



Seeing Eye Dogs
Vision Australia

Paws

For a moment

Issue 1 – 2025



Thank you
for helping
to care for and train
more pups!



Thank you

Welcome to 2025! What wonderful stories and incredible joy I have to share, all made possible thanks to you!

Meet life-changing Seeing Eye Dogs Yana and Joey, whose amazing skills have transformed the lives of their handlers, Dale and Alayna. We introduce another adorable litter of puppies and celebrate more than 40 handler and Seeing Eye Dogs graduating teams.

Every hour of training is an investment in the wellbeing, independence and happiness of someone who is blind or has low vision. Thank you so much for your incredible commitment to our life-changing Seeing Eye Dogs.

Justine Heath

Justine Heath
Acting Chief Executive Officer



Welcome to the world puppies!

With your support these puppies are heading for big things.

Zephyr, Zipper, Zali
DOB: 13/6/24 Breed: L
Mum: Ocean Dad: Zed/Charlie

Armon, Ambrose, Amigo, Aqua, Annabel, Apache, Agnes, Ariel
DOB: 17/6/24 Breed: L
Mum: Unice Dad: Norris

Darla, Ducky, Delilah, Desmond, Delta, Derry, Draco, Daffyd, Dermot, Dora
DOB: 3/8/24 Breed: LxGR
Mum: Nell Dad: Omri

Quentin, Quail, Quilpie, Quarter, Quokka, Quasi, Que
DOB: 21/3/24 Breed: LxGR
Mum: Fern Dad: Tiger

Sia, Scamp (Transferred), Scotty (Transferred), Sid, Sully
DOB: 5/4/24 Breed: L
Mum: Zsa Zsa Dad: Parker

Ripley, Rumble, Raffy, Rhonda, Remus, Rishi
DOB: 4/4/24 Breed: LxGR
Mum: Zia Dad: Keanu

Frisco, Frances, Flint, Frankie, Freckles, Fancy, Faris, Freya
DOB: 21/8/24 Breed: L
Mum: Lucy Dad: Kahuna

Perr, Pascoe, Pharaoh, Pringle, Polo, Perro, Pebbles, Poppet, Posy, Peggy
DOB: 23/2/24 Breed: L
Mum: Ella Dad: Floyd

Chippie, Camilla, Cupid, Carl, Charles, Clover, Chai, Cuba, Camira, Cadel, Chino
DOB: 19/7/24 Breed: L
Mum: Gemma Dad: Keanu

Taffy, Tinker, Tilly, Tully, Taylor, Teddy
DOB: 22/4/24 Breed: L
Mum: Omari Dad: Fitch

Greg, Gideon, Gloria, Garnet, Georgia, Gail, Gilly
DOB: 29/8/24 Breed: LxGR
Mum: Wilma Dad: Kilil

Ubu, Urbi, Umble, Ultimo, Ulf, Uriah, Urchin, Ulesi, Uke, Udell, Ulani, Umee
DOB: 2/5/24 Breed: GR
Mum: Treasure Dad: Deuce

Yetta, Yohan, Yuan, Yasu, Yaden, Yenty, Yvonne, Yonder, Yulien, Yodel, Yuki
DOB: 1/6/24 Breed: L
Mum: Molly Dad: Quincy

Vinny
DOB: 15/5/24 Breed: L
Mum: Alaska Dad: Maiko

Briella, Burra, Bilby
DOB: 4/7/24 Breed: L
Mum: Zara Dad: Diego

Gowola, Wolfie, Winona, Bitja, Journey, Willa, Woody
DOB: 29/5/24 Breed: LxGR
Mum: Wooley Dad: Ivan

Edie, Epic, Enzo, Ernest, Eton, Esme, Eleanor, Eileen, Ember
DOB: 7/8/24 Breed: L
Mum: Scully Dad: Tiger

Everything is easier with Yana – and it's all thanks to you.

Dale's life has now been transformed twice – firstly through vision loss, and secondly when he met wonderful Seeing Eye Dog Yana.

Eighteen months ago, Dale awoke with a headache, unable to see out of his left eye. He was diagnosed with bilateral central retinal vein occlusion (CRVO) – a stroke behind the eyes. Just a few months later, he suddenly felt a pinch in his right eye and his vision went fuzzy. Tests confirmed blocked retinal veins.

'I couldn't drive or work. My life stopped. I spent lots of time sitting in waiting rooms wondering what would happen to me.'

Dale had been incredibly independent, and it was very hard to accept increasing vision loss. While he has regular injections and laser treatment to maintain some sight, Dale knew he needed to do something to maintain his independence.

After several months on the Seeing Eye Dogs waiting list, he was matched with



Yana



Dale and Seeing Eye Dog Yana

beautiful Seeing Eye Dog Yana – and you made this very special match possible!

'Instructor Yoav was amazing and helped the two of us really bond. Learning how to do things was so much easier with Yana. Now I have independence. I can travel safely to Melbourne and back from regional Ballarat on public transport!

'I can even go out in the dark on public transport – if I feel worried, Yana knows, and she leans against my leg and looks up at me. That is a massive comfort.

'It was so overwhelming at the start, with the enormity of what's ahead. But now I know I have support with Yana by my side.'

Your generous support has given Dale independence and purpose – he has even joined the Vision Australia Client Reference Group (CRG) to give back to the community.

Thank you for giving Dale the gift of Yana.

'A Seeing Eye Dog gives you companionship, love and the confidence to be independent.

I don't think I will ever have enough words to express how grateful I am for my Seeing Eye Dog Felix, and to you.'

- Lee-Ann with Seeing Eye Dog Felix



Celebrating the launch of our innovative Dog Care Centre!



In 2019, Veterinary and Reproduction Manager Dr Nicola Cotton and Dog Wellbeing and Adoption Services Kat Kakafikas embarked on a journey to transform the way we care for our Seeing Eye Dogs, ensuring we deliver a gold-standard of health and safety to maximise and maintain optimal wellbeing.

The Ivan Chasemore Dog Care Centre is their vision. The refurbished area borders our veterinary clinic and includes 14 kennels equipped with easy to clean surfaces, self-drainage systems, inside and outside areas, automated dog-toileting doors, climate control, natural light and is designed for ease of use, for our dog and staff wellbeing.

A special unveiling event, attended by more than 100 guests, was held at the Seeing Eye Dogs Mobility Training Centre. Official presentations were made by Bill Jolley, Chairman, Ron Hooton, CEO, Dr Nicola Cotton, Kat Kakafikas, supporter Ngaire Callaghan and client Clare Opie,

who shared her experience with vision loss and the life-changing impact of her Seeing Eye Dog Mabel.

The proceedings culminated in a ribbon cutting by Bill Jolley and long-time supporters, and Seeing Eye Dogs volunteer carers, Neil and Kathryn Archibald, who have been caring for Seeing Eye Dogs for over 10 years.

Neil shared, 'Vision Australia and Seeing Eye Dogs are like our extended family – we support all aspects of their great work.'

Special tours of the new Dog Care Centre and National Puppy Centre were held after the presentation, with guests enjoying playtime and cuddles with special 10-week-old puppies about to start their training journey.

We would like to sincerely thank our Seeing Eye Dogs supporters – this project was fully funded through donations from generous individuals and foundations. Special tactile and braille plaques are displayed throughout the Centre to recognise their contributions.



Guests enjoyed some puppy love

If you would like to know more about other opportunities to support projects like the Dog Care Centre, please contact our Philanthropy, Major Gifts team on 1800 422 077 or email philanthropy@visionaustralia.org

'Joey has completely changed my world.'

Just five months ago, Alayna was matched with Seeing Eye Dog Joey – and now this incredible pair is conquering the world together.

Before Joey, Alayna was struggling to reach her dream of paid, full-time work – her vision loss was making this much harder to achieve. After matching with Joey, everything has changed. Alayna has embraced volunteer work and joined the team at Seeing Eye Dogs kennels in Kensington. Joey and his incredible skills have changed Alayna's life.

Every Wednesday, Joey and Alayna make the trek to Melbourne, travelling on a regional train, Metro city train and then walking to Seeing Eye Dogs.

Alayna says, 'I couldn't tackle the city on my own, but Joey makes it so easy and reduces the stress, showing me the way through crowds and between platforms.'

'Now I work with young Seeing Eye Dogs pups waiting to be matched with a volunteer puppy carer, making enrichment



toys, cleaning kennels, grooming and the best part – giving cuddles!'

Joey easily navigates through big, busy crowds and together, the two have begun taking big leaps in confidence.

'Just the other day, Joey showed me a set of steps I don't normally use. Having Joey by my side builds my self-esteem and confidence. Without him I wouldn't have dreamed of trying such a challenge.'

This amazing team is truly inseparable, regularly out together at music festivals, cinemas, cafes, shopping centres and walking at the local lake.

Thank you for all you do to help care for and train Seeing Eye Dogs like Joey!



'Joey has completely changed my world. He is such a cutie and I am so very grateful to donors!'

- Alayna with Seeing Eye Dog Joey

Life-changing connections

On Wednesday, September 18, we hosted the annual Seeing Eye Dogs graduation event 2024, 'Life-changing connections'.

What a privilege it is to be part of the journey of such special pups seeing them grow up to become working Seeing Eye Dogs and be matched with people who are blind or have low vision.

Matching a Seeing Eye Dog with a client involves so many people at different stages of their lives. We ended the financial year with over 230 active Seeing Eye Dogs around the country. We've never had this many concurrent handlers, which was an incredible outcome to show for the amazing efforts all our volunteers, donors, partners, sponsors, staff, Vision Australia colleagues and donors put in every day of the year.

Following from this great work, we were able to reduce the average waiting time to five months for handlers to be matched with a new Seeing Eye Dog. Lester Chraim, Seeing Eye Dogs client services manager shared with us, 'Our clients tell us that wait time is one of the single most important factors when choosing a service provider and we are doing extremely well on that front.'

'This is the fourth year in a row we've had at least 220 pups born and we have graduated more than 40 new Seeing Eye Dogs with clients. The Seeing Eye Dogs youth program and its camps is in its third year, and we are thrilled to have three young clients graduating this year.'

'We have training hubs with instructors and puppy development trainers in NSW and QLD, to assist our regionalisation efforts, to get us closer to where our clients are and bringing us all closer together.'

The official proceedings for this year's graduation were held at Kensington Town Hall, Victoria with over 40 graduating client and Seeing Eye Dog partnerships and graduating breeding dogs. For the first time, we had Vision Australia satellite offices in NSW and WA join us with live crosses streamed via Zoom.

'This is the best graduation event we've put on yet, amazing work from everyone who has contributed to make this a success and congratulations to the graduating alumni of 2024.' Lester Chraim.





zoetis

Keep your dog safe in Springtime

Everyone comes to play when the weather warms up – and so do ticks – Spring is their busiest time of year!

Ticks are small parasites which attach themselves to animals and some ticks, can be dangerous to our dogs.

Simparica Trio is an excellent preventative treatment, specifically chosen to protect our precious Seeing Eye Dogs, who love its tasty liver flavour!

To protect your dog, follow these two simple steps:

- Use good parasite protection. Simparica Trio is proven to kill paralysis ticks and treats and controls both brown dog ticks and bush ticks.
- Dogs should be checked daily for paralysis ticks, especially in warmer months.

How to Perform a Tick Check?

- Inspect every square centimetre of the dog's skin.
- Don't forget the face, ears, armpits, between the toes, groin and back area.
- If a tick is found, remove it immediately and continue the search.

Visit www.simparica.com.au/simparica-trio to find out more.



Petbarn and Vision Australia – changing lives together!

Petbarn stores have been an essential training ground for Seeing Eye Dogs, providing a rich environment full of sensory experiences.

From the tempting smell of treats to the sight of playful toys and the presence of other visiting pets, this diverse range of distractions helps prepare the puppies for the real world, where they will need to stay focused amidst various challenges. So far, The Petbarn Foundation's 11-year partnership with Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs has funded a total of 179 pups!



Greencross Vets clinics nationally provide a 15% discounted veterinary care and support for Vision Australia clients, to help ensure their four-legged companions stay healthy, happy and ready to work.




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CELEBRATING **18 YEARS** AS THE NUTRITIONAL PARTNER OF

 **Seeing Eye Dogs**
Vision Australia



Welcome Brayden!

We welcome premiership-winning player, Brayden Maynard, as an official ambassador.

'Brayden has been a long-time supporter of Seeing Eye Dogs, having volunteered over the years and adopting his adorable Lab, Simon, from us,' said Seeing Eye Dogs manager for puppy development Jane Bradley.

Brayden is one of many compassionate volunteers who play an integral role in the journey of a Seeing Eye Dog. Without their generosity, our puppies would not be able to receive the care and training they need to become fully-fledged Seeing Eye Dogs.

'Accepting the title of Seeing Eye Dogs Ambassador was easy. It's a worthy cause that everyone should get behind, no-matter which footy team they go for. I'm excited to see the impact we can make together,' said Brayden.

For more information and to apply now, visit:
sed.visionaustralia.org/volunteer



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