

Official newsletter from the staff, graduates and
volunteers of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs



BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS

PAW PRINTS

Spring 2017 - Issue No. 35



Photo Credit: Tyler Garnham

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



As you page through this latest edition of Paw Prints, like all other editions you will share in the positive and profound changes that our dogs make to our clients, both visually impaired and families with children with Autism. This is BC & Alberta Guide Dogs fulfilling its' mission. For the best part, however, you the reader may not be aware of the quiet army of volunteers that have supported the fulfillment of these amazing working teams, both Guide and Autism Support Dogs. These volunteers are of course, individuals and families that

have raised our young puppies and shaped them into amazing working dogs, having participated in the whelping, raising and boarding all our dogs. These unselfish tasks are fraught with highs and lows, hard work, staying alert 24/7 and resulting for some, in disappointment and for others, success. To you all I thank you and applaud your vital contribution to BC & Alberta Guide Dogs.

So, now to you the reader. We have sent you this latest copy of Paw Prints because of your support and interest in the activities of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs. I ask you today to support our army of dedicated volunteers raising our puppies and dogs in training. We have a huge waiting list of clients and we are doing all that we can to reduce the wait list and wait times. You can play an important part in this, by making a donation today, there is a donor form enclosed or you may prefer to donate online. Lastly, please consider leaving a bequest in your will. Bequests make a profound difference to the on-going operations and financial security of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs.

I trust that you will enjoy this edition of Paw Prints and do spare a thought for all our dedicated volunteers that make these amazing dogs what they are – AMAZING!



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*Success stories have been edited for space.
Please visit our website for full stories.*

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GUIDE DOG TEAM



Angell & Guide Dog Macy

Team Sponsor: Provincial Employees Community Services Fund

I received my first guide dog Kobe ten years ago, when I was sixteen years old. Since then, he has accompanied me through my high school and university graduations, as well as travelled with me over 50 times both domestically and internationally. Needless to say, he has earned a wonderful retirement. Enter the latest edition to the family, Macy, a little feisty ball of energy. Very similar to Kobe and yet so different in many ways. We spent a great three weeks in training, through all types of weather and I look forward to what the future has in store for us. I would like to sincerely thank Bill and Linda Thornton for all their dedication to the organization as well as Nick Toni and Rebecca Preston for their countless hours of hard work to train the dogs. I also deeply appreciate the time and energy put in by Macy's puppy raisers and boarders and the rest of the staff that are involved in the entire process.

With best regards, Angell, Macy and Kobe

WANT MORE PUPPY UPDATES? FOLLOW US!

bcandalbertaguidedogs.com



AUTISM SUPPORT DOG TEAM



Cohen & Autism Support Dog Jennie B

Team Sponsor: Grand Chapter of Alberta, Order of the Eastern Star

Living with a disability can be challenging, but living with an invisible disability can be even more challenging. Anyone who has a child with Autism can understand this.

I have a 5-year-old son with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), who is the light of my life. He has many strengths, but has many challenges as well. So when I discovered that they train Autism Support Dogs, I was immediately interested. I filled out the application with BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and went through the application process and then we waited. And finally, in Sept 2016 we were paired with a beautiful lab named Jennie B.

Jennie B has been a part of our family for six months now and I have seen so many changes in my son since her arrival. At first, he was standoffish, but then slowly I noticed him reaching out to her for comfort in the form of a small hand across her back or leaning up against her or just sitting with her enjoying her company. This was a huge step for him as he would only go to his dad and I up to this point. He now loves nothing more than accompanying Jennie B on a walk or any kind of outing for that matter. He is so at peace walking alongside her.

Since then we really enjoy going out as a family and spending time going for walks, shopping or anywhere else the day takes us. Jennie B has brought a sense of calm to our household, and has also given us the confidence to take on any challenges that may come our way.

A big thank you to BC & Alberta Guide Dogs for this wonderful service you provide.



AUTISM SUPPORT DOG TEAM



Kaya & Autism Support Dog Dianne

Team Sponsor: Diamond Foundation

Just before her third birthday, our daughter Kaya was diagnosed with autism. We knew very early on that there was something different about Kaya but no-one could tell us what it was. She wasn't growing on the same scale as other kids her age, and had no speech, plus she was born with other physical difficulties.

Outside of her challenges, Kaya is a funny, happy girl, and just loves animals, especially dogs. After hearing about Autism Support Dogs, we knew we had to apply for Kaya. This past February, we got the phone call we had been waiting for. Dianne became part of our family. While we are all thrilled, Kaya was over the moon. "She's my best friend" she kept saying, over and over, and still does.

The difference we've seen in Kaya has been nothing short of amazing. Kaya has been much calmer since Dianne's arrival, but of course she still has her times where she's upset or frustrated, and when she's having a tantrum or meltdown, Dianne always comes to Kaya.

Because of Kaya's low muscle tone, she never liked going for walks. That has all changed with Dianne. Kaya loves taking Dianne for walks. Kaya is genuinely proud to walk with Dianne.

It is so amazing how Kaya who doesn't express her feelings very often calls out "I am so happy!" "I am so happy I have Dianne" and so are we. There are no words to express our feeling of joy and gratitude to BC & Alberta Guide Dogs for having Dianne in our family. We especially want to say a huge thank you as well, to all the puppy sponsors, raisers, boarders and our amazing trainers, Nic and Laura. Their support, patience and love made this wonderful 4 legged miracle happen for our family.



GUIDE DOG TEAM



Tamara and Guide Dog Bruce

Team Sponsor: John Hardie Mitchell family foundation

Bruce is my third Guide Dog from BC & Alberta Guide Dogs. I first started working with a guide dog 17 years ago, when I was just 15 years old. I was a bit nervous about being matched with Bruce because my first two dogs were very typical, overly energetic labs. Bruce is a border collie golden retriever cross, and his personality is the extreme opposite. He is calm, sensitive, and ridiculously cuddly. I thought I would tire of his "Mama's Boy" tendencies quickly, but I am pleased to report I have fallen madly in love with this boy and am beyond thrilled to have him cling to me wherever we go.

Bruce is a superstar when it comes to navigating the chaos of my daily commute, and he is a much more patient shopping companion than my husband! When we get home at the end of the day, Bruce has a tiny Chihuahua cross named Fergie to relentlessly put him in his place and steal his bone.

Growing up in a town that is much smaller than the city that I live in now, I can honestly say that BC & Alberta Guide Dogs has played a massive role in my access to independence and the incredible action-packed life I feel so lucky to be living.

Thank you, from the bottom of my heart, for all that each of you do to make this happen.



GUIDE DOG TEAM



Joan & Guide Dog Beth

Team Sponsor: The Estate of Doreen Marjorie Powles

What a pleasure to write you a thank you note for sponsoring Beth. We have recently completed our three-week training and I am truly grateful for her companionship and uncanny guiding ability.

I work at Vancouver Community College. Beth has already proven she is focused and interested in finding the bus stops, finding the posts so I can tap my transit card and then comfortably guide me thru the mayhem of the SeaBus, and SkyTrain and on to the College. It is always a positive adventure.

Beth is taking over the guiding duties from my retired Guide Dog, Adera. It is a tribute to how well these dogs are trained to accommodate, that Adera welcomed Beth 110% and Beth shared up her bed, that she arrived with. But their favourite game is playing tug-a-war with an old sock, and chasing around the backyard.

I am privileged to have very helpful family members and a great group of friends, but my life is so much more with the generous support and backing of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and You the Sponsor.

Beth and I count ourselves fortunate to have each other, but for sure Adera pokes her head in to make it clear...Adera is still the supervisor.

Thank you always and forever, for making a difference in my life every day.



VOLUNTEER PUPPY TRAINER

Q&A with BC & Alberta Guide Dogs Volunteer Puppy Trainer Joan in Calgary, AB



Q: How did you initially get involved with BC & Alberta Guide Dogs?

A: We saw a write-up in our local community newsletter talking about BC & Alberta Guide Dogs saying that they were looking for puppy trainers. Then, when we were out walking our own dog, we came across a Puppy Trainer with her new pup in training. She encouraged us to contact the Calgary office, and to perhaps observe an obedience class.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of being a Puppy Trainer?

A: Watching a pup develop into a dog with the potential to change someone's life. The pup is so sweet and so willing, but he has sooooo much to learn. BC & Alberta Guide Dogs provide me with the guidance and support to bring him to a stage where he may actually fulfil that potential.

Q: What is the funniest thing a dog you have been working with has done?

A: When Banting was very young, he decided to challenge his water bowl to a tug of war. Banting sunk his puppy teeth into the mat and used every bit of muscle that he had to pull the mat down the hall and into the family room. By the time we caught up with him and realized what all the growling was about, we had 2 litres of water all down the hall and in the family room. Banting is 5 months old now and we are wondering if it might now be safe to move the water dish back onto the mat.

Q: What is it like to say goodbye to a puppy you have raised?

A: Hard, no doubt about it. But it reminded me of sending our children off when they left home as young adults. It is the goal that we had been working toward and we felt pride, to go along with the loss and the worry about how they would do. We knew that we had given them all a good foundation to carry them forward. With the dog, we knew that the organization had the resources and the commitment to see to his future.



IN THE LITTERBOX

These pups are currently living with their Volunteer Puppy Trainers in Vancouver, Victoria and Calgary! Puppy training is a full-time volunteer job, and is fundamental to our success. We want to say a heartfelt THANK YOU to all our amazing volunteer breeders, whelpers, trainers, and boarders for all your time and the loving homes you provide to our pups.



KIWA & GROVER
4 PUPS - NOVEMBER 21, 2016



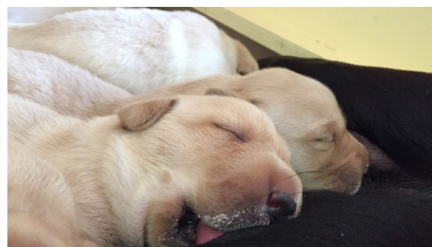
EVELYN & GERRY
8 PUPS - MARCH 21, 2017



DORA & BERT
5 PUPS - MAY 2, 2017



MOLLY & MAX
8 PUPS - MAY 9, 2017



DONOR SPOTLIGHT

SHERITT INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION

Sherritt International Corporation is a low-cost nickel producer in Canada. They support community investment opportunities that contribute to the quality of life in communities near their operations, helps them meet their development needs and enables a community of engaged, civic-minded employees and stakeholders. For more than 10 years, they have supported BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and we'd like to thank them for being part of our family.



PUPPY JOY VISITING THE SHERITT INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

TELUS VICTORIA COMMUNITY BOARD

We would like to thank the TELUS Victoria Community Board for their amazing donation of \$10,000 to Autism Support Dogs, a division of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs. The TELUS Victoria Community Board, led by Mel Cooper guides the company's support for many diverse local community charitable



TELUS VICTORIA COMMUNITY BOARD TEAM DONATES \$10,000!

organizations. The Board's community leaders and TELUS team members together make local funding decisions and seek out community partners to help ensure TELUS contributions make a meaningful difference in the lives of the people in the community, an approach that is unique in Canada. Since their establishment in 2005, our TELUS Community Boards have donated more than \$52.75 million in support of over 4,300 community initiatives. Contributions made through local Community Boards, are made possible by their customers and shareholders. We are so grateful that TELUS Victoria Community Board supports our organization!



COMMUNITY SUPPORT



**KITS4KIDS
\$15,000 DONATION**



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\$16,000 DONATION**



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DOGS ABOUT TOWN



RUNGO DASH FOR DOGS 2017
VANCOUVER, BC



KITZ4KIDS 2017
RICHMOND, BC



CALGARY WOMAN'S SHOW
CALGARY, AB



CALGARY TRIVIA NIGHT 2017
CALGARY, AB

SAVE THE DATE

BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS 'TIES & TAILS' AUCTION & GALA

Saturday, June 24, 2017

Fairmont Hotel Vancouver
Vancouver, BC

Buy your tickets today!

DOG DAYS OF SUMMER

Sunday, August 13, 2017

Hosted by the Bowen Island, BC
Union Steamship Co. Marina in
support of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs

BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS LONDON DRUGS GOLF FOR GUIDE DOGS

Friday, August 25, 2017

Mayfair Lakes Golf & Country Club
Richmond, BC

Registration Opens in June.

For more on these events,
please visit our website:
bcandalbertaguidedogs.com



UPDATES

Welcome Jay & Jazmin to Puppy Sponsorship!

Please join us in welcoming Jay and Jazmin born March 21, 2017 to proud parents Evelyn and Gerry. Their littermates include siblings Annie, Bailey, Gwenyth, Shanty, Austin and Dexter. Jay will live in the Greater Vancouver area with his Puppy Trainers. Jazmin will live in Calgary with her Puppy Trainers.

It costs up to \$35,000 to raise and train a Guide Dog or Autism Support Dog. Our dogs are provided to recipients FREE OF CHARGE, thanks to the generosity of sponsors like you.

To sponsor Jay and Jazmin, call 1-877-940-4504, email puppysponsorship@bcguidedog.com or visit our website: bcandalbertaguidedogs.com.



THE GREAT CANADIAN GIVING CHALLENGE

The Great Canadian Giving Challenge is here! For the entire month of June, every \$1 you donate to us through our page <https://www.canadahelps.org/gcgc/69481> or www.givingchallenge.ca qualifies us to win \$10,000! The more you give, the more chances to win! Donate today! #givingchallengeCA



Great Canadian
GIVING CHALLENGE



LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS

WILL YOU HELP RAISE ME TO
BECOME A GUIDE DOG OR
AUTISM SUPPORT DOG?



A VOLUNTEER JOB LIKE NO OTHER

School starts this spring for new litters who need loving homes!

We are looking for volunteers in Greater Vancouver, Victoria/Nanaimo and Calgary to help raise puppies that will become life-changing dogs for individuals who are blind/visually-impaired and children with autism. Our puppies live with volunteer families from 8 weeks of age until they start advanced training. All food and vet costs are covered. Volunteers receive ongoing training throughout the program.

VOLUNTEER REQUIREMENTS

- Be available for training during the day at least 3 times per month
- Live in the Lower Mainland, Victoria/Nanaimo, or Calgary
- Be willing to take the puppy with you everywhere you go
- Be strong enough to control a large dog

Please visit our website for more info: bcandalbertaguidedogs.com

In BC: info@bcguidedog.com 1-877-940-4504

in AB: info@albertaguidedog.com 1-877-258-0819



SPECIAL THANKS & PATRONS

PATRONS

Leah & Howie Meeker, CM

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Victor and Anna Kern Foundation

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BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS

12th Annual Charity Auction & Gala

TIES & TAILS

**Includes
Dinner and
Live & Silent
Auctions**

**Tickets \$125
Tables of 8**



On Sale Now!

**SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2017
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Call for tickets: 604-940-4504
bcguidedog.com**