

Guide Dog Tales

The latest news from Guide Dogs Victoria

Winter Issue 2016

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and his 'Super Friend' Val

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A message from Karen & Willow

We've been busy the past few months at Guide Dogs Victoria and I'm excited to tell you all about it. As always, these outcomes are due to your ongoing support.

On 27 April, we celebrated International Guide Dog Day. The day recognised the incredible contribution our talented dogs give to their owners who are vision impaired. This year we took the opportunity to extend the celebrations over a week. We started with a community walk through the Melbourne CBD which culminated on the steps of the State Library of Victoria. Gulliver, a giant 4.25m Guide Dog was there waiting for us and created the perfect photo opportunity. The State Library is also where we launched a fantastic art exhibition.

This exhibition, titled Recollections, brought together schools and local artists to repurpose our iconic Collection Dogs into works of art. Finally, we also made an appearance at the Dog Lovers Show on the weekend that followed. Read more about our celebrations on page 7.

In May, we held our annual celebrations for National Volunteers Week. I'd like to extend a warm thanks to our generous volunteers and highlight the many roles they undertake to help raise funds to sustain our many services. Read more on page 8.



Finally, on behalf of our clients and our great team at Guide Dogs Victoria, I thank you for your generous support which is making a difference to thousands of Victorians each year.

Warmly,



Karen Hayes

Chief Executive Officer & Ambassador Dog Willow

Guide Dogs Australia 2017 Calendar



\$19.95
each

FREE
Postage

Call 1800 013 015
to place your order

This calendar once again features a gorgeous photo on each month of our Guide Dog Puppies, large squares allows for appointments, birthday and special dates to be written in. Included in the squares are State Public and School Holidays, and Moon Cycle.



Congratulations to our latest Graduates!



Lailani 



Amy 



Arthur 



Hudson 



Petros 



Ivan 



Joffa 



Lester 




Paulette 

Flicks With The Chicks

When Village Cinemas approached Guide Dogs Victoria asking if they could make a film about the life of a Guide Dog, we had dogs falling over themselves barking to get on the big screen, so we said yes!

12 short episodes are being aired at the beginning of the monthly Flicks with the Chicks program. It will give the audience a chance to see all the behind-the-scenes in the making of a Guide Dog. The adorable caramel coloured Scottie was chosen by the 'Flicks with the Chicks' audience and he will now become the main focus of the films. Check <http://villagecinemas.com.au/events/flicks-with-the-chicks> for more details.

Helen Trussler, Partnership Manager at Guide Dogs Victoria said 'With the help of Village Cinema promotions, we are hoping to encourage this predominantly female audience to share in the Puppy Love by themselves sponsoring another pup over the course of the following year. Thousands of people go to the cinema every day and it would only take 150 people to give \$20 per month for a year to train another one of

these beautiful puppies'. As a charity receiving less than 10% funding from the Government, we could really do with your help, so why not join the Village Cinemas Puppy Love Club and then come and join us at the next Flicks with the Chicks film in August – you might even get to meet the famous Scottie! 



Dog Tale – Guide Dog Barry & Peter

Our Recollections Exhibition partnered with schools and contemporary artists in Melbourne to create works of art. Carey Baptist College was involved in this exhibition and our client, Peter Edwards, was partnered with the school to share his stories in support of the creative process. It also brought a greater understanding to the students about Guide Dogs and the people they support.

Peter, 50, is self-employed and works in the industrial packaging industry. He is married with two children and loves to hike and read. Peter started losing his sight in his mid-teens due to Retinitis Pigmentosa. By 28, he was using mobility aids to get around. By his mid- 30s, Peter had completely lost his vision, and by the age of 34, he received his first Guide Dog. There was a lot to learn with his first Guide Dog but Peter quickly found having a Guide Dog was a lot more efficient than any other mobility aid he had experienced.

To Peter, a Guide Dog has given him total independence. He is now partnered with his second Guide Dog, Barry, who he's been working with for six and half years. Peter finds having a Guide Dog has allowed him the ability to go out into the community independently with more speed and confidence. His love of hiking has not stopped; with both a Guide Dog and sighted guides by his side, Peter has been able to complete the Oxfam 100km walk several times.

Peter's story was used as inspiration for the students' artwork. They chose to celebrate the outdoors as their theme, exploring colours and textures that represent the natural environment that Peter and others would experience whilst hiking. The final artwork has a strong focus on surface texture, which they felt was important to enable people with vision loss to appreciate the artwork through the sense of touch. 🐾



Peter and Guide Dog Barry

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 support 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 suppwant will change lives forever.

Call 9854 4444 or visit
guidedogsvictoria.com.au



The L Litter – 2014 Puppy Pals Litter

Light at the end of the tunnel



Marita

Marita, now 34, was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa 17 years ago. She has ‘tunnel vision’ and she cannot see a thing at night. Her vision has worsened to the point that she is now legally blind.

At first, Marita did not worry so much about her vision impairment. The first shock came when she had to give up driving. The second, much worse, came a few years later:

“When I was 30, it hit me. I’d become a mum of two and I couldn’t drive my children anywhere anymore. Taking them to the shops, to school or birthday parties took a lot of planning, time and effort. I had to plan for things other mums wouldn’t even give a second thought.”

Marita will have to wait for months before a Guide Dog is trained and matched to her, but knowing that we can start the training today will give her hope and confidence in the future.

A Guide Dog will give Marita the independence, safety and pace of life she requires to travel, work, and look after her young daughters.



Marita with her family

A Guide Dog will help Marita live her life the way she wants to – and not be limited by her vision impairment anymore than she has to.

“As my eyes get worse and my kids get older, I find that I’m having to make the transition from the white cane to a Guide Dog. I need to be able to move as freely and as quickly as possible. I understand my limitations but I still want to do everything I can to make life as normal as possible for my children.”

Marita recently joined our Cane to Canine program, to start the transition from a white cane to a Guide Dog.

“A Guide Dog is going to allow me to be more independent and take travelling to another level. When I had my trial walk, I realised how quickly and safely Guide Dogs move. As the kids get older, it will also be reassuring to have a companion when I’m on my own at home. It would be hard without an organisation like Guide Dogs. To think there’d be no one to help you with a white cane or a Guide Dog. It would be hard to leave the house, to have a life.”

With your support, we can provide mums like Marita with a trained dog. Call 1800 988 626 to make a donation today. Thank you. 🐾



Twanny Farrugia

From little things, big things grow

As a bequestor and Guide Dog handler Twanny Farrugia is a well-known friend of Guide Dogs Victoria after receiving his 'Super Friend' Val six years ago.

Twanny has a true appreciation of life after suffering ill health and low vision virtually all of his life. In 1971, as an 18 year old, Twanny became one of the earliest kidney transplant recipients in Australia. He then embarked on a distinguished career as a loss and grief counsellor and educator in the allied health industry before running his own business for 15 years. In 2014 his dedication to community service won him Rotary's Shine On award and Greater Dandenong Council Citizen of the Year.

In his professional life Twanny had referred many of his clients to Guide Dogs Victoria, safe in the knowledge that they would receive superior service in that field. His life changed after being struck by a car in 2009 and Twanny realised that he needed to refer himself. From that point onward Guide Dogs Victoria has meant "independence, friendship and companionship, a safety net I can come to when I need it and it's all free! I see them as my 'safety blankie'".

For Twanny, leaving a gift in his will is 'my way of saying thank-you to Guide Dogs Victoria for giving me back my life'.

Previously he had a false impression that a bequestor is usually wealthy but now realises that "from big things little things grow, individually you don't need millions, collectively it grows into something more substantial".

Twanny and Val enjoy attending the annual bequestor Otus Fellowship Christmas lunch. It is an opportunity to meet like-minded people (and dogs) with the trademark Otus Fellowship atmosphere of friendship. Twanny appreciates the opportunity show everyone the end product of their generous gifts and that he knows both professionally and personally that their important contribution is used both wisely and efficiently. 🐾

A GIFT IN A WILL CHANGES LIVES...

With minimal Government Funding for the breeding raising and training of our Guide Dogs, gifts in Wills help to make our work possible.

Over 30% of our Guide Dogs have been bred, raised and trained due to the generosity of donors who have left a lasting legacy. Leaving a gift in your Will helps restore dignity, confidence, independence and mobility to blind and vision impaired Australians.



International Guide Dog Day wrap up



We celebrated the freedom and independence a Guide Dog brings to people living with vision loss all throughout April. We kicked off celebrations by bringing down Gulliver, a giant 4.25 metre tall dog from Guide Dogs NSW/ACT to attend all our events in Melbourne.

On April 17, we held Dogs Unite. The event was a huge success, bringing together 450 dogs from across Victoria. For the first time, Dogs Unite was celebrated not only in Kew, but also in Bendigo, Ballarat, Gisborne and Geelong. Together, we raised a whopping \$80,000, meaning we are now able to breed, raise and train two Guide Dogs and also fund our other vital services.

On 27 April, International Guide Dog Day, we held a community walk with our clients through the streets of Melbourne. More than 100 clients and supporters together with 30 Guide Dogs and puppies in training took part.

It was a lot of fun and everyone really celebrated, under the beautiful sunshine, the wonderful spirit of being part of this great organisation.

In the evening we launched the much anticipated Recollections Exhibition. This community inclusion project celebrated the life changing role a Guide Dog plays through art. Contemporary artists and schools took part, using our iconic collection dogs as a canvas. The themes of freedom and independence were explored, creating an exciting and impressive exhibition.

That evening, we held our annual awards night to acknowledge and thank the outstanding contributions made to Guide Dogs Victoria by generous individuals and companies. We are proud to announce that the recipients of the Independence Award was Janice Aldred and Noel Smith. Both Janice and Noel have demonstrated their commitment and dedication to our organisation and the people we support over many years. The Freedom Award went to The Australian Bike Friday Club who have raised over \$41,000 in the past 20 years. Finally, the Inspiration Award went to two stand out recipients, Public Transport Victoria and Yarra Trams. These two organisations have worked both independently and together with Guide Dogs Victoria over the last year to create more welcoming, inclusive and accessible communities for people living with vision loss.

We finished up our month of celebrations at the ultimate dog's weekend at the Dog Lovers Show. At the show, our Guide Dogs team put on an incredible display for an audience of more than 800 people in the main arena and at the Pat-A-Pooch stand. Celebrity Dog Trainer, Peta Clarke, was so impressed with what was demonstrated that she said to the packed arena, "Guide Dogs Victoria are THE future of Dog training!"

We are proud of everything that we do and we thank you for your continuous support of our Guide Dogs and the people we help. 🐾

National Volunteer week

In May, we celebrated our wonderful volunteers with a variety of activities and events at Guide Dogs Victoria. Wendy, our Volunteer Manager ran a number of very fun and interactive activities. One of the most popular activities involved 30 volunteers taking on a number of dog personas and went through the initial process of entering the Guide Dog training program. It gave our volunteers a greater insight into the work that we do and how their role impacts.

Another popular program we held was the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Information session. The National Disability Insurance Scheme is the new nation-wide funding scheme to provide support for people with a permanent disability. The volunteers information session put them 'in the shoes' of a client planning their package and all the processes that went along with it. This exercise really focused everyone on the level of detail our clients need to go into when thinking through the opportunities open to them under the NDIS, and how it is really important for Guide Dogs client-facing staff to support them through this often daunting process!

Even under the NDIS funding model, your donations count more than ever. Training our staff and equipping them to assist clients through the NDIS is critical to help Guide Dogs Victoria convert as many of our clients as possible to NDIS funding. We have estimated that over 80% of our clients are not eligible for NDIS funding. We are committed to helping all people who need us regardless of their

funding, with high quality individual quality care and support programs delivered by expert allied health professionals, and of course our wonderfully trained dogs. Converting all the clients we can to NDIS packages means that we can use your generous fundraising dollars to help even more of these people who aren't eligible. 🐾



Donate to Guide Dogs Victoria



Go to guidedogsvictoria.com.au

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Acknowledgements

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