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SAVE THE DATE!

4th Annual "Partners" Awards Dinner

Saturday, October 3, 2009 is the date of this year's "Partners" Awards Dinner. The dinner will be held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, CA. The proceeds from this year's event will go directly toward updating and renovating GDA's Veterinary Care and Surgery Center (Canine Health Center).

Tickets also are being sold for an "all cash" prize raffle and can be purchased in advance or the night of the event. Grand prize - \$2,000; 2nd prize - \$1,000; and 3rd prize - \$500. Tickets are \$10 each and winner need not be present.

Sponsorship opportunities ranging from \$500 to \$30,000 also are available. For information, contact Debbie Sands at (818) 833-6433.



NOW SHOWING ON THE GDA WEB SITE

Two new videos created to introduce viewers to GDA's program and our very special guide dogs are now showing on the GDA web site (www.guidedogsofamerica.org). "Just Like Any Other Day," is shown at meetings, visits, and events across the country. Younger audiences will be entertained while learning about our school as they watch, "A Walk in the Park." This video was created for our volunteer speakers to show during their presentations to school children.

NEW EMPLOYEES

Please join us in welcoming a new employee.

Dixie Gadapee – Kennel Manager

IN MEMORY

It is with sadness that we note the loss of a member of our GDA family:

Marc Alpern — Class 355

With sadness we also note the passing of the following guide dogs for their dedication to ensuring the safety and independence of their partners:

Casino — Class #342	Kobi — In-home training
Dreamer — Class #343	Nova — Class #324
Gabby — Class #332	Shannon — Class #331
Joe — Class #316	Tonic — Class #333
Kepler — Class #324	

10 DAYS UNDER BLINDFOLD IS AN 'EYE OPENING' EXPERIENCE FOR GDA APPRENTICES

Two Apprentices Become Class Members on Their Way to Becoming Licensed Guide Dog Instructors



Tiffany Andrews and Joanna Wilkinson

One minute, Joanna Wilkinson and Tiffany Andrews had perfect vision; the next minute, their world went pitch dark and stayed that way for the next 10 days. Both are apprentices at GDA and are six months into their three-year program to become licensed guide dog instructors. As part of that training the pair spent 10 days under blindfold as members of Class #361. During those 10 days the blindfolds never came off – not to sleep, shower, or eat.

This phase of their training puts the apprentices into a temporary situation of life without sight. The

experience serves to give them a better understanding of the everyday challenges their blind classmates encounter. The week before joining the class, both admitted they were nervous and filled with anticipation.

"I am both nervous and excited. Ten days is a long time to have something that drastic change in your life," said Tiffany before going under blindfold. "I am excited for the experience and the effect it will have on my life. I know it will make me a better instructor."

Similarly, Joanna approached the 10-day experience with a mix of fear and nerves. "I'm really concerned that I will get frustrated with everyday things like eating and dressing. I've done a few things in preparation like showering with my eyes closed and finding my clothes, but there is only so much you can do to prepare for something like this," she said.

"The first night I spent ten minutes putting on my pajamas," said Joanna. "I couldn't tell if my pajamas were backwards or inside out – it just felt wrong to me so I kept taking them off and putting them back on again."

"Eye Opening" continued on page 3 >

VET'S CORNER

HOW TO AVOID HEATSTROKE During the Dog Days of Summer

Contrary to what most people believe, dogs overheat more quickly than humans. They wear their fur coat all year long and they do not pant. They cool their bodies by panting, or blowing out heat, which is much less effective than sweating. Even if you are comfortable, your dog may be too hot!

On a hot day a dog must take in more air to keep its temperature constant. Heat exhaustion most frequently occurs while the dog is confined, whether it is in a car, crate, or doghouse. Animals locked inside a car, even for just a few minutes, are at extreme risk of heatstroke – even with the car windows open.

Prevention

The guidelines below offer important information about how to prevent your dog from heatstroke:

- Never leave your dog in a parked car. On an 80° day, temperatures in a parked car can reach 120° in as little as ten minutes, especially if the car is in the sun.
- Limit your dog's physical activity to the evening or early morning, while the day is cool.

"Vet's Corner" continued on page 3 >

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.

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A PUPPY RAISER WHEN...

It's not just the puppy-in-training at the end of the leash wearing a bright yellow GDA jacket that identifies a very special breed of volunteers known as our Puppy Raisers. It's the subtle changes in their behavior – what they wear, where they go, and how they get there. And it's what they carry in their pockets, purses, and cars, as well as how they “furnish” their homes that are all “tell tail” signs that a puppy-in-training has become a part of their lives, homes, and hearts.

We wanted our Puppy Raisers to share their thoughts about what raising a puppy-in-training has caused them to consider that they wouldn't have before – whether it's their first puppy or if they've raised several. Included here are many of the funny and heartwarming responses we received from some of our Puppy Raisers that completed the following statement: You know you're a Puppy Raiser when...



“...you dig around in your purse for your cell phone and in the process come across a half eaten rawhide, a small squeaky toy, a few loose pieces of kibble, and your Puppy Raiser name tag, but no cell phone!”

“...you get up from the restaurant table and tell your friends, ‘Excuse me, I need to GET BUSY.’”

“...you plan your wardrobe around the color of hair/fur your dog sheds.”

“...you plan more play dates for your puppy than for your children.”

“...you give up your Saturday morning golf game with the guys to go to a training class with a puppy that thinks it is a family reunion and therefore play time.”

“...you look for the most interesting challenges for your puppy whenever you are out in the community (whether or not the puppy is with you).”

“...you recommend restaurants and stores to friends based on whether the puppy was welcome there or not.”

“...you turn in your puppy for formal training (just when they become the perfect dog) and pick up an 8-week-old puppy and start all over again.”

“...you never leave the house without busy bags, pressed rawhide, and heavy-duty paper towels in a Ziploc.”

“...you trade in your name brands for clothing with paw prints.”

“...you take a plane, train, or bus ride with no destination because it's good training for the puppy.”

“...it takes you 45 minutes to get milk, eggs, and orange juice at the grocery store, but that's okay because you knew it would.”

“...every door in your house has a puppy gate.”

“...your child reaches for the cookie jar and you firmly say, ‘LEAVE IT!’”

“...you go somewhere without your puppy and people notice you don't have a dog in tow!”

“...your puppy somehow gets more sleep than you do.”

“...you hear over and over, ‘How can you give them up?’”

“...you go to the monthly training meeting instead of the Dodgers game.”

And you really know you're a Puppy Raiser when...

“...your heart is breaking with so much love spilling out all over, and you look in your puppy's eyes at graduation that tell you, ‘I want to work. I want to help this person live a full life. I know you want me to do this because this is why you raised me. I know you will love me until forever.’”

“Vet's Corner” continued from page 1...

- For outside dogs provide shade, ventilation, a wading pool, and cool drinking water. Keep in mind that shade moves as the sun moves.
- Make sure water containers are large enough to supply water at all times and secure so they cannot be turned over.
- Clip heavy coated dogs to a one-inch length. Leave one inch for insulation and protection against sunburn.
- Allow dogs unaccustomed to warm weather several days to acclimate.



Warning Signs

During warmer weather, if your dog shows any of these symptoms they could be signs of heatstroke:

- excessive panting and salivation
- bright red tongue
- vomiting
- staggering
- diarrhea

First Aid

Call the veterinarian if you notice your dog showing symptoms of heatstroke and take these steps to begin cooling your dog as you get him ready to be transported to the vet's office.

- Take the dog to shade and soak him with cool water (not cold water). You also can use fans, take him to an air conditioned room, or apply ice packs to the areas underneath the front legs and to the groin area for rapid blood cooling.
- Give your dog enough water to wet his mouth and throat, but do not allow your dog to drink copious amounts of water.
- Do not cover your dog, even with a cold towel. This will prevent the heat from escaping.
- Do not place the dog in his crate. Keep him with you with windows down and air conditioning on high to allow evaporation, which will aid in the cooling process.

Knowing how to beat the heat during the warmer weather will help you and your dog to make the most of the long, lazy days of summer and avoid an unplanned “summer trip” to the veterinarian.

“Eye Opening” continued from page 1...

Tiffany had problems finding her shampoo in the shower, but that was nothing compared to the dizziness and nausea she experienced the first week. “We do blindfold testing on the guide dogs in training so I knew that I would become dizzy and disoriented under blindfold,” said Tiffany. “That first week I was sick the entire time, but I eventually adjusted. The students were so great. They would ask me everyday how I was feeling.”

During class it was the blind students that became the teachers to these two instructors in training. “The students started sharing some of their helpful hints with us and one of them tried to teach us some Braille,” offered Tiffany. Added Joanna, “One of the men had us trace the lettering on his baseball cap and asked us if we could figure out what it said.”

Throughout their 10 days of class the two women were treated just like they were students. They participated in all of the activities students experience during their 28 days on the GDA campus. They received their guide dogs on the fourth day of class, ate meals together, went on training routes together, and listened to lectures presented by the licensed instructors.

For Joanna, who has always had difficulty asking for help, the experience was particularly eye-opening. “I am a very independent person; suddenly I needed help with everything. It was hard to ask for help,” she admitted. “It took me three or four days to ask one of the trainers where the water was located on the table so I went without. It took me a while to understand that it is okay to ask for assistance; everyone asks.”

The almost-immediate connection she had with the students was something Tiffany hadn't anticipated. “They were all great. So caring. So helpful. We became one big family. It was unbelievable how everyone connected.”

Even though the women felt comfortable with their

classmates, there were times when both felt lonely and isolated. “My guide dog was great. She was fun and wiggly with an amazing personality,” enthused Tiffany. “I needed someone who would help me last the entire 10 days and remind me why I was doing this. She was exactly what I needed.”

Joanna struggled some days more than others. Her guide dog gave her his undivided attention and laid his head in her lap, which helped her when she felt alone. “In just 10 days I was so lonely. The first two days it was something exciting and new. On days four and five I thought to myself, ‘I'm done.’ But then I started doing things on time and on schedule and I thought, ‘I can do this,’” she said.

And both of them did complete the 10 days; leaving class with a greater understanding and insight for the blind students they serve.

“We went to meet with the students about 30 minutes after we took off the blindfolds and I started crying. It hit me suddenly how much these people meant to me. How much they cared about me, and how much they had come to mean to me. I loved the students and I could not have asked for a better group of people to be with. They were very supportive,” said Joanna.

Echoing Joanna's feelings, Tiffany added: “I learned so much from these students. I tried to tell them right after we took off the blindfolds, but it was too emotional. I wanted to tell them how much they helped me, how much they taught me, and how much they made me laugh. I don't fully understand what it means to be blind, but I have much more insight into what they go through personally and I will be a better instructor because of this experience.”

The experience was emotional and at times frustrating, but both women said they would do it again. “I would do it in a heartbeat,” said Tiffany. 🐾

GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA HAS BIG DREAMS FOR NEW VETERINARY CARE AND SURGERY CENTER

We Need Your Help to Make Our Dream Come True!



vaccinations, and blood work. However, due to the limitations of the facility and the equipment, we can only accommodate a small percentage of the total number of procedures and health checks performed on our dogs each year. As a result, we must contract with outside veterinarians at a cost that is dramatically higher than if the dogs were treated at the school. But with your support that would change...significantly. The chart below clearly illustrates the substantial savings to GDA.

As you can see, keeping these services in-house would significantly decrease our annual veterinary costs. As an added benefit, the new technology would provide an improved and centralized system for keeping detailed medical records to track the health and wellness of all of our puppies-in-training as well as many of our working guide dogs.

Most notable is that the planned updating and renovation of the Veterinary Care and Surgery Center will pay for itself in just one year.

We know you love your pets as much as we love our puppies-in-training and our incredible guide dogs. Your support would mean so much to them and help to realize the dreams of so many. Please use the enclosed reply envelope to help make our dreams come true!

"Surgery Center" continued on page 5 >

At Guide Dogs of America (GDA) we are about making dreams come true. For the blind men and women who come to our school we make their dreams of living a life of greater independence and mobility come true. And, at GDA, we have big dreams, too!

With more than 250 puppies-in-training at any given time and hundreds of working guide dogs, veterinary care is GDA's biggest expense. Just like everyone else these days, we are re-evaluating our expenses and looking for ways to save money – not just today, but well into the school's future. Investing now in updating and renovating our Veterinary Care and Surgery Center presents a tremendous opportunity for the school to save hundreds of thousands of dollars in veterinary expenses annually and to provide state-of-the-art treatment.

GDA currently provides routine health procedures, including X-rays, spays/neuters, general health exams,

Veterinary Service	Service Provided by Contracted Veterinarian	Service Provided by GDA	Savings	Number of Procedures Annually	Annual Savings
Spay	\$500	\$50	\$450	50	\$22,500
Neuter	\$300	\$50	\$250	56	\$14,000
Vaccinations	\$80	\$4	\$76	600	\$45,600
Ear Infection	\$130	\$22	\$108	300	\$32,400
Blood Work	\$250 (includes visit and lab cost)	\$25	\$225	156	\$35,100
Intestinal Track Check	\$80	\$9	\$71	520	\$36,920
X-rays	\$200	\$20	\$180	104	\$18,720

TOTAL ANNUAL SAVINGS

\$205,240

"Surgery Center" continued from page 4...

Where Your Donation Will Go

Highlights of the Planned Remodel and Upgrade of the Veterinary Care and Surgery Center:

Digital X-Ray: Strong dogs need to have strong bones. As standard procedure, all of our puppies have hip and elbow X-rays between 9 and 18 months of age. A digital X-ray machine also will be a valuable piece of equipment in the diagnosis and treatment of any intestinal issues that may exist. This piece of state-of-the-art equipment will not only receive a lot of use, it will save thousands of dollars. If another opinion is needed on any X-ray, these images can be e-mailed easily to an outside veterinarian for quicker diagnostics and a treatment plan that will ensure needed treatments are administered in the shortest time possible.

Laboratory: Bladder and kidney infections are among the most common problems for dogs. Both can only be accurately diagnosed by taking blood and urine samples. New blood chemistry machines and a urinalysis machine would be included



in the renovation. Blood chemistry results would be available in just 15 minutes and the necessary treatment dispensed from the school's pharmacy.

Surgical Suite: An upgraded surgical suite will give GDA the ability to perform more spays and neuters as well as a number of other procedures on our puppies-in-training and working guide dogs. Also included in the remodel will be IV and anesthesia machines, monitoring equipment, and a separate room with individual areas for the recovering dogs. A new surgical table, new lighting, and surgical instruments and packs would also be added. 🐾

AMERICAN IDOL-EYES

Top ten American Idol (AI) Scott MacIntyre, who is legally blind, was surprised by AI judge Paula Abdul with a visit to GDA. The outing introduced MacIntyre to what it might be like to walk with a guide dog.



Scott MacIntyre goes for a test walk.

He did test walks with two of GDA's future guide dogs and is pictured here with one of the dogs and GDA instructor Patty Elizondo. If and when MacIntyre decides he is ready for a guide dog, he will need to complete the application process and the required 28-day training program.

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!

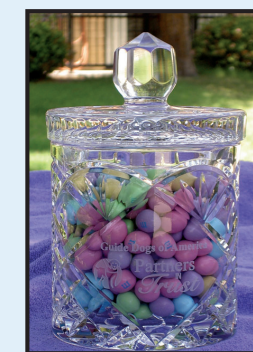


Class #361

GRADUATES from LEFT to RIGHT (Puppy Raisers in parenthesis) Deborah Rogosin & Wink (The Stultz Family), Lyn Saunders & Jamaica (Barbara Blake), Steven Hazzard & Fahrenheit (Sheila Owen-Hazard), Tonya Ledbetter & Charlotte (Emily Guske), Robert Sweetman & A.J. (Kristie Bret-Harte), Maria Rivera & Circe (The Muir Family), Shannon McGowen & Avalon (John & Hope Avery), Nanlyn Bearden & Eden (The Loveman-Sherer Family)

INSTRUCTORS standing L to R: Linda Hawes, Dave Ponce, Annmarie Esposito

Partners in Trust



Just as blind men and women partner with GDA's remarkable dogs for additional independence and mobility, generous friends and supporters partner with GDA to help us carry out and maintain our mission. Become a member of the Partners in Trust Society by naming GDA in your will or trust and receive a beautiful, crystal biscuit jar. Please contact Rhonda Bissell at (818) 833-6432 for more information.

OWN YOUR OWN 2009 "HAWG" AND SUPPORT OUR DOGS – ANNUAL BIKE RAFFLE

Customized Harley-Davidson FLHX Street Glide

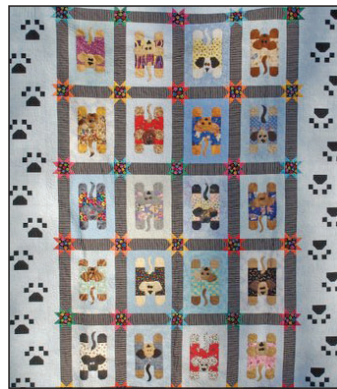


There will be no mistaking where your loyalty lies when you ride up on this one-of-a-kind customized GDA Harley-Davidson FLHX Street Glide. The vibrant GDA blue and black bike was custom painted by Donnie Smith and features a stunning custom-painted collage of three breeds – Labrador Retriever, Golden Retriever, and German Shepherd on the ferring. On the gas tank is an eye-catching rendering of the GDA logo stylized with added wings and our trademark "Hawgs for Dogs." For more information and photos visit www.guidedogsofamerica.org.

Tickets are \$5 each or five tickets for \$20. Complete and return the order form on this page (postmarked by Nov. 1, 2009) to purchase tickets. Tickets can also be purchased at GDA or from our secure web site (www.guidedogsofamerica.org) through Nov. 15, 2009. The winning ticket will be drawn on Nov. 21, 2009 at the Guide Dogs of America Annual Banquet in Las Vegas. (Winner need not be present to claim prize.)

PATCHWORK OF PUPPIES 2009 QUILT RAFFLE

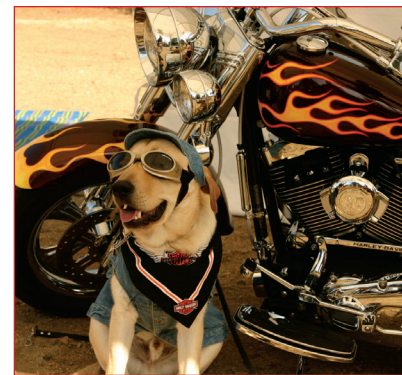
A beautiful hand-made, patchwork quilt has been donated to GDA by the Santa Clarita Valley Quilt Guild for our annual fundraising raffle. Every square is a work of art. The eye-catching quilt measures 93" X 104" and features playful puppies in every square. The quilt is accented with a paw print border.



Purchase tickets using the order form on this page and mailing it to GDA postmarked by Dec. 1, 2009. The cost per ticket is \$2.00 or \$10.00 for a book of six tickets. The drawing will be held at the GDA December Puppy Raiser meeting on Dec. 12, 2009. Winner does not need to be present. For more information contact GAG Granet at (818) 833-6447.



HUNDREDS GO CRUISIN' ON THE 6TH ANNUAL RIDE FOR GUIDES



More than 500 riders on over 400 motorcycles traveled the 100-mile route through the scenic Angeles Crest Highway on the 6th Annual GDA "Ride for Guides." Every year the ride has broken the previous year's fundraising total. This ride was no exception thanks to our hundreds of riders – many of whom have participated every year – and the generosity of our sponsors. Along the route, which began and ended at GDA, riders were met by several puppies-in-training, Puppy Raisers, GDA volunteers, and several GDA graduates. Following the ride, a delicious BBQ lunch was served, and several lucky winners took home raffle prizes that had been generously donated by companies and individuals. 🐾



GDA MERCHANDISE

Don't forget to visit GDA's Web Shop. We have several new items. Plus, shipping & handling is free with most purchases! Click on the link from the GDA web site (www.guidedogsofamerica.org) to shop. Here are just a few of the many items available for purchase to show your support of Guide Dogs of America.

2009 GDA Holiday Cards – Come and get 'em!



Three adorable "haute" dogs in chef's hats have cooked up a special greeting for you to share with friends and family this holiday season. There are 15 (5" x 7") cards with envelopes in each pack. Cost is \$15 plus shipping & handling (\$4.95 for 1-3 packs; 4+ packs call GDA for rates).

Inside message: The season for loving others

Mouse Pads

For the mouse in your house! Computer mouse pads featuring the dog breeds listed on the order form. Designs include three generation collage (12 breeds), single and double images (six breeds), and three playful designs: Peeping Puppies, Peeping Toms (kittens), and Heart's Desire (horses). Made in the USA, the mouse pads are permanently dyed and fade resistant. Mouse pads measure 9" x 8" and are \$12 each (price includes shipping and handling).



MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM

Questions? Call (818) 833-6429.

2009 GDA Holiday Cards	\$15 per box (15 cards)
Quantity of box(es)	Subtotal \$
Shipping & Handling	\$
Mouse Pads FREE SHIPPING & HANDLING	\$12.00 per mousepad
Indicate quantities next to breed(s)	

Breeds available (3 Generation Style):

- Dachshund Black Labrador Yellow Labrador Black Labrador
 Boxer German Shepherd Golden Retriever Boston Terrier
 Chihuahua West Highland Terrier Yorkshire Terrier Beagle

Other breeds available (single dog image or double dog image):

- Corgi Chocolate Labrador Cocker Spaniel Bulldog
 Bichon Sheltie "Peeping Puppies"
 "Heart's Desire" (horses) "Peeping Toms" (kittens)

Total quantity of mousepad(s)	Subtotal \$
TOTAL ENCLOSED \$	

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
 Phone _____

Credit Card (check one) VISA MasterCard Discover

Expiration Date: ____/____/____

Card Number: _____

Signature: (required for credit card purchase) _____

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

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

RAFFLE TICKETS Order Form

Questions? Call (818) 833-6429.

Mail this entire form with your payment. Please note the deadline dates for the raffle ticket purchases to ensure your eligibility.

QUILT RAFFLE

To be eligible entry must be postmarked by December 1, 2009.

Ticket Price: 1 ticket for \$2.00 or 6 tickets for \$10.00. QTY \$

CUSTOMIZED HARLEY-DAVIDSON FLHX STREET GLIDE

To be eligible entry must be postmarked by November 1, 2009.

Ticket Price: 1 ticket for \$5.00 or 5 tickets for \$20.00. QTY \$

TOTAL ENCLOSED \$

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Credit Card (check one) VISA MasterCard Discover

Expiration Date: ____/____/____

Card Number: _____

Signature: (required for credit card purchase) _____

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

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



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