

PAW PRINTS



INTRODUCING OUR NEWEST PROGRAM

Meet Benji, one of a pair of Service Dogs supporting the mental health of fire fighters and burn victims as part of our new Operational Stress Intervention Dog program.



BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS



BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS

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The mission of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs is to meet the demand for professionally trained Guide Dogs, Autism Service Dogs and OSI-PTSD Service Dogs for citizens of British Columbia and Alberta.



ON THE COVER: Peter Hansen, Home Away Manager for the Burn Fund, with Operational Stress Intervention Dog, Benji. Photo by BC & Alberta Guide Dogs

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

CEO: William S. Thornton, GDMI

Having just completed our 25th Jubilee year, I am very excited about the next 25 years starting with a big bang. We have just finalized a recruitment campaign to take on four new apprentice instructors.

Despite COVID, we graduated 31 new working teams in 2021, a record year for the organization. Congratulations and thanks to the puppy raisers, adult dog boarders and our professional Instructors.

I'm proud to announce that BC & Alberta Guide Dogs will host the International Guide Dog Federation's biannual professional conference. We are looking forward to welcoming our global colleagues from 34 countries in April 2023.



It is my pleasure to mention that in August, we will proudly be hosting the 25th Annual London Drugs, Howie Meeker Memorial Golf for Guide Dogs, to be held at Mayfair Lakes Golf & Country Club.

Thank you all for being there for our first 25 years. We collectively change lives and build stronger, healthier communities across BC and Alberta with your generous support.

I trust that you remain proud of the achievements of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs.

Handwritten signature of William S. Thornton

William S. Thornton, CEO



MONICA WITH GUIDE DOG HARLEY

Team Sponsor: The Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

I have a new love in my life... A sweet yellow lab with eyes of gold and a heart of gold to match!

Harley is a bundle of love and energy and is so happy to work. It's nice to have the freedom to go out for walks on my own again. With the unexpected loss of our sweet boy Ashlar, it was a very sad and lonely household over Christmas, but Harley has brought back joy and energy.

Thank you so much to Joel. It was a pleasure training with you. We appreciated your patience and your gentle encouragement. Thank you so much to the puppy raisers, who do the bulk of the work, house training and socializing these pups.

Also, many thanks to the trainers who teach our dogs to be confident and able working guides. At home Harley's favorite pastime is playing with his Jolly Egg, or, relaxing with his chewy bones. He loves to give and receive hugs and snuggles.

Thank you again to Bill, Linda, Joel and all of the staff and volunteers. God bless you all! Harley and I are a Guide Dog team on the go, thanks to your dedication.

LOVE AND HUGS FROM MONICA AND HARLEY!



A COMMUNITY OF CARING

Brood Bitch Caregiver: Debbi
Whelpers: Judy
Stud Dog Caregivers: Bev & Rupert
Puppy Raisers: Brenda & Jack
Puppy Supervisor: Matthias
Instructor: Addie & Joel
Boarders: Meri-Jo & Ron, Laurel

LONDON DRUGS logo
Howie Meeker Memorial GOLF FOR BC GUIDE DOGS
FRIDAY, AUG. 19
25th Annual tournament
Hosted by Leah Meeker

DUCKS FOR DOGS logo
\$5 PER ENTRY AT THE PARK
\$1,000 FIRST PRIZE
JUNE 25, 2022
POLSON PARK, VERNON
11 am - 3 pm
Proceeds from this event support
BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS

INTRODUCING OUR OPERATIONAL STRESS INTERVENTION DOG PROGRAM

ABOUT Operational Stress Intervention Dogs (OSID): OSI Dogs are professionally trained by VICD's Service Dog Instructors and placed with designated handlers. These handlers undergo training to learn the tasks that the dogs can perform, and also how those tasks can be specifically used within their operational work environment.

After placement, handlers receive ongoing support from the VICD Client Services team, which includes mental health professionals.

Each dog is able to perceive environmental and interpersonal cues of stress and anxiety in the location they serve, and intervene with a variety of tasks. Some examples of these tasks include emotional down regulation, de-briefing support, retrieval and interactive activities, and alert to agitation.

The dogs are also trained with custom tasks catered to their placement. VICD Service Dogs is accredited by Assistance Dogs International (ADI) and meets the standards of excellence in all areas of training.

Although the OSI Dogs do not require public access, they meet ADI training standards and are ambassadors for the program and centres they serve.



BENJI

A COMMUNITY OF CARING

Brood Bitch Caregiver and Whelpers: Marie
Stud Dog Caregivers: Chris & Brook
Puppy Raiser: Kristy
Puppy Supervisor: Samantha
Instructor: Mike
Boarder: Judy

ABOUT Benji - OSI Dog with the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund

Benji's placement with the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Burn Fund enhances survivor support services by assisting burn survivors with therapeutic healing and stress-related-symptoms, such as Post Traumatic Stress. Peter Hansen, Home Away Manager of the Burn Fund Centre and his wife Roxanne Gresham, registered clinical counsellor, MA, RCC, are Benji's handlers.

They have been trained to use Benji in assisting the burn survivor community by performing specifically-trained tasks to help support and alleviate stress for those in need.

Benji will attend the following Burn Fund programs with his handlers: Home Away Program, Burn Camp, Little Lionhearts Family Camp, and the THRIVE Winter Retreat.

ABOUT Ferus - OSI Dog with BC Professional Fire Fighters' Association

Ferus is placed with the BC Professional Fire Fighters' Association Mental Health Task Force who assist the Critical Incident Stress Management Team.

Ferus attends defusings with his handler, who has been trained to engage Ferus in a supporting role at these sessions. Ferus has been purpose-bred, raised, and trained to perform pressure and tactile assistance tasks to help facilitate fire fighters in emotional down-regulation after a traumatic event has occurred on a call.



Home Away Resident - Alayne Squire

At a time when my world was turned upside down and I wasn't doing very well, Benji came along.

When I knelt down to pet him for the first time I felt an instant connection and in that moment I felt like I could breathe. Benji continued to visit me over the next seven months; sometimes we would walk together, other times we would just sit together with his head always right next to me.

He helped me feel less anxious about all the uncertainties we were facing and after each visit I always felt lighter. We are finally on our way home and while I am excited about that, I sure will miss my friend.

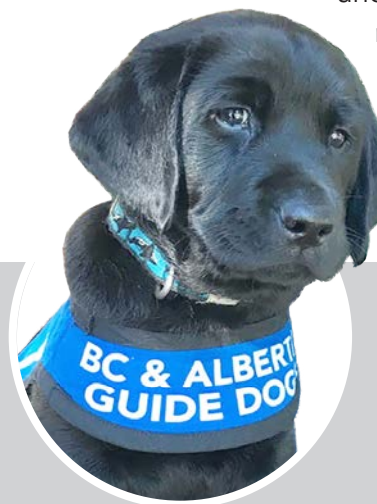


FAQ WITH VICD SERVICE DOGS:

How does a OSI Dog differ from an OSI-PTSD Service Dog?

An **Operational Stress Intervention Dog** (OSID) is trained to work with a handler of an organization to support the wellness of its service members.

An **Operational Stress Injury Dog** (OSI-PTSD) works exclusively with an individual to help mitigate their injuries and empower Veterans and First Responders with the tools to reclaim their place in the community and rebuild their lives.



A COMMUNITY OF CARING

Brood Bitch Caregiver and Whelpers: Marie
Stud Dog Caregivers: Chris & Brook
Puppy Raisers: Sandy & Lyle
Puppy Supervisor: Sandra
Instructor: Mike
Boarder: Kimberley



FERUS



Steve Farina speaks to delegates at the OSI Dog Program Launch



Ferus celebrates his graduation with the Coquitlam Fire Department



MASON WITH AUTISM SERVICE DOG JACE

Team Sponsor: *The Schmelke Family Charitable Foundation and 2020 Kitz4Kids*

How can I find the words to express how much Jace has changed our lives? **This experience has been even more impactful than anticipated, both for Mason and the entire family.**

Mason is an amazing little boy, but struggles with sleep, emotional regulation, boundaries and is also a runner. One of the greatest fears a parent could have is their child getting hurt, and Mason would just run and run and never look back.

It's a very different experience with Jace. Mason finally sleeps because Jace is there with him. If Mason does get up, Jace is right there on watch. When you have a child with autism, there is a continual fight for everything - something as simple as opening the front door to go to the park is a battle. Jace makes going for a walk, visiting the grocery store, or any outing a little bit easier and more fun.

Jace is the well-earned "employee of the month" in our house (every month) and has become an integral part of our family. We never really lived our best lives before him, and I can assure you we are now!

SPECIAL THANKS



Raymond James Canada Foundation \$5,000



Island Savings \$19,643



Fraserway RV Delta \$5,000



Kitz4Kids \$30,575

The 14th Annual Kitz4Kids returned as a virtual fundraiser to raise an amazing \$30,575!

Kitz4Kids would like to acknowledge the Schmelke Family Charitable Foundation for their instrumental \$20,000 donation.

A COMMUNITY OF CARING

- Brood Bitch Caregiver and Whelpers: Mark
- Stud Dog Caregivers: Chris & Brook
- Puppy Raiser: Donna
- Puppy Supervisor: Sandra
- Instructor: Danielle
- Boarders: Sage



"Jace is the well-earned 'employee of the month' in our house (every month) and has become an integral part of our family. We never really lived our best lives before him, and I can assure you we are now!"

RunGo Dash for Dogs Delivers

Thank you to everyone who took part in the 8th annual RunGo Dash for Dogs in Vancouver on Feb. 27.

More than 200 people, along with their dogs, helped raise \$23,837.45 to support BC & Alberta Guide Dogs.

A special thank you to organizer Craig Slagel and his team at RunGo for hosting this amazing event.



RunGo Dash for Dogs \$23,837.45

The 'PUP'ulation increases!

Productive Partnerships

Our stud dogs have been busy!

As part of our breeding partnership with PADS, we would like to welcome Becky (Felix & Nala) and Holly (Finn & Izzie) to our training program.



Patricia & Dougie - Nov. 30, 2021



Velma & Juno - Dec. 13, 2021



Irene & Ocho* - March 30, 2022

*Ocho is from Guiding Eyes for the Blind



Bertie & Finn - March 21, 2022



BECKY

HOLLY

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Leah Meeker

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