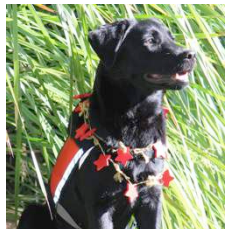




Paw Print

The Newsletter of Australian Support Dogs, Inc. (ASDOG)

December 2014



Welcome to the 2014 Christmas edition of the ASDOG newsletter.

Our newly named newsletter shares recent and proud highlights of our new puppies, advanced training progress, recipient teams and community events.

All made possible, with sincere thanks, to our volunteers, supporters and donors.



INTRODUCING NEW PUPPY LUCY!

A gorgeous golden retriever making great progress.

ASDOG is thrilled to welcome Lucy into the assistance dog program and is most grateful to her puppy raiser, Geoff, for guiding Lucy through her very enthusiastic and busy first 12 months. Lucy was selected from her litter, having good health and a calm temperament, in August at 8 weeks of age. In just a few short months both her training progress and physical growth have been most impressive!

Geoff and Lucy have participated in community access trips and training sessions with other ASDOG puppies and their puppy raisers.



Kara, Heidi, Ivy and Lucy have all been practising walking through shopping centres, riding on travelators and lifts, sitting calmly at cafes, ignoring distractions, catching trains and much more!

Thanks to our dedicated volunteer puppy raisers all pups are doing remarkably well with their training and socialising schedules and are right on track to becoming fantastic assistance dogs.

Lucy at 8 weeks, above.

A train trip for Lucy, 5 months, Heidi, 11 months, and their puppy raisers Geoff and Ann.

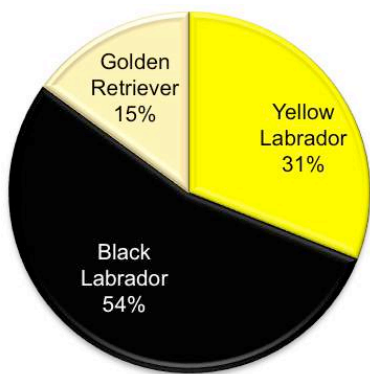
Puppy Ivy in the Christmas spirit, above left.

Did You Know?!

Labrador Retrievers originated in Newfoundland, Canada, in the 17th century, and are the most popular breed by registered ownership in Australia.

Golden Retrievers were originally bred in Scotland in the mid-19th century and are the 5th-most popular dog breed in Australia.

ASDOG Family by Breed and Colour



Mature Dog Health Checks

Assistance dogs over 8 years undergo a biannual health and welfare check. Gayl O'Grady, ASDOG Training Coordinator, is pleased to report, "Ruby, Rayner and Jade are doing great. They're happy and healthy in their working roles, and their condition is appropriate for those of us who are a little more advanced in years!"



NEWS, VIEWS & UPDATES



Jenna, trainee assistance dog

At the ¾ mark in Jenna’s advanced skills training program, trainer Michelle is delighted with her progress:

“We have been working on fetching items such as clothing, keys, phone and wallet in busier environments including the dog park, busy streets and shopping centres, walking on a loose lead, relaxing when on-lead when around other dogs, riding on buses, staying in the drop position when eating at a cafe or restaurant, riding on escalators, opening and closing drawers and cupboard doors and fetching items from the cupboard to hand to me and so much more!

Michelle encouraging Jenna to ignore distractions in a busy shopping centre.

“When Jenna first arrived I remembered thinking that training this anxious, bouncy, needy young dog to be an assistance dog was going to be one of the biggest challenges of my life. Nine months on I can honestly say that the biggest challenge will be the day that I have to say goodbye! With maturity, more confidence building, and further training around other dogs and distractions, I do believe that Jenna will evolve into an amazing assistance dog. She is probably one of the most beautifully natured animals that I have had the pleasure of working with.”

Facility Dog Trials

The Weemala residential unit at Royal Rehab in Ryde is to have ASDOG’s first facility dog! Dogs in advanced skills training are currently being assessed for their suitability for this unique working role. The dogs have had some very encouraging trial visits with the unit’s manager and residents. ASDOG Training Coordinator, Gayl O’Grady, is pleased to report:

“It’s always heart warming to see how happy the residents are who meet the trainee dogs and how excited and patient the dogs are towards them. We’ve had the dogs learning to stand against very high electric wheel chairs and to reach up high to open and close electric doors. We particularly need a dog who not only provides assistance, but loves people and loves being patted as well! It will be a long and regular process of selecting and transitioning Weemala’s new facility dog. We’ll make sure it’s a lovely match!”



Kara Attends Pre-School

Puppy Kara, with her ASDOG helpers, has been piloting a community education program at Leichhardt Children’s Centre.



During monthly visits the children participate in a variety of interactive learning experiences that promote positive attitudes and behaviours to living and interacting with dogs. The children helped to select Kara’s name and they are always eager to give her a pat and see her growth and progress.

The program will culminate with a community access excursion where the children can observe an accredited assistance dog, as well as Kara, in a range of public settings.

Above: Puppy Kara relaxing with pre-school teacher, Sam.

Left: Jock, Weemala resident, receives an enthusiastic greeting from trainee assistance dog, Freya.

Heidi Gets Promoted!

A big congratulations to puppy Heidi who has just commenced advanced skills training. Heidi is a very balanced young dog who loves meeting people and playing with her friends in the park. She excitedly participates in training and is quickly becoming very adept at ‘fetch’ and ‘give’.



Raising Awareness In Our Community

ASDOG has enjoyed attending the following locations and demonstrating our puppies and assistance dogs. A sincere thank you for hosting us and assisting with our fundraising campaigns!

- Willoughby Village Open Day
- BNI All About Business
- Glenaeon Village
- Willoughby StreetFair
- Willoughby Public School

