Sam
The Army Dog

Happy 234th Birthday U.S. Army!
Foreword

The last time we celebrated the Army’s Birthday, we read a story about the Army’s history and what it’s like to be a part of a Family . . . The Army Family.

We had such a good time celebrating last year, that we wanted to do it again. And we wanted to continue the story of our Army Family but this time tell the tale of “Sam, The Army Dog.”

We know you’ll enjoy this story.

Happy 234th Birthday to our Army. Stay “Army Strong!!!”

George W. Casey, Jr.
General, Chief of Staff - Army

Pete Geren
Secretary of the Army
Hi! My name is Jack and this is my dog, Sam. Here is a picture of my family. There’s Dad, me, my sister Susan, Mom and Sam. We all live on an Army Post.
My Dad is a Staff Sergeant in the United States Army. That means he’s a Noncommissioned Officer – an NCO for short. He fixes helicopters. Mom is a Department of the Army Civilian. She works in the Army Child Development Center.
There sure are a lot of different kinds of jobs in the Army! When I grow up, I want to work in the CDC just like Mom. Susan wants to be a Soldier, just like Dad.
Sam and I talk a lot. He said Mom and Dad’s jobs got him thinking.

Every day he sees Dad put on his uniform and go to work protecting our country. Dad is very proud to be an NCO.
He sees Mom serve her country by taking care of children of Soldiers and Civilians when they work. She’s very proud of her job too.
I want to be an Army Dog!
Sam said, “All day long I just bark and chase birds. Hmm, I wonder if the Army has a place for me to be all the Dog I can be. I want to be an Army Dog and help people, too!”
On Monday, Sam had a dream. He dreamed he was a big, huge Labrador Retriever who joined the Army National Guard. His fur was black and he had a powerful nose. In his dream, there was a BIG snow storm and Sam helped the National Guard “sniff out” people who needed help. He knew that rescuing people was an important Army job, and in his dream, he felt like a hero.
On Tuesday, Sam and I played catch. He barked and chased the birds. Sam said, “I wonder how I get to be an Army Dog?” I told him, “You’ll find a way, Sam. You’ll find a way.”
On Wednesday, Sam had a dream. He dreamed he was a big, huge Dalmatian Army Civilian Firefighter Dog. His fur was white and he was covered in black spots. He sat on the fire truck right next to the firefighters. He helped save people from fires. He knew that putting out fires was an important Army job, and in his dream, he felt like a hero.
On Thursday, Sam didn’t bark much or chase many birds. He told the neighborhood children he really wanted to serve his country. One of the children said, “We serve our country because we are very brave when our Moms and Dads are deployed far, far away. “Wow,” said Sam, “Army children sure are special! I want to be an everyday hero just like all of you!” The children said, “You’ll find a way, Sam. You’ll find a way.”
On Friday, Sam had a dream. He dreamed he was a big, huge German Shepherd in the Military Police K-9 Corps. His fur was black and brown. He helped the MPs keep the Families who lived on the Post safe.

He knew that guarding the Post was an important Army job, and in his dream, he felt like a hero.
On Saturday, Sam was very quiet. He wouldn’t play catch. He didn’t chase a single bird. Sam thought to himself, “I’m not a big, huge dog.”
I’m not a Labrador Retriever. I’m not a Dalmatian. I’m not a German Shepherd. I’m just a plain old medium-sized tan dog. I’m not special. I’ll never be an Army Dog. The Army won’t have a job for me.” Sam was very sad. I said, “You’ll find a way, Sam. You’ll find a way.”
On Sunday, Mom said she had a surprise. She said, “It’s June 14th. Today is the Army’s birthday. We are going to the Post Hospital to celebrate with the Soldiers who are patients. We are going to a birthday party!”
When we got to the hospital, we saw the great, big Army birthday cake. There were so many candles, we knew this was going to be something special.

Happy Birthday Army!
Susan put a big yellow bow around Sam’s neck. It said, “Happy Birthday, Army!” He felt so handsome! I gave Sam a basket full of birthday treats to carry to the patients. Sam had never had such an important job before!
All afternoon Sam went from room to room wagging his tail and giving treats to the Soldiers and their Families. He saw how everybody – the Moms, the Dads, and the children are all important to the Army.
Wherever he went, people smiled and gave him lots of hugs and shouted, “Happy Birthday, Army!”
Then it HAPPENED! Sam rounded a corner and couldn’t believe his eyes. Sitting in the hallway was a dog wearing a special scarf Sam had never seen.

I said: “That’s Cordymay. She volunteers at the hospital and is very good at making our Soldiers feel better.”
“Sam! You have all the right stuff . . . a waggy tail, a wet nose and a BIG, HUGE heart. You can be a volunteer, just like her! The Doctors said we can call you Sam, The ARMY Dog!!”

Sam jumped for joy. The Army had a job for him! Mom and Dad said Sam could visit the Soldiers whenever he wanted.

“I found a way!,” Sam shouted, “I found a way!”
Sam was finally an Army Dog! He didn’t have to be a big, huge fancy dog. He could just be himself and serve his country.

When Sam went to sleep that night, he didn’t dream about being a hero. He dreamed about how proud he was to serve REAL heroes – the Soldiers who keep our country free. Sam knew, in his heart, he was truly a member of the Army Team. He knew that together, we are

ARMY STRONG!
"Honorary NCO"
Sam
The Army Dog

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