



**Guide  
Dogs**  
TASMANIA

# PAW PRINTS

The newsletter for people who are creating change for Tasmanians

AUGUST 2019

## A full life lived with Wizard by his side, thanks to you!

**Launceston's Gunter Breier retired many years ago, and now he's preparing for his faithful Guide Dog to hang up her harness and join him.**

Over the past nine years, Guide Dog Wizard has been the eyes for her 87-year-old handler, helping him adjust to his decreasing vision and allowing him to remain safe, independent and active in his community.

But it's not a final farewell for the ageing pair, because the 11-year-old Labrador will remain by Gunter's side, albeit in a slightly different role.

"Wizard is part of our family, and will remain a much loved pet for myself and my wife," says Gunter. "She loves Wizard just as much as me!"

**Thanks to you, Gunter has continued to live a full life with Wizard.**

It wasn't until Gunter was in his late 60's that his sight started to drastically decrease, due to damage to an optic nerve.

Thank you  
for making  
a difference



Gunter Breier and his Guide Dog, Wizard

“There are a lot of things I can no longer do, but Wizard is fantastic company and has given me so many opportunities. Thank you!”

Not long after, he was declared legally blind and began using a white cane to get around safely.

But when Gunter found out that Guide Dog training could be done from the comfort of his own home, he applied and has never looked back.

"There are a lot of things I can no longer do, but Wizard is fantastic company and has given me so many opportunities. Thank you!"

Wizard soon will retire as a Guide Dog but will remain as Gunter's companion until the end.



# Helping others once I'm gone gives me purpose

**Merran Thurley has made the ultimate gift that will one day give someone the joy of a Guide Dog.**

The 68-year-old from Launceston knows only too well what these beautiful companions provide, having received her first Guide Dog when she was just 17.

And now with her eighth Guide Dog, Jacob, Merran wants to ensure that other Tasmanians living with vision loss have the same independence and freedom that she has enjoyed, by leaving a gift in her Will to Guide Dogs Tasmania.

"If it wasn't for the generosity of others, I may not have been so lucky to have had eight wonderful dogs over the last five decades," said Merran.

"Guide Dogs have been such a big part of my life, and it gives me great purpose to know that I will be helping others when I'm gone."

“Guide Dogs have been such a big part of my life, and it gives me great purpose to know that I will be helping others when I'm gone.”

Merran was born with congenital cataracts and by the age of 14, she was totally blind. When she received her first Guide Dog just a few years later, it was like getting her driver's licence; exciting, but also a bit daunting.

At 17, Merran had no idea what her future would look like, but 51 years on, she can confidently say that Guide Dogs have allowed her to work, travel, meet new people and most importantly, given her the choice to do what she wants in life.



Merran with her Guide Dog, Jacob

"I often wonder, if I didn't have a Guide Dog would I be getting up this morning and getting on with the day?"

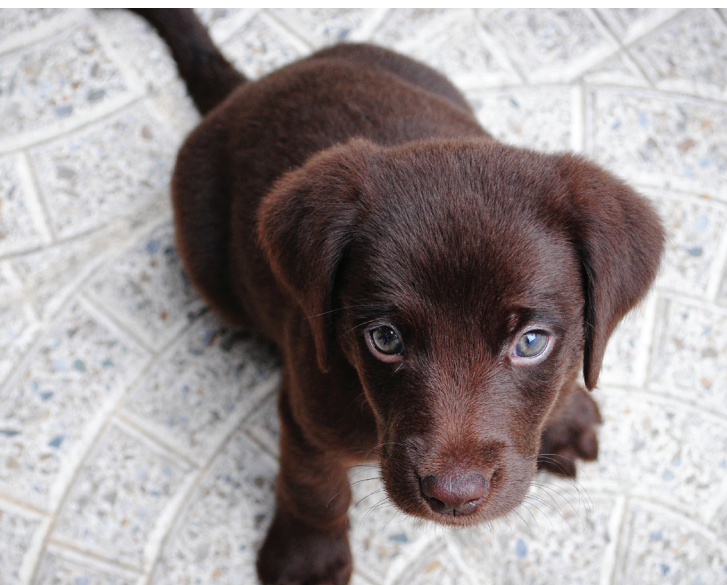
Merran is now at the stage in her life where she wants to ensure she leaves behind a legacy she can be proud of.

"I've had so much independence and pleasure from Guide Dogs over my lifetime, and leaving a gift in my Will allows me to carry this on to others."

Contact us to discuss your wishes for the future.

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## A GIFT FOR THE FUTURE

By leaving a gift in your Will to Guide Dogs Tasmania, you're giving a gift that has the power to transform lives now and into the future. You will be supporting one of Australia's most trusted charities, with confidence that your Gift will be used to provide vital services such as Guide, Therapy and Companion Dogs, to Tasmanians living with disability.

Please contact us for more information

03 6232 1222

[bequest@guidedogstas.com.au](mailto:bequest@guidedogstas.com.au)





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## Alfie

**Date of Birth:** 22 January, 2019

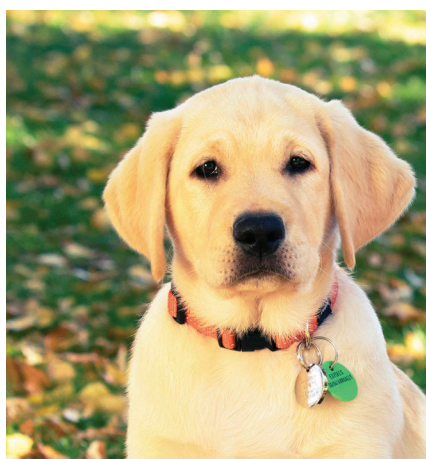
**Gender:** Male

**Lives:** Hobart

**Paw-sonality:** Charismatic, willing to please, and a quick learner

**Favourite thing:** Puppy play dates at the park, made even better when his brother's there too!

**Apprentice sponsor (\$10,000):** Mrs Barbara Self



## Austin

**Date of Birth:** 22 January, 2019

**Gender:** Male

**Lives:** Hobart

**Paw-sonality:** Laid back "Mr Cool". But don't be fooled, this pup has a cheeky side too!

**Favourite thing:** His zebra toy



## Bob

**Date of Birth:** 18 February, 2019

**Gender:** Male

**Lives:** Hobart

**Paw-sonality:** A cute little bundle of energy, Bob is always curious about the world around him

**Favourite thing:** Walks with his puppy pal Merran

**Trainer sponsor (\$35,000):** Mrs Bridget Stott



Bob with his sponsor,  
Mrs Bridget Stott



## Victor

**Date of Birth:** 18 February, 2019

**Gender:** Male

**Lives:** Launceston

**Paw-sonality:** A calm and caring pup with a gentle nature, but still plenty of energy to burn!

**Favourite thing:** His family (aaaawww.....)

## New friendship blossoms between Emily & Harvey



Emily & Harvey

“I needed to learn to trust Harvey, and now that I do, I feel so much safer than before.”

### Getting to know her first Guide Dog has been a rewarding experience for Emily Petit of Hobart.

The 20-year-old has lived with low vision since she was four, and was placed with Guide Dog Harvey, a beautiful golden Labrador, earlier this year.

But the switch from white cane to Guide Dog took a bit of time to adjust to, according to Emily.

“I needed to learn to trust Harvey,” she says.

“And now that I do, I feel so much safer than before. I always felt a bit vulnerable with a white cane, but now I feel protected.”

Emily’s mum, Wendy, has seen the changes in her daughter too. “Emily is fairly shy, but with Harvey she’s more confident to go out and talk to people. They’re a really good team,”

Along with the confidence and safety she’s gained, Emily is enjoying the independent travel her canine companion has allowed her to have. And one of her favourite places to go with him? The dog park!

“Out of harness, Harvey is so playful and fun,” Emily says.

“But he’s such good company, and I’m really looking forward to getting to know him more as he shows his true personality.”

## Rob finds fulfilment in volunteering



Rob O'Brien

“I feel absolutely great being part of such a lovely organisation.”

### Volunteering at Guide Dogs Tasmania has allowed Rob O'Brien to help himself, as well as others.

After struggling with his mental health for a number of years, the 27-year-old from Launceston looked into volunteering as a way to bring purpose, fulfilment and enjoyment back to his life.

“It’s such a welcoming environment to be in thanks to the staff, volunteers and supporters,” says Rob.

“I feel really positive knowing I can help in a way that benefits the organisation, and ultimately, people in the community who rely on these fantastic services.”

Thanks to Rob’s extensive retail experience, he’s brought a range of skills to his volunteering, which can see him one day out on the road swapping over collection dogs, to setting up and running a merchandise stall on another.

He says that every role, no matter how big or small, is important, and encourages anyone with the time and willingness to try volunteering.

“At the end of the day it’s about how you feel. And for me, I feel absolutely great being part of such a lovely organisation,” says Rob.

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Interested in  
volunteering?

to see what roles are available, visit  
[bit.ly/gdt-volunteer](https://bit.ly/gdt-volunteer)

