

# PAW PRINTS

Fall 2019

No. 40

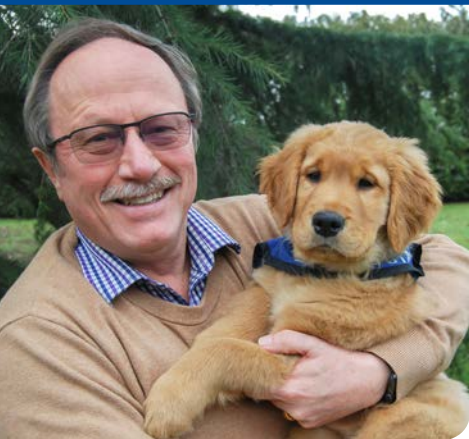


*Official newsletter from the staff, graduates and volunteers of:*

**BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS**

GUIDE DOGS • AUTISM SUPPORT DOGS • PTSD SERVICE DOGS

# MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO



Welcome to our new look newsletter and the latest issue of Paw Prints!

As you'll see on page 13, many new puppies have been born in the past few months. There are quite a few more due before the year is done, and I would like to take this time to commend the staff, volunteers, and our beautiful breeding dogs for such a tremendous effort! I would also like to thank all of our current Puppy Raisers,

and the future Puppy Raisers who will be receiving these puppies, for the amazing part you play in training future Guide & Service Dogs.

Everyone in the organization has taken on the challenge of providing even more dogs to those in need with great enthusiasm. As you'll see from the stories featured in this newsletter, the benefit of providing these certified canine companions is beyond price.

We set the lofty goal of graduating 220 teams by 2020, yet we have already exceeded this number with 241 teams! Thank you

for helping us achieve this goal through your kind and generous support. Please accept our best wishes for the upcoming holiday season and new year.



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**ON THE COVER:** *Puppy-in-training Spoof at Lake Louise, Alberta. Photo by her Puppy Raiser, James V. Simpson.*



# Eva with Autism Service Dog Lizzy

## *Team Sponsor: Jupiter Resources*

Eva is 6 years old and was diagnosed with autism 2 years ago. It was considered a late diagnosis, so we moved from Winnipeg to Calgary to help Eva get as much professional support that we could.

While a very gentle, curious and smiley girl, she still experiences many challenges. With Autism Service Dog Lizzy in our lives, everything is better in so many ways. One of the most important changes is that Lizzy keeps Eva safe. From Eva and Lizzy's first walk together, it was obvious that Eva was so focused on Lizzy that there were no thoughts of bolting; **it was all about holding Lizzy's handle and staying together.**

Eva is 90% non-verbal and she's been working hard to express herself using words. When Eva first heard us use commands that Lizzy would react to, it encouraged Eva to use them as well.

We also noticed a change in Eva's anxiety. Eva seems calmer and more relaxed with Lizzy. We've observed more laughs and smiles and lots of singing. We believe that there are two main reasons for



this. First, having Lizzy integrated into our routine brings more structure to our day, which gives Eva the feeling of predictability, confidence and certainty. Secondly, Eva and Lizzy have bonded so quickly! Eva, who is afraid of dogs, plays with Lizzy by throwing her a toy, tries to hug and kiss her, and lets Lizzy sleep in her room. It's incredible! And it's priceless.



Hearing about BC & Alberta Guide Dogs has been life changing for our family. When we received the call telling us that Lizzy was on her way, that was a great day... one of the best.





## Matt with PTSD Service Dog Monty

### **Team Sponsor: Wounded Warriors Canada**

My PTSD crippled me in terms of being a productive member of society. I was basement-bound for two years before I was paired with Monty in early 2018, and he has changed my life unbelievably since then.

I can now go to the pharmacy for my medications (I previously had to get them delivered) and I can also get groceries with Monty by my side. He has given me the mobility and confidence to be out in public.

*He has given me the mobility and confidence to be out in public.* “

Shortly after we were certified on February 7th, we flew to Ontario for two weeks to visit my family. Monty probably saved my life at this time, as I was feeling pretty low as a result of my limited contact with my kids.

He is such an intuitive best friend. He knows when I'm having difficulties and helps me tremendously.





# An Evening of **COMPASSION** for Veterans

**SATURDAY**

**6-9 PM**

**NOVEMBER**

**16<sup>TH</sup>**  
2019

**QUALICUM BEACH CIVIC CENTRE**

*Featuring inspirational speakers and a silent & live auction. Your \$50 ticket includes delicious appetizers and a complimentary welcome beverage. More information at [www.bcandalbertaguidedogs.com](http://www.bcandalbertaguidedogs.com).*



## Mark with Guide Dog Winston

### *Team Sponsor: Puppy Sponsorship*

After being matched with Winston in early July, I was nervously excited to start our training together. I quickly saw how smart Winston is and what a huge personality he has. He is truly adorable, and I can't help but smile every morning when I wake up and he is raring to go!

Winston has given me back my ability to get to wherever I need to go with confidence and ease. He is so well trained and is a joy to work with. It's great that I can put my cane away again. I get so many compliments on how handsome and well behaved he is.

Winston has brought so much life into my world that I can't thank everyone at BC & Alberta Guide Dogs enough. Thank you to everyone who helped make Winston the fantastic Guide Dog he is today.



# The Gift of Cory

## Team Sponsor: Kitz4Kids

Caleb is a triplet; one of three identical 7-year-old boys who only weighed a pound and a half each when they were born.

His brothers, Kaeden and Kaius came home from the NICU after 6 months, but Caleb came home after a year. His eventful journey into the world has meant that he has a global developmental delay and hearing loss. He is non-verbal and had been tube-fed up until a year and a half ago. All three boys have been diagnosed with autism.

Autism Service Dog Cory joined our “pack” in mid-April and has proven to be everything we had hoped for. We wanted Cory to help keep Caleb safe, so he would not bolt or suddenly attempt to cross the street. The first time Caleb was tethered to Cory, he didn’t even attempt to leave her side. This significant change in behaviour now allows us to go for a walk or to the mall as a family without constant fear for Caleb’s safety.



*She has given him a taste of the freedom that we know he desires.*

”

Not only has Cory given us more independence when we are in the community, but she has given Caleb a taste of the freedom that we know he desires. When he is tethered to her, he skips alongside her, but stays close and follows Cory’s lead when it’s time to stop or carry on.

One challenge that many parents of kids with autism face is reduced opportunities for social interaction. Since Cory, Caleb has started to



interact with his brothers, taking their hand and engaging them in play. Cory will be joining Caleb at his school in November and we anticipate Cory acting as an icebreaker with Caleb and his peers so that Caleb is less isolated.



Cory has also been a benefit to Kaeden and Kaius in ways that we hadn't expected. Morning transitions are a challenge for them and can result in prolonged tantrums as they are slowly trying to adjust from sleeping to waking. Cory lays across their legs on the couch when they wake up, applying deep pressure, which has a calming effect on the boys.

We have to commend the BC & Alberta Guide Dogs organization on their commitment to quality instruction, and for maintaining the

high standards necessary to raise a Service Dog from puppy-hood to graduation. This has provided families like mine with the independence, safety, security and comfort that comes with having a professionally-trained Service Dog.

Thank you to all of the amazing volunteers who have been a part of Cory's training, and for the fundraising efforts of people like you. Thank you for the gift of Cory.

***Caleb's mother, Heather shared her family's story at the 22nd Annual London Drugs Golf for Guide Dogs Tournament.***

***Leah and Howie Meeker C.M. returned to host, and are both pictured here with Heather as she received her prize for the Womens Longest Drive.***





## James with PTSD Service Dog Andy

### **Team Sponsor: Puppy Sponsorship**

I served in the military for 35+ years, and due to serving in several overseas postings, I have had undiagnosed PTSD for 20 years. My official diagnosis was 3 years ago.

After my personal dog passed away, I went downhill quite a bit. My wife researched online and found out about the 52-week Healthy Community Living Program, and my doctors and Vancouver Island Compassion Dogs helped coordinate a PTSD Service Dog for me.

We are initially introduced to many dogs, and then with help from the VICD team, decide which one works best. The first thing that struck me about Andy was his eyes. After having sheepdogs, and not being

able to see their eyes, it was quite comforting to have a set of eyes focused on you!

Andy, along with the training that I've received, supports me during my triggers and my daily routine activities, as well as with my anxiety. You cannot replace this support with money or other types of worldly goods. Andy has been incredible. He has also opened many non-dog users' eyes of what a Service Dog can do.





# 1st Annual Motorcycle Poker Run raises funds for Guide & Service Dogs



Riders rode for a cause in the inaugural Motorcycle Poker Run on September 1, raising essential funds for our programs.

Participants played a charity poker game by riding to five partnering Royal Canadian Legion branches and drawing a playing card at each one, finishing with a complete hand at the end of the run. Grand prize went to Jessica Coldwell with four sixes!

The ride started at Ladner Legion Branch 61 with a pancake breakfast, and volunteers and puppies-in-training greeted the riders along the way at each stop.

Radio sponsor Rock 101 welcomed everyone back to the finish line celebration at the Tsawwassen

Legion Branch 289 with music and gifts, and the riders enjoyed a barbeque lunch.

A bagpipe performance from young pipers Evan Jamieson and Cameron Bonar served as a fanfare for the winners.



***Special thanks to photographer Arturs Feists for these fantastic photos from the day.***



# Steve with Guide Dog Kinta

*Team Sponsor: John Hardie Mitchell  
family foundation*

I received my first Guide Dog, Kinta this past June. I used to use a cane and was hesitant at first to depend on a Guide Dog, but now I can say I don't know what I would do without her – she is the best.



I have enjoyed much more freedom and confidence in my mobility all around my neighbourhood and beyond. Kinta has already helped me avoid fences, street poles, sandwich boards, and of course, people who wander with phones in front of their faces!

I am an active guy who likes to get out, including playing blind hockey at least twice a week. Kinta gets me and all my goalie gear to the rink in record time and enjoys meeting my teammates and their Guide Dogs.

*I have expanded my horizons with  
bus and sky train.* “

I have expanded my horizons with bus and sky train to include Vancouver, and the sea bus to North Vancouver where we meet with a friend to go on mountain hikes. It is important to me to let her be a dog as often as I can and am fortunate to have a park across the street from my apartment as Kinta loves to run and play like the puppy she still is. I love the social aspect I get with others who are fascinated with the fact she is a well-trained Guide Dog.

Kinta is kind-hearted, with a calm demeanour with lots of love to give to all who meet her. Everyone has lots of questions that I enjoy answering, and I praise the trainers and BC & Alberta Guide Dogs for doing such a wonderful job with Kinta.



CGI Staff Donation - \$1,250



Boundary Bay IOED - \$500

# COMMUNITY SUPPORT



West Coast Seeds with named puppy, Sage



Smile Buddy Fundraiser



Vernon Lions Club Ducks for Dogs



YARDI - \$5,500 Puppy Naming



FYIdoctors Staff Donation - \$2,097

# Vernon Lions Club *Ducks for Dogs*

## \$15,225 raised for Guide Dog Program



The Vernon Lions Club hosted a unique fundraising event in support of the BC & Alberta Guide Dog Program. On July 6th, rubber ducks with numbers on them were dropped into the creek at Polson Park. Okanagan supporters purchased their duck ahead of the drop and gathered excitedly to watch their ducks race to the finish line.

The day's celebrations included fun family games, face painting, and entertainment by the Vernon Community Band.

Attendees also experienced a blindfold walk, where Guide Dogs Mac and Winston led people through an obstacle maze, so that people could experience a little bit of what these amazing dogs

do for individuals who are blind or visually-impaired.

We are very grateful to the Vernon Lions Club for organizing such a successful and amazing event, and also to the 1st prize winner who very generously donated half of her winnings back to the cause.



***RCMP Superintendent Shawna Baher and Allyson Reish, Vernon Fire Department were judges.***



# The 'PUP'ulation increases!



**Dora & Gerry - May 31, 2019**



**Nellie & Bert - July 22, 2019**



**Maddie & Dax - Sept 2, 2019**



## What can I do to help?

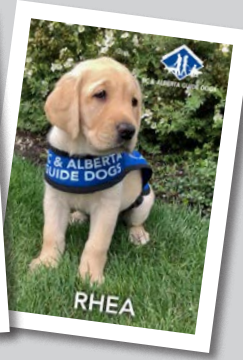
### Are you interested in becoming a volunteer Puppy Raiser?

Our puppies live with families from 8 weeks of age until they start advanced training. All food and vet costs are covered, and our volunteers receive training, supplies and support.

### Interested in Puppy Sponsorship?

Help our puppies grow into life-changing dogs from \$15/month.

Visit [bcandalbertaguidedogs.com](http://bcandalbertaguidedogs.com), or call our head office for more information at 1-877-940-4504.



**Penny & Bert - Sept 27, 2019**





*False Creek Ferries Puppy Field Trip*



*Ties & Tails Charity Auction & Gala*



*Black Creek Dog Show*

# DOGS ABOUT TOWN



*Duncan Parade*



*Poker Run*



*Puppy Sponsorship Appreciation Party, AB*



*London Drugs Golf for Guide Dogs*

# SPECIAL THANKS & PATRONS

## PATRONS

Leah & Howie Meeker, CM

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Toll-free (Alberta):  
1.877.258.0819

## BC VANCOUVER ISLAND

1027 Pandora Avenue  
Victoria, BC V8V 3P6  
Tel: 250.413.3095  
Toll-free (Canada):  
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## VANCOUVER ISLAND COMPASSION DOGS

Office: Rms 9-10  
744 Primrose Street  
Qualicum Beach, BC  
Tel: 250.909.0090  
Mail: BC Head Office





Registered Charity #: 89131 1763 RR0001

## *The 'Paw'fect Holiday Gift Idea*

Give a gift with purpose this holiday season and help our puppies become life-changing dogs for individuals who are blind/visually-impaired, children with profound autism, and military & RCMP Veterans living with an Operational Stress Injury.

Puppy Sponsorships come in all sizes, so please visit [bcandalbertaguidedogs.com](http://bcandalbertaguidedogs.com) to find the 'Paw'fect gift.

1.877.940.4504 (Canada)  
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