

The Brigadoon Barker

The Newsletter of Brigadoon Service Dogs - We change lives one partnership at a time by *offering a helping paw!*

Winter 2019



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Kaelyn and Finn



"I have Cerebral Palsy, CP for short. CP is a neurological disorder that affects the way the brain communicates with muscle groups in the body. As a result of my CP, my muscles don't do what I want them to do when I want them to do it. But what affects me the most is my poor balance. [And] then I thought: service dog!! Independence and a best friend all in one! What could be better?!"

Finn's first day of school with me was the first day of my sophomore year in high school. I remember that day well because up to this point in school, I had to hold an adult's hand. That made my peers not want to approach me and my confidence was virtually nonexistent as a 15, almost 16 year old having to hold an adult's hand everywhere I went. But as soon as I got Finn, my confidence soared like never before! I got to take steps without an adult...and my pup was the reason why. For the first time in my life, I didn't have to wonder what would happen if I fell. I didn't have to worry about how I would have the stamina to go do what I wanted to...because I knew Finn was by my side and together we could conquer anything!

Finn and I graduated high school together in June of 2018 and I am continuing my academic career to eventually become a child life specialist. Without Denise and Brigadoon Service Dogs, I don't think I would get to be nearly as certain of my future and independent as I am now ... and that is because I know that I never have to face anything alone. Whatever obstacles Finn and I come across, we will tackle them how we have the last four years ... and that's together."

-Kaelyn (and Finn)

Newsletter edited by Celeste Macevicius

Welcome, Puppies!

Say hello to Brigadoon's newest recruits:

- 🐾 **Hoss** is a male red merle Australian Shepherd.
- 🐾 **Mark** is a male rough coated tricolor collie from Hope Heels in Alberta.
- 🐾 **Turner** is a male smooth coated sable collie.
- 🐾 **Stella** is a female black lab mix.
- 🐾 **Boots** is a male black labradoodle.



Meet our New Staff Member

Brigadoon is pleased to have recently "hired" a new receptionist and dog trainer. Hazel has joined our tabby cat Loki in Brigadoon's reception. Loki and Hazel play an integral role in helping socialize our dogs to cats. Many of our dogs are placed into houses with cats, so this is very important training! For their "work" they get loads of snuggles, treats, and love.



A Very Special Evening



THANK YOU to all of our sponsors, donors, attendees, and volunteers for a fun and exciting night at our auction on Saturday! We raised over \$42,000!!! It was amazing to hear all of the testimonies from our clients and past inmates from our prison program talk about how working with Brigadoon has changed their lives. Thank you for your continued support

Follow us on Social Media!

Like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram to see event announcements, news updates, and tons of super cute puppy photos.

Facebook: [BrigadoonServiceDogs](#)

Instagram: [Brigadoon_Service_Dogs](#)

Congratulations Graduates!

Congratulations to Brigadoon's newest teams: David & Oscar, Cassie & Champ, and Darby & Cruz. We are so proud of all the hard work you put in Team Training and we are excited to see you grow as teams.



Clementine's Puppies

We are so happy to announce that black lab Clementine gave birth to 9 healthy puppies at Brigadoon on December 9th.



Can Dogs Sense Human Emotion?

By Angie Hill



Did you know that humans and dogs share extremely similar social systems? For example, we naturally live as a family (for dogs, this is a pack) which helps each member to look after one another. That's not all, [dogs](#), as you will know, are very loyal indeed!

We also share similarities by way of body posture, a complex language of facial expressions and also vocalizations that encourage connection with other dogs. Through spending time with humans as domesticated pets which started some 15,000 years ago, canines have developed an ability to decode human nonverbal language.

If you read dog-related website such as the information available [at Woof Dog](#), you will already know that dogs are incredible at watching and observing. They are far superior to us in this regard and that's because we focus most of our attention on verbal language and this limits our ability to see what's going on around us. So, with all the talent that dogs have gained in terms of observation, what do the experts say when it comes to dogs sensing human emotion?

About the Author: Angie Hill is a dog lover and writer based in Atlanta. She works as Editor-in-Chief at Woof Dog – as well as generously writing for Brigadoon this fall!

Can Dogs Sense Human Emotion? *Continued*

In 2018, researchers at the University of Bari Aldo Moro, Italy, [published a study](#) in Springer's Journal *Learning and Behaviour*. The paper's findings established that dogs have advanced to a level whereby they have specific skills, which developed from living in close contact with humans. This has enabled them to interact and communicate with humans without the use of verbal language.

The authors of the study, Marcello Siniscalchi, Serenella d'Ingeo and Angelo Quaranta said that during the research they closely observed 26 dogs at feeding times. During these periods the dogs were presented with photographs of the same man and woman, but they were expressing different emotions facially.

The pictures were strategically placed to one side of the dogs' line of sight, and displayed one of six basic human emotions:

-  Anger
-  Disgust
-  Fear
-  Happiness
-  Sadness
-  Surprise

There was also a seventh picture that showed humans displaying a neutral expression.

The findings showed that the canine participants recorded a bigger response and more cardiac activity when they were shown the photographs that had aroused emotional states on them such as happiness, anger and fear.

Furthermore, the dogs took a greater amount of time before eating again and their heart rates had increased which indicates that they'd experienced enhanced stress levels.

The researchers also became aware that the dogs were inclined to turn their head to the right when they saw a non-threatening expression - surprise, for example - but turned their head to the left when shown expressions of happiness, anger or fear.

Can Dogs Sense Human Emotion? *Continued*

The scientists agreed that their findings back-up the existence of an asymmetrical emotional response in the brains of canines that processes human emotions.

Author, Marcello Siniscalchi said: "Clearly arousing, negative emotions seem to be processed by the right hemisphere of a dog's brain, and more positive emotions by the left side."

Three years before this study, in 2015, Corsin Müller and colleagues at the University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna published their own research on a similar topic. Müller and the other scientists on his team wanted to determine whether dogs can differentiate between happy and angry expressions in human faces, as opposed to relying on other cues.

In short, their findings were that, yes, dogs can indeed get this information simply by observing our faces alone.

Another study in 2016 by a team of animal behaviour experts and psychologists from the [universities of Lincoln](#), U.K, and Sao Paulo, Brazil highlighted how dogs can recognise emotions in humans by joining information from different senses.

Seventeen domestic dogs took part in the experiment. Pairs of pictures were revealed to the dogs that showed either a person; one happy, one annoyed. The researchers then played sounds of a person's voice saying "venha ca" (Portuguese for "come here") that were in a cheerful or angry tone.

The conclusion was that the dogs typically looked at the picture that correctly matched the tone of voice being played via the audio. They picked out the right human facial expression more often than not.

The researchers effectively showed that dogs form intellectual mental representations of positive and negative emotional states, as opposed to just displaying learned behaviours. Remarkably, canines are the only creatures outside of humans who have been observed to have the ability to do this!

What does this mean? Essentially, these studies have proved that dogs have the capacity to integrate two different sources of sensory information and form a coherent perception of emotion from these sources.

It's fair to say that we hear many stories from dog owners claiming that their pet can sense the mood of someone in the family. There is a notable difference between associative behaviour such as learning to react correctly to a happy tone of voice and being able to tell from a range of very different cues that pair up to signify emotional arousal in another. However, the scientists' research has proven that, yes, dogs truly do recognise emotions in humans!

‘He gives me freedom’: Nonprofit gives veterans service dogs to heal emotional, physical wounds

By Liz Dueweke

Reprinted from Q13 Fox

BELLINGHAM, Wash. -- David Umphenour and his dog Oscar were meant to be best friends.

Oscar is Umphenour's service dog from Brigadoon Dogs, an organization providing service dogs for veterans, along with kids and adults with physical and developmental disabilities. Q13 met up with the US Navy veteran and his new dog at the organization's facility in Bellingham to witness the two learning to work together as a team.

Umphenour proudly served our country for 13 years with the Navy, until a rare allergy to a chemical on board Navy submarines affected his health and brain, forcing him to retire. These days, Oscar is helping him overcome health challenges to live a fuller life.

"He gives me freedom," Umphenour told Q13. "I am not homebound. My wife and I can go out and have a date night, we can go out shopping and I won't get stressed out because of large crowds."

Katy Brehan is the lead dog trainer for Brigadoon Service dogs and says these dogs are much more than just faithful friends and loving pets. They normalize life for a veteran who may be dealing with emotional, mental or physical wounds sustained while serving in the military.

"A lot of people avoid social interaction and become isolated. That dog is an open door to a world they thought they'd never go back to," said Brehan.

Instead, for veterans like Umphenour, a service dog allows our country's heroes to focus on a brighter future of possibility over limitation.

"This was definitely meant to be," Umphenour said. "Oscar and I have formed a bond that very few people get to experience. It's great. I love him."

Watch the accompanying video to this article at <https://q13fox.com/2019/11/13/he-gives-me-freedom-nonprofit-gives-veterans-service-dogs-to-heal-emotional-physical-wounds/>

Enjoying Winter with Dogs: Tips

Winter is here! The weather is colder, the days are darker, and our lives are busier with the festivities of the season. Although winter can be stressful for dogs, it can also be an exciting and enjoyable time. Here are some tips for keeping your dog happy and content during the winter.

Indoor Fun

- 🐾 Is your dog going stir crazy? Try brushing up on their training or teach them a new trick
- 🐾 Keep your dog's brain busy: try buying or creating a puzzle toy (search "enrichment activities for dogs" for some ideas).
- 🐾 Dogs can play and run even inside! Play a game of hide and seek or fetch (carefully!). Creating a scavenger hunt with treats or a toy is another fun activity
- 🐾 Most dogs love watching TV, cuddling, or napping with their person!

Outdoor Fun & Safety

- 🐾 Have fun in the first snow. Let your dog sniff the new smells, bound in the snow drifts together, or throw them a snowball.
- 🐾 Bundle up! If your dog gets cold easily, consider putting a coat on your dog. Shivering, whining, anxiety, slowing down, and paw lifting are all signs your dog is too cold and should be brought inside.
- 🐾 As the days get shorter, make sure you're visible on your walks. Reflective vests and lights for your and your dog ensure you'll be seen by cars.
- 🐾 Wipe your dog's paws and belly after coming in from walks. This ensures your dog's paws stay healthy in cold weather. It also prevents your dog from licking anything unhealthy (such as salt) that may have gotten caught on them during the walk.
- 🐾 If you have a non-shedding dog, try cutting their paw, leg, and beard hair to a shorter length to ensure snow and ice don't get caked into their coat

Celebrating the Holidays

- 🐾 Look up special pet-friendly holiday events in your area. For example, many communities do pet photos with Santa
- 🐾 If you give gifts this holiday season, consider wrapping something for your dog. You can even put it in an old cereal box or other wrapping that your dog can have fun unwrapping
- 🐾 Be aware of holidays foods and fun that are unsafe for dogs. These include: Nuts, raisins, citrus, chocolate, edible bones, alcohol, tinsel, aluminum foil, poinsettias, and ivy
- 🐾 Recognize the holidays can be stressful for dogs. Try to keep elements of your dog's routine the same. When visitors are over, give your dog a quiet place where they can rest alone undisturbed. Identify your dog's stress signals (ex/ panting, yawning, lip licking, and avoiding eye contact) and help them if you start to identify they are stressed. You can then try different strategies like massage, a Thunder Shirt, chewing on a bone, a walk, or alone time to help calm your dog.

Fun Page!

Brigadoon Dogs

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