

Visionary

Edition **49**
November
2022

A tribute to
Her Majesty
Queen Elizabeth II

Cultural Celebrations
at the Israel
Guide Dog Centre



International Guide Dog Federation
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www.igdf.org.uk



First and foremost, membership of the IGDF enables Guide Dog Schools around the world to join a community dedicated to serving the visually impaired. That community needs and wants to share its knowledge and the IGDF facilitates that.

The map below outlines the contributing countries for this edition of Visionary – **Japan, Israel, UK, USA**



Cover Photo
Queen Elizabeth II greets a guide dog owner and their dog

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Message From The Chair

Bill Thornton | Chief Executive Officer
BC & Alberta Guide Dogs, Canada

Since our July issue of the Visionary, there have been, a number of, changes to the IGDF Board and our standing Committees. I would like to bring you all up to date on these changes.

We said goodbye to Christine Turc, our Vice-Chair and Communications Committee Chair. We wish her well in her retirement. Christine Benninger has kindly stepped up to Chair Communications. Due to position term ends, our Development Committee Chair Ivana Merryman Boncori, Accreditation Committee Member Chris Muldoon and Development Committee Member Bob Proesmans have retired from their IGDF roles. On behalf of us all, we thank these fine volunteers and rest assured we will find more work for you in the future! Every one of you has made a significant difference to the IGDF – very many thanks.

It is my pleasure to welcome two new IGDF Board members. Antoine Bouissou (France) has joined the Communications Committee and Dale Cleaver (Australia) has taken on the Strategy working group Lead. We look forward to working with both of you. Board Member Seishi Tanoue (Japan) has kindly taken on the Chair of the Finance Committee.

I am more than delighted that Tim Stafford was re-elected for a second four-year board term. Many thanks to Lukas Franck who has succeeded Ivana as DC Chair and we welcomed

continued

Message From The Chair



Zuhey Medina-Gonzalez (USA) as a new DC Member. John Welsman has joined the Communications Committee. Tim Stafford and Christine Baroni-Pretsch have stepped down as co-chairs of the Education Committee and Paul Adrian has taken on the Chair. Lee Buckingham (Australia) has joined the EC. Please visit pages 12-15 for further details and the full list of IGDF Committee positions.

The Board has agreed to establish a new dedicated Standards Committee (SC). This new committee will be led by Tim Stafford. The new Standards Committee will take on the responsibility for reviewing, revising, and writing the IGDF Standards. This will allow the AC to focus on the assessment process as we resume assessment visits. On-site assessments will resume in 2023 and all organisations due to be assessed during 2023 have now been contacted.

The Board of the IGDF and Assistance Dogs International have agreed to update our MOU between us and work more actively

together for the advancement of us both. Both organizations do exceptional work and are world leaders in their respective fields. A good example of a current project would be the current cooperation on Dog Welfare. A joint presentation was made at our latest IGDF webinar and at ADI's recent conference in California. Together we have a great opportunity to globally influence the rights and privileges for all our clients and be acknowledged as the De facto world leaders in our professional fields.

Finally, preparations continue for the 2023 IGDF Conference in Vancouver April 27th to 30th. The Conference Programme Committee, led by Christine Baroni-Pretsch has developed an exciting variety of plenary sessions, workshops and panel discussions. The latest programme can be downloaded from the [What's New](#) page of the IGDF website. The conference will also be an excellent opportunity to renew and make new connections with colleagues from around the world and explore beautiful British Columbia. The conference is filling fast so please do not delay your registration. Immediately following our conference there will be an important Breeders Workshop running May 1st – 3rd hosted by our colleagues at the IWDBA. Having our events back-to-back makes attending more cost effective – I would encourage your breeding and puppy-raising staff to attend. There is a comprehensive slate of topics and practical events taking place.

Wishing you all continued success from your IGDF Team.

Bill



2023 IGDF Conference

The special Early Bird discount rate has been extended to bookings made before 1st January 2023

[Please follow this link for further information and to book your delegate places](#)

IGDF Awards

Nominations are sought by the IGDF Office for the following awards which will be announced at the 2023 conference:

The IGDF Dorothy Award

The 'Dorothy' is awarded to the IGDF Member organisation voted to have had the most memorable TV and/or Social Media Advertisement. If you have made a TV or social media advertisement within the last 4 years highlighting the work your organisation does, you may submit it for consideration of the 2023 Dorothy Award.

The Ken Lord Award

This award recognise the lifetime commitment of an individual to the international guide dog movement. Nominees must have been working within the international guide dog movement for at least 25 years and have made a significant contribution to the success of the international guide dog movement.

The Derek Freeman Scholarship

The Derek Freeman Scholarship supports the practical application and academic endeavours in the practice of canine breeding and puppy-raising programs undertaken by accredited and applicant organisations of the International Guide Dog Federation.

Grants are in the range of £2,000 to support travel, accommodation and study at host organisations assisting with the applicant's continued education in the field of guide dog breeding and puppy-raising.

[Additional information for all awards can be found on the IGDF website](#)

Hosted by

2023 IGDF Conference is hosted by IGDF member BC & Alberta Guide Dogs



IGDF are delighted to announce that we will be returning to in-person assessments in 2023 where it is safe and practical to do so. All organisations due to be assessed in 2023 have now been contacted. If you are unsure when your organisation is due for assessment, please contact the IGDF Office.

As we move back to in-person assessments, we are keen not to abandon the learnings and advantages that remote assessments have provided us with, so the AC will be working with assessors and organisations to incorporate the use of remote technology and process wherever it is advantageous to the assessment process.

Congratulations to the following organisation which has been accepted as a new Applicant Organisation:

- Pes Pomocník (Slovakia)

Congratulations to the following organisation which has moved from Applicant Organisation to full IGDF Membership:

- CNIB Guide Dogs (Canada)

Congratulations to the following organisations which have passed their accreditation assessments:

- Guide Dogs Grünberger (Germany)
- BMS Blindenführhundschole Maik Schubert (Germany)
- Stiftung Deutsche Schule für Blindenführhunde (Germany)

Cultural celebrations at Israel Guide Dog Centre

Lisa Baron Haet
**Israel Guide Dog
Centre, Israel**

As I write, here in Israel, we have just begun the series of four consecutive Holy Days (aka The High Holy Days / Holidays) which occur in the fall. First, there is the Jewish New Year or Rosh Hashana which usually coincides with the month of September.

At IGDCB, we invite our board, clients, volunteers and staff to join us in a celebration of the New Year. We wish all health and happiness, success and only good things in the coming year. We eat and drink sweet things for the promise of a sweet year; raise a glass of sweet wine, dip apples in honey, eat honey cake and date cookies.

A week later, we observe the holiest day of the Jewish calendar, Yom Kippur, which is a day of fasting and introspection. We ask for forgiveness from those we may have wronged and forgive others who may have wronged us. We attempt to fulfill any pledges we have made to ourselves or others. Most Israelis do not work on this day, however, we must and do have Puppy Centre and Training Kennel staff on campus to care for the dogs.

A few days after Yom Kippur, we celebrate for 8 days the holiday of Sukkot, also known as the Feast of the Tabernacles.



[Date cookies for Rosh HaShana](#)



[Celebrating the Jewish New Year at IGDCB](#)

Many people build a temporary hut, called a sukkah to eat their meals. This 'tabernacle' is decorated with hanging ornaments, pomegranates and paper chains with a roof of palm fronds or bamboo matting. This holiday marks the fragility of life and the wanderings of Moses and the Israelites in the desert for 40 years.

The concluding holy day is Simchat Torah (Joy in the Torah.) This is when we complete the reading of the last portion of the Bible, and begin the process of reading it all over again, at the beginning of the first book of the Bible, Genesis.

In Israel, everything is quite pressured before the holidays or "Hagim" as they are called. People want to finish projects to have time to prepare for shopping,

cooking, hosting or staying with family and friends for festive meals or to travel for pleasure trips, etc.

There is a common saying which refers to this period; "After the holy days - Achari ha hagim." This literally means - we'll be able to take care of this when we are back to the routine time of "after the holy days." We enjoy this special and sometimes pressured month and wish all of you a healthy, sweet and successful year ahead.

There are many more celebrations here, so the holiday of Passover will need to wait for next time! In addition, there are significant holidays celebrated by some of our clients who belong to various cultures and faiths here; Muslim, Christian, Druze, Ethiopian Christians and Jews.

Specialty Meals Make Everyone Feel Welcomed

Rachelle Kniffen
Leader Dogs for
the Blind, USA

Every client who comes to the campus of Leader Dogs for the Blind for training is asked a simple question – How was your experience? Without fail, clients excitedly mention the tasty food and excellent service provided by our kitchen staff. Many add, “I was amazed at the effort they undertook to meet my dietary requirements.”

“As far back as 40 years ago, we provided a special menu for our clients who were diabetic,” shares Sharon Dougherty, manager of residential and food services. **“Today we support a wide variety of diets to meet individual religious or health requirements.”** Our kitchen team accommodates a large variety of diets including diabetic, Kosher, Halal, gluten free and lactose free, often providing several in addition to a standard menu in each class.

But our kitchen staff don’t stop there, they include fun activities centered around meals. There is fiesta night with mocktails (alcohol free drinks) like margaritas, and Michigan-centric products like apple cider and donuts (a Fall treat), barbecue dinners and ice cream drinks made with locally produced orange and ginger sodas.

Because LDB has been serving clients from

Spain for several decades, some of their wonderful cultural traditions have influenced our menus, most notably the importance of including fresh fruit with every meal. We’ve been lucky that some clients have shared their treasured family recipes with us, allowing us to prepare traditional Spanish cuisine for the entire class to enjoy.

Welcoming diversity comes in many forms, treating individual meal requirements is just one of them. To quote English Poet William Cowper, “Variety is the very spice of life, That gives it all its flavor.”

LDB improve the client experience by meeting a variety of dietary needs



Journey to the Goal! Access to Football Stadiums

Shiori Nishida
Japan Guide Dog
Association

Football is a popular sport in Japan. In 2019, before the Coronavirus crisis, the average audience was 20,751 people for each Japanese professional football “J1 League” match.

One day, a guide dog user visited the Saitama Stadium, home of the Urawa Red Diamonds, a popular J1 club with one of the highest average attendances per league home game, to watch a football game. Although the Urawa Red Diamonds’ staff accepted the guide dog user, they were not sure if they guided them in the right way. With this experience, the staff thought about improving the service for guide dog users so that more people, including people with disabilities, could support the team and enjoy games at the stadium. That was when they asked JGDA for help. JGDA held a seminar for the Urawa Red Diamonds’ staff in 2021 in which the staff learned basic information about guide dogs, users, laws, and a role-play of guiding a JGDA staff as a guide dog user to a seat in the stadium with a PR dog.

This May, the Urawa Red Diamonds provided a spectator experience for guide dog users at the home game match with Kashima Antlers to test and clarify the issues on accepting guide dog users. Five guide dog teams joined and enjoyed the game in the stadium while listening to a radio broadcast on a smartphone app.

Arisa Yamamoto, JGDA Public and Media Communication Department staff, says, **“the Urawa Red Diamonds, who conducted this verification event, is a club in the Tokyo metropolitan area.**



Guide dog user at Saitama Stadium

I believe that the initiative taken by such a leading club will encourage other clubs and organizations, and even other sports. Today is a big step in that direction. There have been cases where stadiums rejected guide dog users. I hope this will be an opportunity for all stadiums to know how to welcome guide dog users and increase the number of places where guide dog users can go out to enjoy.”

JGDA will continue kicking the ball with the Urawa Red Diamonds to the goal of having anyone, including guide dog users, enjoy football at their stadium. We believe it will be another step forward to a world where guide dog users can access anywhere they want.

A Tribute to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

Tom Wright
Guide Dogs for the
Blind, UK

Guide Dogs was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Her Majesty the Queen. We want to express our gratitude and admiration for her truly remarkable life and reign over so many years, and thank our fellow members of the IGDF for reaching out to us with condolences in the wake of the news.

The Queen's love of dogs was well known all over the world. Images of her corgis, scampering around the ankles of visitors to Buckingham Palace and being carried down steps from aeroplanes, remain utterly iconic. She had a dynasty of them throughout her life, helping to preserve and promote this beloved Welsh breed and creating new corgi fans around the globe.

But the Queen was also deeply fond of her Labradors, like so many others in her family, and they were often pictured by her side on her summer breaks at Balmoral. The Labrador's loyalty, intelligence and sense of fun are of course the traits our own guide dog owners cherish. Many of our guide dogs working today can have their ancestry traced back to Labradors from the Queen's own Sandringham line.

No doubt, this shared love of dogs was a simple human connection made whenever a guide dog owner had the opportunity to meet the Queen. Guide dog owners often said that while their dogs gave them a great conversation starter, the Queen was more interested in the person behind the dog and always took the time to ask about them, often while the dog snored at their feet.



A young Queen Elizabeth greets a guide dog handler

Mayor of Torbay and guide dog owner Mandy Darling was able to meet the Queen at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party. Despite the hundreds of other attendees and various rules around etiquette, Mandy said it felt like a deeply personal experience, with the Queen even bending to pet Mandy's guide dog Todd – who henceforth was known as 'Sir Todd' to family and friends.

At Guide Dogs we were fortunate to host the Queen at a number of our sites and share with her our work, opportunities for which we are so grateful. Our thoughts and well-wishes remain with the Royal Family.

Dog Welfare Working Group

Update from **Bob Proesmans**

We all agree that dog welfare is important, but even experts have very different views as to what 'good' welfare is and how we can achieve it. Welfare assessments involve considering diverse elements and can risk making value and opinion-based assumptions.

At the latest IGDF webinar held on the 24th November (now available on the website) and at the occasion of the latest ADI conference in Concord, CA, Tim Stafford (IGDF) and Peter Gorbing (ADI) have co presented on the Five Domains and the importance of dog welfare/ethics: "Assessing Assistance Dogs Welfare – A Framework For The 21st Century".

In parallel, the International Guide Dog Federation's working group on Dog Welfare and Assistance Dogs International have joined forces to produce a joint position statement on the ethical training and care of dogs.

The IGDF working group on Dog Welfare have profoundly prepared and discussed the content of this position paper over the last couple of months, the outcome being a well-thought balance between science and experience.

Both the IGDF and ADI are now preparing for the launch of this position paper. This position will inevitably raise lots of questions, questions that will be examined by the working group and answered by the IGDF in a FAQs sheet.

As breeding dogs is part of our members' activity, an ethical code on breeding imposes itself too.

The IGDF Dog Welfare working group will therefore investigate in this matter intensively in the coming months, collecting information on current practices and give recommendations on how to improve.



Welcome Antoine Bouissou

The IGDF welcome Antoine to the Board following his election at the September Annual General Meeting. Antoine will also serve on the IGDF Communications Committee alongside Chris Benninger.

Antoine is currently on the Board at the Association des Chiens Guides Grand Sud Ouest, France following his retirement from

a successful career with the Airbus Group.

He initially became involved in the Association as a host family and was then elected to the Board in 2019 as the representative of host families.



Welcome Lee Buckingham

The IGDF Education Committee welcomes Lee Buckingham from Guide Dogs Queensland, Australia where he is the General Manager for Guide Dog Services.

Lee and Guide Dogs Queensland have been instrumental in helping to develop the IGDF Online Learning Platform and we are grateful for his time and expertise as we

continue to develop the site.

Lee has experience spanning over three continents in not-for-profit, hospitality, facilities management, food production and resources.



Welcome Dale Cleaver



The IGDF also welcomes Dale to the IGDF Board following his election at the September Annual General Meeting.

He will also serve on the IGDF Finance Committee alongside Seishi Tanoue and Chris Benninger.

Dale has been the CEO of Guide Dogs NSW/ACT in Australia since 2017 and has a history of working in the health, not for profit and charity sectors.

Dale's role will also involve acting as the IGDF's Board liaison with the World Blind Union. as we work towards building stronger relationships across the sectors.



We are delighted to welcome John Welsman to the Communications Committee.

John has been a guide dog handler since 1983 and has worked in the vision impairment sector since 1997. He is currently

Welcome John Welsman

the Canine Affairs Lead Professional at Guide Dogs UK, and will be familiar to many of you as the host of the Visionary podcast.

Following feedback from the Communications Survey, the format of the podcast will be changing to bring you more interviews and topical items in shorter, more regular episodes.

Welcome Zuhey Medina-Gonzalez

The IGDF Development Committee Welcomes Zuhey Medina-Gonzalez from Southeastern Guide Dogs, USA.

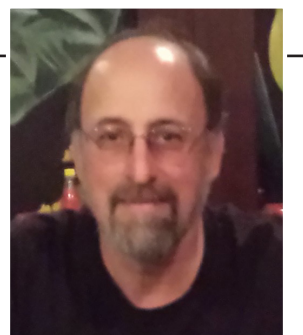
Zuhey is the Director of Genetics, Reproduction and Puppy Care at Southeastern Guide Dogs and has significant experience working with new guide dog organisations in Latin America.

Zuhey has a B.S. in Animal Science from New Mexico State University and experience in breeding, whelping, puppy education and production management as well as a passion for nutrition and puppy development.



Congratulations to Lukas Franck and Paul Adrian

Congratulations to Lukas Franck from the Seeing Eye, USA who has been appointed Chair of the Development Committee and to Paul Adrian from Vision Australia who has been appointed Chair of the Education Committee. Lukas also serves on the EC and Paul also serves on the AC so we are grateful to them both for their time and commitment to IGDF.



Paul Adrian (left) and Lukas Franck (above)

Thank you to Christine Turc

Our thanks go to Christine Turc whose second term on the IGDF Board has come to an end. Christine served on the IGDF Board since 2014 and has now retired to spend time with her family in France.

Christine was Vice-Chair of the IGDF Board, and served on the Communications Committee, the Conference Programme

Committee, and as the Board liaison for the CEN/TC 452.

Stepping into the role of Vice-Chair of the IGDF Board is Christine Baroni-Pretsch from Foundation Romande pour Chiens Guides d'Aveugles.



Thank you to Ivana Merryman Boncori

Our thanks also go to Ivana Merryman Boncori whose term on the DC has come to an end. Ivana is a GDMI and Certification Consultant at Danish Association of the Blind, Denmark; as well as a volunteer Board member at Dogs for Life, Slovakia so we also appreciate the time that Ivana gave to the DC helping new and emerging guide dog organisations in their journey

towards full IGDF membership.

Ivana served for 7 years as a member of DC, before succeeding Brad Hibbard as DC Chair in 2021. We are very grateful for Ivana's huge contribution to the work of the IGDF.



Thank you to Chris Muldoon



Thank you to Chris whose term on the AC has come to an end. Chris has served on the AC since 2016 and made a huge contribution to IGDF, most recently on the development of the remote assessment process. Chris will continue to serve as an

IGDF assessor where his experience and knowledge will be a huge asset to the Accreditation Committee.

Chris has worked in the guide dog sector for 30 years and has a number of degrees to show for it. Most recently he has completed his PhD, so look out for his up-coming conference presentation discussing his research.

Thank you to Bob Proesmans

Thank you to Bob whose term on the Development Committee has come to an end. Bob has served on the DC since 2013, but will continue to work with IGDF as lead of the Dog Welfare Working Group.

Bob also runs a small animal veterinary practice together with his wife Mieke, also a vet, in Belgium whilst holding down the

role of Vice-President of Purpose Dogs Belgium.

We are therefore hugely grateful to Bob for his time and contribution to IGDF and for sharing his veterinary expertise with our international community.



Board and Committees Positions

Following the 2022 AGM, the IGDF Board are pleased to announce the full list of IGDF Board and committee positions:

Finance Committee:

Seishi Tanoue (Chair), Chris Benninger, Dale Cleaver and David Maynard

Communication Committee:

Chris Benninger (Chair), Antoine Bouissou and John Welsman

Accreditation Committee:

Susan Armstrong (Chair), Paul Adrian, David Grice and Minna Leppala

Development Committee:

Lukas Franck (Chair), Lee Stanway, Jane Bradley, Julijana György Mateši and Zuhey Medina-Gonzalez

Education Committee:

Paul Adrian (Chair), Lukas Franck, Sam Tawada and Lee Buckingham

Dog Welfare Working Group:

Bob Proesmans (Lead), Tim Stafford, Melanie Harris (USA Guide Dogs for the Blind), Becky Hunt (GDUK), Nicola Cotton (Vision Australia), Prof Tiny De Keuster (University of Ghent), Jennifer Rogers (Palmetto Animal Assisted Life Services, USA and ADI representative)

UKAS Lead: Tim Stafford

Strategy Lead: Dale Cleaver

Technology Lead: Dale Cleaver

ADI Liaisons: William Thornton, Chris Benninger, Tim Stafford and David Maynard

WBU Liaison: Dale Cleaver

CEN/TC 452 Liaison: Tim Stafford

EGDF Liaison: Tim Stafford



Knowledge Sharing Webinars

Stay in touch with news, research, and best practice from around the world by attending our regular webinars. Webinars are open to all IGDF Members, Affiliates, Applicant Organisations and Enquiring Organisations. Registration details are circulated by the IGDF Office and are available on the IGDF website.

2023 Webinars

IGDF Update

Led by: IGDF Board

Date: January 2023

Description: This session, led by the IGDF Board, will discuss the role and function of the new IGDF Standards Committee and IGDF's new Suspensions Policy.

2022 Webinars

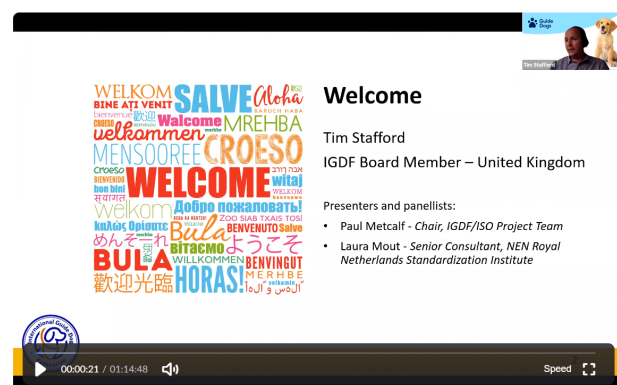
If you missed any of our 2022 webinars, you can access their recordings on the IGDF website. A list of all our 2022 webinars are below. Our thanks to everyone who has contributed to this series so far.

Health and Behaviour: Are they truly separate concepts?

Led by: Sara McIver, Guide Dogs UK

Coach, Reinforce, Repeat

Led by: Tony Harvey, Guide Dogs UK



Working with People who have Additional Needs

Led by: Lee Stanway, Guide Dogs UK

Guide Dogs for the Blind Inc., USA, Virtual Tour

Led by: Guide Dogs for the Blind Inc. USA

The New IGDF Education Website

Led by: Guide Dogs Queensland and the IGDF Education Committee

Guide Dogs NSW/ACT Technology Strategy

Led by: Glen Mason, Chiara Belluomo, Jodi Martin (Guide Dogs NSW/ACT)

Assessing Assistance Dog Welfare

Led by: Tim Stafford, Guide Dogs UK and Peter Gorbings, Dogs for Good, UK

If you are interested in presenting your own IGDF webinar, or know someone who would like to, please contact the IGDF Office at enquiries@igdf.org.uk

Visionary

Next Issue

The deadline for articles for the next issue of Visionary is: **1st February 2022.**

Special Feature

Global economics and its impact on fundraising and services. Share your organisation's stories and experiences.

Please send articles on this or any other topic to the IGDF Office by the above deadline.

Please supply your articles as a Word file with original images attached as separate jpeg images. The IGDF Office will contact you if your article is accepted with details of how to submit a recording for the Visionary podcast.



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