

Edition 41 | March 2020

visionary

vi•sion•ar•y (vizh'n-eri || -erri) adj. 1. Characterised by vision or foresight

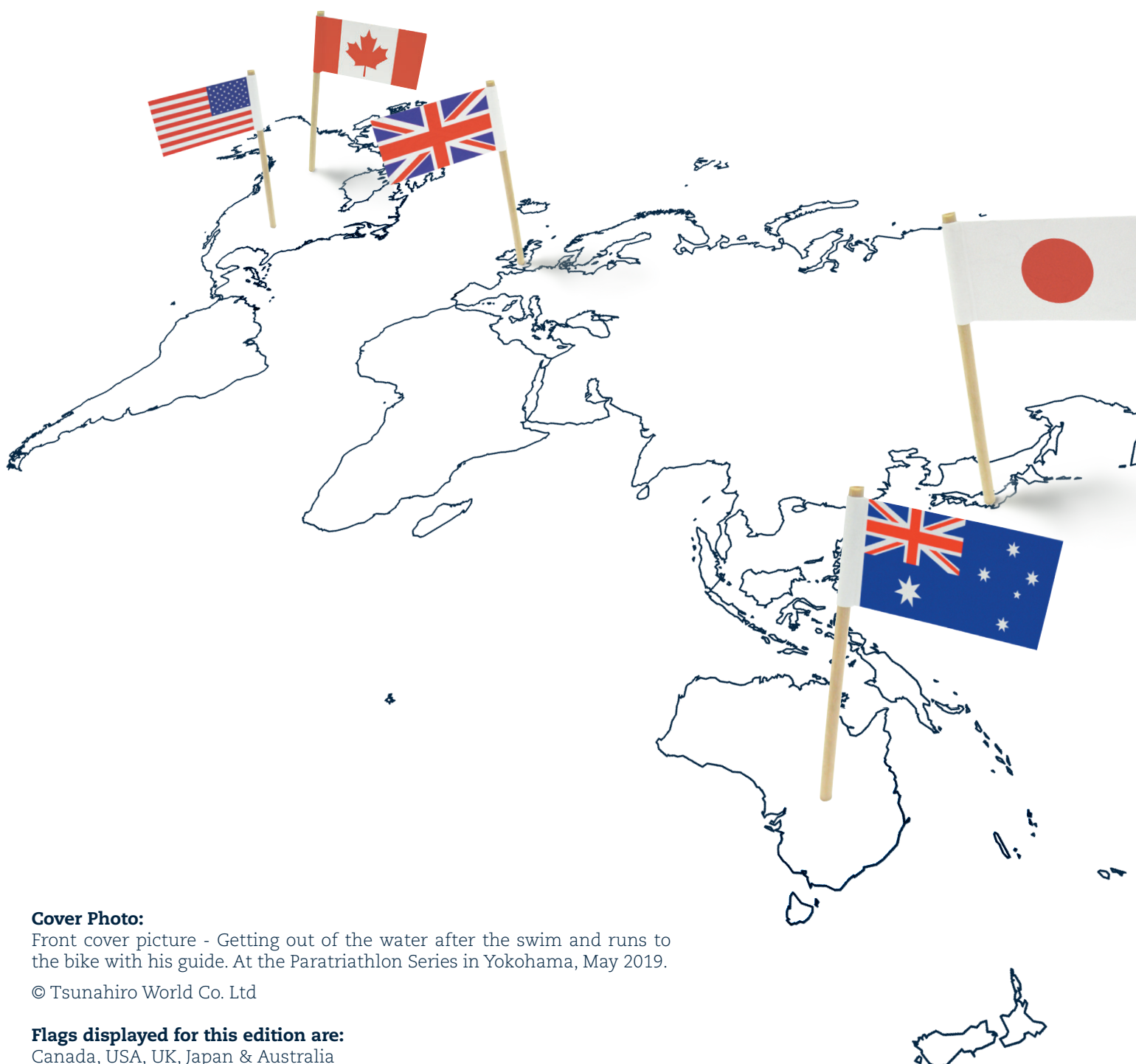
Ticking The Boxes
Seeing Eye Dogs and The IWDR Checklist



Aiming For Tokyo Olympics
Training for the Paratriathlon

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.



Cover Photo:

Front cover picture - Getting out of the water after the swim and runs to the bike with his guide. At the Paratriathlon Series in Yokohama, May 2019.

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Flags displayed for this edition are:

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Message from the Chair

Paul Metcalf - Guide Dog Manager
Guide Dogs Victoria, Australia

Hello everyone and welcome, once again, to Visionary – the official newsletter of the International Guide Dog Federation.

It is something of an understatement to acknowledge the impact that the current Covid-19 pandemic will be having on all of us – especially given the requirement for social / physical distancing and the way it very much restricts our ability to work as close as we do with our clients and volunteers.

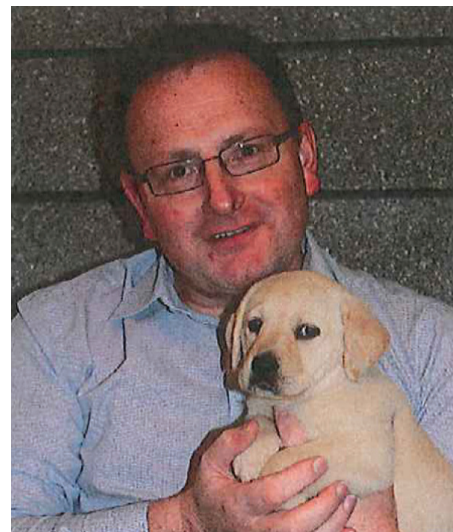
For some, the legal situation will be such that full lockdown prevents any direct / 'in-person' service delivery; for others it may be possible to provide support via tele-practice / tele-service capabilities (phone, Skype, Zoom, etc.).

Whatever situation you are in, please do take care of yourselves, your clients, volunteers and families.

As you know, the 2020 IGDF Seminar and Breeders Workshop was scheduled to take place around this time but, as with all similar events, it was necessary to postpone as borders closed and international travel became impossible.

The IGDF Board has been working with Mathilda Guide Dogs and the Breeders Workshop Planning Committee in order to secure alternative dates with minimal loss / additional costs.

More information will be included later in this newsletter and further detail



Paul Metcalf with a nice golden Labrador pup in his arms.

shared with IGDF Members, Affiliates, Applicant / Enquiry Organisations and other Seminar delegates in due course.

Finally, whilst none of us want to witness current events in the future, I am sure we have all been presented with opportunities to review and develop our services in different ways – some of which we may take forward into what becomes our new 'business as usual' when we emerge from the restrictions we are now working through.

Please do think about how you can share any new learnings with your IGDF peers and colleagues around the world – perhaps an article for the next Visionary?

I close, as always, with best wishes on behalf of the IGDF Board – STAY SAFE!

Kindest regards to all,

Paul Metcalf

IGDF Chair

Disclaimer

Whilst the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) retains editorial right to all articles presented within the Visionary, accuracy of specific detail and figures quoted are as provided by the author and their supporting organisation.

The IGDF, whilst welcoming feedback on content, will not enter into any dialogue relating to perceived inaccuracies in these areas.

IGDF Assessments

Congratulations to the following organisations which passed their five year assessment:

- Dog Guides Canada, Lions Foundation of Canada, Canada
- Freedom Guide Dogs for the Blind Inc, USA
- Southeastern Guide Dogs Inc, USA
- Training Centre 'Dogs as assistants for disabled people', Russia

The following organisations have been accepted as Enquiring Organisations:

- Stapell Working Dogs, Australia
- Liberty Assistance and Guide Dogs, Greece

The following organisations have been accepted as Applicant Organisations:

- Daniel Tuma, Czech Republic

Our best wishes to the following organisations who are leaving the IGDF:

- Dogs With Wings Assistance Dogs Society, Canada
- Centro de Investigacion y Desarrollo - Fundacion "A" - Perros Guia Mexico y America Latina, Mexico
- Guide Dogs Serbia

As a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic and the restrictions on international travel, all member organisations due to be assessed during 2020 have been granted a one-year extension. These assessment visits will take place once the international situation permits.

The Importance of eLearning in GDMI Apprentice Training

Sebastian McPherson - Apprentice Supervisor

Leader Dogs for the Blind, USA

For many years, Leader Dogs trained apprentices mainly on the job plus assigned books to read, papers to write and made them complete a one-week O&M course at a local university.

Around 2008 we began developing a formal apprentice training that included 60 identified competency skills. This Apprentice Competency Evaluation consisted of skills in the areas of interpersonal and professionalism; orientation and mobility; guide dog selection, training and evaluation; client information and assessment; and client/dog team training.

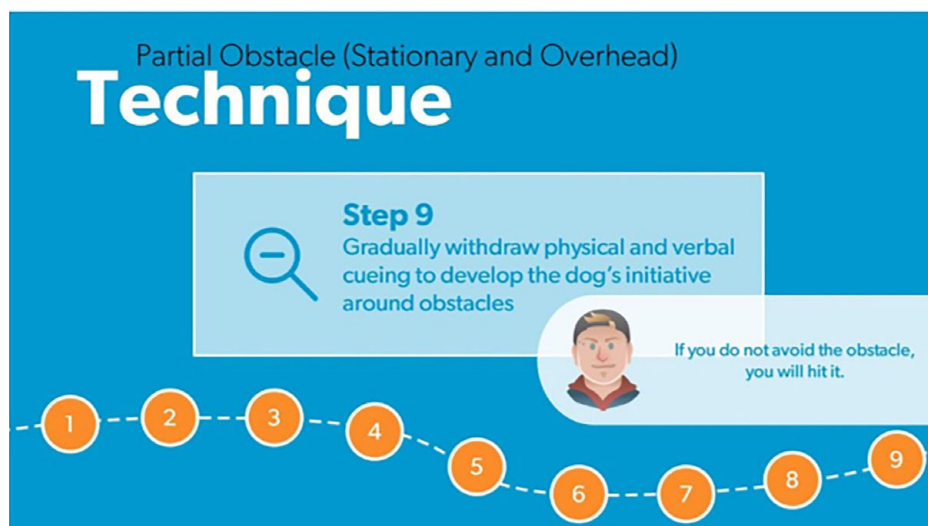
Though we had great training content, we did not have a great delivery method. Apprentices learned through lectures, reading and more lectures. In all honesty, it was rather boring. Boring isn't good for learning, for dogs or humans, so we set out to create a more stimulating learning environment.

Today, in addition to on the job learning, our apprentices are taught via 18 eLearning modules. We embraced the science behind eLearning. It speeds up training which reduces costs and maximizes knowledge retention and productivity, but more importantly...it can be fun!

Our apprentices complete the 18 modules at their own pace, finishing the three levels on a timeline that fits their personal learning style and lifestyle. Topics including canine learning, client assessment, field services and dog health are taught via interactive screens that are interspersed with meaningful video and voice over. For those who prefer to learn through reading, every module has a resource section that provides a written script along with extra information on the subject matter. Each module ends with interactive quizzes, some are video based, that provide the learner with immediate results and feedback.

To increase the fun component, we created avatars of staff members who would have provided the learning content in lecture style in the past. With a few bad jokes thrown in for comic relief, our apprentices are eager to make their way through their training.

We are happy to share more information about our apprentice eLearning modules with interested organizations. Feel free to contact me, Sebastian McPherson, at 248-651-9011.



2020 IGDF Seminar & Breeders Workshop

As you know, the 2020 IGDF Seminar & Breeders Workshop was scheduled to take place in Prague during May of this year.

The current Covid-19 pandemic, however, meant that delegates could not travel and venues could not host large gatherings of people in an effort to minimise the risk of transmission of the virus to others. Additional issues around cancelled flights and the closure of international borders added to the reality that our key event could not take place as planned.

This was a great disappointment to all

– particularly as we had again reached our target of 300 delegates who would, once again, congregate to share experiences and new learnings whilst meeting new friends and cementing old relationships.

The IGDF Board has, since the decision was made to postpone, been working closely with Mathilda Guide Dogs in efforts to re-schedule the event in such a way that would not incur additional or cancellation costs to delegates.

As a result of those efforts, new dates have, indeed, been confirmed for the Seminar & Workshop to take place – 21-25 May 2021.

The Pyramid Hotel, Prague will remain as the venue of choice and we are currently in the process of transferring Seminar / Workshop registrations and hotel bookings to the new dates.

As soon as we have the final detail on what actions may be needed to finalise this we will advise.

With regard to any flights that may have been booked, you will need to approach the airlines directly in order to consider options for rescheduling and / or cancelling.

We will be taking a look at the Seminar Programme in the coming months in order to confirm that presenters can attend the new dates. If opportunities arise for new abstracts to be considered, we will advise.

Finally, thank you for your patience as we have been working towards this announcement and we look forward to meeting you all in Prague in 2020.

Guide Dogs Around The World

IGDF Members (92% return)	99	8
Also member of Assistance Dogs International	35	11
Subscribe to the International Working Dog Registry (IWDR)	26	13
Own breeding programme	68	8
Broods mated – natural	913	9
Broods mated – artificial	541	10
Pups acquired	8,360	13
Puppies completing development programme (programmes supported by 9,466 Puppy Raisers)	6,227	12
Own kennels	68	9
Own Dog Training Facility	78	8
Dogs completing formal Guide programme (ready for matching)	3,184	13
Withdrawals – from puppy programme, through training and up to 1-year post-graduation as a working Guide Dog (Of these, 1,148 [29.66%] were recorded as being health-related)	3,874	19
Withdrawn into successful career change	430	25
Own Client Training Facility	56	8
New Graduations during 2018 (successors / replacements)	1,696	8
New Graduations during 2018 (First-time Handlers)	1,440	8
Aftercare / Follow-up visits	22,940	16
Average working life	9.7	23
Guide Dog teams currently working (December 2018)	21,772	13
Standard retirement age for working Guide Dogs (54 organisations)	10.3 (average)	10 (average)
Qualified Guide Dog Mobility Instructors (full-time equivalent)	666.3	9
Qualified Guide Dog Trainers (full-time equivalent)	280.5	10
Trainee Guide Dog Mobility Instructors / Trainers (full-time equivalent)	312.5	11

The request for Annual Return data (2019) will be sent out to all IGDF Member organisations very soon – please do complete the form and return it as soon as possible.

Annual Report submissions are a condition of membership and, as you can see from the above, they provide valuable information for us all.

Major-General John Groom First Chair and Co- Founder of the International Guide Dog Federation

William Thornton

BC & Alberta Guide Dog Services | Autism
Support Dogs | PTSD Service Dogs, Canada

The idea of the International Federation of Guide Dog Schools for the Blind (IFGDSB) - as it was originally known - stems from conferences held in France (1973) and London (1976). At the conclusion of the third international conference in Vienna in 1983, attendees agreed the formation of a European-based group to consider "the formulation of guidelines and standards for the training of dogs and to teach blind people the use of dogs". The meeting agreed that the Royal Dutch Guide Dog Centre would consolidate the work of a working group consisting of representatives from the UK, Netherlands, France, Scandinavia and Switzerland and that other guide dog schools could be invited to participate.

This initiative was raised with Major-General John Groom, the new Director General of the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, UK. He embraced the idea adding an International variation rather than just a European plan. Late 1985, invitations were sent out to all the known Guide Dog Schools.

Hosted by the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association, UK, and chaired by John Groom. The first working meetings were held in Reading, UK in September, 1986. See attached photo.

There were 28 delegates from 15 schools representing 10 countries.

In April 1988, a second international meeting was held once again in Reading, attended by 40 delegates from 16 countries, representing 25 guide dog organisations. At the end of the two-day debate, delegates from all schools signed a document prepared by solicitors, forming an unincorporated association known as "The International Provisional Council for Guide Dog Schools for the Blind".

They appointed a provisional executive body consisting of members of the original 1983 Vienna working group. The new Council, comprising five Chief Executive Officers from countries in Europe, was empowered to do such work as was needed to bring into being a new organisation called "The International Federation of Guide Dog Schools for the Blind" ("IFGDSB"). John Groom was elected Provisional Chair by the delegates.

At a third meeting in Reading, legal documents were ratified on 12th April 1989. The new organisation, then known as the International Federation of Guide Dog Schools for the Blind (IFGDSB) was incorporated in the UK.

The International Federation of Guide Dog Schools for the Blind (IFGDSB) held its first Conference. At Leamington Spa in 1990, Photo attached.

Major-General John Groom, First Chair, or "Chairman" as he liked to be known, is sadly only known to a few of our current members of the IGDF. We are all greatly indebted to him for taking the much needed initiative and his skilled leadership in creating the formation of the IGDF. He brought together national leaders in the field of Guide Dogs from many countries and skillfully rendered down strong opinions, attitudes and ego's to bring us to where we are today. This was done at a time when he was new to our field of work and whilst he was Director General of the largest guide dog programme in the world!

Sometimes with a little off-colour humour, but at all times, showing great drive, foresight and vision, he showed us the way ahead. Pulling people together to enrich and strengthen our profession for the betterment of those with vision loss.

Regretfully, John Groom was not recognised by the IGDF during his lifetime. I would however, ask that we all reflect on his contribution and that we take a moment to remember him at our next Conference.

John Groom's alacrity, charm, diplomacy, determination and can-do approach, the traits of a great leader, tore down the challenges that faced our founders. We were fortunate to have the right man at the right time for the right job.

We all owe John Groom a great deal of gratitude and respect. His legacy has brought us all together.

We remember you John and thank you for all that you have done for our Industry. Your legacy lives on.

On behalf of the entire membership of the IGDF we send our condolences to John's wife Jane and to his family.

First IGDF meetings prior and just after IGDF creation



3 photos of all delegates from different countries present at the meetings prior to IGDF creation in Wokingham in 1986. Then also in Wokingham in 1988, and after IGDF was created at a meeting in leamington spa in 1990.

Aiming For 'Tokyo Olympics' at Age 40 For Paratriathlon – Ryu Nakazawa and Guide Dog Deneb

Kyoko Yamaki - Public and Media Communications

Japan Guide Dog Association, Japan

The charm of paratriathlon is the 'sense of fulfillment at the finish line,' Ryu shares. The sport consists of 0.75km of swimming, 20km of tandem biking and 5km of running. 'In the end, my organs are rocked so hard they hurt.' He has competed in 32 international competitions since 2012 and is proud that he has completed all of them.

Triathlon is greatly affected by weather and geographical features that the world ranking is evaluated not by finishing time but the order of finishing the competition. However, Ryu's most memorable race was not the 5 wins but the one in London in 2013, when he finished last. He wore a wetsuit to swim, but the ocean was so cold that he suffered from hyperventilation. Then he fell from his bike on the cobble paving in Hyde Park, which also led to his guide being injured. This meant that they were only able to jog instead of run at the end. Yet the sense

of fulfillment when they finished was unforgettable.

At age 27, he noticed discomfort in his eyes. While he was working, he started seeing rainbows around the light, then he experienced pain in the eyes and had nausea. He was diagnosed with glaucoma. He was losing his vision and visual field when he saw a totally blind high school girl competing in a triathlon on TV. 'If someone who cannot see can do it, I should try,' and he signed up at a triathlon club in the autumn of 2011. He couldn't take a breath so he could barely swim 25m, and his knees hurt when he ran 1km. 'I was not afraid to try.' He trained after work, quit smoking and refrained from drinking alcohol.

At the Asian Cup in 2012, the '32-year old beginner' won the title. The more he practiced, the more doors were opened. He quit his job and went to Tsukuba University of Technology. He felt the need for safe travel and applied for a guide dog in 2014. Deneb became his partner that helps him maintain

his mental, technical and physical balance.

There were 3 guide dog users in the university dormitory and the Tsukuba University Triathlon Club invited him to join their practice sessions. After graduation, he got a job at Syneos Health Commercial where his ideal environment as an athlete was provided.

Olympic paratriathlon started from Rio 2016, but the vision-impaired men's event is a new category for Tokyo 2021. The final qualification will be in July, but Ryu is targeting the Asian Cup in Hiroshima in April. It's the off-season right now, so he trains 5 days a week. He swims for 90 minutes at a sports facility from 6 am. Then bikes on the machine for 2 to 3 hours at home. He sometimes wears weights to recreate the slope on an actual course. In the afternoon, he goes to nearby park and runs for 2 hours and comes home before it gets too dark to see.

In 2018, Ryu found a lump on Deneb's shoulder. He got treated and was able to come back in 6 months. While he was away, Ryu couldn't stop thinking about him and people asked him 'where's Deneb?' 'Deneb is a part of me,' and Ryu's daily routine came back with the return of Deneb. He felt, 'Deneb overcame his challenge, and now it's my turn.'

'I want a gold medal in Tokyo.' We imagine a passionate guy facing challenges but once out of the race, he is more of a down-to-earth person. 'I'm living my life to the fullest. I'm blessed with great people.' 'Because of my vision, I started the triathlon and met Deneb.' His eyes are fixed on 'Tokyo 2021.'

If you plan to visit Japan with your guide dog, as an athlete or a spectator of the Tokyo Olympics 2021, prepare at least 6 months in advance. Contact Animal Quarantine Service in Japan to confirm the compliance status of requirements.

<http://www.maff.go.jp/aqs/english/animal/dog/index.html>

You will also need to apply for a Temporary Certificate of Overseas Guide Dog Users.

<https://www.moudouken.net/en/visiting-japan.php>



Ryu Nakazawa taking part in a Paratriathlon



Ryu Nakazawa training while his guide dog looks on.

Ticking The Boxes: Seeing Eye Dogs and the IWDR Checklist

Matthew Collins

Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs, Australia

At Vision Australia Seeing Eye Dogs, we are constantly on the hunt for new and evolving technologies to ensure that our dogs can be the best that they can be.

This past November we were beyond delighted to be able to host the internationally respected voices in the assistance animal industry: Jane Russenberger and Dr. Eldin Leighton.

They ran a three-day workshop for not only our staff, but also the staff of Border Force Australia, whom we have a great working relationship with. We currently share an exchange program enabling us to find the best dogs and volunteers suited to each other's programs.

A large portion of the workshop was

spent discussing the International Working Dog Registry Checklist. By joining with all the international guide dog schools already involved with the program, we are looking to maintain our high standards in our breeding dogs, and to compound that with the best specimen from all around the world.

By combining this data into a significantly larger data set to choose from, we can ensure that inherent qualities such as behavioural traits, general health and factors that impact a pups general performance, can be prioritised which in turn leads us to being able to provide the best dogs possible for our clients.

The other aspects that the workshop focused on was dog temperament, and ways to improve our assessment of temperament, especially in young pups. Using a livestream (pictured)

enabled all staff to be able to view these assessments as they took place at a distance so as not to distract the dog being assessed. It also allowed everyone to view and score the process at once with live coaching from Jane Russenberger as opposed to having to repeat the process numerous times.

We also currently share a very special relationship with Metro Trains, the organisation responsible for all train infrastructure in Victoria, Australia. We have used this relationship to have a custom life-size train and platform replica installed in our training centre. This provides a simulation, in a safe and secure environment, of embarking and disembarking a train, a pivotal skill for a large number of our clients.

Our relationship has also enabled us to work directly with Metro Trains staff to educate them about the needs of our blind and low vision clients. We



Jane Russenberger Leads Demonstration - Lead walking Training

Ticking The Boxes: Seeing Eye Dogs and the IWDR ChecklistCont...



Live Stream Demo - A young dog and handler on a set of stairs

recently held a training day where, using a combination of simulation goggles, AIRA technology and long canes, we tasked the employees with being able to navigate around not only our model train, but out in the real world, as they made their way to a randomised location within walking distance. Based on the feedback we

have received, it really opened the eyes of the staff involved, and they are already looking to implement several tips and tricks they learned during the exercise.

By utilising these technologies, we can improve not only the quality of our dogs, but also improve upon our own

learning and techniques. By continuing our relationship with organisations like Metro Train, these learning can also spread into the general populace, making everyday tasks like catching a train just that little bit easier for our clients.



Jane Russenberger talking about the Live Stream video on screen.

the future of the visionary

The next deadline
for Visionary
submissions is

1st June 2020

Special Feature:

**How was life in your
organisation during
Covid 19 : your
initiatives, good ideas
and nice stories ... ?**

Please supply your articles as a
word file with **original images
sent separately as jpeg images.**

Remember to include the
completed submission form,
along with your article and
any pictures you would like
to include

For the index, please include a
one-sentence description of
your article.



The July edition cover showing Yvonnick Chapon nose to nose with his Guide Dog JO

