

PAW PRINTS

BC & ALBERTA GUIDE DOGS

CELEBRATES TEAMMATES



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The mission of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs is to meet the demand for professionally trained Guide Dogs, Autism Service Dogs and OSI-PTSD Service Dogs for citizens of British Columbia and Alberta. At all times we meet or exceed international standards as established by the International Guide Dog Federation and Assistance Dogs International.



ON THE COVER: The Canucks Pup Jersey in the Vancouver Canucks dressing room.
 Photo by Vancouver Canucks

MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

CEO: William S. Thornton, GDMI

After the trying times of the past two years, it is a pleasure to be able to reconnect with our Guide and Service Dog community and our supporters.

As more and more restrictions are lifted, the chance to form new bonds and re-establish our training programs have meant we can strengthen our own services.

BC & Alberta Guide Dogs always strives to meet or exceed the international standards as established by the International Guide Dog Federation and Assistance Dogs International. As we move forward, one of the critical ways to do this is by investing in our staff with the addition of new apprentices in both BC and Alberta. This will help ensure we can meet the growing demand for Guide and Service Dogs across both provinces. The addition of Apprentice Guide Dog/ASD Instructors and OSI-PTSD Instructors will increase the number of clients we can serve.



We have built a community of caring that is reflected in the tireless work of our volunteers. For as long as two years our Puppy Raisers take these wonderful dogs and help prepare them for Advanced Training. It is not a small ask. Our volunteers are, and always will be, the strength of our organization. Their commitment is more evident as we have ventured back into public. From our visits at events like Concert Properties Appreciation Days to the Calgary Farmer's Market during Stampede, our volunteers demonstrate their commitment to our mission with unwavering enthusiasm. Thank you to everyone who makes this possible.

As we get set to take the next steps in our journey that has lasted more than 25 years, we are excited for possibilities. A partnership with the Vancouver Canucks is an exciting opportunity to help spread the word of the important work we do. We thank them, and everyone who has been part of our community.

William S. Thornton,
CEO



PHOTO COURTESY THE VANCOUVER CANUCKS

TRAINING CAMP UNDERWAY FOR CANUCKS PUPS

BC & Alberta Guide Dogs are proud to partner with the Vancouver Canucks as the team sponsors a litter of SIX puppies. The fans had their chance to vote for names and came up with this starting line-up: **Ryp, Jersey, Gino, Hank, Rookie, and Hattie**. The pups were born on August 22, 2022. The partnership will also see the Canucks raise a service dog-in-training over the next two years.

Ryp, the Canucks Pup, was introduced to fans at the team's home opener on October 22. He was named after former Canuck Rick Rypien.



"To us, the name Ryp represents the ultimate teammate. Ryp is courageous, kind, determined and supportive. He is a helper. We know Ryp will make a tremendous impact on the life of his forever teammate following his training," says the Canucks.

After training is completed, this Canucks Pup will work with a visually impaired client, a child with autism, or a Veteran or First Responder with OSI-PTSD.

Service dogs play a vital role in our community by improving the quality of life for many, including

assisting in mobility, lowering stress, and providing safety. BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and the Canucks recognize this is a special opportunity to help meet this need and make a positive impact.

"Rick meant so much to so many," says the Canucks organization. "He accomplished a great deal in a short amount of time, and has left a legacy of support. To honour the work Rick had intended to do, the Canucks started **Hockey Talks** to help provide resources to kids and youth experiencing mental health issues. Partnering with BC & Alberta Guide Dogs is another step in honouring Rick."

JERSEY & GINO JOIN PSP

Starting at just \$15/month, you can sponsor either Gino or Jersey. Not only does your contribution help support our mission, you will receive regular 'pup'dates and photos as you follow them on their amazing journey to change someone's life! Our dogs are provided to recipients **FREE OF CHARGE**, thanks to the generosity of sponsors like you.



SPONSOR US

AYDEN'S REMARKABLE JOURNEY WITH GARBO

Team Sponsor: The Vernon Lions Club

As we reflect on the year since Garbo joined our family, it has been remarkable. Our son Ayden is noticeably more confident, outgoing, social, and frequently more content day-to-day. Ayden has come to depend on Garbo for emotional support, to create personal space, and he relies on Garbo for a sense of safety.

Having Garbo – and the handle part of the vest – creates a role of responsibility and a sturdy position for Ayden to “buddy up.” This has helped establish and maintain routines that have eased transitions and provided stability that Ayden responds to.


When belted together in public, Garbo provides a greater sense of safety for us. It has allowed us

to explore activities and places we would not have contemplated before. When overstimulated, Ayden uses Garbo to help communicate his feelings before he can verbalize his emotions. With Garbo, he doesn't need to use his words. He will stop and put his face into Garbo's neck. He puts his hands under her vest to feel her breath if feelings escalate. Having these cues has significantly decreased the frequency of his attempts to bolt. Not all the outings go smoothly, but having Garbo assist in anchoring Ayden is a huge stress reliever.

We are so grateful to the generosity of the Vernon Lions Club and their sponsorship that enabled this opportunity.



Thank you to BC & Alberta Guide Dogs, their donors, volunteers, trainers, staff, puppy raisers, and boarders for making such a program available. The work done makes a huge difference in lives.



GARBO

A COMMUNITY OF CARING

Brood Bitch Caregiver & Whelp: Marie Gustafsson
Stud Dog Caregivers: Brooke & Chris Charles

Puppy Raisers: Karen Herbrich
Boarder: Laurel & John Crosby

MICHAEL AND KONA: BUILDING AN INSEPARABLE BOND

Team Sponsor: The Royal Canadian Legion Foundation BC/Yukon Command

Since I've had Kona, the value he has provided me has been life-changing. PTSD can be crippling in terms of being a productive member of society. I now get out so much more! Kona offers such a positive outlook for me through daily walks, as well as play.

It is amazing how Kona is such an intuitive best friend. He now knows when I'm having difficulties and helps me immensely. Kona has given me the ability to go out in public with

confidence. I'm tremendously happy I joined the VICD program.

Kona's unconditional love and ability to automatically sense when I need support has been a blessing.

Thank you to BC & Alberta Guide Dogs staff and volunteers for being compassionate and flexible so Kona and I could succeed.





KONA

A COMMUNITY OF CARING

Brood Bitch Caregiver & Whelp: Wendy Caywood
 Roberta & Ken Whiley
Stud Dog Caregivers: Connie Caldwell

Puppy Raisers: Hugh & Joan Norris
Boarder: Kim & Eileen Barker

GIVING BRUCE THE RETIREMENT HE DESERVES

Team Sponsor: Burce and Susan McGorman

Like people, guide dogs eventually retire from work to enjoy well-deserved rest and relaxation. As a guide dog user, two of the most common questions I'm asked are: "how do you know when your dog is ready to retire?" and "what happens to them when they retire?"

Since I just retired my third dog, Bruce, in July of this year, the best way to answer these questions is to tell his story.

Bruce arrived in the late summer of 2013 as an eager and enthusiastic 18-month-old dog who loved to wear his harness and was ready to guide his heart out. In harness, he was all business, walking with his head up, chest out, and tail wagging. He guided with purpose and confidence. My husband once described him as a "dog on a mission."

His favourite workplace was our local mall because he had been socialized as a puppy. He LOVED the mall despite the fact it was not my favourite place. He often "talked" in the car in the parking lot and couldn't wait to get inside.

In March of this year, Bruce turned 10 years old and still very much enjoyed his work, guiding in his usual peppy, confident manner. Then in early May, I started to notice changes in his behaviour.

One day, I brought his harness out for a walk, and he didn't move from his spot in the living room. Before that, anytime he heard his harness, he would immediately get to his feet in anticipation of doing his job. On another occasion, when we got to our destination by car, he was panting quite hard.

I put his harness on, and he guided me to the door of the business, though without his usual enthusiasm.

Inside the business, I asked him to "find a bench" and he took me toward a chair and laid down.

As this was the dog equivalent of "the bench is over there," I took him back to the door to have him find the bench properly, and he promptly laid down. On this trip, I knew his guiding days were coming to a close. This was confirmed when, in mid-June, we took a trip to the mall.



He did not "talk" in the car, and when we got inside the mall, he immediately laid down on the mat by the door. These were all Bruce's way of telling me, "I don't want to do this anymore." My responsibility was to respect his wishes, even if that meant my independence would change.

In 2013, while I was still training with Bruce, the trainer arranged for me to meet his puppy raiser, and I asked her if she and her husband would like to have Bruce back once he retired. She had agreed, and we have kept in touch over the years

My husband and I took Bruce to her home in mid-July following one last after-care visit with a BC & Alberta Guide Dog Services trainer. For me, and every guide dog user, deciding whether to keep the dogs ourselves or retire them elsewhere is very personal.

For me, I knew Bruce would have a much better retirement with his puppy raiser than he would with me. I wanted him to kick back, relax, play, have fun, and be a dog with no responsibilities whatsoever. Giving him up was heartbreaking, but it was what was best for him. His puppy raiser has sent me updates and photos, and I am confident I made the right decision for Bruce. He has an amazing retirement!

TIES & TAILS RETURNS WITH NEW LOCATION

Fundraising Gala moves to Tsawwassen Springs on Friday, May 12, 2023

Mark your calendars for Friday, May 12, 2023 as the Ties & Tails Charity Auction & Gala makes its return following a two year hiatus due to the pandemic.

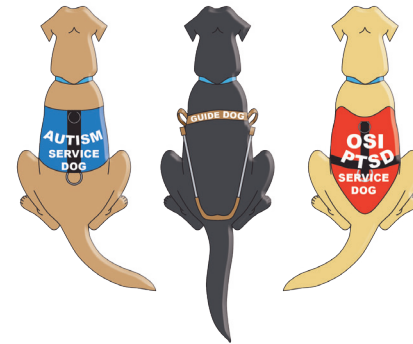
The event returns with a new home, Tsawwassen Springs, and renewed enthusiasm.

Linda Thornton, Director of Breeding and Puppy Training for BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and event organizer is excited to welcome the public back.

"The opportunity to connect with our supporters is such an important part of what we do. We're excited that we can gather again and celebrate."

The funds raised at the event go towards breeding, raising and professionally training Guide Dogs, Autism Service Dogs, and OSI-PTSD Service Dogs.

Thornton says the event is a fun-filled evening featuring



fine-dining, inspiring speakers, auctions and raffles. Tickets and more information for the event will be available on the website at bcandalbertaguidedogs.com.

RUNGO LOOKS TO BUILD MOMENTUM IN 2023

8th Annual Dash For Dogs Fundraiser Set for February 26, 2023 in Stanley Park

What better way to keep your New Year's resolutions than running or walking through gorgeous Stanley Park in Vancouver?

The 9th annual RunGo Dash For Dogs is a guided 10 km, 5 km or 2 km run or walk through the park with proceeds going to BC and Alberta Guide Dogs. Last year's more than \$23,000 raised has pushed their eight-year fundraising total to more than \$130,000 to support the organization.

RunGo founder and race organizer Craig Slagel says the event is an excellent opportunity to help build on last year's momentum.

The event kicks off with the 10 km run at 9:30, followed by the 5 km at 9:35 and the 2 km at 9:45. Following the race, there will be a social event with pancakes, prizes, and music.



Bill Thornton, CEO of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs, says Craig and his team of volunteers' commitment to persevering over the last two years is nothing short of remarkable.

For more info, email dashfordogs@rungoapp.com
To register, visit raceroster.com/events/2023/65958/rungo-dash-for-dogs-2023.

PICS OF THE LITTER



Whitney & Emmett - May 4, 2022



Whisper & Finn - May 6, 2022



Jet & Felix - May 30, 2022



Spooft & Zegan - July 2, 2022



Penny & Felix - August 22, 2022

GOLF FOR GUIDE DOGS SCORES YET ANOTHER ACE FOR CHARITY

The 25th Annual London Drugs Howie Meeker Memorial Golf for BC Guide Dogs tournament may not have seen any hole-in-ones, but the day was an ace with the participants.

The event raised more than \$32,000, up more than 30 per cent from 2021. Bill Thornton, CEO of BC & Alberta Guide Dogs, says he's already looking forward to next year's event.

The 2023 tournament will also feature a new home!

The event is moving to **Tsawwassen Springs**.

Thornton says moving to a new venue will help grow the event. He says the continued support from **London Drugs, Patron Leah Meeker, the sponsors, participants, and volunteers** makes the tournament a success.



"Year-after-year our supporters continue to amaze. Thank you to everyone who makes this possible."

KITZ4KID CONTINUES TO DELIVER ITS SUPPORT FOR AUTISM

Kitz4Kids continues to build on its fundraising success for BC & Alberta Guide Dogs. Since 2014, the charity has raised \$230,575 for the Autism Service Dog program.

Kitz4Kids was founded by Eva, Lad, and Douglas Dolejsi family after their son Andrew died in a car crash. Their annual fundraiser has also been strongly supported by

the generosity of the the Schmelke Family Charitable Foundation, which has donated \$80,000 to Kitz4Kids. With no signs of slowing down, Kitz4Kids is

hosting its next charity event on Saturday, Jan. 21, 2023 at the River Rock Casino in Richmond. For more info or to donate visit kitz4kids.com

THANK YOU!!



First West Foundation — \$15,000

Thank You to First West Foundation for your \$15,000 donation that will make such a “Pawsitive” Impact.

First West Foundation is proud to provide grants through the Valley First Community Endowment.

PATRON

Leah Meeker

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(co-founders)

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