

November 27, 2009

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## Male model calls Victor home

Few Victor Harbor locals realise they have a celebrity in their midst.

A young male model, known as Salmon, has called Victor home for the past year and has been relishing the quiet life with his retired “parents”, while occasionally slipping away for modelling assignments.

Salmon has been modelling for Guide Dogs SA.NT, including its recently released calendar, and in case you haven’t guessed by now, he is a young dog on the Guide Dog Development Program.

He has spent the early part of his life with locals Syd and Sue Armstrong, who have been responsible for his socialisation and early training.

They have loved having him as part of their life and have also been involved with fundraising for the organisation and ferrying him to his modelling assignments arranged by Guide Dogs and his sponsors Salmon Studio, an Adelaide graphic design agency.

Salmon will be assessed for formal guide dog training in early January from Guide Dogs’ redeveloped buildings in Morphett St, Adelaide.

Guide Dog Services Manager Tracey Jones says she is quietly confident about Salmon’s abilities, but could not guarantee his success as a guide dog.

“Many dogs have the skills and obedience, but sometimes still don’t make the grade due to personality and physical reasons.

“We are looking for a highly confident dog with low stress levels. We ask a lot of our dogs and we need to be 100 percent sure that they can cope in all situations.”

Salmon’s proposed training comes at a highly exciting time for Guide Dogs, with the organisation opening the doors for business on its redeveloped Adelaide headquarters on February 1.

Ms Jones says the new building represents a new era, allowing Guide Dogs to further develop and expand its range of programs for people with vision and hearing loss.

“Many people don’t realise the breadth and range of programs we offer for people with these conditions.

“We do everything we can to make sure people can live as independently as they can in their community.

Guide Dogs Association of SA and NT Inc | Full member of the International Guide Dog Federation

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- GUIDE DOG SERVICES
- VISION SERVICES
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“Not everyone needs or wants a guide dog. There are so many other ways we can help people with vision loss. It’s all about finding new ways of achieving goals – not giving up on life.”

Guide Dogs will also open a Discovery Centre, an interactive, fun education centre for vision and hearing which Victor Harbor primary schools will have the opportunity to visit. The centre is part of Guide Dogs’ preventative health policy and will be largely aimed at schoolchildren in the hope of stemming projected rises in preventable vision and hearing loss.

And back to Salmon, should he be successful in his pursuit of guide dog training, he will most likely graduate on his calendar month.

Anyone wanting to order calendars for \$19.95, including postage, should call Guide Dogs on 1800 484 333.

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