

‘Having a Service Dog Has Given Me My Life Back!’

With the support of her service dog Athena, Andrea Melcher has completed thousands of community service hours while #StillServing

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Andrea Melcher served in Afghanistan as a member of the special ops support unit, but much of her time was spent assisting the 75th Ranger Regiment as a member of the tactical human intelligence team.

After service, SGT Melcher joined VFW Post 9126 near Tulsa, Oklahoma. While she was pulling its float in a Veterans Day parade, Melcher met a special dog.

“Athena kept finding us when we stopped and would try to jump into my truck!” Melcher said. “She was wearing an ‘adopt me’ vest, and after the fourth or fifth time she escaped her handler, we decided she chose us and that we had to adopt her.”

When she met Athena, Melcher had just suffered a fifth miscarriage and lost her previous service dog, Sheba.

“Athena couldn’t have found me at a better time,” she said.

Today, Athena is set to become Post 9126’s official mascot. With her support, Melcher has completed thousands of community service hours while #StillServing at the local and state levels of the VFW.

“I love to help veterans, and Athena helps me to be able to do that,” she said. “Having a service dog has literally given me my life back!”

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