

November 3, 2009

Dear Supporter,

**“We encourage Shane to be courageous... having the confidence to tackle the obstacles that come his way... to dream of a bright future, just like every other child.”**

*Shelly Fretwell, mother of five-year-old Shane who has been legally blind since birth.*

Please support our work with your gift today so we can assist people like Shane to gain the independence to chase their dreams.

**I am writing to let you know how Guide Dogs SA.NT is making a difference in people's lives – people like Shane Fretwell and his family.**

Shane is a typical little boy. He is five years old, is learning to read and write, can ride his bike without training wheels and is a protective big brother of his two younger sisters. Shane also loves his friends, Lego and toy cars.

Shane has a special “friend”, affectionately known as “Sam”, who will be with him for many years to come. Shane is almost completely blind and “Sam” is the name of his white cane.

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His mother Shelly, who is so proud of his achievements, says she is constantly aware that Shane will most likely lose the limited vision he still has.

“It’s so confronting for us. It will change Shane’s world and we will have a whole new set of challenges to face.”

However, a “can-do” attitude has helped Shane thus far, who says:

**“Just because I’m blind doesn’t mean I can’t give it a go.”**

Guide Dogs first came into Shane’s life when he was just a toddler. At the time his parents were still coming to grips with their beloved son’s blindness, and wondering how they would cope raising him in a sighted world.

Shelly says she does not know how they would have managed without Guide Dogs, particularly the support they received from Mark Battista, who is Shane’s Orientation and Mobility Instructor.

“He’s been there for us at every step of the way, including introducing Shane to ‘Sam’. Guide Dogs has given Shane amazing confidence. Who’d have ever thought Shane would be able to ride a bike?”

Shane, like many boys his age, is making big plans for the future, and while these plans will most likely change many times over, one is almost set in concrete.

**Shane is determined to have a guide dog and he wants to name him Sam.**

We know that Shane’s needs will change as he grows up. He will require extra training and assistance as he transitions from primary school to high school, and perhaps even to university.

When he eventually moves out of his home in a country town, Shane will need support settling into new neighbourhoods, houses and jobs – and, of course, he will most likely have a succession of guide dogs throughout his life.

In South Australia and the Northern Territory, the necessity for what we do is greater than ever. There are many more people with impaired vision who will need some form of mobility assistance for the rest of their lives.

As CEO, I am responsible for ensuring these services continue to be available to the people who need it most.

We need an injection of \$100,000 in donations by Christmas to purchase and train four more guide dogs.

Each trained dog is provided free to our clients, but ultimately each dog costs more than \$25,000. We can only do this with generous public support.

We now have 29 puppies on our Guide Dog Development Program which will be assessed for formal guide dog training in 2010 – and yet we still need more.

Please help us to reach our target of \$100,000 by mailing your gift with your completed donation form to us in the supplied envelope.

With your assistance we could possibly exceed this target, allowing us to further develop our programs to cope not only with growing demand, but also the rising costs of program delivery.

Like you, we want people who are blind or vision impaired to travel independently, make new friends and achieve their life goals.

Remember, we do not receive any government funding for our Guide Dog Services, so we're counting on you to help.

Yours sincerely



Kate Thiele  
CEO  
Guide Dogs SA.NT

PS Guide dog mobility can be a life-changing experience.  
Please support these special partnerships and donate today.  
Your gift will make a difference.

Here are some ways your donation could be spent

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**\$35**      An ID coat for a guide dog puppy  
                 in training

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**\$50**      Equipment and supplies for an older  
                 pup during advanced training

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**\$100**     Equipment/toys for one puppy  
                 to use throughout its first year  
                 of early development/training

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**\$150**     Customised guide dog harness

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**\$500**     Vaccinations for five puppies

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