

Guide  
Dogs  
VICTORIA



# Guide Dog Tales

The latest news from Guide Dogs Victoria

Spring Issue 2015



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### Guide Dogs Shop

Get some goodies for Christmas!

### Meet Kathryn

And her Guide Dog hero, Sammie

### Graduation Day

A wrap up of a wonderful day



# A message from **Karen & Willow**

Spring has finally sprung and Willow and I have been enjoying the sunshine and the new blooms. We've also been kept very busy here at Guide Dogs Victoria.

Willow and I joined more than 120 Guide Dogs Victoria friends, clients, volunteers, and Guide Dogs at this year's Run Melbourne. The money we all raised is going towards helping children who are vision impaired gain confidence and independence through the services of our Children's Mobility Program. It was an amazing day, and a special thanks goes to all those who attended, fundraised and supported us!

More recently, we celebrated International White Cane Day on October 15 with our annual walk in the Melbourne CBD. Look out for a Guide Dogs Victoria branded tram with an important message to all about opening doors for the blind or vision impaired.

I'd like to highlight some of the fantastic articles we have in this Spring edition of Guide Dog Tales. For the third year running, I am delighted to announce that Guide Dogs Australia has been named Australia's Most Trusted Charity, so a heartfelt thanks to all of you for your continued trust and loyal support. Read more on page 3. You will also learn about a beautiful young lady who is doing amazing things with a Guide Dog by her side on page 5 and about celebrating the class of 2015 on page 7.



I do hope you enjoy this jam-packed edition of Guide Dog Tales. Thank you once again for your generosity and support, we simply could not continue to help the blind and vision impaired community without you.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Hayes".

**Karen Hayes**

Chief Executive Officer & Ambassador Dog Willow



## Shop Now Open!

With Christmas fast approaching, the team at Guide Dogs has been working behind the scenes to give our on-site shop a lovely makeover.

The shop will be open from 2 November – 18 December on a Tues, Thurs and Friday between 10:30am-2pm giving plenty of time to purchase Christmas gifts. With free parking on-site, it couldn't be easier to support Guide Dogs Victoria this Christmas.

# Congratulations to our latest Graduates!



Letty



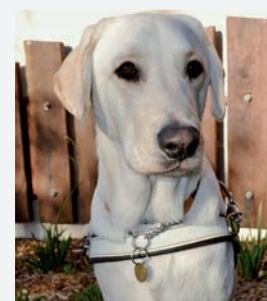
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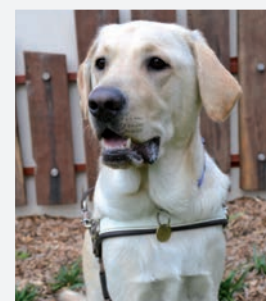
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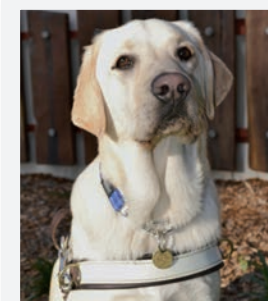
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## Guide Dogs Australia named Most Trusted Charity third year running!

For the third year running, Guide Dogs has been voted Australia's Most Trusted Charity in the annual Australian Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brand poll.

The award is based on the results of an independent survey commissioned by Reader's Digest that has been conducted annually for the last 13 years. Guide Dogs Australia was recognised for its services, including providing Guide Dogs to Australians who are blind or vision impaired for over 60 years.

Guide Dogs Victoria CEO Karen Hayes is thrilled to have the organisation acknowledged for the third year in a row. "Over the years the public has been so supportive of the work we do, so as part of the Guide Dogs family, I'd like to express my sincere appreciation for this recognition," she said.

In Victoria alone, there are 220,000 people living with some form of permanent vision loss with this figure expected to grow to 350,000 people by 2020.

"Demand for our services in the state, and throughout the country, is on the rise. We are always looking for ways to prepare for this growth – at this time, our priority is to find Victorian homes for 20 of our guide dog puppies as well as recruit 50 puppy raisers over the coming months." says Karen.





# Dog tale **Zella**



Zella with her puppies at 3 weeks old

Hi there, I'm Zella, Mum of the most beautiful litter of pups, the I Litter. I am so proud of my girls - they are part of the current Puppy Pal litter, which means they will be very famous!

I'm so proud they were chosen to be part of this special club. Thanks to our Puppy Pals, my little pups will now have the best chance to change the lives of people who live with a vision impairment. They have the potential to become Guide Dogs when they grow up, all thanks to this wonderful group of people. Isn't that exciting? What a lucky group of puppies they are!

Best of all, our Puppy Pals will get to know them very well over the next 12 months - which means I can also keep an eye on them as they grow up!

Before they left to live with their Puppy Raisers my little ones had already started their training, being held and walked by our Puppy Nurturers which is an important first step in their development. Now they are off in the big world, and though I miss them, I know each of my girls is in very good hands with their Puppy Raisers. They would be learning so much already, and I couldn't be prouder.

I can't thank our Puppy Pals enough for believing in the potential of my pups and for being so passionate about wanting to help change lives. I just can't wait to watch them grow up and help someone who really needs them.

**Become a Puppy Pal today.**

**From just \$25 a month!**

**Every Guide Dog we breed, raise and train costs over \$35,000.**

Puppy Pals help fund the training that prepares our adorable Guide Dog puppies to help someone living with vision loss or blindness. You will help name litters, follow their amazing journey through regular **Pupdates** and attend **Meet the Pups** events.

**So what are you waiting for?**

**Your sup pawt will change lives forever.**

**Call 9354 4444 or visit [guidedogsvictoria.com.au](http://guidedogsvictoria.com.au)**



The L Litter - 2014 Puppy Pals Litter



Kathryn with Guide Dog Sammie

## Meet Kathryn & Sammie

This time last year, Kathryn and Guide Dog Sammie received a certificate from Guide Dogs Victoria: it was a graduation certificate!

**Sammie and I met on my 21st birthday. It was love at first sight. For the next month and a half I dreamed about what life with her would be like..."**

Before Guide Dogs Victoria's graduation day, life wasn't so happy for 22-year old Kathryn who dreamt of independence, driving a car and getting on with her life. Bilateral Coloboma had interfered with her leading an independent life.

Kathryn also suffers from an eye condition called 'Nystagmus', which causes involuntary motions of the eyes. When she experiences extreme emotions or stress her nystagmus worsens to such a degree that she cannot see at all.



Kathryn serves up a coffee

Kathryn attended Arnold Cook House, our training centre for people who are vision-impaired, where they learn to live and work with the Guide Dog we have selected for them.

Kathryn recalls: "Sammie and I had to learn about each other. We had to work together until she trusted me and I trusted her. When I finally took her home, Sammie instantly became a family favourite."

Kathryn can also enjoy a working life now that she's got Sammie. She works at her local San Churro coffee shop, where she is employed as head barista.

"I took Sammie to the job interview and my boss fell in love with her. My colleagues have done their best to keep Sammie comfortable. After hours my colleagues keep me back so that they can gradually introduce me to other stations in the coffee shop. They're so caring."

Sammie has opened doors for Kathryn: "Without Sammie and Guide Dogs Victoria, I'd probably be struggling at university and I probably wouldn't have made it into the work force. And I'd have no independence."

**Thanks to your donations, young adults like Kathryn can enjoy the companionship, the safety and the independence only a Guide Dog can give to a person who is blind or vision impaired. There are many more young adults like Kathryn who await our help and support – and their first Guide Dog. Please donate. Call 1800 988 626. Thank you.**



# It all began with Rosie

The Guide Dogs Victoria dog sponsorship program is supported by several corporates, but also a number of committed individual sponsors. John Downer is one of our regular puppy sponsors, and he has had many years of enjoyment watching his chosen puppies develop from 6 weeks of age to fully trained working Guide Dogs.

After many years supporting the arts and humanitarian causes and observing the great work of Guide Dogs Victoria, John decided to diversify his philanthropic giving and began to support our breeding program. John told us how this interest began,

**“A few years ago, I witnessed a close friend and distinguished architect gradually lose his sight. This experience made me realise how fundamental our eye sight is. It’s the most valuable sense we’ve got and it’s so incredibly important that we look after it”.**

John’s support began in 2011 when he sponsored a puppy and named it after his wife, Rosie. Since then, John has been the proud sponsor of four more puppies. “This is a wonderful program which gives me much happiness. I really enjoy the involvement that I have with the puppy; it’s great to come out to the Guide Dogs Victoria campus at the various stages of development to see my puppy being trained. I attended the street walk with Rosie when she was more advanced and it was fascinating to see what she could achieve; this would be my favourite part of the program. Attending Graduation Day each year to see



Guide Dog Rosie

your dog graduate is also a very rewarding and proud moment.”

John has also been lucky enough to meet one of his sponsored dogs along with its new owner. “It was an interesting experience and one I won’t forget. It was enjoyable to meet the handler in person; she was so very grateful for her Guide Dog and explained how it had changed her life for the better, giving her far more confidence and independence. This made me so very proud to have been able to help provide something that most of us just take for granted.”

Since starting his first puppy sponsorship, John hasn’t looked back and continues to support the breeding program to help provide highly qualified Guide Dogs to those who need them most.

**If you aspire to a gift that truly keeps on giving, why not become a proud puppy sponsor? Please call Caroline on 03 9854 4497 for more information - we’d love to hear from you.**



## Change a life, sponsor a puppy!

**Four highly trained paws can make a world of difference to someone who is blind and you can make that happen by simply sponsoring a puppy today.**

**It might cost \$35,000 to sponsor a puppy, but changing a life is priceless.**

Contact us to find out more:

03 9854 4444 or via [fundraising@guidedogsvictoria.com.au](mailto:fundraising@guidedogsvictoria.com.au)



The class of 2015!

Congratulations to the Class of 2015! We had a wonderful graduation ceremony at the Hawthorn Arts Centre on August 22. We saw clients, Puppy Raisers, volunteers, bequestors and staff come together to celebrate the 70 graduating dogs and the incredible work done by Guide Dogs Victoria.

## Graduation Day

Graduating dogs and their Puppy Raising families were all acknowledged up on stage and were all met with a round of applause. We also heard some heart warming speeches from John Gosling OAM and David Simmonds, who was graduating that day with his Guide Dog, Olga.

A day like this would not be possible without the support of all those involved in this entire journey. From the staff who manage the breeding program, to our wonderful Puppy Raisers who give their time and energy in raising these puppies, and to the trainers who prepare the dogs for a long and active working life. Of course, the journey has just begun for the handlers who receive the ultimate gift of independence and companionship from their dog.

We sincerely thank all those involved - the impact given to those who receive our dogs is far greater than one could ever imagine.

## Jaryd's triumph

At just sixteen years of age, Jaryd Clifford has the world at his feet. He also doesn't let his vision impairment get in the way of his passion for sports, especially in cross country running.

Jaryd was diagnosed with Juvenile Macular Degeneration at age 3, which leaves him with severe central vision loss. He began receiving services with Guide Dogs Victoria at age 4.

He began his running career during primary school. But it wasn't until he qualified for his first National Cross Country Championships at age 13 that he began his serious training with Coach Max Balchin.

Jaryd says,

**"I enjoy distance running as it gives me the feeling of freedom, that I can do anything! I love to run, if I'm not running I'm studying my idols or my rivals."**

Jaryd already has many awards under his belt. He won the School Sport Australia National Cross Country in the 3km, 16-19 years category at the Moonee Valley race course with an impressive time of 9 minutes 9 seconds. He was also part of a winning team who won the Australian School sport 4 x 1km relay race.

More recently, Jaryd's dream of representing Australia on a global stage has come true. He has been selected to represent Australia at the International Paralympic championships in the Vision Impaired 5000m category in Doha, Qatar, in October. He will be one of the youngest competitors in the field. Though he's nervous, he's looking toward the future: "Doha will be a major step in my chances to qualify for next year's Paralympic Games which will be in Rio." This is extremely exciting and we congratulate and wish Jaryd the best of luck for the race.



Jaryd Clifford leads the race!



## A message from the President on GDV Membership



We at Guide Dogs Victoria (GDV) wish you the very best for the new financial year and thank you for your support during 2014/15.

The success of GDV is very dependent on a wide range of people, including our donors and volunteers (including our puppy raisers). I especially wish to thank this important group of the Guide Dog Family for the magnificent and significant contribution you make and I look forward to your ongoing support.

A number of our Guide Dog Family have increased their relationship with GDV by becoming GDV Members. Membership of GDV is a key element of our governance and accountability framework. I encourage you to consider becoming a GDV Member.

Consistent with other not for profit organisations, GDV's governance and accountability framework can be summarised as operating as follows:

- the management and staff, led by our Chief Executive Officer Karen Hayes, are responsible for the day to day operations of GDV and are accountable to the GDV Board; and
- the Board, made up of elected or co-opted GDV Members, is in turn accountable to our Members.

The Board members, who provide their services on a voluntary basis, oversee GDV operations and are responsible for establishing and monitoring the implementation of our strategic direction.

The Board is accountable to our Members and it discharges this responsibility through a range of mechanisms. One of these mechanisms is the overview of the financial year's outcomes and plans for the following financial year that is presented at the November Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Members are provided with a copy of the Annual Report prior to this meeting that overviews the years outcomes and plans.

**To become a GDV Member you must complete an application form. These forms can be obtained by contacting Courtney Knox at GDV on ph 98544486 or via email [courtney.k@guidedogsvictoria.com.au](mailto:courtney.k@guidedogsvictoria.com.au)**

**Russell A Walker**

President, Guide Dogs Victoria

## Woof! Tea Towels on sale!



New Terry Tea Towels from Dryen come in adorable designs in either Red or Blue. Only \$16.95 for two, these high quality tea towels feature two cute designs:

1. Puppy paw print border with puppy in the centre
2. Paw print pattern all over

**Now only \$16.95 (postage free)**

To place your order call Telemarketing on 1800 013 015 or head to our online store at [guidedogsvictoria.com.au](http://guidedogsvictoria.com.au)

## Acknowledgements

### Guide Dogs Australia Partners



### Guide Dogs Victoria Supporters



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Strathmore Community Bank

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