

Guide
Dogs
VICTORIA



Guide Dog Tales

The latest news from Guide Dogs Victoria Christmas Issue 2015



In this edition:

Jack's new Guide Dog

A Christmas wish come true

Providing a lasting legacy

Read Sandy's heart-warming story

Wrap up of the year

Looking back on the achievements of 2015

A message from **Karen & Willow**

Wow, what a year! Willow and I are so proud of everything everyone at GDV has achieved in 2015 and we are so grateful that you've been part of this journey with us.

This year has been filled with many wonderful events. In April, we launched our inaugural Dogs Unite which saw dogs from all over Melbourne join us for a four kilometre walk with a difference. Look out for more information on next year's event on our website, it's going to be even bigger and better!

Some other highlights include our heart warming and moving celebration for International Guide Dog Day at the Shrine of Remembrance. We also made a splash at Parliament House, with our Puppies and Pancakes event, encouraging our State government representatives to help us champion the "Access All Areas" message for our Guide Dogs and Puppies in Training.

More recently, we had an amazing walk in the city with more than 150 clients for International White Cane Day. What made this day extra special was the launch of our very own branded tram, proudly sponsored by Public Transport Victoria and Yarra Trams, that encouraged the public to 'Open Doors' for the vision impaired.

Phew! I told you it was a jam packed year. Though Willow and I are looking forward to some rest and



relaxation, we are excited for what the new year will bring. We want to invite you along with us for what will be a fantastic 2016.

For now, I wish you and your family an absolutely wonderful festive season. Thank you for your continued support and being part of the Guide Dogs Victoria family.

With very best wishes for the festive season,



Karen Hayes

Chief Executive Officer & Ambassador Dog Willow

Start the New Year **by changing a life**

Your help will make a difference; it will change a life.

It takes two years to turn a puppy into a graduated, working Guide Dog. A person with impaired vision needs to trust that their Guide Dog will not only help them get to wherever they want to go, but also keep them absolutely safe.

The training to achieve that level of skill and safety costs more than \$35,000. With minimal Government funding and increased demand for our services, your support is essential.

- Today, more than 220,000 people in Victoria have some form of permanent vision loss.

- That number will nearly double – in the next decade, largely due to our ageing population.
- The chances of someone suffering from a loss of vision TRIPLES every 10 years past the age of 40, and...
- More than 350,000 people in Victoria will be blind by the year 2020 – in just 5 years' time. This represents 41 people a day who will suffer from permanent vision loss.

Sponsoring a Guide Dog Puppy will provide independence, freedom and mobility to Victorians who are blind or vision impaired – things that most of us take for granted. If you would like to Sponsor a Puppy and change a life please contact, Helen Trussler on 03 9854 4444 or email fundraising@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Thinking of the future...today

Sandy Storey-Wilson has been a vital part of the Guide Dogs Victoria family for close to ten years after deciding to support our work with a gift in her Will.

Sandy doesn't personally know anyone with a vision impairment but has always felt drawn to Guide Dogs Victoria because they make such a positive change to a vision impaired person's life. As she does not have any children of her own, she wants her estate to do something worthwhile for others in the future.



Sandy believes it is vital to have a Will and to update it as the years pass by so that family and friends will know her wishes and can follow through with them after she passes on. She encourages her friends to complete a Will as well as a Power of Attorney when the conversation turns to the future, and lets them know that Guide Dogs Victoria features high on her list.

"I have over the last few years attended a number of bequestor afternoon teas as well as Guide Dog Graduation ceremonies, which I always find very moving. I enjoy being part of a group with a shared vision."

"I think Guide Dogs Victoria offers a tremendous service to the community and hope it continues to be well supported by all Australians into the future."

Through her gift to Guide Dogs Victoria Sandy is providing a legacy in supporting people with vision loss. Sandy is a member of our Otus Fellowship, a group of like-minded donors who, by planning a future gift in support of our services, will help us to achieve our aims in the years ahead.

If you are interested in joining our group, or would like to know more about how you, like Sandy, can leave a gift in your Will to Guide Dogs Victoria, please call our Bequest Department on 9854 4444 or email: bequests@guidedogsvictoria.com.au.

Change a life this Christmas - sponsor a puppy!

Give the gift that keeps on giving from as little as \$25 a month.
Contact us 03 9854 4444 or fundraising@guidedogsvictoria.com.au



Jack's new Guide Dog won't just be for Christmas.

Thanks to your continued support, Jack is getting his very first Guide Dog. By the time the festive season is with us, he'll probably have been matched to a suitable Guide Dog and will be starting training with him.



Jack lost sight in his right eye by the age of three. By the age of eight, he'd lost all sight in his left eye.

Jack has grown into a lively and ambitious 18 year old who seems to live life in the fast lane. As you well know, a Guide Dog is a gift that lasts for many years. Jack will enjoy the companionship, safety, independence and freedom of movement only a Guide Dog can provide.

When he was younger, Jack dreamt of getting a Guide Dog. Orientation & Mobility instructors enrolled him into our 'Youth Guide Dog' program and Jack got to walk through his school with Guide Dog, Woodrow.

"I found that once I had put my trust in Woodrow, he took a big load off my shoulders. I could focus on where I was going, rather than worry about how many obstacles I was going to run into. I can't wait to be matched to my first Guide Dog and to start training together. When we're a working team, life will be a lot quicker and easier, especially at university."

Please continue to help us train more Guide Dogs for young people like Jack with a donation.

Let me assure you that, like a Guide Dog, your gift will not only be just for Christmas – it will change a young life!



Acknowledgements

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Guide Dogs Victoria Sponsors Strathmore Community Bank



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