

Paw Prints – The official newsletter of Guide Dogs SA

Autumn 2016

Message from the Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to a brand new year! I hope you and your family enjoyed an entertaining yet, restful festive season.

Your generosity in 2015 has meant that the quality of life of so many people living with disability has been enhanced. Thank you for your continued support. You are the reason that Guide Dogs are able to make such a difference in the community.

The announcement that we will be opening Beau's Personalised Pet Stay, a new five-star pet hotel at Adelaide Airport, was an incredible way to end 2015. Beaus will not only provide a haven for your precious pets when you go on holiday, but profits from the hotel will be directed to much-needed funding for Guide Dogs' services. Read more in this issue.

I am delighted to introduce you to, Orion and Quora, as well as update you on Milo's new life with Elise, all recent graduates from our Puppy Development Centre. Each of these beautiful dogs has pursued a different career after completing their intensive training – as a Guide Dog, Autism Assistance Dog and Pets As Therapy Dog.

You may not be aware that some vision impaired people like Elise may work with more than four Guide Dogs across their lifetime.

In this issue of Paw Prints, I invite you to read the touching story of how Elise has adapted to working with Milo, her second Guide Dog – they have even taken a trip to Queensland together, and Elise is loving life with her new best friend.

As a mum myself, I find it is impossible not to put myself in the place of the parents of Sadie, Ben and Max. These mums and dads simply want to keep their children safe, supported and loved, but every day, they face heartache and fear. Fortunately, with supporters like you, their children now have Orion and Quora by their side. I know you will love reading the story of how these incredible dogs have changed the lives of Sadie, Ben and Max forever.

You'll also read about our innovative Sensory Services groups, creating adventure, fun and friendship through Ukulele classes and a personal glamour session, as well as a full report on the success of our 2015 Dining in the Dark fundraiser event. If you took on the challenge of blindfold dining, thank you! I hope it provided awareness to you and your group about living with vision impairment and why your ongoing support of Guide Dogs is so important.

I hope you enjoy this issue and once again, on behalf of hundreds of people across South Australia living with vision impairment, and their families, thank you. I am so grateful for your support.

Kate Thiele.

C E O, Guide Dogs SA/NT.

Beau's Pet Hotel taking off.

Your precious pets will have a safe haven to take their holidays when Beau's Personalised Pet Stay opens in early 2017.

Groundwork for the industry-leading pet hotel is taking off at the Adelaide Airport and is expected to open in 2017, Guide Dogs SA/NTs 60th anniversary year.

Named after Beau, the first Guide Dog ever trained in Australia in 1951, the pet hotel will feature both luxury and affordable mid-range personalised accommodation for dogs, cats and other pocket pets, such as rabbits.

The project, funded only by borrowings, not community donations, is designed to ensure Guide Dogs SA can expand its community services to people living with disability. It will also provide benefits to the SA community via new job creation and increased tourism opportunities.

"Since our foundation, we have worked hard to ensure our clients have access to things we often take so much for granted: inclusion, mobility and independence," C E O, Kate Thiele says.

"Donations will continue to be essential to fund our vital services. However with an ever-increasing need for services, we need to be nimble and innovative to future-proof our revenue streams.

All profits from the pet hotel will be used to fund increased services."

Beaus will have 186 standard and luxury rooms and extensive indoor and outdoor enclosures where dogs can run and play. Cats have their own sanctuary with 60 condos, and a private and secure play area for felines to explore or snooze the day away in the sunshine. It will also offer personalised doggy day-care and training services.

“This is a first for Guide Dogs SA/NT. Never before in South Australia have we seen a facility of this kind, which will in itself be a holiday destination for pets, thanks to the outstanding facilities and high standard of care and safety that the hotel will provide,” Kate says.

“It also means that highly sought-after animal training and care expertise can be opened up further to the community.”

Guide Dogs SA/NT Chairman Joe Thorp and the inaugural Chairman of Guide Dogs SA in 1957, Frank Beauchamp, turned the first sod to get the project underway in November.

Standard dog boarding will comprise clean and spacious kennels with beds, climate-controlled temperatures and plenty of natural light.

Luxury rooms will include personal televisions and private outdoor courtyards. Cats will have access to spacious condos with private sleeping areas and litter boxes.

“We have been overwhelmed by the many positive comments about Beau’s from people who want to use the facility as well as people enquiring about employment opportunities,” Kate said.

“I believe this will become a holiday destination for pets thanks to the outstanding facilities and high standard of care and safety the hotel will provide.

“You wouldn’t expect anything less from Australia’s Most Trusted Charity.”

Dining in the Dark provides an insight into a world of darkness.

“As soon as the blindfold went on I felt vulnerable. Noise became much more prominent and I fumbled to find the edge of my plate. I even knocked my glass! I suddenly realised the number of challenges that people face with vision impairment in undertaking simple tasks that we take for granted. By the end of the dinner, I was much more proficient and didn’t make too much of a mess, and I appreciated my sight so much more.”

Hundreds of people had a similar experience to Julie when **Dining in the Dark** during September and October last year.

By donning a blindfold and having a dinner party at home, or eating at a North Adelaide Restaurant people were able to experience dining with a difference, and connecting with the importance of Guide Dogs services.

Dynamic **Dining in the Dark** Ambassador, renowned Adelaide artist Emma Hack, encouraged a dozen North Adelaide Restaurants to host a table on the last Friday of September, for a fun night out with a purpose.

There were more than 35 dinner parties held and 66 people took up the challenge at the restaurants.

As the highest fundraiser for the occasion, with a total of \$1,010, Mardie took the experience one step further, when she took a supervised blindfold walk with a Guide Dog, her prize for such an amazing effort.

Thank you to everyone who took part in the Dining in the Dark fundraiser.

Your contribution will provide vital services to South Australians living with vision impairment.

Stay tuned for more details about the next instalment of this exciting event in 2016!

Changing Lives by building confidence through style and music.

How do you feel when you take the time to dress well, apply a little make up or, for the guys, comb your hair and make yourself presentable? You feel good, right; confident and proud?

For most of us, choosing a nice outfit, doing our hair, applying makeup or shaving is all part of the daily routine. For someone with vision impairment, it's no different.

Imagine though, not being able to see when you are trying to apply eye shadow or shaving each morning. It sounds tricky, doesn't it? Both men and women living with vision impairment face challenges, in completing these tasks every day.

Supported by a team of Occupational Therapists, also known as O Tees, and Case Managers from the Sensory team, a group of 10 young ladies aged 15 to 26 years recently attended a Personal Care workshop to learn tips and tricks for styling their hair and applying makeup.

The group focused on hairstyling and maintenance, makeup and nail polish application, with the O Tees and Case Managers sharing tips on making it easier and more accurate.

With a goodie bag full of samples, each of the girls were excited to continue practicing at home, where they will receive a follow-up visit to offer even more tips and tricks.

With these new skills boosting their confidence, these young ladies are now ready for the challenge of going to job interviews, and socialising with friends. The Guide Dogs Sensory team looks forward to offering a similar workshop for men in the near future to help with personal grooming.

While the ladies glammed up, Guide Dogs' sensory clients were taken to the shores of Hawaii at the November Music

Appreciation Group, when Noel McPharlin from the Blackwood Ukulele Group taught the primary chords and culture of the Ukulele. Large print music sheets helped the group follow along, with one member, already an accomplished self-taught musician, taking it a step further with his skill of 'playing by ear'. The Music Appreciation Group meet once a month to hear from guest speakers, attend music events, watch live comedy and anything else that falls under the 'arts' banner.

If you or anyone you know would benefit from participating in the group, or for information on any of the support groups offered by Guide Dogs, please visit guidedogs.org.au/services or phone Your Support Line on 1800 757 738.

“It’s so good to be part of a team again.”

Your support helped unite Milo with Elise and she is overjoyed with her new lease on life.

Elise and Milo were recently matched after Elise’s first Guide Dog, Gypsy, retired after nine years of faithful service.

“Gypsy is like my best friend. I was quite overwhelmed at the thought of her retiring and having to be matched with a new dog,” Elise said.

“I couldn’t imagine life without her although, I think she is happy to have a rest now – she likes to chill out and live the life of a retiree,” said Elise.

“While I waited for my new dog, I had to go back in time and remember how to use the cane again. Even though I worked with the cane for almost 20 years before Gypsy came into my life, it was still a bit of a shock.

“You really have to concentrate on what you are doing. One slip of concentration and you can get into trouble, whereas with a dog, you can anticipate what’s up ahead. It’s also lonelier – a cane has no personality!” she said.

Elise says she couldn’t wait to get back to her ‘old’ life again with her dog by her side. “Milo likes to walk fast, just like me. I could tell he was the dog for me during the matching process. He puts a lot of pressure on the harness.

“He’s a real go-getter and strides strongly – in fact, sometimes I have to get him to slow down a bit!”

There have been many developments in Guide Dog training in the last nine years and we are delighted that Milo is a perfect match for Elise. “Having the right dog to suit her needs is so important for confidence and personal development,” said

Tracey Jones, Guide Dog Instructor.

At first, Elise was concerned about how Gypsy would accept Milo but they now love to play tug-of-war and doggy games together, and both sleep in Elise's bedroom. "We both love him," says Elise.

"Milo is so devoted and affectionate. As soon as I am out of my chair, he's up and next to me, waiting to know what we are doing next. He wants to do the right thing and make me happy.

"It was really good to put the cane away. The first thing we did was travel by plane to the 2015 Australian Goalball Championships in Queensland last October – I'm in the national team. It was exciting to be independent and confident again, finding my way around the accommodation and playing venue.

"I've experienced working the cane and with a dog in the last year and working in a team again is fantastic. I've got much more confidence and independence. Thank you to everyone who helps Guide Dogs – because of you, Milo and I can do so much more, like go to work, travel safely and have a social life on the weekend."

Please consider a donation to the Guide Dog program today. Your contribution will help a young person like Elise turn their dreams into reality. Call 81 15 6060 today to donate or visit guidedogs.org.au/donate.

Providing a home for a Collection Dog.

How many of you have told someone 'I'm a dog person' at some point?

This is just one of the reasons Victor Harbour locals, Lauren and Kieran Shine, became involved with Guide Dogs as Collection Dog Hosts and Puppy Raisers.

"Anyone from the UK, as we are, will remember the show Blue Peter from their childhood. It was on Blue Peter, that I first learned about Guide Dogs through the show's 'pet Golden Retriever' Goldie. Goldie was a brood bitch whose puppies went on to train as Guide Dogs and they always stuck in my head.

"Seeing a Guide Dog at work has always fascinated me, and remembering Goldie from my childhood, and the amazing work her pups went on to do was one of the reasons we originally became involved with the organisation."

One of the first things Lauren did when they took on their fish and chip business was to request a Collection Dog from Guide Dogs.

"We don't charge extra for sauces and condiments like most other places, but I saw an opportunity.

"We decided to ask patrons to make a donation to Guide Dogs in the Collection Dog, instead of charging them extra. The response was amazing!

"Of course it's voluntary but most people are so generous, especially when they read that it will be donated to Guide Dogs; some even pop in notes for just one pot of sauce!"

Requesting another Collection Dog when they recently took over an ice creamery was again a priority for Lauren and Kieran. "The plastic containers that the ice cream comes in are

really useful for all sorts of things, so instead of throwing them out, customers buy them by 'feeding the collection dog' with a donation. In addition to promoting recycling, people are happy to donate because the funds are going to such a worthy cause."

"Having a Collection Dog is such a simple and easy way to support Guide Dogs. It is delivered and collected by volunteers, and I think it also promotes altruism. It's about more than just making money; it's about what we can do to help provide a necessary service to the community."

Soon after receiving their Collection Dog, Lauren and Kieran heard on the radio that Guide Dogs were looking for Puppy Raisers. With their love of dogs, they jumped at the opportunity to apply and were soon approved. "Most people ask 'how do you give them up?' but we think of it simply as the puppy being on loan to us.

"It's our job to socialise and prepare them for their training, and the important job they will one day have as a Guide Dog, or Autism Assistance Dog."

Lauren also says that reading stories about how these amazing dogs change people's lives keeps them going as Puppy Raisers. "These stories are inspiring. After reading a story online recently we agreed that it was time to raise another dog. We're excited to have the gorgeous Nina with us now. To us, a dog would be a great pet but to someone living with disability, they will be life-changing, and we feel privileged to be a part of that."

If you own a business, and would like to host a Collection Dog, or are interested in becoming a Puppy Raiser, please contact the fundraising team on, 8115 6060 or email info@guidedogs.org.au.

What's on at Guide Dogs

Quiz night

Quiz night is here again, bigger and better than ever, with footy legend Andrew Jarman, our MC for the evening. Bring your smarts, join the fun and help support people living with disability by hosting a table.

Test your wits and ability, (and memory!) in a game of trivia with your friends and family and you could be the team that walks away with prizes and bragging rights.

Please save the date – Friday 17 June.

Stay tuned for full details at guidedogs.org.au, coming soon.

Winedirect.com.au supports Guide Dogs!

Do you enjoy a nice crisp white in the summer or a full-bodied red during winter? Every time you purchase an expertly curated mixed pack of wine, or supply of an old favourite, through winedirect.com.au/guidedogs not only will you be taking it easy on your purse, you'll also be enhancing the lives of people living with disability. Even better, they offer free shipping anywhere in Australia for a dozen or more. What are you waiting for? Get online and make your purchase today or call Darryl on 1800 649 463.

Guide Dogs products

Are you looking for the pawfect gift for a friend or loved one? Look no further! Guide Dogs online shop has something for everyone from luxury dog grooming products, to branded office supplies and plush dogs. Visit guidedogs.org.au/shop or our office at 251 Morphett Street, today, and give a gift with a difference.

Entertainment Books

With your purchase of an Entertainment Book through Guide Dogs last year, you contributed to raising over \$7,000! This year, the aim is to reach an incredible \$10,000 from sales, so that more people in the community will benefit from receiving

vital services. Pre-order your Book, or Digital Membership now, ready for delivery mid-April. In doing so, you will receive bonus vouchers valued, at over \$200! It's a great gift idea for Mother's Day, an upcoming birthday or for your own personal use. Visit guidedogs.org.au/entertainment-books today, or visit our office, at 251, Morphett Street, from 13 April.

Paws Parade.

You're invited to join our Paws Parade on 27 April – International Guide Dog Day – as traffic stops in the heart of the Adelaide CBD, to celebrate the amazing work of Guide Dogs and Autism Assistance Dogs in the community. Contact our team on, 81 15 6060, to join the parade!

Hearts healed, lives changed.

“Now we have Orion, a massive weight has lifted from my shoulders.”

Eleven-year-old Ben has never slept alone.

“As soon as the sun goes down, Ben becomes incredibly fearful. He has never been able to sleep in his own room - always in our bedroom, on a mattress or in bed with me,” said mum, Jennie.

“It’s heartbreaking because he knows that this is not what other 11-year-old boys do. Other boys his age don’t have to sleep in the same room as their mum anymore.”

Can you imagine Jennie’s emotions when she stands at the door of her young son’s room now, watching him sleep in his own bed, snuggled up next to Pets As Therapy Dog, Quora?

Eleven years – and overnight, this beautiful dog has changed Ben’s life forever.

Everyone knows that a Guide Dog helps people who live with vision impairment, or that the Autism Assistance Dog program helps families of children living with autism. But do you remember the story of Stephen and his Pets As Therapy Dog, Koby, from our March 2015 issue of Paw Prints?

Quora, like Koby, is one of the many dogs selected for Guide Dogs’ Pets As Therapy program. While not as well suited for a career as a Guide Dog or Autism Assistance Dog, these dogs are well trained and show particular empathy. They are especially suitable as a trained companion.

“Pets As Therapy dogs provide a high level of comfort and safety to people with special needs. This is particularly the case for children with autism, like Ben and his 16-year-old brother, Max.

“These children can communicate but still have significant challenges,” said Guide Dog Instructor, Natalie Carey.

While Ben and Max are verbal and attend mainstream schools, they struggle with the same sensory issues and anxieties associated with autism.

“Max is in Year 10, which presents a huge pressure. He arrives home in sensory overload meaning he gets overwhelmed very easily by the things you and I may take for granted.

“Now, Max takes Quora on her evening walk. When he gets home after fresh air, exercise and quiet time with his special dog, he feels so much better,” Jennie said.

After visiting so many doctors, specialists and psychologists, Jennie and her husband wondered what difference a dog could make. “We are just blown away by the changes in the boys. Quora brings such love and comfort to our home.”

Ben and Max needed a high level of comfort, but little Sadie, just three years of age, needed an Autism Assistance Dog to keep her safe, as she begins to experience life.

“I worry all the time. Even something as simple as going into a shop and having to pay is impossible. I can’t drop her hand.

She sees everything as a new place to explore,” said Sadie’s mum, Lauren.

“She has no independence. From the car, to shopping trolley or pram, she’s always strapped in restricted – just so I know she is safe.”

An Autism Assistance Dog changes lives by enabling freedom, independence and safety. Sadie is attached to her dog, Orion, by a lead secured around her waist. But if she attempts to run, Orion will resist by sitting or even lying down. Orion also

provides comfort and calm for Sadie and her entire family.

“Walking Sadie’s big sister, Giselle to school is amazing. Sadie doesn’t speak, but I know what she is thinking. She looks up at me with delight as if to say, look at us, we are all walking together! Now she can walk freely with Orion by her side, just like all the other little brothers and sisters.”

Thanks to your support, children like Ben, Max and Sadie and their families now look to the future with hope. But there r still so many more young children who need help. Children who, without your help, may be in danger or be unable to face challenges of everyday life.

“The beautiful thing about our dogs is the variety of ways they can help. All of our dogs go out and help someone, whether in our core Guide Dog or Autism Assistance Dog programs, or if they have a career change, and become a Pets As Therapy dog. Every dog will benefit someone,” said Natalie.

Your support means Guide Dogs can help keep young children like Sadie safe, and offer opportunity for young people like Max and Ben that may otherwise be out of reach for them. With your help, Guide Dogs can lead these children toward a safer and inclusive life.

Please consider a donation today. Your contribution will enhance the quality of life for people living with disability and children living with autism. Call 8115 6060 to donate or visit guidedogs.org.au/donate