

February 2026

NEWSLETTER

LATEST NEWS FROM **LIONS ASSISTANCE DOGS**

Welcome to 2026!

In this issue we highlight the achievements of 2025, give you an update on our dogs in training, and share some key events and updates to look out for in 2026!



APRIL 19th

NATIONAL HEARING
DOG DAY

Get excited for our special day of celebration! PG. 10



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A message from our CEO.

As we reflect on 2025, I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved together at Lions Assistance Dogs as a community. 2025 was a year defined by growth, impact and big steps towards our future. We successfully saw the delivery of 41 Assistance Dogs across Australia, the most we have ever delivered in a calendar year. Each placement represents a life-changing partnership offering a recipient newfound independence and security. Out of the 41 Assistance Dogs delivered there were, 25 Hearing Assistance Dogs, 10 Psychiatric Assistance Dogs and 6 Medical Assistance Dogs.

Behind every successful Assistance Dog placement is the journey, and it starts in the Breeding Centre. In 2025, we welcomed 28 puppies into our Puppy Program, through our Breeding Program. We also celebrated 33 accreditations of placed Assistance Dogs. This is a testament to the high standards our team upholds and the extraordinary capability of our Assistance Dogs.

We proudly made steady progress on the expansion of our National Training Centre, undertaking detailed planning and design work as we prepare to enter Phase 1 of the build in 2026. This development will ensure we can meet growing national demand and expand our impact for decades to come. In addition, we embraced an exciting new chapter with our rebrand from Australian Lions Hearing Dogs to Lions Assistance Dogs. This change reflects the variety of support we now provide and positions us strongly for future growth.

None of this would be possible without our staff, volunteers, Lions Clubs, donors and supporters. Thank you for being part of this journey and for helping us transform lives. Stay tuned for an exciting 2026.

Yours in service,
PCC David Horne
Chief Executive Officer

EISIE & Arias LITTERS



Welcome to 2026, we have exciting updates from a brand-new batch of dogs.

Alfie has shown wonderful maturity, out and about in the world. He remains relaxed in public spaces and is loving social time at home, particularly when playing with his older foster brother, Bill the Chihuahua.



Ashwin has had a busy month, enjoying outings to markets, cafés, Bunnings, and the city. He continues to build confidence settling on his mat and is progressing well with obedience.



Quinn enjoyed his first holiday, including beach visits with meeting new people and dogs. His cheerful and adaptable nature has helped him confidently manage change, including farewelling his foster brother as he moved into full-time training.



Milton is developing strong routines through daily walks, outings, and quiet settling during cafés and church services. He is building independence through short periods alone.



Izzy has enjoyed beach swims, camping adventures, and daily training, absolutely loving life. She is now fully toilet trained, comfortable with handling, and progressing well with obedience. As always if you wish to know more, visit the link below to sign up to monthly updates.

<https://lionsassistancedogs.com.au/membership/>

MEET OUR NEWEST RECRUITS!



WEBSTER

IN THE SPOTLIGHT!
is Webster, one of our three Poodles who came to us late 2025. He has grown so much and is loving life in the Puppy Program!



ADDIE

Sponsored and named by
Adelaide High School



AYLA

Sponsored and named by
Peter & Megan



BLUEY

Sponsored and named by
Lions Club of Gawler Inc



KUMA

Sponsored and named by
Lions Club of Whitsunday Inc



MELVIN

Sponsored and named by
Lions Club of Yarrawonga Inc



SUE

Named in honor of
Suzette



WINNIE

Sponsored and named by
Lions Club of Leeuwin Inc



WYLIE

Sponsored and named by
Wyalkatchem District High School



KENNY

Sponsored and named by
Lions Club of Port Kennedy Inc

Accreditations



Sherbet

Gumhaven Kennels

- Sponsored and named by Lions Club of Beachport-Rivioli Bay
- Delivery supported by Lions Club of Westlakes - Seaton Inc
- Fostered by Patricia



Vino

Breeding Program

- Sponsored and named by Lions Club of Barossa Valley Inc
- Delivery supported by Friends & Family
- Fostered by Lenara & Daniel



Freddie

Gumhaven Kennels

- Delivery supported by Lions Club of Warrnambool Inc



Pippa

Breeding Program

- Sponsored and named by Lions Club of Heidelberg Warringal Inc
- Delivery supported by Lions Club of Margaret River Inc
- Fostered by Nadine, Jan & John



Babs

Breeding Program

- Sponsored and named by Jake
- Delivery supported by Friends & Family
- Fostered by Jenny



Benny

Breeding Program

- Sponsored and named by Lions Club of Canberra Belconnen Inc
- Delivery supported by Friends & Family
- Fostered by Jenn

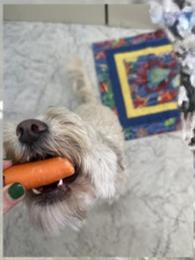


Lions Club of Tamworth, with Hearing Assistance Dog, Shadow.

Did you know?

When an Assistance Dog is offered to a recipient and accepted, Lions Assistance Dogs will contact a local Lions Club who will help in the delivery process. This Lions Club will also provide follow-up visits post placement to support the recipient. If you wish to know more about the success of this program, head to our website.

<https://lionsassistancedogs.com.au/lions-clubs/>



2025 WRAPPED

2025 saw one of our biggest years to date! As the year ended, we got a snapshot into how our future Assistance Dog pups spent the hot summer cooling down and enjoying some much-needed rest time!

Throughout the year we smashed records and set new highs in the history of Lions Assistance Dogs. We saw the rebrand from the original name of Lions Hearing Dogs and we managed to deliver more Assistance Dogs in one calendar year than ever before. We achieved;

- 41 Assistance Dogs delivered
- 33 accreditations
- 6 litters of puppies
- 28 new pups into the Puppy Program

Psychiatric Assistance Dog Program

MEET THE DOGS in Training!



Lilla has been thriving in her BnB foster home and progressing well in training. She has begun low-level indoor outings (such as malls), adapting to new environments, and is responding well in uniform. In the Training Centre, she is improving in her engagement, learning vital commands such as “chin” and “up”, and has mastered pushing an emergency button, a key skill for her future recipient. Lilla’s growth and achievements in her first months of training are promising, and excitement from the team is high for the next stages.

Clive is settling in extremely well at the Training Centre and has been making new friends, including his littermates from Guardian Maple’s litter. This month, his task training and walks in uniform have progressed quite well, helping him stay attentive and professional while out in busier streets like King William Rd, Hahndorf, and Stirling. He also had a successful outing to an Early Learning Centre, interacting calmly with young children, which was a fun experience!

Clive has learnt important skills including pressing an emergency button and ‘two-paw touch,’ which will later help interrupt Anxious behaviours. Overall, Clive’s confidence, engagement, and skill development these past months have been excellent. He continues to impress all of us here at Lions Assistance Dogs and we are so keen to watch him progress.



Tully has had a fantastic month, learning the balance between both fun freewalks and focused jacket-walks. She’s progressing well with indoor public spaces, learning to navigate shops and busy areas while ignoring distractions (which can be hard sometimes). Tully is excelling in Psychiatric Assistance Dog specific tasks, including responding to Anxious behaviours, pushing the emergency button, resting her chin for grounding, and performing the “up” command for comfort. Her drive, focus, and adaptability are outstanding, and she’s building a strong foundation of skills to ensure she’s ready for her recipient’s needs.

Hearing Assistance Dog Program

FAREWELL JOJO

We are thrilled to share that Jojo has been successfully delivered to her new home in sunny Queensland! Marking a very exciting milestone in her journey as an Assistance Dog. Unsurprisingly and happily, Jojo embraced her new environment with confidence, curiosity, and her trademark calm nature, impressing and showing everyone what she is made of!

Since her placement, Jojo has accompanied her recipient to multiple settings, learning about her new home and the fun lifestyle she will adjust to. This includes the supermarket, pet shop, veterinarian, and the local council. In every environment, Jojo demonstrated exceptional focus, attentiveness, and impeccable behaviour, showcasing the solid foundation she developed throughout training with her trainer Ashleigh, who couldn't be prouder!

Jojo's positive attitude, eagerness to please, and adaptability were evident throughout the delivery process. It can always be a stressful time for all parties involved, especially for the dog, but from airport travel to settling calmly at cafés, she handled each new experience with grace, earning plenty of well-deserved treats along the way. Being the first delivery of 2026 and the last of her siblings to be placed, Jojo's journey is especially meaningful. She has finished this chapter on a high note, forming a strong, trusting bond with her recipient from day one. Jojo is a wonderful example of the Hearing Assistance Dog Program, and her impact will be long-lasting. We are incredibly proud of the confident, capable, and gentle dog she has become and thank all our supporters for helping make her journey possible.



Medical Assistance Dog Program

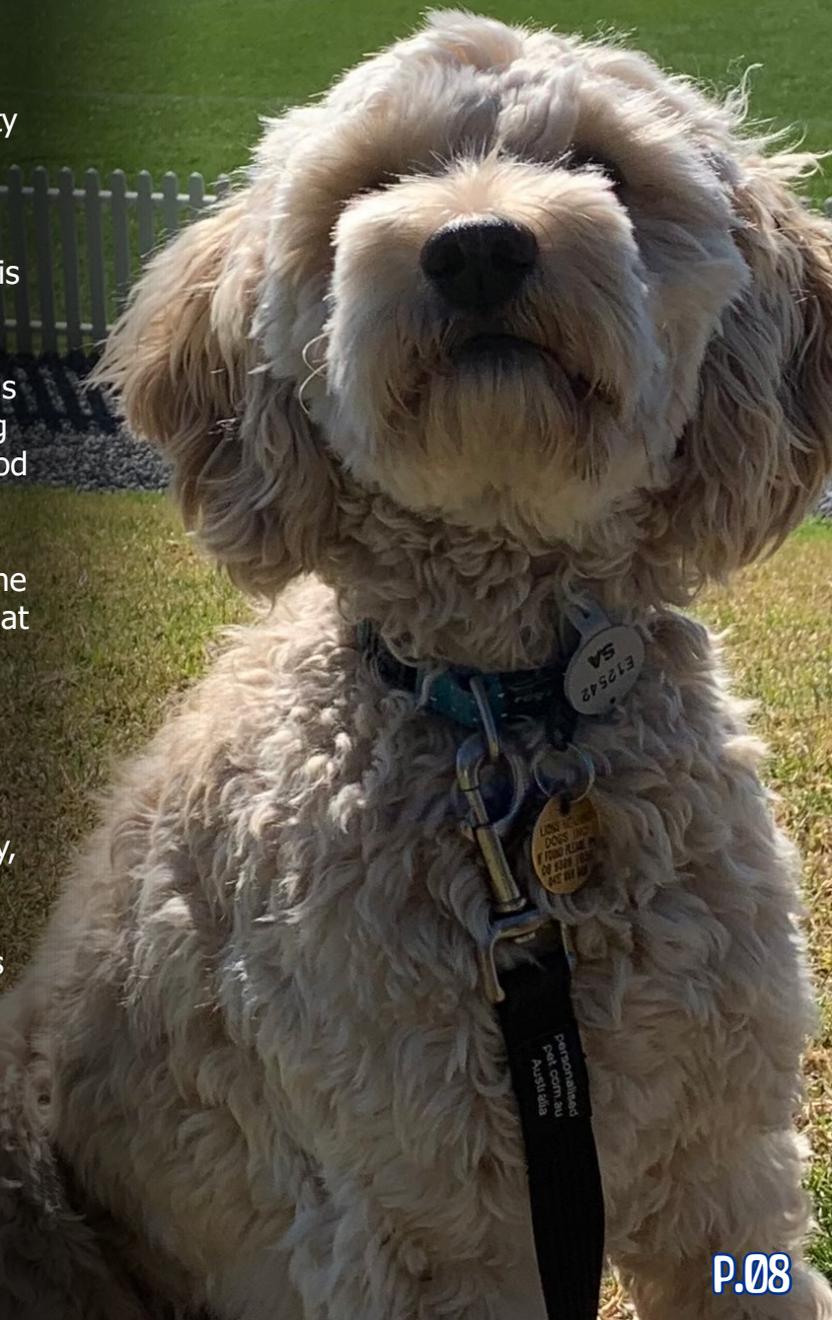
YAKKA ONE YEAR LATER

Yakka continues to thrive as a Diabetic Alert Dog, making a difference in his recipient's life. As a Diabetic Alert Dog, Yakka performs his role with the same enthusiasm every single day. He alerts to changes in blood glucose levels before symptoms are even felt, often before a continuous glucose monitor detects a shift. His ability to do this is outstanding, and provides a layer of safety and confidence for his recipient. We couldn't be prouder!

Over the past 12 months, Yakka's support has extended far beyond his medical alerts. He has become a source of comfort during periods of high anxiety and stress, offering reassurance on these difficult days for his recipient. When anxiety makes leaving the house feel overwhelming, Yakka has been providing the courage for his recipient to step outside of their comfort zone. His presence has transformed everyday life for his recipient.

One particularly powerful moment came when his recipient was home alone over Christmas. During the night, Yakka alerted to his recipient's low blood glucose level episode and retrieved the hypo kit when it was needed most. He remained close, continuing to alert as levels changed, ensuring the safety of his recipient. It was a clear reminder that an Assistance Dog is not just trained to perform tasks, they are a constant, caring companion.

The bond formed over the past year has been amazing. At work, Yakka is focused and dependable. Out of uniform, he is playful, cheeky, and full of personality, bringing laughter and joy. No matter how fun-loving he may be, his recipient's health is always his priority. Yakka has not only given his recipient more independence but has also had a positive effect on family and friends, who have witnessed the confidence and reassurance he brings. One year on, Yakka is doing exceptionally well, a devoted Medical Assistance Dog and a beloved family member, changing lives every single day.





Merch Fire Sale

Out with the old and in with the new!

As 2025 saw the rebrand from Lions Hearing Dogs to Lions Assistance Dogs, we are selling discounted merch with our old branding. Be sure to check out the store and get your hands on these items while stocks last.



\$5

\$10



\$8

www.lionsassistancedogs.com.au/shop/



NATIONAL HEARING DOG DAY

APRIL 19th

Visit our website to learn more and
find out and how you can get involved
www.lionsassistancedogs.com.au

National Hearing Dog Day

was established in 2021 to
celebrate the life changing impact
of Assistance Dogs on the Deaf and
hard-of hearing community. This
special day commemorates the
delivery of our very first Hearing
Assistance Dog, Amber, on April 19,
1982. If you want to get involved:

- Wear a splash of orange
- use #NHDD on social media





Lap the Map

LAP THE MAP WRAP FOR 2025

2025 was another exciting year for Lap the Map. We loved seeing all the photos of activities, fundraisers and Lions Clubs all around Australia participate.

Thank you to all the individuals, Lions Clubs, community groups, schools, retirement villages and of course, the dogs who participated!

- Over 20,000kms traveled
- 47 teams
- 131 participants and fundraisers
- Raised over \$26,000

This also marks our first year with incentive items, including a hat, water bottle and dog treat pouch, achieved as you hit big milestones!

Lap the Map helps us raise funds and awareness of our Diabetic Alert Dog Program. Read more about the life-changing impact on pg 8!



Save the date.

Create your free Will!

March 16th - 30th

Keep an eye on our social media closer to the date for information on how to create your free Will. Visit our website to find out more about how you can leave a gift in your Will.

<https://lionsassistancedogs.com.au/leave-a-lasting-legacy/>



Safewill



Hearing Awareness Week

1st March -
7th March 2026

A week to raise awareness and education on all things relating to hearing health. At Lions Assistance Dogs, our goal is to provide Assistance Dogs that compliment each individuals needs.

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