



## A Legacy of Vision and Compassion:

### THE INSPIRING JOURNEY OF JOSEPH JONES

In 1885, in the small town of Meridian, Mississippi, a child was born who would change the lives of thousands of individuals. Although Joseph Jones came into this world with full vision, at the age of eight, he contracted a tropical fever, and his eyesight was severely impacted.

Joseph refused to be defined by his disability. He began his career as a railroad machinist. Joseph immersed himself in the labor movement, passionately advocating for workers' rights. But as time passed, his vision decreased even more, and, at 37 years old, Joseph became legally blind and was forced to give up his railroad job.

Seeking a loyal companion to help him navigate the world, Joseph applied for a guide dog. Unfortunately, he was denied one due to his "advanced age"... he was 57. Determined to regain his independence, Joseph extensively researched guide dogs and their benefits. Doing so revealed a substantial need for more guide dogs, particularly ones without a fee.

Joseph founded International Guiding Eyes (IGE) in 1946 in Richmond Hill, New York. IGE's mission was to provide guide dogs free of charge to those in need and would never discriminate based on age. Joseph believed that, with the assistance of these specially trained dogs, thousands of individuals could regain their freedom and live fulfilling lives.

IGE's first task was to find a suitable dog trainer. Joseph soon met William P. Holzman, a seasoned dog trainer with expertise in working with German Shepherds, the preferred breed for guide and working dogs at the time.

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### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings,

As we mark our 75th anniversary, I am filled with great pride. We must honor the legacy of Joseph Jones, whose audacious dream and unwavering determination, gave birth to Guide Dogs of America | Tender Loving Canines (GDA|TLC). Working together, we have granted thousands of people freedom and independence.

Joseph's legacy is a gift to us all. This organization is more than a service dog school. It's a community. It's a place where people find purpose and can become a part of something bigger than themselves. It's where lifelong friendships, lessons, and memories are made. What started as a dream has become a safe haven for peace, kindness, and hope.

Joseph once said, "It seems like an impossible task that I have undertaken, to provide at least 10,000 blind people with a

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In desperate need of financing, Joseph turned to his friends in the labor movement for support. The International Association of Machinists (IAM) allowed Joseph to promote IGE through the union's influential newsletter. Donations started pouring in, and Joseph's dream began to take shape.

Joseph's strong belief in his mission kept him going, even when facing challenges such as finances.

With barely two nickels to rub together, Joseph and Holzman trained and deployed their first guide dog, "Young Buche of Groyullam," to a man named Arthur Torgerson. Buche enabled Arthur to pursue his dream of higher education.

Joseph's tenacity and research eventually led him to Captain Kreimer who was living in Burbank at the time and was renowned as one of the first guide dog trainers. Their new partnership sparked a relocation of the school to Southern California and also allowed

IGE to train guide dogs year-round. It was here in Los Angeles that Joseph formally filed for the incorporation of International Guiding Eyes, thus marking the official birth of the organization in 1948. The move to California also brought the financial support of the Hollywood community, full of celebrities who recognized the life-changing impact of guide dogs. For instance, Andy Griffith donated the full cost of training a guide dog.

By 1951, IGE had produced an astounding 83 guide dogs. However, the organization didn't just count its success based on numbers, it also looked to the real stories of change that happened for its clients. Students who received guide dogs from IGE gained newfound independence and pursued their dreams with confidence.

It took several years after the school's founding before Joseph received a guide dog of his own. However, once



## History Timeline

**1885:** Joseph Jones is born.

**1893:** Jones loses his vision due to a tropical fever at age 8.

**1928:** The first guide dog arrives in the United States.

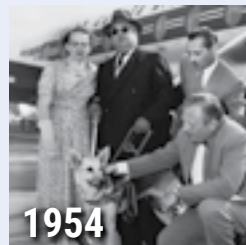
**1942:** Jones is denied a guide dog for being "too old."

**1946:** Jones starts a school in New York with trainer William Holzman. They produce their first guide dog "Young Buche of Groyullam" a year later.

**1948:** Jones officially incorporates International Guiding Eyes in California.



1946



1954



1960

1928





he did, Joseph and his new loyal companion, Lucy Belle, touched hearts of many as they traveled the nation, tirelessly advocating for access to guide dogs. Joseph and Lucy would visit local districts and

lodges to encourage fundraisers, they spoke to thousands at national conventions, and were a staple of Hollywood, wining and dining with the stars of the 1950's.

Joseph's death in 1957 marked a profound loss. Just before his passing, Joseph had one last contribution to IGE. The lack of a permanent home was a great concern of his. In 1956, Joseph and the board of directors purchased a piece of land in North Hollywood to build a headquarters. Duke Evers took the reins as Joseph's successor, and the organization continued to grow. In September 1960, the newly built headquarters on Denny Avenue in North Hollywood became IGE's first official home. For the first time, administrative offices, kennels, training quarters, and a residence for the head trainer are all housed under one roof. Joseph's dream had a place to thrive for years to come.

For 75 years, IGE, now GDA | TLC, has carried out Joseph's motto: "We serve so that others may see." His legacy continues to be the brightness we bring to people's lives and the power we give them to move through the world with confidence and respect. Joseph's journey was one of hope, resilience, and boundless compassion—a life that continues to inspire and remind us that a single person's vision can illuminate the lives of many. 🐾

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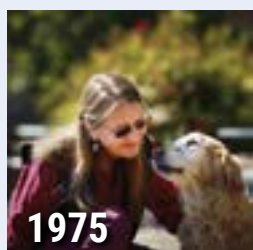
guide dog that will give them their freedom and independence, release them from the darkness, and take them places they want to go. I fully realize the proportions of this undertaking, but none will tell me that it can't be done."

As we celebrate this milestone, we must remember our work is never finished. We have embraced a new mission that includes service dogs and that is not a responsibility I take lightly. At this very moment, there is a Veteran who won't leave their home, burdened by the hidden scars of their service. There is a child with autism feeling too scared to go out in public, yearning for a friend. These people need our help, and Joseph's legacy will guide us forward as we continue to transform lives through partnerships with service dogs.

Sincerely,

*Russell Gittlen*

Russell Gittlen, President GDA|TLC



1975

**1951:** International Guiding Eyes produces 83 guide dogs in its first three years.

**1954:** Jones realizes his dream and receives his first guide dog, Lucy Belle.



1980

**1957:** Jones passes away at 72.

**1960:** Official headquarters are built in North Hollywood.

**1975:** Bonnie Bergin trains the first service dog to assist a paraplegic woman, giving birth to the service dog movement.



1990



1992

**1981:** Organization moves to new campus in Sylmar, California.

**1990:** President George H.W. Bush signs the Americans with Disabilities Act into law, which defines service animals.



2016



# History Book Update OUT NOW:

To celebrate our 75th anniversary, we're thrilled to announce the release of our updated history book. The last 10 years have been a whirlwind of change and progress. We've built new buildings, embraced a new mission, changed our name, and touched countless lives along the way. Step into the captivating story of Guide Dogs of America and discover the inspiring origins of Tender Loving Canines. Purchase your copy today through Amazon, available in either hardcover (\$28) or paperback (\$25). We're also excited to share that the book is available on Kindle for just \$5. Scan the QR code below to get your copy today! 🐾



## MERCHANDISE SHOP GDA|TLC

To purchase, go to "Shop GDA" on [guideddogsofamerica.org](http://guideddogsofamerica.org) or call (818) 833-6429.

### 2023 HOLIDAY CARD

This year's holiday card is a 5x7 fold over card, with the message inside "Wishing you a holiday season touched with wonder and filled with love." These come 10 per pack along with white envelopes.

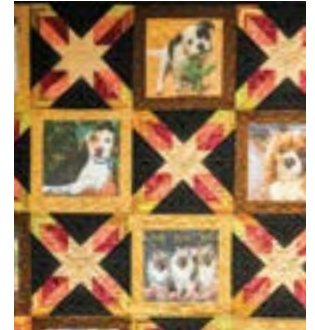
**PRICE: \$15.00**

Tax, shipping, and handling not included. If mailing a check, please call (818) 362-5834 to determine additional tax and shipping charges required for payment.



## 2023 QUILT RAFFLE

This year's beautiful and detailed quilt, "From Our Dogs To Yours," was crafted by the Santa Clarita Valley Quilt Guild! This beautiful piece of art contains pictures of all different shapes, sizes and breeds of four-legged friends. One very lucky person will have the chance to take it home after the drawing on **Friday, December 15, 2023**. The cost is \$2 per ticket or \$10 for six tickets. (Quilt measures 62.75 in x 61 in.)



Tickets can be purchased by mail, over the phone at (818) 833-6429, or in person at the school! If purchasing by mail, please include your address and phone number. Envelope must be postmarked at least 7 days before the drawing.

**1992:** President Bud Melvin changes name to Guide Dogs of America.

**1995:** The organization's first puppy nursery is built.

**1998:** Tender Loving Canines Assistance Dogs (TLCAD) is founded in San Diego.

**2007:** TLCAD receives accreditation from Assistance Dogs International.

**2016:** The visitor and education center is built and completed.

**2018:** Dormitories and administration buildings are remodeled.

**2020:** Guide Dogs of America and TLC merge.

**2021:** Kennel Center and Puppy Nursery renovations are completed.



# SAVE the DATE

## EVENTS CALENDAR 2023

Oct 14 Guide Dog Graduation  
Nov 11 Las Vegas Charity Banquet

### GRADUATES (PUPPY RAISERS IN PARENTHESES)



#### GUIDE DOG CLASS #424

**IN ROW:** Stephen Ulerick & Kingston (Margaret Jackson), Mui Phu & Fritz (Annabel Schultz), Judith Lung & Bernard (Giles Family), Roger Kopp & Elton (Dave Brooks), Monique Barragan & Gadget (Tammy New), Amanda Hilty & Itsy (Cheryl Stevenson), Albert Macklin & Whit (Kaity Taylor)

**INSTRUCTORS:** Sydney Fujishige, Sean Chiles



#### SERVICE DOG CLASS #13

**IN ROW:** Joe & Apple (Lisa Collins), Brooke & Raider (Sobel Family), Angel & Vivian (Mike Steinmetz)

**INSTRUCTORS:** Nicole Maples



#### SERVICE DOG CLASS #14

**IN ROW:** Rudi & Wisdom (Anna Conway), Shelby & Bosun (Ugoretz Family), Drew & Iniko (Shelby Zimmerman), Lisa & Justice (Thomas Family), Beth & Opie (Diana & Jenna Cheng), Danielle & Lego (Stapleton Family), Kristin & Ziggy (Yoshida Family)

**INSTRUCTORS:** Nicole Maples, Jen Bohan, Sonia Parisi



Audrey Whetzel graduated from IGE in April 1964, and was partnered with "Heidi," a beautiful black female German Shepherd. Audrey and "Heidi" went to work for IGE, traveling around the country, speaking at conventions, and appearing before service groups to put a human (and canine) face on IGE's fundraising efforts. The pair proved to be a popular draw, and Whetzel penned a poem to her partner that was widely circulated:

### *Heidi*

*Tho not a word can Heidi say  
She lets me know in every way -  
By my side she'll always be,  
Watching, loving, guiding me.*

*Her warm, wet tongue upon my cheek,  
Her quick response each time I speak -  
Oh how I thank the Lord above  
For sending Heidi me to love*

*Ready now to take my place among society,  
The chains of blindness gone for good,  
My Heidi set me free.*

*How bright Life is with Heidi near,  
This darkness I'll no longer fear,  
She'll take me where I want to go -  
Heidi, how I love you so,  
Heidi, how I love you so.*





Guide Dogs  
of America



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Canines

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### GET PARTNERS [DIGITAL EDITION]

If you would like to receive this newsletter by e-mail, simply go to [guidedogsofamerica.org](http://guidedogsofamerica.org) and click on the "Newsletter Sign-up" icon located at the bottom of the home page.



**OUR MISSION STATEMENT:  
TRANSFORMING LIVES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH SERVICE DOGS.**

Cut along dotted line

### MAKE A DONATION

If you would like to make a one time donation, please fill out the information below, cut along the dotted line and use the provided envelope to mail in your donation. If paying by check, please make check payable to **Guide Dogs of America**.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Cash  Check  Credit Card Donation Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_



Donating to GDA|TLC has never been easier. Open the QR code reader or camera app on your phone and hold your device over the QR code to give or in your web browser type, <https://give.guidedogsofamerica.org/PNL382>