

# SCCC Brigadoon Service Dog Program

& rocket explosion in Afghanistan.

Brian Henry & Donner. Army Veteran injured by an IED



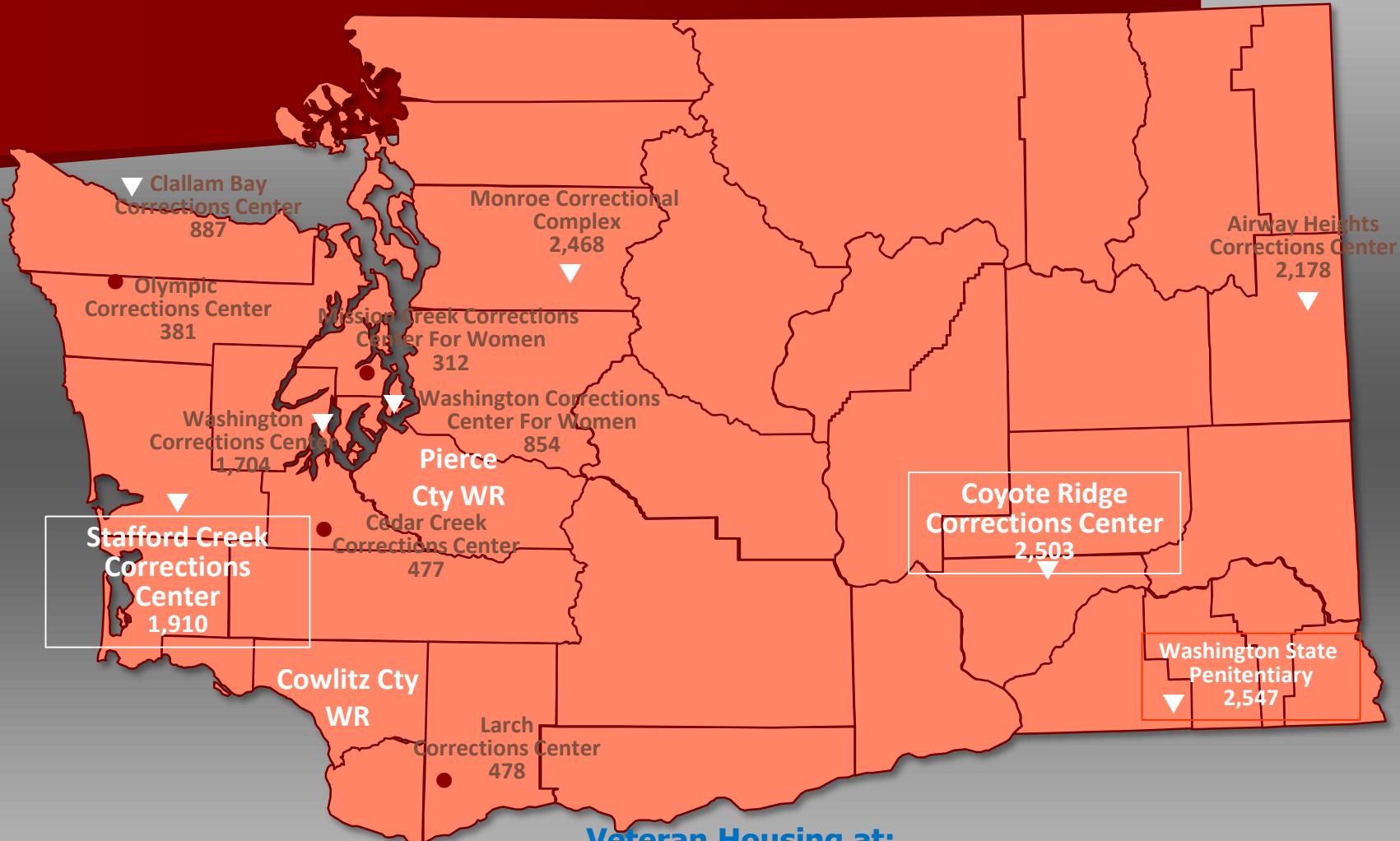
# WA DOC Incarcerated Veterans



It is estimated that with the downsizing of the US Military there will be an expected 10,000 military personnel demobilized through the military bases of Washington state every year for the next 5 years. Statistics show that 10% of those military personnel will likely become incarcerated in our state and Federal prisons. 91% of those incarcerated Veterans will be placed in State prisons. (2004 Bureau of Justice Statistics report). WA DOC is expected to see a significant increase of incarcerated Veterans over the normal incarceration rate in the next 5 years. These incarcerated Veterans will come to DOC with significant effects of post war time trauma and stress requiring special attention and services. The goal of the SCCC Veterans Pod Project is to better understand this special offender population and meet their unique needs in order to successfully manage these individuals while incarcerated and help to transition a more positive person back in to society.



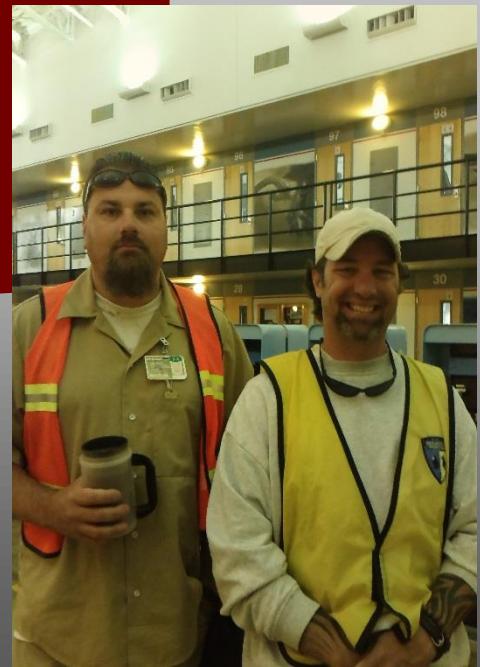
# DOC Prison Facilities with Veteran Housing



## Veteran Housing at:

Stafford Creek Corrections Center, Aberdeen (MI3)  
Coyote Ridge Corrections Center, Connell (MI3 & Medium)  
Washington State Penitentiary, Walla Walla (MI2)  
Work Releases- Cowlitz City WR & Pierce Co WR (MI1)

# H5 has been dedicated to house incarcerated military Veterans...



# Program Goals:



- Enhance Veteran offenders' overall prison behavior and personal wellbeing by giving them an opportunity to closely associate with like-experienced individuals.
- Establish a group of staff that are familiar working with the complex Veterans services systems and the special nature of Veterans.
- Make available support resources and programs to cater to the special needs of Veterans.
- Reduce the financial burden on DOC and Washington State by assisting incarcerated Veterans in accessing their Federal resources and benefits; specifically in areas of transition/release, health/wellbeing, establishing healthy community ties, and job readiness.

# Eligibility Requirements

All incarcerated Veterans are eligible to be housed in the Veterans Pod that meet the below requirements-

- 1) MI3 (minimum) custody or lower,
- 2) Volunteer to participate in the program,
- 3) 6 months infraction free and remain infraction free,
- 4) Agree to abide by unit rules and conduct expectations,
- 5) Not be dishonorably discharged.

# What the Vet Unit is about...

- Veterans helping Veterans.
- Quiet, clean community environment.
- Release and transition assistance.
- Partnerships with Veterans organizations.
- Links to Veteran resources.
- Enrichment activities and programs.



# Vet Unit Programs



## Triage Clinic



## Crochet Group



# Color Guard & Service Garden



09/05/2013

# PT & Yoga



# Veteran Ensemble & American Gold Star Mothers



# Peer Guides & Support Classes



# SCCC Brigadoon Service Dog training partnership!

Incarcerated Veterans training service dogs for Vets in need.



# Brigadoon Service Dogs



## Brigadoon's Mission...

*We provide service dogs for veterans, other adults, and children with physical, developmental, and behavioral health disabilities, to promote a more independent and enriched life.*

*We change lives one partnership at a time by "Offering a Helping Paw"!*

- Established August 2004.
- Accredited with Assistance Dogs international in 2012.
- Recipient of The Golden Tennis Shoe Award presented by US Senator Patty Murray.
- WA DOC Volunteer of the Year presented by Gov. Inslee.
- Volunteer of the Year for The Whatcom County Peace Builders.

# How it started... Founder and Executive Director, Denise Costanten



"They (offenders) are so right on target at teaching these dogs because they are teaching these dogs for their fellow veterans and it makes them feel like they are giving something back," said Denise Costanten, founder and executive director of Brigadoon Service Dogs. –



Denise first partnered with WA DOC at CCCC in 2012. Expended to SCCC in November 2014.



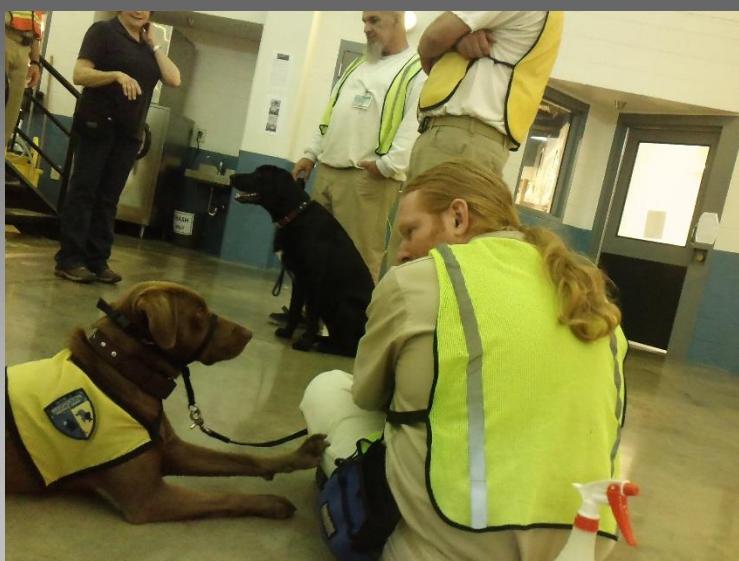
# Why are incarcerated Vets good trainers for Brigadoon?

Training service dogs is an intricate and long process...

- Win-win for both parties...
- Trainers provide lots of time, care, and attention.
- Trainers are doing it because they want to. Thankful for the opportunity.
- Incarcerated Vets giving back.

# The Trainers...

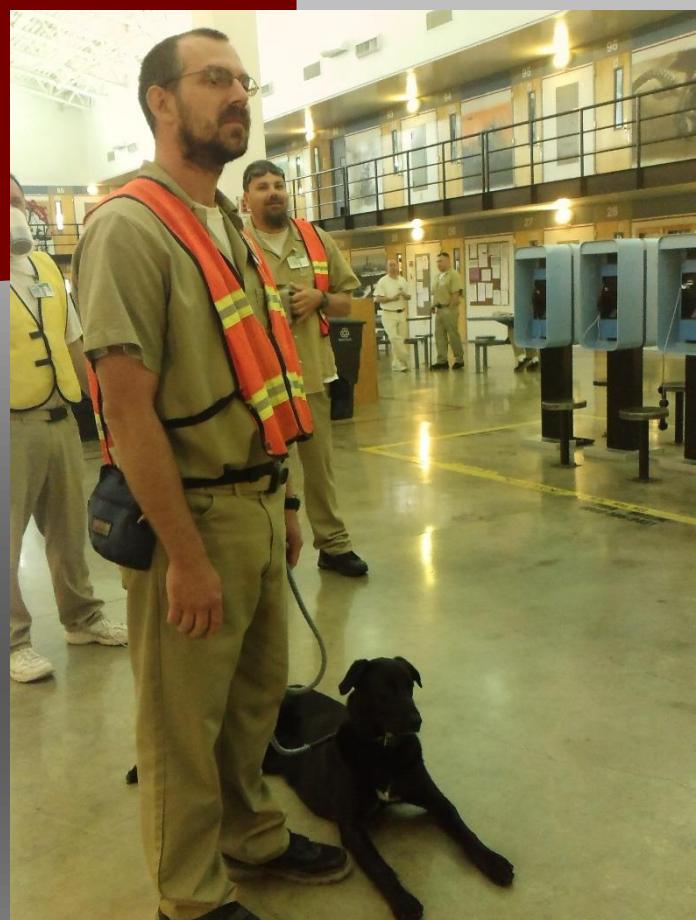
- Incarcerated Veterans from the SCCC Vets Unit.
- Carefully handpicked and screened.
- 2 trainers per dog.
- Begin as dog walkers.
- Currently 12 trainers.



# Training... Operant Conditioning clicker training.



12/05/2014

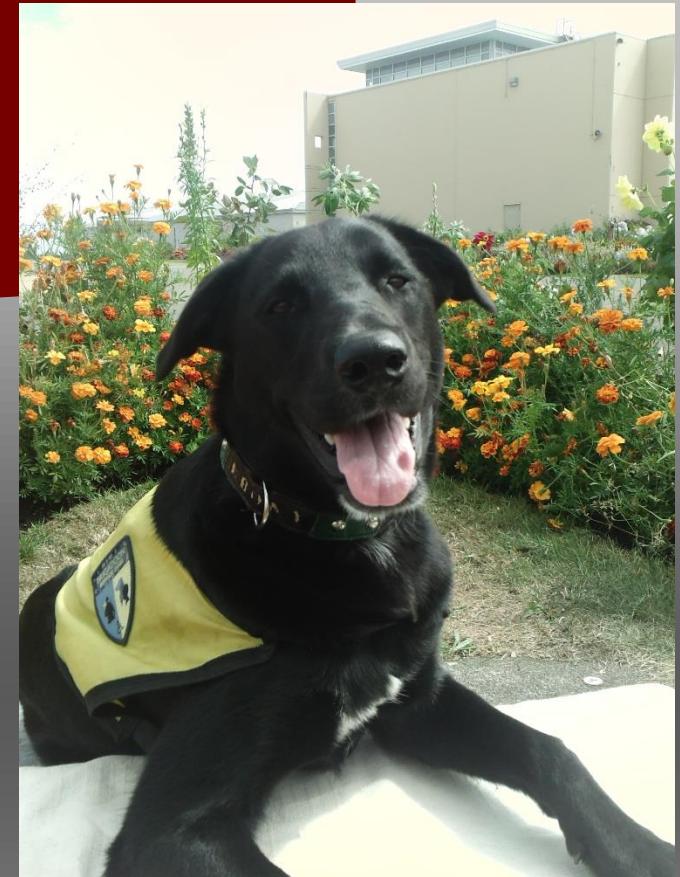




# It's a “win-win”!

## **What the Incarcerated Vets get out of it...**

- ✓ Lessons in patience, communication, and caring for something greater than yourself.
- ✓ Giving back to the community and their fellow Veterans.
- ✓ Job skills.
- ✓ Companionship.



## **What Brigadoon gets out of it...**

- ✓ Abundance of motivated and caring trainers.
- ✓ Good trainers at a good price.
- ✓ Dogs are well cared for 24-7.
- ✓ Dogs have access to consistent training 24-7 (training endorsement).
- ✓ Further helping the community by giving inmates a chance to build skills.

# Endless support...





# Just a few success stories... Morgan & Kacey



**Kacey:** 19 years served Army. Well decorated Sergeant and leader. 20 years assault 1.

**Morgan:** 7 month old hound PAWS rescue. Scared and shy.

Morgan is graduated very successful with many skills and is being placed with a US Vet who lives in Gnome, AK.



Morgan

# Kacey's own words...

**What does this program mean to you?** "It's taught me patience. It's reminded me of who I use to be, and what I am capable of doing after prison."

**Why did you sign up to be a trainer?** "I have friends wounded in combat. There is never enough to say to someone injured and now my actions tell the store of what I've wanted to say to so many but didn't know who to."

**What do you want the world to know about the Brigadoon Dog program?** "Brigadoon offers hope and healing for citizens and our offenders."

# Michael & Snickers



Did not make service dog but...Snickers was picked up recently by Arizona state to be trained for their canine drug task force.



**Kent:** 4 years Army Medic and civilian EMT. Wounded in combat. 6 years robbery.

**Snickers:** 8 month old chocolate abandoned on a farm. Too much energy and wouldn't listen.

# Michael's own words...

**What has this program done for you?** "It has brought a lot of light in to my life. I have been able to identify some weakness in my teamwork skills and some personal weaknesses. I will have to work on before release... it has allowed me to put something before myself..."

**Why did you sign up to be a dog trainer?** "Primarily because I wanted to help. I wanted to be a part of this program because they are helping disabled Veterans and it gives me a chance to give back."

**What do you want the world to know about the Brigadoon Dog program?** "The program works for so many different reasons. From the when the dogs arrive here at SCCC to the moment they enter service. The impact for everyone involved is purely immeasurable. I will never forget this opportunity."

# Scott & Jack



**Scott:** 6 years Army. Angry and abused drugs. 15yrs assault.

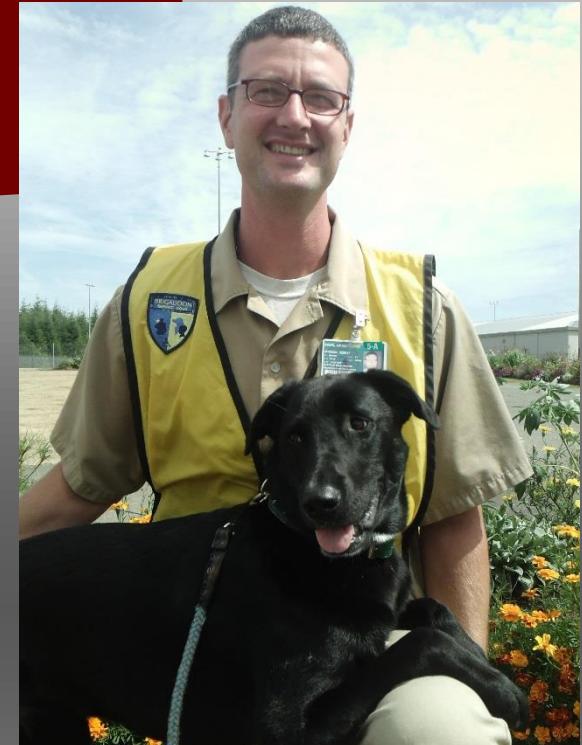
**Jack:** 7 months old Labra-doodle. Laid-back and aimless.

Jack is currently working with Scott and his co-trainer. He is turning out to be a calm, caring dog with great strength. He has mastered several of the skills needed to be a service dog and is due to graduate in early Spring 2016.

# More about Brigadoon & how to apply for a dog...

Visit--- *brigadoondogs.org*

- Find out how you can help.
- How to apply for a service dog.



Brigadoon is a non-profit organization. Service dogs are provided to Veterans for a very small service fee. Dogs for civilians are available. Payment plans and fundraising options are available.

# Thank you for your time!

