

2026

PAWS FOR THOUGHT

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

OF PADS IN THE OKANAGAN

HONOURING YEARS OF CARE

WITH OUR 200TH LITTER

A ROYAL LEG UP

A VISIT 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING



A TIME OF RENEWAL

As I write this message to the cherished members of our PADS community, the sun is shining, flowers are in bloom, and spring is around the corner. It is a time of renewal—much like what is happening at PADS itself.

The past few years have been challenging. Yet, as PADS turns 40 next year, the resilience, passion and dedication of our staff, volunteers and donors, who have sustained us for the past four decades, are evident everywhere.

While I have yet to meet many of you, the conversations I have had so far have shown me what a truly incredible organization this is. The thoughtfulness of your comments and suggestions has helped me shape some early thoughts about our direction for the next several years.

The Board of Directors and I are working to finalize our new strategic plan. But that hasn't stopped us from developing and implementing several plans and initiatives already.

Recognizing that volunteers are essential to PADS—we power 90% of our programs—we have created a new role of Senior Manager, Volunteers and have hired **Jill Wurflinger** to lead this team. Jill will be hiring volunteer coordinators in Calgary and Burnaby to work alongside Brian Smith in the Okanagan. We will be replacing Hydrant with a modern and easy-to-use communications platform and introducing streamlined policies and procedures to ensure you have the resources and support needed and to ensure consistency.

We are investing in our staff—creating pathways for development, continuing education and training, and ensuring that staff are connected to one another regardless of where we are based. To say that I am immensely proud of our staff team is an understatement.

None of this work would be possible without the exceptional generosity of our donors, who fund 100% of what we do. We have developed a new donor stewardship and recognition plan to ensure that we are demonstrating the impact of your philanthropy.

While we prepare to celebrate our past 40 years, and are working to stabilize our present while planning to secure our future, we are also redefining the culture of PADS. We call it the “7Cs + 1”—embodied in:

- Communication
- Clarity
- Consistency
- Courtesy
- Collaboration
- Closing the loop
- Celebration and
- Accountability

The 7Cs + 1 will guide our work and outline what you can expect from us. I am excited about the months and years ahead, and am committed to sharing our plans and seeking your feedback.

With the budding elements of the season around me and the rejuvenation that spring provides, I am optimistic about our future. I am so excited to build and embark upon our next chapter with all of you.

Thank you for your continued belief in PADS and for your extraordinary support. Together, we are changing lives, one dog at a time.

With all my heart,

Andrea



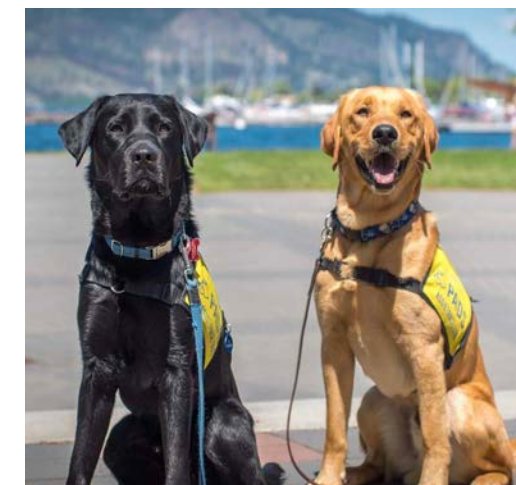
A DECADE OF DEDICATION

PADS Okanagan began with a simple idea and a lot of heart.

In 2016, **David and Karen Johnston** became the first puppy-raisers in the Okanagan region—and the journey began.

Ten years later, that small beginning has grown into something truly extraordinary. Over the past decade, 126 dogs have been part of the PADS Okanagan story. Each one has been raised, trained, and loved by members of this community. Of those, 48 remarkable dogs have graduated, going on to become life-changing partners who provide independence, confidence, and connection to their clients.

Today, more than 57 active volunteers give their time, open their homes, and share their hearts to help these dogs succeed.



PADS Okanagan continues to be supported by a community that has stood beside us every step of the way. **Lake Country Alliance Church** has been our home base, an anchor for learning, growth, and connection. We're deeply grateful to long-time supporters including **Total Pet Vernon, Predator Ridge, the Starlight Drive-In, and the Starlight Bingo Players** who sponsored graduating dog PADS Bingo. Their commitment helps us create an impact that reaches far beyond our region.

Finally, we would like to recognize and thank our Okanagan founder, **Brian Smith**, for his vision, leadership, and 10 years of dedicated service to the region. His commitment has been instrumental in shaping PADS Okanagan into the strong and impactful program it is today.

As we celebrate 10 years, we do so with gratitude, pride, and a deep sense of purpose. Together, we are not just raising dogs.

We're changing lives.



Cover Pup: Sonar
Photo by: Kim Edwards

2025 AT A GLANCE

28 NEW TEAMS

15 NEW VIPS

OVER 570,000
VOLUNTEER HOURS

IT'S IN THEIR BLOOD

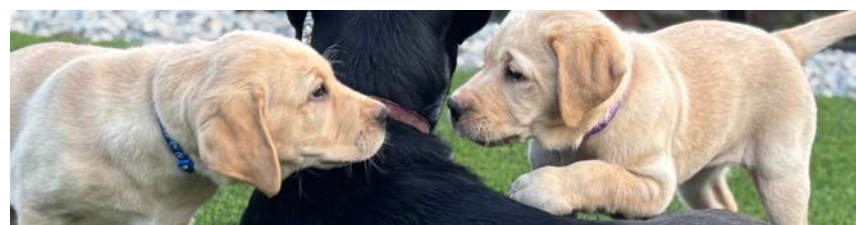
RAISING HEALTHIER SERVICE DOGS

A happy, healthy service dog starts long before they are born, and PADS is proud to take another meaningful step in supporting that journey. Our Breeding and Medical Team has launched a new Bloodwork Project, designed to help us better understand key health markers across our population of dogs.

With the generous support of the **True North Veterinary Diagnostics Trust Award**, we're able to run bloodwork on all puppies in training at around 13 months of age. While we'll be collecting a broad range of data, our primary focus is on two important indicators: Creatinine and Alkaline Phosphatase (ALP). Findings will give us valuable insight into the unique characteristics of our colony and help guide informed breeding and health decisions that promote the long-term wellness of every PADS dog.

Running through 2026 and 2027, the project will provide a robust dataset for analysis. We're also fortunate to be working with a local veterinary pathologist and veterinarian who will help review the results and dive deeper into the trends that emerge.

Overall, this initiative marks an exciting advancement in our commitment to raising happy, healthy pups who are set up for success in their future roles as life-changing service dogs.



A STRONGER COMMUNITY

IMPROVING THE RAISER JOURNEY

Puppy-Raisers give, on average, over 3,000 hours a year, supporting PADS puppies-in-training from the moment they don their yellow vests until the time they enter Service Dog Training.

The Raiser Experience Project was created to strengthen PADS' volunteer community by improving the Puppy-Raiser retention rate, reducing the need for continual recruitment, and enhancing outcomes for every puppy-in-training.

Launched and led by dedicated volunteer **Cathy Demers** in 2023, with support from fellow volunteers **Carol Herman, Kevin Hisko, Pam Esplen, Barb Danielsen, and Monica Fourt**, the project was developed to ensure that Puppy-Raisers have multiple opportunities to share detailed feedback and have a voice in shaping program resources and supports.

"The Raiser Experience Project has deeply strengthened our puppy-raising program over the past few years. The honest, real-time feedback from our volunteers has helped us make meaningful changes that ensure our Puppy-Raisers feel supported, valued, and like their willingness to share their experience makes a difference." — **Chelsea Baird**, Senior Manager, Puppy-Raising Program

And the results have already been felt across the community: clearer communications, more responsive support, smoother processes, and a measurable increase in volunteers who take on a new puppy when their previous one goes into Service Dog Training. The project has continued to evolve and expand, with more than 400 volunteer interviews completed. They've strengthening connections, programs, and futures for PADS puppies and the people who raise them.

We would like to thank Cathy for her dedication and leadership on this project and the whole group for their impactful contributions.



THE NORGAARD FOUNDATION LITTER

Arrived: July 2025

Whelped by: Krista Beech, and Brad and Laresa Neufeld



BECKETT



BLUE



BUBBA



DORY



FERGUS



MAREN



VIKING

THE WILLOW PARK CHARITY GOLF CLASSIC LITTER

Arrived: May 2025

Whelped by: Michelle and George Tuan



ANDIE



BOWIE



CARPIE



FENDIE



JONSIE



LAVIE



LYLIE

BEST FISHES HONORING YEARS OF CARE WITH OUR 200TH LITTER

Burquitlam Animal Hospital has long been a loyal and valued provider of care to PADS dogs. Whether it's routine check-ups, urgent medical support, or specialized reproductive care, we've been able to count on their dedicated team for over 25 years.

This year, they helped us celebrate a huge milestone, the naming of our 200th litter. In November of 2025, we welcomed the Burquitlam Fishes litter: PADS Angel, Koi, Minnow, and Spring, whelped by Michelle and George Tuan.



THE BURQUITLAM FISH LITTER
MINNOW, KOI, SPRING, AND ANGEL | BORN NOVEMBER 3, 2025



CLASS OF 2025

PADS breeds, raises, and trains fully certified assistance dogs. Our mobility, PTSD, and hearing dogs provide life-changing independence to individuals. Our Accredited Facility Dogs work with professionals in education, Victim Services, and healthcare to help support healthy communities.



TEAM ALMA



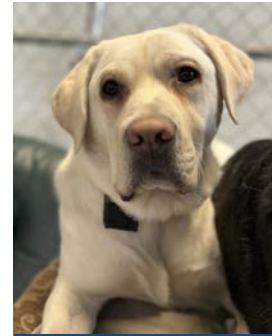
TEAM ASTI



TEAM BAGEL



TEAM BLAIR



TEAM BRINKS

PROGRAM LEGEND

SERVICE DOG

HEARING DOG

ACCREDITED FACILITY DOG



TEAM CLEAT



TEAM CRUMPET



TEAM FIDDLE



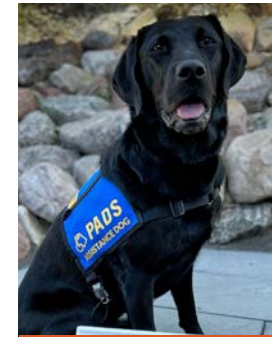
TEAM GLISTEN



TEAM KASOTA



TEAM LINK



TEAM MORIAH



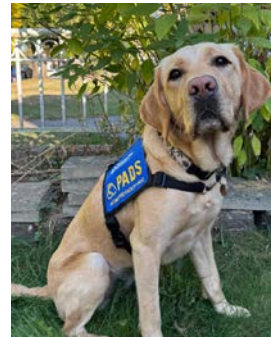
TEAM MUFFIN



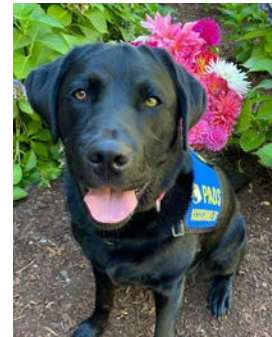
TEAM NOVA



TEAM ORION



TEAM PETRA



TEAM POSY



TEAM QUICHE



TEAM SCARLET



TEAM SPRINTER



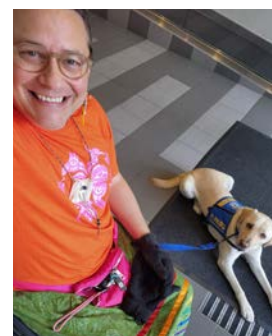
TEAM TETRIS



TEAM TOAST



TEAM TOPE



TEAM TRITON



TEAM WAFFLE

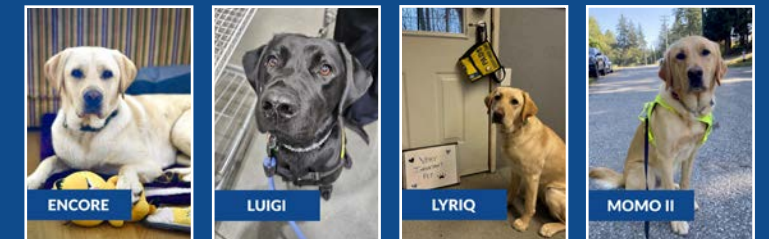
BREEDING DOGS

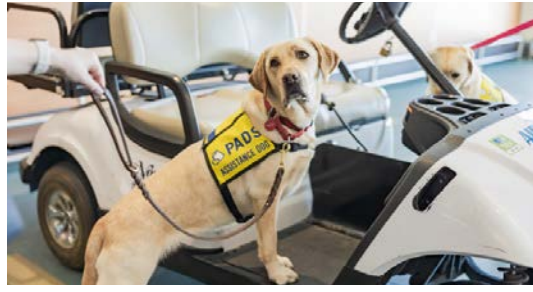
Each PADS breeding dog is carefully selected for their outstanding health and genetic profile and wonderful temperament.



VERY IMPORTANT PETS

PADS VIP Dogs are very well-trained dogs that are better suited for a life as a pet, and are placed with a child or adult who has a disability.





TAKING FLIGHT

ACCESSIBILITY TOURS WITH YVR

Field trips are often more than important training opportunities; they can also open opportunities for partnership. This year, the Service Dog Training and Client Care Teams worked in collaboration with **YVR** Vancouver International Airport to offer accessibility tours for PADS dogs and clients.

This pilot program, launched in August, offers service dog teams and dogs-in-training 'paws-on' experience navigating an airport environment. It allows dog handlers and their pups the opportunity to learn to navigate an often stressful environment together, without the pressure of a real flight.

This collaboration also offered YVR valuable insight into what a dog-handler experiences in their space, providing integral feedback for their continued commitment to accessibility.



INTRODUCING TEAM 'TOBA

In 2025, more paw prints touched Manitoba as we placed three new Accredited Facility Dogs in the province. Each of these dogs brings heart, hope, and healing to the communities they serve.

PADS Orion joined STARS, a nonprofit air-ambulance service providing critical care across Western Canada. Based in Winnipeg, he supports frontline crews returning from difficult missions, greets teams, offers one-on-one visits, and travels between STARS bases to provide steady, grounding emotional support whenever he is needed.

PADS Bagel, following in the paw prints of retired **AFD Milan**, joined her colleague **PADS Gloucester** at Manitoba Justice Victim Services. Together, these dogs support victims as they move through the justice system. Glossy's presence has added warmth and connection since 2023, and Bagel complements that work beautifully.

PADS Fiddle brings a bright spirit to the halls of Winnipeg's Transcona Collegiate. She brings comfort, connection, and joy to students and staff alike. Fiddle acts as a friend, a teacher, and a source of happiness, and the school quickly found it unimaginable to be without her.



OUT AND ABOUT

BUILDING SKILLS IN PUBLIC

As a PADS dog enters the final stage of their training and prepares for their placement with a client, real-world field trips with their trainers become especially vital. These outings give the dogs the opportunity to refine specialized skills, build confidence in diverse environments, and apply their training in everyday, real-life scenarios.

Recent field trips have included visits to **YouthLink Calgary**, **Capilano Suspension Bridge**, the **Vancouver Police Department Mounted Unit**, and **Spruce Meadows**—each providing unique challenges and learning experiences that support their readiness for their future working partnership.



STARTING WITH CARE

Every person who applies to PADS arrives with a story and a unique journey when seeking an assistance dog. A generous investment from the **Calgary Foundation** has enabled PADS to onboard a new Client Care Specialist and bring a more intentional, person-centred approach to our intake and suitability assessment process across our mobility, hearing, and PTSD programs. Our interview protocols have been standardized, ensuring every applicant receives a consistent and thoughtful experience from the very first conversation.

How we welcome someone into PADS shapes everything that follows, and this funding helped make that care a permanent part of how we work.



IN THE EDUCATION BUSINESS

Facing the world as a service dog team can come with challenges. This fall, the PADS Client Care team engaged several businesses to help educate and advocate for the legal rights of service dog teams.

This initiative, which continues into 2026, is a continuation of our commitment to ensure our clients feel safe, secure, and welcome. Through education, we can help our community to be seen but not scrutinized.

Client Care spoke with businesses, highlighting the work PADS does and providing ideas for how to make their spaces and practices more accessible for service dog teams. The engagement from employees was wonderful, with thoughtful questions and insightful comments.

As part of this outreach, two PADS client teams, **Team Dylan** and **Team Latte**, shared their experiences. We're incredibly grateful for their candour in sharing some of the challenges they've faced.

A ROYAL LEG UP

A VISIT 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING

For more than five years, PADS has been supported by **Spruce Meadows** and the **Spruce Meadows Leg Up Foundation**. This enduring partnership remains a powerful example of community in action.

In 2025, the partnership was celebrated on an extraordinary stage as Spruce Meadows marked its 50th anniversary. The milestone brought international attention, and, as a charity of choice, PADS was honoured with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity: a private meet-and-greet with **Her Royal Highness, Sophie, Duchess of Edinburgh**, the Royal Patron of Spruce Meadows.

During the visit in Calgary, Her Royal Highness took the time to learn firsthand about the impact of our highly trained dogs—hearing personal stories from volunteers, meeting client teams, and witnessing the profound difference these partnerships make in everyday life.

As PADS looks to the future, partnerships like this remain essential. The unwavering support not only fuels our mission but also reinforces a shared vision: building a more inclusive, compassionate community for all.

Thank you, Spruce Meadows and the Spruce Meadows Leg Up Foundation, for your leadership, generosity, and steadfast belief in the power of assistance dogs to change lives.



BEAR NECESSITIES

SUSAN & JONATHAN'S STORY

Volunteering with PADS is a profound act of dedication, and few embody that commitment more fully than **Susan Taylor** and **Jonathan Young**. For over three decades, they have woven PADS into the fabric of their lives—first as devoted puppy raisers and later as generous supporters whose contributions continue to uplift the organization.

Their journey began in 1995, when a chance encounter with a yellow-vested PADS dog sparked Jonathan's curiosity. A follow-up visit brought **PADS Bear** bounding into their lives. From that moment, Susan and Jonathan's path was set. Raising Bear was joyful, occasionally chaotic, and undeniably life-changing. When he graduated in 1997 and was matched with a client, the couple began donating to PADS, moved by seeing firsthand the difference their efforts had made.

Bear was only the beginning. **Brant, Leo, Harper,** and **Leon** followed, each with their own story. Whether raising puppies, dog-sitting, gardening at the Burnaby campus, supporting events, or selling raffle tickets (sometimes with the irresistible lure of Jonathan's long "arm's-length" tickets), Susan and Jonathan poured their energy into every aspect of the organization. Twice a year, they even offered weekends at their Whidbey Island cabin to support fundraising, complete with memorable hospitality.

Susan's role expanded further when she began leading volunteer orientations, helping to onboard thousands of new volunteers. What kept them connected throughout the years was simple: the history they built with PADS, the deeply rooted community, and the people—volunteers, staff, clients—who make the organization feel like family.

Although Jonathan's dementia has shifted their ability to volunteer, their dedication has not wavered. Today, they continue to support PADS financially, remaining inspired by the enduring bonds between clients and their dogs.

Their story is a testament to love, community, and the quiet power of giving.



THE CALGARY RCMP VETERANS ASSOCIATION LITTER

Arrived: September 2025

Whelped by: Krista Beech



CRUISER

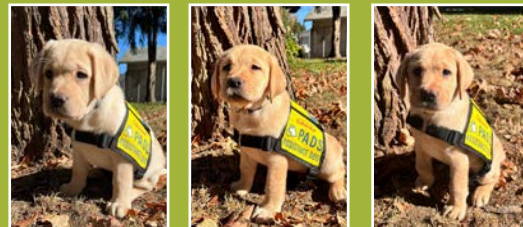
ROYAL

STETSON

THE IN LOVING MEMORY OF SHARON TOKAR LITTER

Arrived: August 2025.

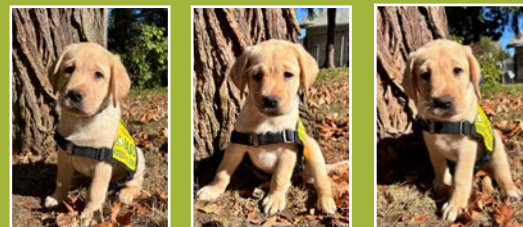
Whelped by: Josy and Bill Nadiger



BRYN

CHORCHA

GLOVER



JASPER

KYREE

PIXIE



RIFF

ZUBY

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Donors fund 100% of what we do at PADS. Without their generosity, we would not be able to change lives, one dog at a time. Every gift makes a difference, and there are many ways in which people can help.

MONTHLY GIVING

Monthly gifts are an easy way to have a big impact. Just \$15 per month gives new pups-in-training their first Puppy Pack – the toys, crates, and training treats that create happy, safe environments for them to develop essential skills in their early days.



DONATIONS

Make a gift of any amount. It costs \$35,000 to raise, train, and place a fully-certified assistance dog, and your gift will help a puppy reach their potential.



MAKE A GIFT IN YOUR WILL

Bequests are a powerful way to make a significant impact. One simple sentence is all it takes. To learn more, please email andrea.wright@pads.ca. If you have left PADS in your will, we would love to hear from you and recognize you through our Legacy Circle.

SPONSORSHIPS

Puppy and service dog sponsorships directly fund the work of raising and training PADS service dogs. Import Puppy Sponsorships come with **exclusive naming rights**. To learn more, please email chantel.bender@pads.ca or michelle.martin@pads.ca.





RCMPVA GOLF TOURNAMENT

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

COLLICUTT SIDING GOLF CLUB



REGISTER HERE



CONNECT WITH US

email: reachus@pads.ca
phone: 604.527.0556

WEST COAST

9048 Stormont Avenue, Burnaby, BC V3N 4G6

OKANAGAN

Box 77, Enderby, BC, V0E 1V0

CALGARY

304 55th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2H 2Z6

Registered Charity # 89225 2347RR0001