



Fall 2016 volume 31 number 4

## Graduates On The Go

Independence and Mobility in Action as GDA Graduates Travel with their Guides

When students arrive at GDA, it is with the goal of achieving greater independence, mobility and freedom. Having the assistance and companionship of a guide dog certainly makes the day-to-day and routine activities easier. But for guide dog teams, exploring beyond their typical routes or boundaries that they've established for themselves can be an adventure and give the guide dog user a greater sense of wanting to explore further. Sometimes it's a neighboring city or state; or it might be a destination across the country or on an ocean cruise with multiple ports of call; or the call of the wild and the great outdoors. No matter how near or far, our guide dog teams are out and about and enjoying life.

We asked our graduates to share with us some of their recent travels. On this page and inside this newsletter you will read in our graduates' words and see in their photos, the ways in which many of them showed us they are living life to the fullest with their guide dog by their side.



Mark Hanohano and Coby at Grand Canyon

"Coby and I traveled with friends to the Grand Canyon. Our tour bus broke down and we ended up staying a few hours longer than we had planned and we had a great time exploring the area."

– Mark Hanohano

"My guide dog Otto and I attended a celebration recognizing me for my

10 years of service with Southwest Airlines. The event was held at Gilley's in Dallas, Texas. In addition to his harness, Otto donned a faux tux (complete with French cuffs on his paws) to the event."

– Don Wilson



Don Wilson and Otto attend anniversary celebration

## Taking a 'Paws' to Thank Outgoing GDA President and Welcome New President

As 2016 comes to an end, we ask that you join us in sending best wishes to Dale Hartford, who is retiring after serving seven years as GDA's President. Under his management and oversight there have been many changes and enhancements to the GDA campus as well as the program. His leadership has taken GDA to a new level of excellence.

[Taking a 'Paws' continued on page 2 »](#)



Cari Shields guide dog Dodger and Pluto on a cruise

"Dodger and I recently took a 14 night "Disney cruise" through the Panama Canal. It was fun traveling with all of the characters on the ship and visiting ports like Cozumel, Cartagena Colombia, Puerto Vallarta and Cabo San Lucas. We even demonstrated obedience training, when I put both Dodger and Pluto in a 'down/stay.'"

– Cari Shields

"Pali and I travelled to San Diego this last August. It was our first trip together on our own. One of the days we went to the beach. I have never taken a guide dog to the beach before and it was interesting seeing her reaction. I really feel like we bonded more during the trip and look forward to many more."

– Katrina Stanley



Katrina Stanley and Pali at the beach in San Diego

[Graduates On The Go continued on page 3 »](#)

# A GDA Goodbye Wag Of The Tail To Dedicated Volunteers And Employees

## Millions of Reasons to Thank Steve and Grace Cohan — GDA's Dynamic Duo



Steve and Grace Cohan have been GDA's dynamic fundraising duo for more than 27 years. Steve Cohan got things started in 1989 with the first-ever "Hawgs

for Dogs" motorcycle ride to benefit the school. Soon after, his partner in life became his partner in creating a series of successful fundraising rides across the country. The pair has planned and helped promote hundreds of rides. As volunteers the couple raised more than \$2 million for the school.

Grace joined the GDA Outreach Department as staff in 2005; Steve joined a year later. The couple has spent the past several years traveling from city to city, visiting and educating individuals and businesses about the school and continuing their fundraising efforts. Throughout the years, they have traveled with GDA's annual Harley-Davidson motorcycle, selling raffle tickets and bringing awareness to others about GDA. Please join us in wishing the Cohan's many happy miles of retirement and safe travels always.

## Longtime Class Cook Angie Wellington Hangs up her Chef Coat



For more than 30 years, class cook Angie Wellington has welcomed GDA students to our breakfast, lunch and dinner table. Thousands of meals have been prepared by Wellington and served to hundreds of graduates over the years.

Graduates frequently mention "the food" among the many things they love about their time in class and Wellington loves making the meals that keep them well fed during their time at GDA. Wellington considers each student that comes to GDA a part of her family.

"I feel so blessed to have the biggest family in the world," she said.

When asked what made something taste so good she would always reply, "I make it with extra love." It is that among so many other things that we will miss when she retires.

Please join us in sending Angie our best wishes and thanking her from the bottom of our hearts (and stomachs).

## A Hart-felt Thank You

For the last seven years, Robin Hartford has been the person behind the scenes during her husband Dale's term as GDA President. While her husband's role was more visible, Robin made contributions in several areas that raised funds for the school and its programs. She took on the very important task of overseeing the procurement and inventory of all the merchandise available on the GDA website. She also handled the logistics and management of the annual Las Vegas Charity Banquet — GDA's largest fundraiser every year. And, when needed, she traveled around the country promoting GDA events. Please join us in wishing Robin the best of luck and many happy years of retirement.

### Taking a 'Paws' continued from page 1 »



"Dale consistently increased the school's fundraising totals and, more importantly, grew the number of guide dog teams graduating each year," said IAM International President Robert Martinez, who announced Hartford's retirement in August. "His loyalty and his leadership will not soon be forgotten."

As we say goodbye and thank you to Dale, we welcome Russell Gittlen as the new GDA President.



Gittlen, who most recently served as IAM District 15 New England Area Director and Local 447 Assistant Business Manager, will assume his new duties on Jan. 1, 2017.

Gittlen brings to the school many years of leadership, management and fundraising experience.

He has actively supported GDA for many years. In 2014, Gittlen was honored with the GDA "Gift of Sight" award in recognition of his dedication to the continuing success and future of the school.

Please join us in congratulating these two GDA "top dogs."



“Escort and I traveled to one of my favorite places, Punta De Mita Mexico. Together we explored the ancient fishing village and went sailing in nearby Puerto Vallarta. Escort’s guide work kept me safe navigating the cobblestone and dirt roads while passing many wild chickens and dogs. It was a great bonding vacation.”

– Adam Lawrence



Adam Lawrence and Escort in Mexico



Adam Ohnstad and Hawk in Palos Verdes, Calif.



Liz Francis and Watson with Captain Scott (L) and husband Francis Daniels (R)



Elaine Cowger and Sherpa in Summit County Colorado

“My guide dog Sherpa and I take frequent hikes in the beautiful mountains where I live in Summit County Colorado.”

– Elaine Cowger



Donna Matthews and Sadie at Monticello

“My husband Mel and I have travelled a lot with Sadie in the four years we have had her. One of my favorites was a two-week trip to visit many of the historical locations around Virginia including Monticello, Thomas Jefferson’s home, which we found fascinating.”

– Donna Reed Matthews



Chris and Sharon Sellman and Obi at the Statue of Liberty

“On our summer vacation we traveled to New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC. In New York we visited the 9/11 memorial and One World Trade Center, Empire State Building and Statue of Liberty and many more. We explored the Independence Hall complex and the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. Our trip ended in Washington D.C. where we visited our nation’s Capital and the memorials. Obi traveled on planes, trains, car and bus and by boat. He was a true champion the entire trip.”

– Chris Sellman



James Jay and Archie at Gardens of the World in Thousand Oaks



Terry Klein and Henna at the Grand Canyon



Danny Gonzales and Boris at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles



Bill (Murph) Murphy and Titan at Dinosaur Cafe



Brian Collins and Gibson at the Renaissance Faire with a friend and his daughter



Andrew Hager and Sammy visited the White House

# Making Your List, Checking It Twice

GDA has ideas for thinking outside the (gift) box

Skip the malls and shopping hassle with everyday and easy ideas for giving to your friends and loved ones, while giving to GDA. We also have ways for you to keep the holiday spirit of giving all year long, including online shopping options and grocery loyalty cards that give a percentage to GDA, matching employer gifts and monthly giving.

## GDA's Holiday Fund-a-Need Campaign

— Nov. 29-Dec. 30, 2016

Support GDA's Holiday Fund-a-Need Campaign and help fulfill the wishes of GDA's Puppy, Nursery, Veterinary, Kennel and Student Services Departments.

The campaign runs Nov. 29-Dec. 30. We encourage you to share this information with your family, friends and co-workers and to share the link [www.biddingforgood.com/guidedogsofamerica](http://www.biddingforgood.com/guidedogsofamerica) via social media. (Note: link only active during campaign dates.)

A gift for you... Your donation is a tax deduction, and the end of 2016 is just around the corner.

*Please note: This is NOT an auction; your donation will fund a GDA need.*

## Grocery Store Rewards Cards

We thank all of you who choose to contribute to GDA by shopping at participating grocery stores with your club cards. By registering your cards and designating GDA, a percentage of your total grocery bill is donated to the school every time you shop.



Register or renew (each September) your Ralphs Rewards Card to designate Guide Dogs of America as your charity of choice. To register

your card for the first time or renew, call (800) 443-4438. If you have registered your card previously, Ralphs requires that you renew your registration each September in order to continue to contribute to GDA.



If you have a Food 4 Less Card, you do not need to register or renew the card. If you don't have a card, please

call (818) 833-6438; we will send you a pre-registered card that will ensure a percentage of every purchase you make is donated to GDA.



## Online Shopping

If you are shopping on Amazon, please go through smile.amazon.

com. GDA will receive .5 percent of your total amount purchased all year (on most items). The first time you visit the site, you will be asked what charity you would like to support. Type in **Guide Dogs of America**, and a drop-down menu will appear. Click on the first option, which will be **International Guiding Eyes, Inc.** Every time you shop Amazon in the future, go through smile.amazon.com. The site will remember GDA as your charity of choice. If you are shopping from a different device, you will need to choose GDA the first time you use it. Please share this information with your family, friends and co-workers. Thank you!

## Give to GDA as Your Gift to Family and Friends This Holiday Season.

What do you get the person who has everything? You give in their name. A great gift idea and a very special way to support GDA during the holidays is to make a contribution in the name of your family and/or friends. Your contribution lets those important people on your list know how much you care about the work we do. It also lets them know they are remembered by you in a thoughtful way that makes them a part of giving the gift of independence and mobility to those who are visually impaired. A handwritten card with a special message will be sent to those you designate with your donation. For more information, call (818) 833-6429.

## Matching Gifts

Many companies offer a matching gift program to employees. These programs match, dollar-for-dollar, charitable contributions made by an employee, doubling the donation made to Guide Dogs of America! Ask your employer if it offers a matching gift program.

## Year-Round Giving One Month at a Time

Many of our supporters make monthly donations to GDA using our convenient automatic donation program. At the beginning of each month, we automatically charge your credit card in the amount you specify. Call (818) 833-6429 with questions or to participate.

## CFC Pledge Card

Please designate #11873 on your CFC pledge card. Your CFC contribution helps us breed, raise and train extraordinary guide dogs. These intelligent dogs are provided free of charge and offer trustworthy assistance and companionship to visually impaired men and women as they strive to live their lives to the fullest.

## Tax-deductible, End-of-year Charitable Gift Giving

If you are planning to make a donation to GDA and would like to deduct the charitable contribution on this year's taxes (2016), you'll need to make your gifts by Dec. 31. For more information on end-of-year planning, go to [guidedogsofamerica.org](http://guidedogsofamerica.org), click How to Help, then click on Gift Planning.

## If You Would Like To Lend A Paw...

GDA could not continue to fulfill its mission without your generous support.

For more information about how you can become involved in our mission, please visit the How to Help section of the Guide Dogs of America website at [guidedogsofamerica.org](http://guidedogsofamerica.org). You can also contact us via e-mail at: [mail@guidedogsofamerica.org](mailto:mail@guidedogsofamerica.org) or by phone at (818) 362-5834.



## Puppy Corner

### Why Do Dogs Do That?

Explanations for Common and, Sometimes, Puzzling Canine Behaviors



Most dog owners couldn't imagine life without them, but dogs do have some curious behaviors that "beg" the question, "Why does my dog do that?!" some of the most common curious canine behaviors that leave us scratching our heads or saying, "stop that!" are addressed and explained here.

#### Eat grass

There are two generally accepted answers to this question. Any dog will seek out a natural relief for a gassy or upset stomach, and grass seems to do the trick. When ingested, the grass blades tickle the dog's throat, as well as his stomach lining. This sensation causes the dog to throw up, especially when the grass has been gulped down instead of chewed on. A sick pooch will usually eat grass in big bites and then vomit.

Although dogs don't normally graze on large amounts of grass like cows do, some dogs simply find the grass taste palatable. If a dog likes to graze and is healthy, just make sure the grass he's eating hasn't been treated with chemicals or pesticides, which can be quite harmful.

#### Circle before lying down

Before the days of dog beds and rugs, dogs in the wild had to create their own comfy beds. By circling, the dog would flatten out leaves, grass and stems and feel the area with his paws for sharp objects or uneven spots. Circling is just a sign that the dog is getting ready to get comfy.

#### Wag its tail

Dogs communicate with their tails. Most people believe that a wagging tail means a happy dog but the position of his tail is an indicator of his mood. A low tail curved into a "U" shape with a slow wag, says he's relaxed and content. However, if the dog's tail is high and arched over his back, he is either fascinated or annoyed and a growl may be the only way to tell the difference.

#### Sniff another dog's backside

Dogs have a sense of smell that can be 10,000 to 100,000 times more sensitive than that of a human. By sniffing another dog's hind end, the dog is actually getting a lot of important information. A quick sniff of the rear, and one dog can tell the other's emotional state, gender, diet and whether the dog is healthy or sick — and much more. This is due to the chemicals stored and secreted from the sacs tucked in a dog's rear end.

#### Drink out of the toilet

Dogs seem to enjoy drinking out of the toilet so much more than drinking the perfectly good water in his bowl. To him, the toilet is a never-empty supply of clean, cool water. The constant flushing keeps the water fresh and maximizes its oxygenation. However, it is recommended that the lid be kept closed, due to the potential ingestion of harmful bacteria or poisonous cleaning chemicals.

#### Roll around in smelly stuff

Have you ever caught your dog rolling around in poop? This behavior, while quite disgusting, is also quite common — and very natural. It is believed that the behavior is instinctual, tracing back to the days when their wild ancestors would mask their scent to help them sneak up on their prey. What smells repulsive to humans is like perfume to a dog. Conversely, what smells great to humans doesn't always appeal to a dog. Some theories suggest that dogs engage in this behavior, particularly after baths or when recently groomed, to get rid of an unpleasing (to them) perfume or soap smell.

#### Eat poop

"Coprophagia" is the clinical term used for when a dog eats poop, and there are several possible explanations for why a dog does so. It's not unusual for a dog to eat poop because he is bored. Sometimes, it is a learned behavior they've picked up from other dogs. If the dog has been punished for going in the house, they might eat it to remove the evidence. It's also a good way to get attention. These are all reasons why a dog might be eating poop but, most of the time, it's simply because dogs like the taste of it and it becomes a habit.

#### Kick its hind leg when you scratch it belly

Whether the concentration of scratching or rubbing is on his tummy or side, a dog will usually respond by pumping his leg. This could indicate his enjoyment but, more likely, it's because you've found that "sweet spot" that stimulates the scratch reflex, an involuntary reaction. When you locate this particular spot, you're both causing the itch and scratching it. Sometimes veterinarians can use the spot to identify nerve damage or neurological problems. The belly rub kick also can be compared to the knee-jerk that humans do when the doctor taps just below your knee with a hammer.

#### Tilt its head when you talk to him

The simple answer is that dogs tilt their heads to hear us better. Dogs are well known to have incredible hearing but they sometimes have trouble locating the source of a sound or the direction that it's coming from. Tilting their heads repositions the ears, helps to open the ear canal and allows a dog to better judge distance and position of sounds. As part of their incredible audible abilities, the slight change in sound from different positions of the ears can help a dog pinpoint its source.

# Fall Merchandise & Holiday Gift Ideas

Find holiday gift ideas online at Shop GDA!

Whether buying a gift of something for yourself, you'll find lots of great GDA logo items at Shop GDA. Go to [guidedogsofamerica.org](http://guidedogsofamerica.org), click How to Help, then click on Shop GDA! All prices include shipping and handling. Merchandise is also available for purchase by phone by calling (818) 833-6429 or at GDA.

## 2017 GDA Lapel Pin



2017 GDA Lapel Pin — This year's pin features the Guide Dogs of America logo. The words "Guide Dogs of America" appear above the logo and the year 2017 is below. The pin also features a vibrant green leaf wreath border; Made in the U.S.A., the gold metal pin is 3/4" round.

Price: \$8 (includes shipping and handling).

## 2016 Raffle

To purchase raffle tickets, use the order form on this page or call GDA at (818) 833-6429.



## Quilt Raffle

This year's colorful quilt was created and donated by the Orange County Quilters Guild, which named the quilt "Woof, Woof." Several of the blocks feature a Labrador Retriever design, some of which even include the recognizable yellow jacket that identifies a GDA puppy-in-training.

Dotting the quilt are smaller squares with paw prints and hearts. The quilt measures 65" x 85".

Purchase tickets using the order form on this page and mail it to GDA, postmarked by Dec. 1, 2016. Tickets are \$2 each or six for \$10. Drawing to be held on Dec. 10, 2016. Winner does not need to be present.

## In Memory

With sadness, we note the passing of the following guide dogs and breeders:

**Amelia** — Breeder  
**Autumn** — Breeder  
**Darby** — Class 345  
**Delos** — In-home  
**Eleah** — Breeder  
**Hedda** — Breeder

**Koko** — In-home  
**Kuma** — Class 360.5  
**Lacy** — Breeder  
**Noelani** — Class 360  
**Miles** — In-home

## Congratulations Graduates

Class #394



### Graduates (Puppy Raiser in parentheses):

Front row left to right: Kim Samco and Keeva (*The Prince Family*), Don Wilson and Otto (*Brian and Tina Lockwood*), Denise Martinez and Wafi (*Michelle Ramos*), Daniel Gonzales & Boris (*The Reinhart Family*), Vernice Norris and Picasso (*Judi Paxton*), Cyntia Vivians and Wonder (*Greg and Fiona Hahn*), Katrina Stanley and Pali (*Rick and Melanie Anderson*), Joy Wolf and Adam (*Robert Ruby*), Jeff Hedberg-Thomas and Kaleb (*Karen and Lily Brodie*)

**Instructors:** (back row) left to right: Sean Chiles, Linda Hawes, Mindy Romero, Alejandra Maldonado

**In-home Graduate:** Richard Fiel and Bridget (Steve and Cindy Fuquay)

**Instructor:** Mindy Romero

## FALL 2016 Order Form

Questions? Call (818) 833-6429. \*All Shipping & Handling is included\*

Mail this entire form with your payment.

### Merchandise

☐ 2017 GDA Label Pin — \$8 per pin \$

### Raffle Tickets

☐ 2016 Quilt Raffle — \$2 per ticket or \$10 for 6 \$

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \$

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Credit Card** (check one) ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ AMEX

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ CVC: \_\_\_\_\_

required for credit card purchase

☐ **Check** (make your check payable to **Guide Dogs of America**)

**Mail to:** Guide Dogs of America ATTN: Fall Merchandise Order Form  
 13445 Glenoaks Blvd., Sylmar, CA 91342 **Or use the enclosed envelope.**

# 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Holiday Card Contest

This Year's Holiday Memories,  
Next Year's GDA Holiday Card

Now is the time to start thinking about staging a holiday-themed photo of your dog to submit for our seventh-annual Holiday Card Contest. Say, "Puppy treats!"

## Submission Guidelines:

All photos MUST BE TAKEN IN HIGH RESOLUTION (300+ dpi) and submitted via email as an attachment by Feb. 28, 2017 to [partners@guidedogsofamerica.org](mailto:partners@guidedogsofamerica.org). All photo entries become the property of GDA. Credit for the winning photo will be given.

- Winner will be notified on May 15, 2017 and will be posted on our website
- Please make sure that the email includes your full name, dog's name and your phone number

# Donor Spotlight

Donor's Support of GDA is a Hole in One



Avid golfer Joleen Janssen first became familiar with Guide Dogs of America when she played in a GDA golf tournament. She won the tournament several times, but it's GDA that came out the big winner when Janssen decided to include GDA in her planned giving and become a Partner in Trust.

Janssen has been a donor since 2002, but wanted to do more and ensure that her support of the school would live on.

"I took the GDA brochure to my attorney because I wanted to be sure that the name was absolutely correct," Janssen said. "I think it's a wonderful organization. I have no children so I needed someplace to leave my money when I'm gone. I felt that GDA was a very worthwhile and it's a cause I believe in."

Janssen admitted that they spent more time at the tee, loving and petting the GDA puppies-in-training that greeted them on the course, but that was fine with her. It was that extra time that deepened her understanding of and appreciation for the school and the work it does.

"Over the years, I have explained to many people what the organization is all about and the service GDA provides," Janssen said. "I tell them if you have any faith in dogs at all, I think it's just a perfect place to make a donation or leave your money. Like me, my friends are dog-lovers and they agree with me that it is an excellent cause."

For information about becoming a Partner in Trust, please contact Rhonda Bissell at (818) 833-6432.

## Partners in Trust

The Partners in Trust Society was established by GDA as a way to recognize and honor the generosity of those who have included the school in their planned giving.

By thoughtfully naming GDA in their wills, trusts and life insurance policies, the members of the Partners in Trust Society ensure that their support of GDA will continue for years to come. We are forever grateful to them for remembering GDA in their estate plans — in any amount — and we are honored to be a part of their legacy.

For additional information about how you can leave a future gift to GDA, go to [guidedogsofamerica.org](http://guidedogsofamerica.org), click on How to Help, then click on Gift Planning — or call Rhonda Bissell at (818) 833-6432.

Please note: The names that appear on this list indicate those individuals who have included GDA in their estate plans during this past GDA fiscal year (July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016).

Anonymous (4)  
Ja Arezzi  
Blair Brignall  
Shirley A. Donoho

Jean R. Dressler  
Shannon & Jerry Elliott  
Marsha Sue Fine

Annelies Kischkel  
Brian & Beverly Leahy  
Del McCulloch

Marty Teller  
John Thompson  
Gretchen Welch

We are saddened that these Partners in Trust are no longer with us and we honor their memory here for their gracious act of giving to GDA that will support the school long into the future:

Mary B. Anderson  
Frank Banks  
Matthew L. Behrends  
Melvin Bodek  
Pearl G. Booth  
Maria Grace Brewer

Grace Brubaker  
James M. Cantrell Jr.  
Donald Dailey  
Lynne Gorman  
Mary Leora Hopkins  
Glenda Rae Kershaw

Ruth O. Martinson  
Virginia McCallum  
Doris Mountjoy  
Bettie Neale  
Esther & Seymour Ober  
Leon Paris

Barbara H. Porter  
Bill & Betty Schertle  
Vera Svidensky  
Herbert Weisz





# Partners newsletter

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## A GDA Wag of the Tail in Thanks

As the year comes to an end, Guide Dogs of America would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our contributors, donors and volunteers. Without their generous support, we would not be able to change the lives of those who are visually impaired with the gift of a guide dog.



### Mission Statement

Guide Dogs of America is dedicated to its mission to provide guide dogs and instruction in their use, free of charge, to blind and visually impaired men and women from the United States and Canada so that they may continue to pursue their goals with increased mobility and independence.

## Join Us For The Dedication Of GDA's New Visitor And Education Center

A dedication ceremony for the new Mackie and Phil Singer Visitor and Education Center on the GDA campus will be held on Sunday, December 10 at 11 a.m. The event is open to the public.

The new building will allow us to enhance our visitors' experience by being able to give them a more in-depth look into GDA's history and programs.

Several naming opportunities are still available for areas of the building. Learn more about how your donation can support this exciting new addition to the GDA campus by visiting our website at [guidedogsofamerica.org](http://guidedogsofamerica.org)

### Naming opportunities include:

**GDA Store** — \$10,000

~~Audio/Visual Display~~ — \$10,000  
**NAMED**

**GDA History Wall** — \$15,000

**Break Room** — \$25,000

**Serving Room** — \$25,000

~~Flag Pole~~ — \$25,000 **NAMED**

~~Board Room~~ — \$50,000 **NAMED**

~~Courtyard~~ — \$100,000 **NAMED**

**Apartment** — \$100,000

**Lobby** — \$150,000

**Large Meeting Space** — \$250,000

For more information about other naming opportunities and sponsorship levels, contact Rhonda Bissell at (818) 833-6432.