



GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA

Partners

VOLUME 19

NUMBER 1

SPRING 2004

A Day In The Life Of A GDA Kennel Technician

At Guide Dogs of America, we house nearly 100 dogs. Some are being trained, others are guide dogs and puppies-in-training who are being boarded while their owners and foster families are away, and still others are breeding dogs. All must be cared for, fed, cleaned, and exercised. The day-to-day care of all these dogs is lovingly provided by our kennel technicians. To give you an idea of how we care for our dogs, let's follow the "kennel techs" for a day.

8:30 AM: The seven kennel techs arrive to some very rambunctious, happy and noisy dogs. Dona Carruth and the other kennel techs let them out to their outdoor runs. Dona has been at GDA for nearly 14 years. Ironically, when she first found out about GDA, she wasn't looking for a job. Glancing through the paper one morning she was intrigued by our ad for a kennel tech. She applied and won the job.

"Over the years, the dogs have kept me here. They're just so wonderful. It's fascinating to see the different personalities. They're all individuals. I've also raised six GDA dogs at home and I appreciate that these dogs have a purpose. I see how much they mean to our students."

Dona will be leaving GDA this spring to retire to Georgia with her husband, but she'll miss her furry friends. And we'll miss her.

On this morning, as on all mornings, she and the other technicians scoop out, disinfect, and rinse down the indoor kennels before letting the dogs back in and beginning the same process on the outdoor runs. Some dogs need medication, while some of them need a little patting and playing. Loving the dogs is Dona's favorite part of the job.

10:00 AM: After being back outside for a while, the dogs are let in for feeding. The dogs know what time it is long before the clock strikes 10, of course, and they're all barking, "Me first!"

Angela Rice, Lead Kennel Technician, oversees all the feeding and care of the dogs. She joined us in 1999, after helping her mother raise a puppy for GDA. Angela finds that she really gets to know the personality of the dogs when she deals with them on a daily basis, especially the dogs in guide dog training.

"When you see them at graduation, and hear what the students have to say about having a guide dog, it just gets to me. I cry every time. I love this job. I can't imagine ever working anywhere else."

Before lunch, Angela and the other kennel techs give baths, and within a few moments, there are sopping Labradors, Golden Retrievers and German Shepherds in need of drying. Dogs who aren't getting a bath are usually out walking and running at this time of day. It's a favorite time of day for our dogs and our kennel techs.



Kennel Technicians:
Front row (left to right) –
Angela Rice, Louise Grim,
Dona Carruth
Back row (left to right) –
Chris Medina, Larry Borbon,
Chris Colegrove





Following in Decker's Pawprints continued from page 1

12:00 NOON: Afternoons are a mix of rest time and play time. Chris Colegrove, a kennel tech who has been at GDA for almost four years, says his favorite part of the day is when they take a group of dogs and let them run in our fenced-in "community area." He loves to watch them play and let loose.



Chris first learned of GDA when his parents took him to a GDA Open House. He had been working at an animal hospital and was very impressed with what our dogs could do. He noticed a couple of his ex-co-workers from the hospital at GDA and he

asked them about working here. It wasn't long before he applied and was hired and he's never regretted it for a moment.

"It's great to see the dogs working, and then get to see them playing. No two dogs are alike, and that means that no two days here are ever alike. It's a great place to work!"

3:00 PM: It's time to start winding down the day. Our dogs in training get fed just once a day in the morning, but some of our boarders are used to two meals a day, so they get their second meal in the afternoon. Louise Grim, who has been here for three years, says she loves all the dogs, but she definitely has her favorites.

"I can't help it. Some of them just get to me. Usually, it's big, rambunctious male Labradors, but recently, I just fell in love with one of the female Labs. While she was here, I just felt like she was my dog."

Louise also spends time with puppy raisers when they come in and she enjoys that. *"I like helping them with problems and getting to know them. It always feels like a family, here. I love it. I can't imagine working anywhere else."*

4:00 PM: The kennels are cleaned and disinfected again, as the kennel techs wrap up another day. The dogs eventually quiet down for the night knowing that their friends, the kennel techs, will be back first thing in the morning to start all over again.

Cleaning up after 100 dogs day after day may not seem like most people's idea of a great job. But there is the benefit of being able to work with, play with, and care for some very smart and lovable dogs.

And there are great satisfactions. Louise says, *"I want the partners of our dogs, and the Puppy Raisers to know how much we care for their dogs. And I want the supporters of GDA to know that they make an enormous difference. I see these dogs every day, and I see what they can do."*

Maybe that's why nearly all our kennel techs say they can't imagine working anywhere else. All of us here, especially those of us with a wagging tail, greatly appreciate their hard work and love. 🐾



PARTNERS NEWSLETTER

Published by:
GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA

13445 Glenoaks Blvd.
Sylmar, CA 91342
818/362-5834
818/362-6870 fax

EMAIL:
mail@guidedogsofamerica.org

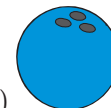
WEBSITE:
www.guidedogsofamerica.org

EDITOR:
Jay A. Bormann

CONTRIBUTORS:
Lorri Bernson
Rhonda Bissell
Louise Henderson
Andi Krusoe
Debbie Sands

Pinning Down The Date For Our Annual Bowl-A-Thon

If you can spare a Sunday afternoon in October for a great time bowling and raising money for GDA, then pin this date on your calendar, October 17th. Sign-in at Canoga Park Bowl (20122 Vanowen St., Canoga Park, CA) will be at 11:00 AM and bowling starts at noon. The cost is \$35 per person, which includes three games, shoes, lunch, and a free raffle ticket. Or come just for lunch and the raffle for \$15.



No matter what your skill level, you'll have a ball and help us strike fundraising gold for GDA. We're pinning our hopes on seeing you there! 🐾





GDA Dogs To The Rescue

When a GDA dog isn't suited to be a guide dog, that doesn't necessarily mean the end of its career. Our dogs are so well bred and trained, and such intelligent, loyal friends, that they are often suited to other working dog careers. We're very proud of the following GDA "career change" dogs, all of whom prove they are man's best friend by saving lives as search and rescue dogs:

- **Mark** (Marcus), paired with Steve Pendergrass, Advanced Search and Rescue for the Kern County, CA Fire Department.
- **Doc** (Modoc), paired with Carrie Hinger, Urban Search and Rescue and Disaster Search, Los Angeles, CA.
- **Mocha**, paired with John Thomas, Advanced Search and Rescue, Murrieta, CA Fire Department.
- **Harry**, paired with Russel Tao, Advanced Search and Rescue, Montebello, CA Fire Department.
- **Hopi**, paired with Mike Taul, Search and Rescue, Marin County, CA Fire Department.
- **Heidi**, paired with Scott Racow, Basic Search and Rescue, Boca Raton, FL Fire Department.
- **Hobbes**, paired with Mike Conners, Search and Rescue, Coral Gables, FL Fire and Rescue.
- **Higgins** (J.D.), paired with Anthony Bizzaro, in training, Bellbrook, OH Fire Department.
- **Kelly**, paired with Michael Mulcahy, in training, Washington, DC, U.S. Capitol Police.
- **Trapper, Ivan, and Fresca** in training, not yet paired. 🐾



Our Annual Open House: Hats Off To GDA!!

June 12, 2004

11:00 AM-4:00 PM

Be sure to wear the most outrageous hat you own (or invent a new one) to this year's Open House celebration of our wonderful dogs. Our theme this year is **Hats Off to GDA**, and we're hoping to see some crazy examples of head coverings.

We're sure the hats will be entertaining, and there'll be lots of other events and activities to make this a fun day for all ages. We'll be holding our annual Puppy Trials, where puppies-in-training get to show their promise by maneuvering obstacles and avoiding distractions. There will also a guide dog demonstration at mid-day, a Silent Auction with everything from pet supplies to entertainment packages, and enough good food to feed the whole family. And puppies, puppies everywhere!

Admission to the Open House is FREE, but there are charges for food. Gates open at 11:00 AM and close at 4:00 PM. Arrive promptly for the best events, which conclude at 3:00 PM. GDA dogs are welcome but please, no family pets.

And we hope you'll spend a lot at our Silent Auction which concludes at 2:00 PM to raise money for GDA. Donations to our Silent Auction are greatly appreciated. You can bring your new items, collectibles, and gift certificates to GDA by May 7th or contact Cherry Teter at (818) 342-4952 for more information. 🐾

Permanent Puppy Prints

When GDA Puppy Raiser Karen Dillis wants to make a permanent memento of the babies in her life, both two-footed and four-footed, she imprints their feet in cement to make attractive garden stepping stones. Her fellow Puppy Raisers in the San Luis Obispo Puppy Raiser Group saw them and an idea was born. The Group, led by Area Leader Teri Dillingham, organized a **Paw Print Craft Day**. Karen and her husband and their pup Astro hosted the event, and made garden stone "memory prints" of all the puppies in the group. Karen says, "They are such a heart-warming reminder of how quickly our 'children' grow." 🐾



First Available at Open House!

GDA COOK BOOK

recipes from gourmet graduates, puppy raisers and friends!





GRADUATE GUIDE LINES

Lighting The Way To Friendship And Gratitude



Elizabeth with
Pirate.

Elizabeth Conejo Daniels remembers exactly how she began selling her home crafted candles for GDA. *"In 2001, I had the privilege and great pleasure of training at Guide Dogs of America with my fourth guide, **Pirate**. He's an intelligent, affectionate, (handsome, too) and hard-working Black Labrador with an adventurous spirit and a goofy sense of humor. After graduating, I felt a strong desire and obligation to somehow give something back to GDA for everything they've given and done for me."*

Elizabeth is a full-time Spanish-English translator, but she also has a thriving hobby of

making candles for friends and relatives. Since her candles symbolize light, friendship and hope, it seemed to her a natural to sell them for GDA. That's why, for the last two years, you can find Elizabeth, Pirate and her husband Francis at every graduation, selling their unique and beautiful candles. All proceeds after expenses go to GDA, so the next time you attend a GDA graduation, check out Elizabeth's table and you'll be sure to find a symbol of light and friendship to take home.

Staying In Touch With Our Graduates

Because communication between GDA and our graduates is so important, we are trying to build a list of all GDA graduates who have email addresses. Graduates should send their name, email address, graduation class number, and dog's name to Lorri Bernson at LMBERNISON@guidedogsofamerica.org. 🐾

Your Chance To Get Involved: The Guide Dogs Of America Foundation

As the new President of the Guide Dogs of America Foundation, I want to extend a warm welcome to all who might want to join us in this important volunteer effort to support GDA. Whatever your particular talents or skills, we likely have a need you can match. And your time is our most valuable asset. I know from being a Puppy Raiser that helping GDA provide guide dogs to blind men and woman is an enormously rewarding way to give of yourself.

This year, we're planning a bigger and better than ever Golf Tournament in September at a new venue: the Tournament Players Course in Valencia, CA. In October, we'll also be holding our Annual Bowl-a-Thon, which was such a big success last year. And exciting new fundraising events are on the drawing board. Watch this space for details.

If you want more information about joining us as a volunteer, please call me at (818) 398-2794, or email me at daball@aol.com.

Don Ball, President, GDA Foundation

A Cool Donation From A Wonderful Foundation

To help keep our dogs cool during the warm months of summer and fall, we received a generous donation of \$22,000 from the **S. Mark Taper Foundation**, a private, family foundation dedicated to enhancing the quality of people's lives by supporting charitable organizations. We had requested a grant to fund the purchase of a new air conditioning system for our kennel. Raymond F Reiser, Executive Director of the Taper Foundation commented that, "We are happy to respond to the request from GDA because we recognize that providing a guide dog to people who are blind changes their lives in an important and long-lasting way. Your work is very much in keeping with the philosophy and goals of the S. Mark Taper Foundation." GDA President Jay Bormann expressed his gratitude. "The Taper Foundation receives many applications from worthwhile organizations. We're thrilled and extremely grateful they chose to support GDA. The Foundation's grant will help protect our dogs from the often brutal heat of southern California and further our mission of breeding, raising, and training healthy and intelligent guide dogs. We're honored to accept their generous support."

The new air conditioners were installed last August, and from all the dogs chillin' in our kennels, we offer our heartfelt thanks to the S. Mark Taper Foundation! 🐾

Partners in Trust Forever

Including GDA in your will or trust is a great way to help provide guide dogs for the blind and support the long term financial health of GDA.

Doris and Chris Christensen recently named GDA in their trust. Doris says the inspiration for her gift goes back to when she was a child and helped a blind girl in her school's special education class. Helping the blind student left a lasting impression on Doris and helped lead her to a career as a teacher. For the last seven years of her teaching career, she worked with physically handicapped children, which reinforced their desire to help people with blindness. After coming to a GDA Open House, they became convinced that GDA was the right choice.

Kathy Phillips, of Dallas, Texas came to name GDA in her will by a completely different path. When watching an *Animal Planet* television show on a guide dog breeding program, she became very impressed, but later she couldn't remember the school's name. The idea of contributing stuck with her, however, and when researching guide dog schools on the web, she recognized GDA as the school she had seen on TV. We're very glad

she found us again.

The following **Partners in Trust Society** members also recently informed us that they have included GDA in their wills:

- **Janice Fleeup**
- **Robert & Edith Hunio**
- **Connie & Mike Mancari**
- **Janet Swanson**
- **Nancy Sanderson**

For more information about the Partners in Trust and adding GDA to your will, please call Rhonda Bissell at (818) 362-5834 ext. 229. 🐾



IN MEMORY

We recently lost four wonderful members of the GDA family:

- Homer Sidlow, Graduate of Class #287
- Guide Dog Ukon, Class #295
- Guide Dog Diego, Class #297
- Guide Dog Java, Class #305

Start
Your Collection
Breed Pins
Today!!

COLLECTION OF GDA LAPEL PINS

Our specially-designed, high-quality lapel pins feature our special guide dog breeds. There will be a series of five with two of them already introduced. Each pin is approximately 1" x 1" and costs \$8.00. **Shipping is FREE!**



GDA 2003 Lapel Pin

Get your 2003 Black Labrador pin — #1 in series of five.

GDA 2004 Lapel Pin

Your 2004 Golden Retriever pin is #2 in series of five pins.



GDA BREED PIN ORDER FORM

Mail this entire form with your payment in the enclosed envelope.

Lapel Pins	Quantity
2003 GDA Black Labrador Lapel Pin \$8.00	
2004 GDA Golden Retriever Lapel Pin \$8.00	
	TOTAL

ENCLOSED:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone Number (____) _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION: Check: Please make payable to Guide Dogs of America.

Visa MasterCard Discover

Signature _____ Exp. date ____/____

Card Number _____



TAKING A PAWS FOR THANKS

In addition to the many friends who make regular contributions by mail or payroll deduction, GDA is grateful to those who conduct special events or donate goods or services to help us carry out our work.

Christmas in July

Our thanks to Conrad Dratwa and his guests for the unique *Christmas in July* fund-raiser he holds each year for GDA. Conrad opens his home for a special Christmas party, and asks guests to donate at least \$1 to help provide guide dogs to people who are blind. And each year, his generous guests donate much more than a dollar each. Tresha Marshall, one Christmas in July enthusiast, increases her donation each year by taking advantage of her company's matching gift program.

(We encourage you to check with your human resources department to see if your company will match your donations to GDA.)



Dining with Gratitude

We and our students are extremely grateful to all who helped fund the much-needed renovation of our dormitory dining room. We've added new chairs, new windows, new overhead lighting, acoustical ceiling panels, and wainscoting to make the room more comfortable, quiet, and home-like.



Shades of Generosity

Sue Tenney, a long time supporter of GDA, recently made a donation to allow us to replace two wind-damaged shade awnings over our graduation area. In December, she played

Santa to all the good dogs in our kennel by surprising us with a huge box of dog toys. Thank you, Sue, for all you do for GDA!

Letting Sleeping Dogs Lie

We are deeply grateful, as are our graduates and their dogs, for a special gift from Nancy Ayers, our Ventura area Puppy Raiser Group Leader. Her donation has allowed us to purchase a year's worth of beds so each guide dog has one to use in the dorm and take home after graduation. Thanks, Nancy!

Hawaii in Las Vegas

At our Annual Las Vegas Banquet last year, many of our guests wore beautiful Hawaiian shirts and leis supplied by the International Association of Machinists and Auto Workers Local Lodge 1979 of Honolulu. Thanks to Local Lodge 1979 and to Richard Tada, President, as well as Alexis Samida and Sampson Poomaihealani, for their efforts to make this fun donation possible.

Thanks for Being Famous

Few people have done more for GDA than Mark Moreaux. For many years, Mark and his wife Pauline have helped out in numerous fund raisers, and organized our Annual Bowl-a-thon (see page 2). So it's no surprise that when his employer, Farmers



Insurance, recognized employees for "community involvement," they chose Mark as one of those whose name is now engraved in the *Farmers Walk of Fame* in front of the home office on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles. We're very proud of Mark, and gratified that Farmers has chosen to encourage its employees to follow Mark's example of generosity and commitment.

A New Venture for GDA

Each year, the Guide Dogs of America Foundation's Annual Golf Tournament and other events raise money for special projects. Their most recent donation will help complete the renovation

continued on page 7

of our dormitory kitchen and has allowed GDA to purchase a new Chevrolet Venture. This mini-van will be used in our guide dog training programs and for special transportation for students. Thanks to the GDA Foundation and all who volunteer so generously to make the Foundation's events successful!

What Friends Are For

At GDA we like to make new friends and keep the old. Two of our newest friends are with Hamer Toyota in Mission Hills, Calif., Don Redding, president and Bud



Brown, treasurer. Bud, a long-time supporter of the school and golfer in the GDAF golf tournament, enthusiastically told his colleague about our work. Mr. Redding, a serious dog lover, became interested and thoughtfully decided to support GDA with a generous contribution. We're indeed grateful for our new friends!

Thanks to all who donate, volunteer or raise money for GDA. We are so grateful for your dedication and hard work!! 🐾

WISH LIST

We're wishing and hoping that some of our friends will be able to donate:

- * **STERILIZED BONES & NYLABONES - Large (10"-12")**
- * **SIX COMMERCIAL OUTDOOR HEATERS**
- * **NEW SHOP VACUUM for kennel area (4-5 gallon)**
- * **NEW COMMERCIAL MEAT SLICER**
- * **NEW TABLES AND CHAIRS for kennel department break room**
- * **JAWS SCREEN READER COMPUTER SOFTWARE for students**
- * **DESCRIPTIVE VIDEOS for students**
- * **BOOKS ON TAPE for students**

Ozzie Intimidated, Tag Team Replaces Him



The role of "kennel cat" is a crucial one at GDA. The job is to teach our guide-dogs-to-be not to be distracted by cats when working.

Unfortunately, our new kennel cat **Ozzie** decided the job wasn't for him. He refused to leave the safety of the nursery to instruct our dogs in the ways of cats. So while **Ozzie** will remain our nursery cat, his job as kennel cat has been taken over by a new dynamic duo, **Ricky and Lucy**.



The new tag team kennel cats were both adopted from shelters and we're hoping that together, the cute pair can turn the intimidation tables around and teach our dogs in training to leave cats alone. 🐾

OUR MOST IMPORTANT EVENT: Graduation and



Graduation Day represents the culmination of decades of breeding, two years of raising and training a guide dog, and four weeks of tough training for our guide dogs and their partners. On the day when it all pays off, our students express with deep emotion their hopes for new mobility and independence, their confidence in their new four-footed partner, and their gratitude to all who made it possible.

We welcome all of our friends to join us at these life-changing ceremonies. Graduation starts at 10:00 AM on the GDA campus in Sylmar, CA, and lasts about two hours, with a reception and tours of the campus following.

- **Spring: May 2, 2004 - 10:00 AM**
- **Summer: August 1, 2004 - 10:00 AM**
- **Fall: October 24, 2004 - 10:00 AM** 🐾

The Puppy Corner

We welcomed six new litters of pups to the GDA family this winter. If you'd like to be a puppy raiser to one of these 30 future guide dogs and live on the west coast, please call Louise Henderson at (818)362-5834, ext. 234.



**GUIDE DOGS
OF AMERICA**

13445 Glenoaks Blvd.
Sylmar, CA 91342

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SYLMAR, CA
PERMIT NO. 187

Breed	# of Puppies	Date of Birth
Black Labradors	1	10/9/03
Black Labradors	7	10/9/03
Black Labradors	8	10/20/03
Black & Yellow Labradors	8	12/5/03
Black Labradors	1	12/23/03

Address Service Requested

Mark your calendar for family fun!

The 10th Annual Big Dog Parade & Canine Festival in Santa Barbara

Saturday, June 5, 2004 • 9:30 AM

2004 Grand Marshall: Guide Dogs of America

For more information go to www.bigdogs.com



GDA Employee Updates

GDA welcomes **Jessica Forman** and **Chris Medina** as our newest part-time kennel technicians. Jessica has GDA in her genes because her mother is Meri, head of GDA's breeding program. 🐾

Class #340

Front Row - Graduates, left to right: Sally Link and **Nemo**; David Dowland and **Nacho**; Wendy Sparrow and **Teaka**; Armando Sepulveda and **Raju** (*he did not graduate*); Bill Emerson and **Usher**; Pat Franklin and **Kate**; Mark Grimes and **Aslan**; Clarence McDougal and **Hayes**; Charlene Powers and **Bentley**; Don Sorensen and **Vic** **Instructors (standing) left to right:** Kris Schmidt; Bob Wendler; Andrea Alfaro.

Puppy Raisers (not pictured): **Nemo** – Eric Bergemann; **Nacho** – The Schattl Family; **Teaka** – Dick and Sue Logemann; **Raju** – Corey Stein; **Usher** – Tom and Ardis Natterstad; **Kate** – The Augustine Family; **Aslan** – Carolyn Chowanec; **Hayes** – Cindi Heslin; **Bentley** – Brett Loutensock; **Vic** – Debbie and Shawn Makaena.

