



Seeing Eye Dogs
Vision Australia

Paws

For a moment

Issue 2 – 2025



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



Thank you

It's such a joy to share the stories of independence and joy you bring to Australians who are blind or have low vision.

Meet inspirational couple, Beverley and Warwick, whose Seeing Eye Dogs Alfred and Oslow make navigating the world together easy – and read about Seeing Eye Dog Winnie, whose comforting presence has given Sophie such happiness.

Check in with the stars of our recent appeals, Clare and Seeing Eye Dog Mabel, and Jo and Seeing Eye Dog Phil and meet our newest graduates. Find out why Twanny is so passionate about giving to change lives. And there's a special invitation to join our puppy sponsor community!

Your support is so important to us. Thank you!

Justine Heath

Justine Heath
Acting Chief Executive Officer



Welcome to the world puppies!

With your support these puppies are heading for big things.

<p>Hooton, Henny, Heidi, Harper, Halo DOB: 14/9/24 Breed: L Mum: Natasha Dad: Diego</p>	<p>Myrtle, Moose, Minnie, Miles, Max, Maurice, Maui, Marlon, Maple DOB: 3/12/24 Breed: GR Mum: Pickles Dad: Gambler</p>
<p>Iver, Shan, Iniki, Ini, Ingke, Indigo, India, Immy, Ignatius, Ibis DOB: 5/10/24 Breed: LxGR Mum: Gretel Dad: Kilil</p>	<p>Norah, Nigel, Nicky DOB: 4/12/24 Breed: LxGR Mum: Usha Dad: Quincy</p>
<p>Juno, Josie, Joseph, Jingle, Jester, Jessica, Jenga, Janet DOB: 11/10/24 Breed: L Mum: Xendi Dad: Quazi</p>	<p>Prue, Poppy, Pip, Petra, Peter, Pedro, Paul, Pammi, Pablo DOB: 19/12/24 Breed: L Mum: Tammy Dad: Soihtu</p>
<p>Kurt, Kojac, Koda, Kobi, Kit, Kristen, Keller, Kashmir DOB: 19/10/24 Breed: GR Mum: Velma Dad: Jonah</p>	<p>Ryee, Roo, Roman, Roma, Rocco, Roan, Renoir, Reggie, Reddy DOB: 21/12/24 Breed: LxGR Mum: Honshu Dad: Vino/Achilles</p>
<p>Othello, Ochre DOB: 31/10/24 Breed: L Mum: Iika Dad: Pike</p>	<p>Quella DOB: 31/12/24 Breed: LxGR Mum: Yuki Dad: Brian</p>
<p>Lyric, Libby, Latte, Laksa DOB: 1/11/24 Breed: LxGR Mum: Kamini Dad: Omri</p>	<p>Swift, Sven, Smokey, Serena, Sasha DOB: 18/1/25 Breed: LxGR Mum: Iris Dad: Floyd</p>
<p>Ornell, Omar DOB: 5/11/24 Breed: L Mum: Joey Dad: Pirate</p>	<p>Taru, Tia, Twanny DOB: 18/1/25 Breed: L Mum: Quilla Dad: Copi</p>
<p>Orchid DOB: 11/11/24 Breed: GR Mum: Bess Dad: Kamahl</p>	<p>Umeko, Unagi, Uganda, Udin, Ular, Ulyssa, Una, Ula DOB: 3/2/25 Breed: L Mum: Keitha Dad: Otava</p>
<p>Odie DOB: 12/11/24 Breed: L Mum: Velvet Dad: Chance</p>	<p>Vada, Vali, Venus, Vera, Vicky, Vienna, Vince DOB: 14/2/25 Breed: LxGR Mum: Fennel Dad: Diego</p>

A perfect partnership

It's not often we're able to tell the story of a couple who both have Seeing Eye Dogs, but Beverley and Warwick are the exception!

Married for 20 years, Beverley and Warwick are both totally blind and have each experienced the limitless freedom and independence a Seeing Eye Dog brings. And it's all thanks to compassionate people like you.

Beverley has been blind since the age of seven, when surgeons had to cut her optic nerve to remove a cerebral abscess in the right side of her brain. Warwick has been blind since the age of 23, after being born with a genetic syndrome that led to retinitis pigmentosa.

The couple have worked in diverse roles over the years, from therapeutic massage to community service, always with a Seeing Eye Dog right by their side. Beverley has had six dogs and Warwick has had nine. Today, Beverley works with Seeing Eye Dog Alfred while Warwick works with Seeing Eye Dog Oslow. They cannot imagine life without a dog guide.

"Like every dog I've trained with, Alfred bonded immediately to me. He is a beautiful, well-mannered boy, always wagging his tail and eager to work.



Beverley and Warwick
with Seeing Eye Dogs Alfred and Oslow

He just jumps into action once his harness is on," says Beverley.

Warwick says their dogs are like 'brothers', which makes for a wonderful home life for everyone. 'Oslow is an easy-going, laid-back boy who loves playing with his brother. As soon as their harnesses come off at home, you wouldn't know they are working dogs.'

Beverley says having a Seeing Eye Dog and not relying on sighted people makes a huge difference in their lives. "Once you get comfortable, it's just seamless."

The lifelong impact of Seeing Eye Dogs for people like Beverley and Warwick is extraordinary. Thank you for all you do to support Australians who are blind or have low vision.

"I am so grateful for Kevy. He is the gift of freedom."

- Linda and Seeing Eye Dog Kevy



"From little things big things grow:" Twanny Farrugia's Legacy

Twanny's story is one of remarkable resilience. Born in Malta, he emigrated to Australia at eleven and faced significant health challenges, including a kidney transplant at seventeen and the eventual loss of his sight.

Despite these setbacks, Twanny remained positive and fiercely independent. A passionate advocate for people with vision loss and disability rights, Twanny received the Rotary Shine Award and Greater Dandenong Council's Citizen of the Year in 2014.

Eileen and her family first met Twanny 13 years ago when they raised his first dog guide as a puppy. Over time, they formed a close friendship, and as Eileen grew more involved with Seeing Eye Dogs as a volunteer puppy carer, she encouraged Twanny to seek additional wheelchair training with his dog, Anabelle, to support his mobility.

As Twanny's health declined, he was deeply grateful for the wheelchair training he and his beloved Anabelle received from the Seeing Eye Dogs team.



Eileen holding puppy Twanny outside Kensington's Dog Care Centre



Kirsten proudly holding puppy Kirsten inside Kensington's new Dog Care Centre

In his Will, he generously funded the training of eight Seeing Eye Dogs puppies and made a gift to support the wheelchair program. One of these puppies, Kirsten, was named after his goddaughter, a gesture that Eileen says means a lot to her, as they shared a special bond. "No matter what he was going through, he always put others first," says Eileen. "We miss him terribly."

By including a gift for the wheelchair program and sponsoring eight Seeing Eye Dogs pups in his will, Twanny's legacy continues to support the blind and low-vision community. His commitment to paying it forward—believing that even small gestures can create significant change—serves as a powerful reminder of his kindness. The words, "From little things, big things grow," perfectly capture the lasting impact of his generosity.

We are hugely grateful to generous supporters like Twanny. If you would like to know more about how you too can transform people's lives, we would love to hear from you. Please contact our team on 1800 422 077, or email gjw@visionaustralia.org

"I adore her, and she adores me."

Sophie was just 20 years old when she was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa, a degenerative eye condition that causes tunnel vision and night blindness, and Usher syndrome, a rare genetic disease that affects both hearing and sight.

The conditions are unpredictable, and this double diagnosis meant a difficult adjustment. Connecting with Vision Australia 12 years ago was a significant turning point.

"When you're quite independent, accepting you need extra help, then actually putting yourself out there and asking for it is even harder. But everyone at Seeing Eye Dogs is so friendly, so welcoming. No question is ever stupid. They just make it so easy."

Sophie was given a visibility cane to help increase her confidence, but as her eyesight deteriorated, her cane was no longer enough. She was matched with Seeing Eye Dog, Yarra, and they spent six wonderful years together before Sophie sadly lost Yarra to illness in 2023.

Her struggle with anxiety and loneliness prompted Sophie to apply for another Seeing Eye Dog. In August last year she



Sophie with Seeing Eye Dog Winnie

was matched with Seeing Eye Dog Winnie, who she says is a hardworking, sensitive soul. "We're a good team," Sophie explains.

With Winnie by her side, Sophie has new confidence and positivity in her life. She's getting out, taking on new challenges and environments. Winnie takes her job very seriously and has been life saving for Sophie. "Winnie pretty much saved my life the other day. A car ran through the red light, and we were halfway across the road. If she hadn't stopped, the driver would've hit me."

"It's clear I adore her, and she adores me. Without Winnie, I wouldn't be as happy as I am."

This inseparable team was made possible by your kindness.



"I was so relieved when I heard Felix could learn to help me in my wheelchair. Felix was unbelievable, he had to adapt overnight."

- Lee-Ann with Seeing Eye Dog Felix

New graduates

Twenty-seven more people are now striding out with confidence and independence, thanks to your amazing commitment to helping people with vision loss. **We are so grateful for your help.**

SEEING EYE DOG *Brassy* MATCHED WITH *Jael*
SEEING EYE DOG *Jacqui* MATCHED WITH *Beverley*
SEEING EYE DOG *Tanya* MATCHED WITH *Martin*
SEEING EYE DOG *Tetra* MATCHED WITH *Catherine*
SEEING EYE DOG *Yanna* MATCHED WITH *Dale*
SEEING EYE DOG *Yoffi* MATCHED WITH *Matt*
SEEING EYE DOG *Billie* MATCHED WITH *Crystal*
SEEING EYE DOG *Bingo* MATCHED WITH *Daniel*
SEEING EYE DOG *Donna* MATCHED WITH *Graeme*
SEEING EYE DOG *Gambo* MATCHED WITH *Paul*
SEEING EYE DOG *Gracie* MATCHED WITH *Hayden*
SEEING EYE DOG *Gwenyth* MATCHED WITH *Katie*
SEEING EYE DOG *Hathi* MATCHED WITH *Lynette*
SEEING EYE DOG *Homer* MATCHED WITH *Mark*

SEEING EYE DOG *Layla* MATCHED WITH *Ilona*
SEEING EYE DOG *Lenny* MATCHED WITH *Joan*
SEEING EYE DOG *Maggie* MATCHED WITH *George*
SEEING EYE DOG *Mandy* MATCHED WITH *Cassandra*
SEEING EYE DOG *Pinot* MATCHED WITH *David*
SEEING EYE DOG *Sophie* MATCHED WITH *Sara*
SEEING EYE DOG *Ulysses* MATCHED WITH *Joanne*
SEEING EYE DOG *Winter* MATCHED WITH *Brett*
SEEING EYE DOG *Youseff* MATCHED WITH *Alison*
SEEING EYE DOG *Zeeba* MATCHED WITH *Casey*
SEEING EYE DOG *Waylon* MATCHED WITH *Ron*
SEEING EYE DOG *Zimbo (Jimbo)* MATCHED WITH *Anthony*
SEEING EYE DOG *Kezia* MATCHED WITH *Graeme*

A special thank you from Clare and Jo



"Everything I do now is because of Mabel. You made that happen – thank you so much. Once I've put the harness on her, I feel like I could do anything. It's actually like she is part of me." - Clare



"It's so important for you to know exactly what you have done for me. Life with Phil is so different. I never feel alone or frightened. He is always there to support me. And I never hesitate to go out. I feel such freedom!" – Jo



Petbarn Foundation Seeing Eye Dogs Appeal 2025 – Changing lives, four paws at a time

Since 2012, the Petbarn Foundation has donated over \$29 million to animal welfare groups and rescue organisations across Australia. The Petbarn Foundation's single largest annual fundraising appeal is for Vision Australia supporting Seeing Eye Dogs.

In the last 12 years the Petbarn Foundation has funded 179 Seeing Eye Dogs and counting, donating \$8.95 million to Vision Australia.

Now, there's an opportunity to make an even greater impact! By supporting the 2025 Seeing Eye Dogs Appeal at any Petbarn store this July, individuals can help change even more lives.

Show your support and help train up a pup this July by donating in store or online at petbarn.com.au/seeingeyedogs



zoetis

Fleas: A Pesky Problem

Fleas are tiny, annoying bugs that love to bite and make our pets itchy and incredibly uncomfortable, and it can be tough to get rid of them.

Simparica Trio, a monthly chewable tablet, is a game-changer for flea control. It starts killing fleas quickly and wipes them out completely within eight hours. Plus, it's super easy to give to your dog, thanks to its tasty liver flavour that dogs love.

Simparica Trio is also making a positive impact through its sponsorship of the Seeing Eye Dogs program. Zoetis, the company behind Simparica Trio, donates a year's supply of the medication to keep these incredible dogs safe from fleas, ticks, worms, and other parasites.

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



SimparicaTRIO



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Dr Katrina Crowe
BVSC, SENIOR COMPANION ANIMAL VETERINARIAN

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of Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs



Puppy sponsors change lives!



Puppy sponsor, Debbie

Every puppy born at Seeing Eye Dogs has the potential to change a life forever, and puppy sponsors play a special role in their journey.

Puppy Sponsors give pups-in-training everything they need to become world-class Seeing Eye Dogs and receive regular updates and exclusive 'behind the scenes' photos. Sponsors Rachel and Debbie love the connection they feel to their sponsored pups.

"I love receiving updates from my sponsored dog and their pack. It's amazing to hear their progress and the journey they take. If you've ever thought about sponsoring, please do it and support Seeing Eye Dogs." – Rachel

"Seeing the progress of the puppies through emails, letters, and photos is something I truly enjoy—it's wonderful to follow their journey and see the impact they will have. It's an incredibly rewarding way to make a difference." – Debbie

Meet our newest litter of puppies and find out how to become a sponsor today! Scan the QR code here.



Celebrating 65 wonderful years

In 1960, Mrs Phyllis Gration AM established the Lady Nell Seeing Eye Dog School in Wonga Park, after experiencing the life-changing impact of a dog guide herself. It was the beginning of what we know as Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs today.

After the first Seeing Eye Dog, Saki graduated in 1961, the organisation grew quickly. Our staff, branches, kennels and breeding program expanded, as did the number of overjoyed clients. It's amazing to consider that in our first 30 years, Seeing Eye Dogs graduated 230 dogs – the total amount now matched in the last five years.

There have been so many milestones and incredible achievements over the years – but none of this would have been possible without the support of caring people like you.



Thank you for helping change the lives of people who are blind or have low vision!