

At Your Service:

# MAN'S BEST FRIEND



Specially trained  
service dogs provide  
comfort, support and  
unconditional love

Photo by Dustin Peters

Jed Morgan of Central Point with his pal, Recon.



TEXT BY CINDY QUICK WILSON

**A**ny dog lover knows these furry friends can enrich our lives with an abundance of love and affection. With a nuzzle, a willingness to please and a tail that says "I'm-so-happy-to-see-you," they make the challenges of everyday life just a little easier. And nowhere is that generosity of spirit more apparent than in the bond between a service dog and a veteran.

Having a son in the navy heightened Michelle Nelson's sensitivity to the physical and emotional challenges many veterans face. "There are so many stories about people coming out of the military with some level of disability from their experiences," she says. "Since I had already seen what a difference training diabetic alert dogs and physical assistance dogs could make in people's lives, I knew that by training dogs for these veterans, some amazing things could happen."

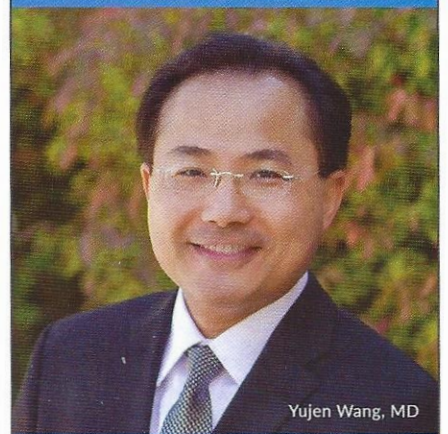
In 2010, Nelson founded PAVE (Paws Assisting Veterans), a small, nonprofit organization, based in Cornelius, Oregon, where these specially trained companions learn to perform a range of practical tasks that include assistance with climbing stairs, retrieving dropped items and opening or closing doors or drawers. For those who suffer from PTSD, anxiety and depression, service dogs provide calming techniques and emotional grounding. "I can't tell you how many veterans tell us they would not be here if it weren't for the dogs, and that the dogs have literally saved their lives," Nelson says.

*continued on page 16*



**Oregon Retina Center**

Retina Research Institute



Yujen Wang, MD

**Bringing Experience  
& Innovation to Eye Care**

**State of the art technology  
and advanced therapies**

**Specialized medical and  
surgical eye care**

**Macular degeneration and  
diabetes eye care**



**(541) 770-2020**

[WWW.OREGONRETINA.COM](http://WWW.OREGONRETINA.COM)

**MEDFORD  
GRANTS PASS  
ROSEBURG**



The 2018 team training at Brigadoon Service Dogs. Dogs go through basic training on their path to careers as service dogs. Photo by Brigadoon Service Dogs.



*continued from page 15*

## Canine college

Generating these highly educated companions is a lengthy and expensive process that takes years of training and up to \$40,000 per dog, according to Denise Costanten, founder and executive director of Brigadoon Service Dogs in Bellingham, Washington.

Costanten worked for years as a professional dog trainer but says, "I decided I wanted to do more with my experience." In 2004, she closed her previous dog training business, got certified, and began to train service dogs exclusively. She admits, "It's a lot of hard work. We are a very small, nonprofit operation, so for us, it's definitely a labor of love and not a money-making pursuit."

## Suitability for service

Having the "right stuff" to be a successful service dog is more about trainability and temperament than it is about being a particular breed, Costanten explains. "We use a lot of Labradors, but we've found that some breeds are better suited for different jobs. For instance, collies are especially good for scent detection and working with autistic children and the hearing impaired."

PAVE service dog graduate Pilsner.  
Photo courtesy of Christina Mulick,  
executive director of PAVE.



***"I can't tell you how many veterans tell us they would not be here if it weren't for the dogs, and that the dogs have literally saved their lives."***

— Michelle Nelson, Paws Assisting Veterans (PAVE)





A volunteer and dog team graduate from team training at Brigadoon Service Dogs. Photo courtesy of Brigadoon Service Dogs.

*continued on page 18*

For more information about certified service dog organizations that work with veterans:

**PAVE**  
**Paws Assisting Veterans, Inc.**

503.348.2048  
[www.paveusa.org](http://www.paveusa.org)

**Brigadoon Service Dogs**

360.733.5388  
[www.brigadoondogs.org](http://www.brigadoondogs.org)

**Assistance Dogs International**

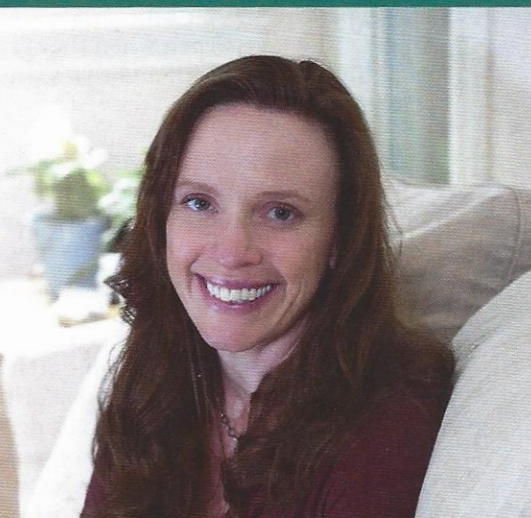
[www.assistedogsinternational.org](http://www.assistedogsinternational.org)



## It's Time to Claim the Health Care You Deserve.

*Let Us  
Show You  
How.*

Dr. Brigid Crowe



**WILD FERN**  
Natural Health

Naturopathic Primary Care & Apothecary

[www.WildFernNaturalHealth.com](http://www.WildFernNaturalHealth.com)

64 N. 3rd Street, Ashland  
(541) 708-0066

Lifestyle

Nutrition

Botanicals

Homeopathy





Service dogs also learn to wake a veteran who might be having a traumatic dream.

*continued from page 17*

Training starts with “puppy raisers,” who take the pups into their home environments and expose them to as many different social experiences as possible. “They start out with basic training,” she says. “Then when they’re 18-20 months old, we match them with a client and that’s when the specialty training comes in.”

### Special operations training

Nelson explains that they train the dogs for basic tasks and then add specific skills training once they know the recipient’s unique needs. “The dogs may be taught to lick the face or hands, nudge, paw or use a calming technique called DPT, deep pressure therapy, if the owner has a PTSD episode,” she says.

With DPT, the dog uses its weight and warmth against the veteran’s body to interrupt a panic attack, a PTSD episode or to redirect their attention away from a disturbing train of thought. That grounding pressure helps to bring the person back into the present moment and stops the progression of the event.

The dogs also learn to wake a veteran who might be having a traumatic dream. “We had one vet who had horrible nightmares where he could not be awakened,” Nelson says, “and his actions while still dreaming frightened and traumatized his family. Once we placed a dog with him, it would sense when the nightmare was coming on and wake him before he got too deep in the dream. That assistance made it possible for him to live with his family again.”



Beau, a Brigadoon Service Dog, is learning how to turn the light on and off. Photo courtesy of Brigadoon Service Dogs.





Aiden, a Brigadoon Service Dog, training at Cedar Creek Correctional Center in 2012 learning, "get your leash." Photo courtesy of Brigadoon Service Dogs.

***"Training a service dog takes years of hard work. It's definitely a labor of love."***

— Denise Costanten, Brigadoon Service Dogs

*continued on page 20*

# THE LASIK HOUR

MEET DRs. OLIVA & WELLING AND  
GET YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED  
WATCH A LIVE LASIK  
PROCEDURE!



**MEDICAL EYE CENTER**  
1333 Barnett Road • 541-734-4816 • MedicalEyeCenter.com

**ENTER  
TO WIN**  
Oakleys  
Botox  
1/2 off LASIK



**NOVEMBER 29<sup>TH</sup> AT 6 PM**

**DRINKS AND REFRESHMENTS ON US - BRING A GUEST!**



continued from page 19

## A vest does not a service dog make

With the increase of vested “service” animals showing up in grocery stores, shopping malls and other public places that used to be off-limits for pets, there can be some confusion about trained and certified service animals versus an untrained pet that provides comfort to its owner.

Though the definition of a “service animal” may differ state-to-state, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines a service animal as a “dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability.” With or without a physician’s authorization letter, this definition does not include other species of animals, either wild or domestic, trained or untrained, that might be used as emotional support animals, comfort animals or therapy dogs. Further, the ADA states, the tasks performed by a certified service animal must be directly related to the individual’s disability.



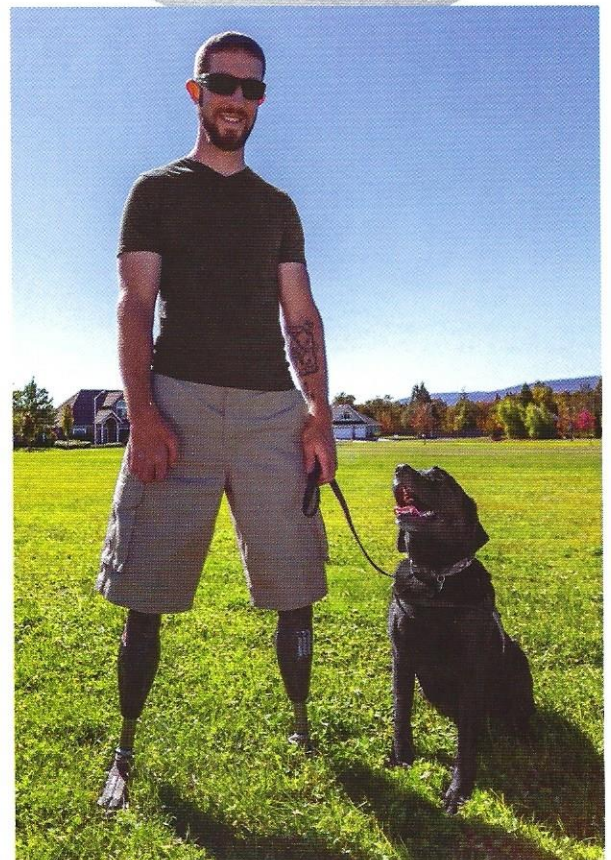
Photos on this page by Dustin Peters

***“The process is very individualized to match each applicant with the abilities of the dog. When it clicks, it’s magic.”***

— Denise Costanten, Brigadoon Service Dogs



When the vest is off, service dogs know they are off the clock and it is time to play.







Louis Ihrig, a former inmate at Stafford Creek, surrounded by collie puppies born earlier this year. Ihrig helped train dogs for Brigadoon Service Dogs while serving his sentence.

## Service dogs: An "in" with inmates

In 2011, Denise Costanten, founder and executive director of Brigadoon Service Dogs in Bellingham, Washington, began a partnership with Cedar Creek Correctional Center, located south of Olympia, Washington, where several carefully selected prisoners can keep a dog and, under her close supervision, provide some basic training. After eight months, these animals receive their final training at Brigadoon and then become service dogs for veterans.

"It's a very coveted opportunity for the inmates but more importantly, this program has helped shorten the wait time for veterans who sometimes wait a year or more once they are through the application process. It's been a win-win for everyone," Costanten says. Three correctional centers in the state of Washington are now successfully participating in this program.

*continued on page 22*

# Give the Gift of Relief!

Want to give the ultimate gift?  
Give a ready-to-go  
symptom relief gift box!

**NOW \$65!**  
\$75 value



#### OPTION #1

**PAIN  
RELIEF  
IMMUNITY**

Aja Tincture  
(CBD or THC Indica or Sativa)  
Panacea Immune Defense  
Herbal Tea Blend

#### OPTION #2

**MUSCLE  
EASE**

Hercules Tincture  
(CBD, Indica)  
Hercules Muscle  
Ease Herbal Tea Blend

#### OPTION #3

**SLEEP  
AID**

Hypnos Tincture  
(CBD or THC, Indica)  
Hypnos Sleep  
Aid Herbal Tea Blend

#### OPTION #4

**MENTAL  
EASE**

Heka Tincture  
(CBD or THC, Sativa)  
Heka Anxiety &  
Stress Herbal Tea Blend

**GIFT BOX  
INCLUDES:**  
Tincture • Tea Bottle  
Herbal Tea • Strainer  
Gift Tags

**Breeze**  
**BOTANICALS**

Ashland, Oregon 97520  
1526 Siskiyou Blvd  
541-708-6446

Gold Hill, Oregon 97525  
315 Second Ave  
541-855-8797

[www.breezebotanicals.com](http://www.breezebotanicals.com)

\*Promotional Price does NOT include State of Oregon tax if applicable  
WARNING: Cannabis is for use by adults 21 and over and medical patients in the Oregon. Keep out of reach of children.  
Medical Marijuana Program. Do not operate a vehicle or machinery under the influence of Cannabis.  
Disclaimer: Any statements and/or products outlined in this promotion have not been evaluated by the FDA.  
They are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure or prevent any disease or illness.



*continued from page 21*

## Ready, set...wait

Due to the high demand, the costs involved and the two-year training time, getting a service dog can be a lengthy endeavor. "For civilians," says Costanten, "it can take as long as two years. For our veterans, we try to get them a dog within a year or sooner."

Applicants can apply online. "The process is very individualized to match each applicant with the abilities of the dog. When it clicks, it's magic," she says. "I love seeing how the dogs begin to bond with the client."

PAVE provides the service dog, the training and ongoing support at no charge, but there are several criteria the veteran needs to meet to qualify. "Right now, the wait time is about one year," Nelson says. "The screening process is very important for matching the vet and the dog. We always want to have a successful and long-term partnership where each part of the team will be safe and happy." ■

Maple, Pilsner and Jiggs. Service dogs for PAVE. Photo by Christina Mulick, executive director of Paws Assisting Veterans



## FREEZE FAT AWAY WITH THE WORLD'S #1 FAT REDUCTION TREATMENT

- Work on those stubborn pockets of fat resistant to diet and exercise
- NO surgery, NO downtime
- Permanent results and a money back guarantee

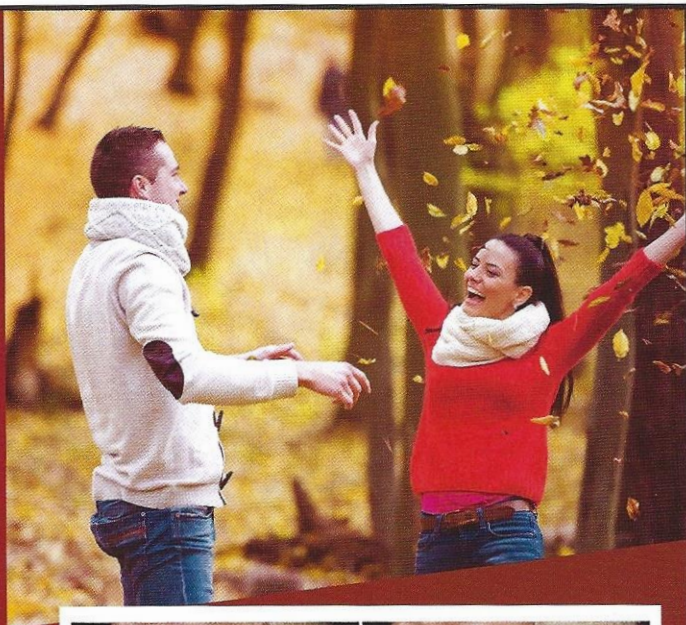
**BUY ONE TREATMENT, GET ONE HALF OFF!**



**541-210-8806**

1910 E. Barnett Road,  
Suite 101, Medford

[admireaesthetics.com](http://admireaesthetics.com)



BEFORE



12 WEEKS AFTER  
CoolSculpting® Session

Photos courtesy of Artistry Aesthetics Michael Farley, D.O.

MF-0008560