

The Rocky Report

From Rocky the Rocket



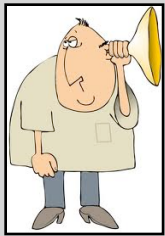
A Periodic Report

RockyTheRocket@Blackfoot.Net

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The BAER Test ...

Before I arrived at my new home in Montana, there was talk of sending me to Colorado for an expensive BAER test. The BAER test was the only 100% reliable method to determine if I was deaf, or to measure the extent of my possible hearing loss. BAER, pronounced "bear," stands for "Brainstem Auditory Evoked Response."



The procedure uses a computer to record the electrical activity of the brain in response to sound stimulation. The test would not measure the full range of my hearing but it would tell if my hearing was within the normal human range. Some dogs who test as "deaf" will still be able to hear very high pitches.

The test is not painful and can be performed on any dog over six

weeks of age. In general, the BAER test is the only test that a dog cannot cheat on.

Deaf Dogs Are Not Handicapped ...

In spite of rumors that deaf dogs are handicapped and can not function normally, they are some of the most adaptable and inventive creatures we know. As puppies, they learn to queue off the actions of their litter mates. They are very attuned to movements and changes in light. They recognize vibrations (which is all that sound really is) and they sense the change in airflow or pressure that results from opening or closing a door. The same is true for dogs whose loss of hearing is gradual because of age or a prolonged illness. They just never admit to us that they cannot hear. Congenitally deaf dogs don't know that they are missing anything. From: DeafDogs.Org.



Rocky's Miracle ...

In spite of the possibility that I might be deaf, my master adopted me anyway. He read information on the internet about deaf dogs and learned they are easier to train than dogs that can hear.

During the first few weeks my master paid extra special attention to me, and still does of course. At first I tended to look away and not respond. But gradually I looked when my name was called, alerted to sounds on the TV and the sounds of children who were outside and some 80 feet away. The final verdict is that I can hear and now I alert to many different sounds, as well as to verbal and hand signal commands from my master.

So, it was either a miracle, my hearing being restored, or I could hear all along. My master and I choose to believe it was a miracle!