

Announcer ([00:02](#)):

You are listening to the Safety Moment Podcast by Utility Safety Partners. Safety is always a good conversation and it's a click away. Here's your host, Mike Sullivan.

Mike Sullivan ([00:15](#)):

Welcome to the podcast everybody. The Safety Moment is back and we are with a very special guest today, Miranda Turenne from BC and Alberta Guide Dogs. This is just a phenomenal organization that really raises dogs from puppy hood through to adult life, and they pair them with people who either need a guide dog or somebody who's with them for, sorry, a dog that's with people who have PTSD or even Autism Dogs. A phenomenal organization. And if you're like me and you're out and about, you've seen these dogs out in the public and the work that they do is with the people who are with them is phenomenal. And this is going to be a really interesting chat today. And the best part about this is the BC Alberta Guide Dogs were selected by my colleagues at Utility Safety Partners as the organization we wanted to donate to with our first charity golf tournament happening in early September. Miranda, thank you so much for joining me on the Safety Moment podcast. As we just said, it's no longer a POD podcast. Today's episode is A-P-A-W-E-D podcast. I had to get that in there. It was good fun. It was a good fun, but thanks for joining me.

Miranda Turenne ([01:37](#)):

Well, thank you so much, Mike, for having me. I really appreciate it.

Mike Sullivan ([01:40](#)):

This will be fun. And as we were talking just before we started recording, but for all those who are listening, utility Safety Partners, we're hosting our very first charity golf tournament. We've held golf tournaments for many, many years in the past, but it was always really our board members, then committee members. And this is the first time we're doing an actual public charity golf tournament. As of this morning, I think we have just shy of 90 registered golfers. So we're getting really close to wonderful our total, and we have a little bit more than a month to go. So we're really hopeful we hit that total. So there's a survey went out to our staff members. I'm not sure if you're aware of all this Miranda, but a survey went out to our staff members and they came back with the BC and Alberta Guide Dogs.

([02:25](#)):

And personally, I had never heard of the BC and Alberta Guide Dogs. And I said, okay, well what's this? We will look into it. And sure enough, I mean, how can you not support what you're doing? It's a tremendous opportunity for us to work with you. And I like doing what our staff want us to do. I am not a top down kind of guy really. I want to hear from staff. I may have a preconceived notion of what we should do, but I want to hear from staff and get their feedback, their input, and they help drive the organization. So this is one of those opportunities that we did. So welcome to the podcast, Miranda, and thanks for doing this.

Miranda Turenne ([03:09](#)):

Thank you so very much for inviting me on, and thank you to the staff and for yourself for being open to supporting our organization. For those folks who maybe are new to learning about BES Nail Burger Guide Dogs, we are a organization, a nonprofit that professionally breeds, raises and trains, guide dogs for individuals who are blind or have low vision autism service dogs for children with profound autism

and their families and O-S-I-P-T-S-D service Dogs for Veterans and first responders living with operational injury like post-traumatic breast disorder. So I mean, what I'm really grateful is that the support from organizations like you help make the mission and mandate go forward for BC and Alberta Guide Dogs. Without folks like you, we would not be able to be placing our life-changing dogs and empowering people's independence through partnership with these animals. So we couldn't do it without you. And we're very, very grateful to be part of this and to always educate people more about the work that we do and the dogs that we train.

Mike Sullivan ([04:26](#)):

Well, it's interesting. I mean, you see a lot of, if you're out and about like I am, I'm out on our Calgary Pathways almost every day, and it's frequently I'll see somebody with a dog and it says in training, do not pet or something like that. And I can only guess now that I've been exposed to the BC Alberta Guide Dogs, that might be one of your dogs in training. Is that what happens? Not every dog is trainable, I don't think. And not every dog that's trainable could be working with one of these groups. I don't think.

Miranda Turenne ([04:59](#)):

I mean, we do have very special dogs. Our dogs have been bred for generations upon generations to be the healthiest and most resilient and temperament wise apt to have an aptitude for the work that we're going to ask them to do. So whether that's they're going to be supporting a family with a autistic child or whether they're going to be working as a guide dog somewhere big and busy like downtown Vancouver, all of those things are possible and we are supported by our volunteers. I would say we're run, 95% of the organization is based on volunteer support. So we have wonderful volunteers who are in the program who foster our puppies that they get at eight weeks old and then do all of the really hard stuff of teaching them, loving them, going through the basics, attending our classes, working on things like loosely walking and house training and obedience and other important life skills, socializing them so that they are used to doing lots of boring people stuff or finding exciting people, stuff quite boring, ideally as well. And then the best dog they've ever owned, they give them back to us so that those dogs can go on to make a big change for a person with a disability.

Mike Sullivan ([06:39](#)):

How long has the VC Alberta Guide Dogs been in operation?

Miranda Turenne ([06:44](#)):

So we've been around for just over 30 years,

Mike Sullivan ([06:46](#)):

30 years.

Miranda Turenne ([06:47](#)):

So our organization was founded initially as strictly a guide dog organization. Our founder Bill used to work for several guide dog organizations in Canada and the UK and then founded BC Alberta Guide Dogs at the time, BC Guide Dog Services. And then as the needs grew, so did our mission and mandate. So we eventually brought on autism service dogs for families with children with autism, and then incorporated with Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs to also train O-S-I-P-T-S-D Service Dogs for Veterans and first responders. So yeah, we've been doing our job for a minute.

Mike Sullivan ([07:36](#)):

No kidding. No. What's your role, Miranda, with the organization?

Miranda Turenne ([07:41](#)):

So my title is Service Dog instructor. What that really means is I take all of the amazing hard work from our volunteers once their puppy leaves them, we kind of colloquially refer to as coming into university. So they come into advanced training and I am kind of a teacher, dog trainer, career counselor, Yel, I'm a matchmaker. And then at the end of their training period, why make the match with the client and then support the client through our training process. So for our PTSD service dog clients, that is a five week training process where they're with us for five weeks doing in-class and public access, learning how to work with their dog in order to pass the public access test for our autism teams. They're going to be working with me for two weeks and then they receive a lifetime of support. So not only does our organization give these dogs to our clients at no cost to the client, but we are there, actually, I lied. We loan them out for a dollar. So the entire cost of the dog to the client is \$1. And then they also receive a lifetime of support and follow up training and check-ins with someone like me. So I'm kind of the all around everything from client services to dog training.

Mike Sullivan ([09:20](#)):

So it takes obviously a very special person to do what you do and there's a certain element of what you do. Yes, there's some probably training provided, but I mean a lot of what you just described, you can't train for that. This is something that you've been exposed to, you're good at or you grow with it. So I mean, I commend you for being able to do what you do. And when I see a guide dog of any kind, whether it's I'm on a plane or whatever I might be, and I've seen plenty out there, the Guide Dog's temperament is usually all the same. It pen doesn't even matter what breed it is, but it's usually typically the same very calm dog, clearly in control. Nothing seems to phase the animal. And we talked earlier, you mentioned that the dogs are bred for this, but even with the breeding process, there's got to be some dogs like, okay, this one, this is not going to make it, or it doesn't have the right temperament at what age of the dog, do you know? Yeah, this is not going to work. Or Yep, this is going to be a great dog, great guide, dog.

Miranda Turenne ([10:30](#)):

Well, I mean we're always doing ongoing assessments. And if we have a dog who even in puppy program clearly says that, things like public access, going out to malls, taking escalators, riding on transit. If those things are something that the dog finds uncomfortable, stressful, if there's any sort of health considerations, we of course will never ask a dog to do something that they don't like to do, just like I'm sure, even though your job is very hard, Mike, I hope that the end of the day you find pleasure and satisfaction in doing your hard work.

Mike Sullivan ([11:16](#)):

Usually I leave all the hard stuff to the end, I guess, but you do the good stuff first

Miranda Turenne ([11:22](#)):

When all the conditions are optional, yours going there, not just because you get a paycheck, but also because you get enjoyment from the work that you do. And it serves fulfillment as a perfect word that to use for what we're doing. So we never ask a dog to do something that they wouldn't enjoy doing or

that they're showing us that they really don't enjoy doing it. Industry standards are around 50% of the dogs don't make it to a service career. That being said, our organization works really hard to make sure that the dogs that do come into advanced training are as successful as possible, but we're not in the business of putting square pegs in round holes. So we like to think that we're respecting what the dogs are telling us. And some of our dogs say, you know what? I'm not a doctor. I'm not a lawyer. You can keep your engineering career. Can I go be a musician?

Mike Sullivan ([12:19](#)):

Yeah.

Miranda Turenne ([12:20](#)):

I actually have a guitar in the back too.

Mike Sullivan ([12:22](#)):

Oh, do you? Okay, well there you go. You speaking okay.

Miranda Turenne ([12:25](#)):

If the dog did right? Yeah. Maybe in another universe, Mike, you're you were

Mike Sullivan ([12:30](#)):

In the Who, maybe, maybe wouldn't that be something? And somehow I found myself here. Now maybe I wasn't very good at that. Everything possible. I do find it impressive though, when you take a dog and you pair it with a person, and then there's that relationship factor too. So you have the dog is clearly the right dog for the work, whatever that work might be, but then you've got to pair it with the person and then that's probably a whole separate dynamic. And so you're involved in that process too. I gather.

Miranda Turenne ([13:07](#)):

I'm very lucky to be involved in that process as well. So part of my privilege and my work is getting to know our clients, the people that we serve, whether that's the families, the dynamics of that family or the client who was previously a person who had an occupational stress injury occur. I get to know our clients. They do a lot of rigorous interviewing. They're providing us as much background information about themselves, their lifestyle, the needs that the dog will have to serve. And then I get the dogs and I start to get to know the dogs that come into university and I have the privilege of getting to work with them, finding out their likes, dislikes, personality, quirks, those types of things that really allow me to say, I think that this person, this job is compatible and this person is compatible with the dog. So first I say, Hey, I think this dog will go, maybe you'll be a phenomenal autism service dog. Now that I have the right dog, I've trained them the skills I need to find the right person who, just like any relationship, our challenges are ones that we can live with and our strengths are ones that we love.

([14:39](#)):

So those things are really important to making a strong relationship and a strong relationship is the foundation of the work that we do with our dogs.

Mike Sullivan ([14:48](#)):

When I'm on your website, I see you have mentioned the three different types of guide Dogs. Dogs, there's a Guide Dogs, the Autism Service Dogs, and the O-C-S-I-P-T-S-D service dogs. Now each one of those dogs or functions is very specific. And so when you, are you breeding for each specificity or just breeding for a service dog in general and then saying, this dog is the right mix for that or the right mix for this. How does that even work?

Miranda Turenne ([15:21](#)):

So we are just breeding for amazing, healthy, well-rounded dogs who love a job, who like to work, and who are confident and resilient whenever possible. So our program, the way that our program is structured is we kind of train our dogs with an eye towards being, I hate Guide dog. So that dog would be one that maybe we will put a little bit less emphasis on things like that dog needs to make eye contact not going to be as important for a person who has a visual impairment. So what we're looking for when we get the dog is that or that our director of health and breeding, Linda Thornton, she's our founder's partner wife. And so she's in charge of working with the dogs that we have, doing the health testing, doing the collaboration with other schools, schools, exchanging breeding stocks so that we can maintain a healthy population.

([16:30](#)):

And so ideally all of our dogs are kind of cut from a similar cloth. We can have a family, if you will, and each child in that family might do a different job, but genetically they're all the same. So the idea is that once we've created this, ideally bred this dog who has had an amazing genetic start, then we go through an amazing training program and socialization program. So our puppy program is absolutely phenomenal and they do an amazing job of really giving our dogs the best headstart possible, a strong foundation and in life, positive life experiences and good manners in an ideal world. Although the teenagers when we come in, so we forgive them for babies, there

Mike Sullivan ([17:21](#)):

Is that. Yeah, we all were at some point.

Miranda Turenne ([17:25](#)):

Absolutely.

Mike Sullivan ([17:27](#)):

That's

Miranda Turenne ([17:27](#)):

Over.

Mike Sullivan ([17:27](#)):

You mentioned the dogs that like to work and there's got to be some dogs that are really predispose more so to working as a guide dog, just like a border colleague. It wants to work, it wants to herd. It's bred into the dog for generations upon generations. But I can't see a border colleague being a good guide dog, very smart, very intelligent, but I can't

Miranda Turenne ([17:58](#)):

Incredibly smart,

Mike Sullivan ([17:59](#)):

But I can't see it being a good guide dog because it's really kind of hyper too, right? And it has a lot of energy.

Miranda Turenne ([18:06](#)):

Well, I mean, I make the joke, I heard this from a dog trainer. I said, all dogs wish they were Labradors. ([18:14](#)):

And that's because for us, our program mainly has Labradors or Labrador Retrievers and some golden retriever. And you'll find that amongst the Assistance Dogs international schools. So we refer to that as a DI amongst a DI schools, you're going to see a large portion of the dogs that are placed with people as service dogs through these schools will be labs or lab golden crosses. And they just tend to have that temperament that says, I want to work cooperatively with people. I'm openly social, so I'm not going to have those protective instincts that would be maybe a detriment to a person who's looking to reintegrate into the world. They're not going to need to be managers. They're like Border Collies, right? Border Collies are out there managing their environment.

([19:09](#)):

These guys are amazing followers and they're just happy to do anything with you and for you. They naturally have a really connected kind of PAC drive for them. And so the things that we are doing is just enhancing the traits that they have. So a lot of times we'll see our Labradors because they're specifically Bri for service work. They might have maybe a little bit less prey drive. They're not going to be wanting to necessarily chase ducks into a pond that would be really problematic for a family if they had an autistic child who tethered the dog. So not all dogs are suitable for the work that we're asking. And even within our population, some are going to be better at Guide Works than they are at working with autism.

Mike Sullivan ([20:03](#)):

If you haven't registered for the very first Utility Safety Partners charity golf tournament, we hope you'll do. So taking place at the Hamptons Golf Club, September 9th, 2025, all proceeds above and beyond operating costs are going to the BC and Alberta Guide Dogs, which we are talking about right now. So for a guide dog, let's look at that specifically. What is a guide dog? I mean, providing somebody who has visual impairment, obviously that's probably what I'm more familiar with, maybe most people are more familiar with because you see obviously that dog is helping that person along, whether it's navigating traffic on the sidewalk or crossing a street, but there's more to it than that. I mean, what else is that guide dog doing for that person?

Miranda Turenne ([20:53](#)):

I mean, our guide dogs are incredible. I have to say I am not an expert on our guide program, but I have had the privilege of getting to learn from our guide dog instructors. They're absolutely incredible. And our dogs are doing a lot of problem solving, decision making, and really being genuinely the eyes and the safety mechanism for people with a visual impairment. So if for example, a person says, Fido forward and that dog sees a car coming, their dog is actually going to do something which we call intelligent disobedience, and that dog is going to say, Nope, I'm not going. That's a bad idea. You could get hit by a car, or they're going to be able to navigate things like imagine going to the stampede grounds and you

had low vision to be able to get from A to B confidently and without necessarily having the fear of running into somebody.

(22:03):

And they also, honestly, a lot of times what our dogs are doing is they are a visual reminder or informer of that the person that they're working with is a person who may need accommodations because of a disability. So not every disability is something that you're able to see from the outside, whether that's a veteran or first responder who has suffered a post-traumatic stress injury, or whether that's a visually impaired person just talking to them, you might not see that they're dealing with that type of disability. And so the dogs are there also as a visual reminder for people that this person is working with something that the dog is helping them mitigate. And so I think it also creates a little bit more awareness. And honestly, a lot of social connection disability can be very scary for people who are not familiar dealing with it.

(23:07):

And so if you've ever had the ability to walk through a mall and people see the dog and they're smiling and then they look up and they make eye contact with you with a smile on their face. And so the social impact of having a dog that both creates the confidence to go out in the world and also informs people that maybe that this is a person who I need to be clear about my instructions for letting them know I've got your water glass just to the top of your plate on your right. So just having that dog there is enough to remind people about how to be better allies for people living with disabilities.

Mike Sullivan (23:54):

And you're so right. If I am in, whether it's a mall or like I said, an airport or wherever I might be, and I do see a person walking with a guide dog and sometimes they're in training. You notice that too. It'll even say on the dog itself, right on their back, or maybe in training do not pet or something like that. But there's a profound appreciation that I have anyway, and I'm sure most people do as well. It's like, wow, that's not only really kind of cool to see that, but that's a very special connection between that person and that dog. And that's a very special dog to be able to do that. I mean, I've had dogs since I was a kid, and not one of them would be any good as a guide dog, I can tell you that. I mean, they're beautiful animals and there are great pets and friends and pals, but wow, not one of them would be able to do anything except maybe bark at the mailman or something like that.

(24:51):

Hey, the mailman's here. But that'd be about it. But when you see these animals out in society, and like you said, society embraces that as an automatic recognition without any questions asked, I think. Well, I think people have a lot of questions like I do, like we're talking about here today, but without any questions asked, there's a recognition right away that that's a very special animal. It's a very special bond, and it's one of the things I think of, it might sound so peculiar, but that dog is working all its waking hours at some point just like we do. Does it need to let off steam and play and chase a ball or is it really, this is what makes it happy to work?

Miranda Turenne (25:36):

Both.

Mike Sullivan (25:37):

Okay. I don't feel so dumb asking a question. It's

Miranda Turenne ([25:39](#)):

Not binary. No, no, it's a really great question. We get asked it a lot, so thank you for asking that because we see dogs, these dogs in public, and they're usually in that context supporting a person. That being said, our dogs have amazingly fulfilling dog lives. There are, I mean, folks who are listening can't see that I've got a dog working, but with air quotes right now, Leo is laying on the couch with his head in my lap and he is receiving beautiful massage while I'm receiving cathartic touch and the ability to lower my stress. And he's having a great nap. And he is a very loved family pet at the end of the day as well. So not only are they able to go out in public to be able to support their people that they have important jobs to do, but they also have regular dog lives too. They go to the off leash area.

Mike Sullivan ([26:48](#)):

Oh good.

Miranda Turenne ([26:50](#)):

They play with their kids and the family, kids in the backyard. They play fetch and tug with their clients and they go for beautiful walks along the trails next to the river. These dogs have great dog lives on top of. They also have the ability to be able to go out in public. So one of the things that our puppy program focuses on is making sure that our dogs can do both of those things, that they are flexible, that they can happily ride on a sea train as well as they can happily ride in the full wall of a car, at the back of a car. So it's both things. And they know really when

Mike Sullivan ([27:30](#)):

Work time and when it's play time, obviously, right? They know that.

Miranda Turenne ([27:34](#)):

Oh, I think so. But sometimes playtime tends to bleed into work time.

Mike Sullivan ([27:41](#)):

I'm not doing

Miranda Turenne ([27:41](#)):

One of us, I'm going to be honest. They're so funny. They know how to make us laugh. And that's part of the job that they do, especially in our PTSD program and our autism program, is that their job is also to be able to create positive bonding interactions with our clients to do silly things that make us laugh and get our attention. And you know what? We love them for that they're not robots as much as sometimes it would be convenient if they were, it can be a lot of work to be a service dog user.

Mike Sullivan ([28:16](#)):

Yeah, I can imagine. But a robot, I don't know because we're not robots either, and they have to be malleable to what the person needs.

Miranda Turenne ([28:26](#)):

Absolutely. So they are navigating their world in the same way that we are, where they have amazing days where everything is optimal. Sometimes they're just like, ah, today is not going to happen.

(28:41):

I had too much of a great play on the weekend and I'm kind of exhausted or anything else. So they're not robots and they are able to be able to let their handlers know whether or not that they're capable of doing something. And our job is always, as handlers and trainers is to respect what that dog is saying. If for some reason a guide dog three years into the job had something go sideways for them, and this is why we talk about service dogs and public access and why it's so important that while it's tempting to bring fluffy to the mall, if Fluffy does something that causes a really bad incident with my guide dog, that can actually impair that dog's ability to do its job for its handler going forward. And so things happen and our job is to respect them as an animal and to realize that just because I love this job. When I first started it, I used to be a teacher,

Mike Sullivan (29:43):

Okay,

Miranda Turenne (29:44):

I'm not a teacher anymore, or at least not a high school social studies teacher. Things change. And so, and I'm really grateful that I'm not the same person I was

Mike Sullivan (29:55):

I'm sure a lot of before my pre, I'm a what you though as a teacher applies today. I have no

Miranda Turenne (30:00):

Doubt you never regret your education.

Mike Sullivan (30:03):

Yep. No, good.

Miranda Turenne (30:05):

I love that job

Mike Sullivan (30:05):

Too. How many dogs do you have in the program? I mean, obviously it's a cycle, right? It's a whole life cycle for the dogs and who you're pairing 'em with. How many dogs are in the program at any given time in both BC and Alberta?

Miranda Turenne (30:20):

Well, I mean really depending, again, as you said on the dogs in the cycle, we're looking over a hundred puppies in training and then dogs in university on top of that. So it is a large endeavor for us to be able to find and place enough dogs. The demand is always increasing. We've had to actually even limit applications for our autism service dog program because those dogs are dogs that are born not necessarily trained. So the demand is always increasing, and we work really hard to be able to serve that demand as much as possible with the resources that we have. So yeah, I would say over a hundred puppies in training and then probably about 40 dogs in advanced training between our different regions. So yeah, it's a big project.

Mike Sullivan ([31:19](#)):

It's a massive project. I can't even imagine. I mean, it's a massive project and every dog is an individual and every person you're pairing it with as an individual, that takes a lot of effort. Now, in terms of your, we mentioned resources available. I mean, if I understand correctly, most if not all of your funding is through charitable donation, is it not?

Miranda Turenne ([31:44](#)):

Absolutely. So again, without folks like you and your staff, thank you staff, we wouldn't be able to do the important work that we're doing. So we exist almost exclusively on charitable donations by individuals and corporations such as yours, Mike, thank you. And some small granting opportunities that are available to us and to every other nonprofit, but the cost of the veterinary care and the food and the gas in the cars and all of those little things that mean that I can go out to a client's home and sit down and talk with them and then offer them a life-changing partner, which would cost about \$35,000 for every dog that is trained in place, plus a lifetime of support for that client. It's very not cost. Unco very expensive. It's very expensive,

Mike Sullivan ([32:52](#)):

Not cost. And people don't realize, I don't think people realize that you put those hard figures in, it adds up fast. There's no question. It adds up fast. For utility safety partners. We're forming the Alberta One call. You may remember us from that name. We've been around for 40 plus years and we're a nonprofit as well. People think, oh, you guys are government. No, we're not. We're funded from our members. We have our revenue structure with our membership, but we have to run as lean as possible. Our board members and our members, they demand that we do so. And yet at the same time, the bar is set very high of how we need to operate to provide that community public safety element and maintaining infrastructure safety. And that applies to you too. There's a line you can't go below when you're talking safety, you're talking that a guide dog, you said it has to be able to understand, should I cross the street now because I'm being told to or because it's safe to, there's a line you can't go below, and I'm glad we're able to do this and shed some light on the BC and Alberta guide dogs.

([34:04](#)):

I'm glad that the staff of utility safety partners said, Hey, we want to support this organization. I personally was not aware of it, and I'm so glad I'm aware of it now. And like I said earlier, I'm outside a lot 12 months of the year after work and weekends, and I do see dogs in training. And the next time I do, I'll ask, by the way, is this one of the BC Alberta guide dogs? And hey, do you know Miranda? Or I'll name drop it all of a

Miranda Turenne ([34:38](#)):

Sudden, I'll be important. I've talked to her. Well, I mean, our puppies are pretty recognizable. They're usually wearing a bright royal blue vest with white riding on it, so they're pretty recognizable. And our puppy program is growing in Calgary all the time. So you better be careful with saying how much you're out and about, because that sounds like a phenomenal opportunity to take a puppy and raise

Mike Sullivan ([35:06](#)):

It. Oh, don't tend me for organization. I would love to do it. I'm not ready yet. But maybe someday not too long from now. I am not retiring yet. But I do think about it. I would lie if I said I wasn't, and I would have to. It's a great way to get a dog. Oh, I think so. I mean, because fulfilling. Oh, it's got to be so hard

to say goodbye to that dog when it's time to, you've graduated from me, so I've taken you as far as I can. It's got to be so

Miranda Turenne ([35:35](#)):

Hard. I mean, it is. I've been saying goodbye to dogs for over 15 years, and I get misty-eyed when I think about my first dog saying goodbye to her, and I still cry a little bit every time I say goodbye to one of my, how could you not in university? How could you not? I love them. Yeah, we love them. No, sometimes people are like, oh, I couldn't do that. I'm like, that's right, because we don't love the dogs, but we do. Oh my God. Yeah, we love our dogs. And as much as we love our dogs, we also love our community. And people think that this is a dog organization. And I like to frame it more as an organization that supports people with life-changing service dogs to create independence. And when you've had that moment, if you're ever lucky enough to have it, when you have somebody look you in the eyes and say, thank you, you have changed my life. Or when you read a client's testimony and they say, this dog has made my life worth living for again,

Mike Sullivan ([36:52](#)):

That's powerful. You just

Miranda Turenne ([36:53](#)):

Have a little cry and you say, where's the next one? I'll have another one. Because it is the most impactful thing I've ever had the privilege of doing for someone else. It goes with us everywhere we go. So it is a 24 7 job for our volunteers and sometimes for me when I take them home, but I wouldn't trade it for anything because while that goodbye is hard, that time with a dog is amazingly fulfilling. It's so rewarding. The community that we get to be amongst with the other volunteers of the best people you'll ever know or meet because they're all the same like-minded servant's heart and wanting to love something and let it go is one of the most difficult things that a person could do, but also probably one of the best.

Mike Sullivan ([37:47](#)):

Well, it's got to be fulfilling.

Miranda Turenne ([37:48](#)):

Be careful,

Mike Sullivan ([37:49](#)):

Mike. Well, yeah, maybe I should, but I'll have to talk to my wife. You

Miranda Turenne ([37:52](#)):

Definitely should. We always have a puppy surplus.

Mike Sullivan ([37:57](#)):

And if you

Miranda Turenne ([37:57](#)):

Have a puppy deficit,

Mike Sullivan ([37:59](#)):

If somebody does want to get involved, how would they

Miranda Turenne ([38:03](#)):

Please at any time? Check out our website. So we're BC and Alberta Guide Dogs, right? So you can either pop that in the Google or check hit BC guide dogs.ca, I think is what it does under it might be BC and alberta.com ca and check out our website. We should have links to our puppy raising program, to our applications. If you or yourself might want to learn more about receiving a dog as a client, if you have an occupational stress injury as a veteran or first responder, if you are a person with low vision or struggles with any sort of visual impairment enough that you're considered legally blind or that you are family that has a child with autism under the age of eight years old, then you might fit within our mandate of who we're able to serve. And hopefully we can get together. And if you're interested, I'm not kidding, we're always kind of in a pinch for amazing people who want to raise these puppies, and it's so rewarding and a lot of fun in the meantime.

Mike Sullivan ([39:18](#)):

It's got to be. Yeah, it's got to be. And boy, I tell you, it's tempting. I work with some wonderful people internally, utility safety partners, and a lot of my colleagues externally in BC and Alberta. And for those people who are listening, if you think you might be somebody who's suitable for this, then for sure look up BC and Alberta guide dogs.com and see if you're a fit. Miranda, thank you so much for doing this. It's been a real pleasure meeting you, and it's been a real pleasure learning more about VC and Alberta Guide Dogs and the services that you provide, and I hope to meet you in person sometime soon. I'd love to maybe, I don't know, get involved somehow. But yeah, I think I'll reach out at some point, and I really, really appreciate you doing this for us today.

Miranda Turenne ([40:11](#)):

Well, thank you. It has been my sincere pleasure. I'm always grateful for an opportunity to passion talk about our organization and what we do and the amazing people like yourself who at Utility Safety Partners who are doing the really, actually super important work of helping raise money for another nonprofit. So I hope that you're all very proud of the contributions you've made, and we'll be sure to share that golf tournament and make sure that you guys get all sold out. And if we're lucky, maybe we might even be able to bring some puppies by

Mike Sullivan ([40:52](#)):

Oh, that be something for a big thank you, and that there won't be a golf tournament. Everybody's playing with the puppies, but that's fine. By all means, means if you can make it and if you can bring some of the puppies and people with you, I have no doubt you'll be a big hit and we'd love to have you.

Miranda Turenne ([41:08](#)):

Perfect, perfect. You better be careful as we'll. Just start dropping puppies in people's golf bags. You'd be like, oh, well, you look at your new tribe. You've been a puppy for a year. Here you go. Well,

Mike Sullivan ([41:19](#)):

I know

Miranda Turenne ([41:20](#)):

People you next, we get class.

Mike Sullivan ([41:21](#)):

Some of the folks I know would be very happy with that horrible circumstance.

Miranda Turenne ([41:25](#)):

Wonderful. Well, thank you very, Mike. I really, again, I'm grateful to you and to everybody who sought to nominate our organization for your tournament, and I hope that you'll someday consider checking us out and learning, maybe even adding a new dog training hobby to your,

Mike Sullivan ([41:44](#)):

Well, just one more

Miranda Turenne ([41:46](#)):

Hobby, I'm sure. Very empty schedule, right?

Mike Sullivan ([41:49](#)):

Well, just what? I need one more hobby, but I like fulfilling hobbies, and that'd be one of them. Again, thanks for doing this, Miranda, and I hope we'll see you at our tournament.

Miranda Turenne ([41:57](#)):

Wonderful. Thank you again. You have a wonderful day.

Mike Sullivan ([42:00](#)):

You too. That's going to wrap things up on this episode of The Safety Moment podcast. I want to thank our producers stories and strategies, and I do hope you choose to follow this podcast on any directory you're listening on. And please do leave us a rating. You can follow us on X at Utility safety. We're also on Instagram and Facebook and LinkedIn. If you'd like to send us a note, maybe you have an episode idea, email us at info@utilitysafety.ca and put podcast in the subject header. I'm Mike Sullivan, president of the Utility Safety Partners. Click to know what's above and below. One click costs you nothing and not clicking. Well, that could cost you everything. I.