride and came to thank David personally for saving their dog.

Service Dogs at the Fair

2019 marked Believet’s 5th year attending the “Great Minnesota Get Together”. The Minnesota State Fair dedicates a day to our military service men and women. The event is an excellent way for veterans and active service members to collaborate with military organizations. Believet gains a lot of awareness each year on Military Appreciation Day.

Pups in the Park

On the tenth of August, Believet held its second annual Volunteer Appreciation Day to give a small thank you to our wonderful volunteers. Our volunteers are an important part of our mission. Without them, our organization wouldn’t be possible. A special thank you to volunteers Patty and Dave Benson for planning our appreciation day. Thank you to Captain Ken’s and Quinn and Cindy Willmarth for donating the food.