



GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA Partners



Fall 2014 volume 29 number 4

The Magic Of The Match

How GDA's Instructors Pair Partners



Donna Bennett and Havana

There's no smoke and mirrors, nothing up their sleeves and no rabbit pulled out of a hat, but many GDA graduates believe that there is magic behind the matches of students and guide dogs orchestrated by our licensed instructors.

"Graduates will say to us, 'I don't know how you do it,' referring to how well-matched they are with their guide dog," said Linda

Hawes, Apprentice Coordinator, Licensed Instructor. "We know both sides of the team very well, which gives us the information we need to match the personalities and unique characteristics of each to their new partner. We've been working daily with the dogs in formal training for six months or more, we know their personalities and their work style; every graduate has filled out a comprehensive application, including a medical report, and has been assessed by an instructor."

During the application and evaluation process, GDA's instructors are gathering information that will give them a

feel for the applicant's lifestyle. The information will help them to determine if a person's orientation and mobility skills could be enhanced by the use of a guide dog.

"At what pace are they comfortable walking? What is their activity level? Do they work outside the home? What are the streets like and how much traffic is there? Have they ever had a dog?" said Hawes. "We consider everything about a person's lifestyle and environment."

Similarly, the dogs in formal training are also being evaluated. Among the traits the instructors look for are pull and stamina; personality is also key.

A college student, for example, would most likely require a higher energy dog than a senior due to the activity level and the speed at which they travel. A successful match takes into consideration not only what the handler's life requires but also the needs of the dog by placing him in an environment in which he will thrive.

When it comes to pairing personalities, there are times when the instructors rely on the adage, "opposites" attract.

"We don't necessarily partner a high-energy dog with a high-energy person. If they are too similar, they don't always click," said Hawes. "Even the person's tone of voice is part of the matching process. How well or quickly a dog responds to a command can depend on the voice inflection in which it is being delivered. Some dogs



Robin Schneider and Alex

Magic Of The Match listings begin on page 2 »

Taking a "Paws" to Give Thanks

Guide Dogs of America would like 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.

respond better to a voice that is high-pitched or a tone that is very enthusiastic, while a soft voice or low tone may get a better response from others.”

Size also is considered. There are times it would appear that there’s been a mismatch when, in fact, it is a student’s lifestyle or a health issue that may be the reason to select



Arroyo Fields and Alice

a specific size dog for the handler.

Hawes gave two recent examples: “A 6-foot man needed a dog on the smaller side because he travels by plane constantly and his dog had to fit comfortably under the seat. For the petite woman with balance issues, we matched her with a dog that comes almost to her hip; having a taller dog offers the stability she needs.”

Students with back issues or glaucoma also benefit from having a taller dog. “Glaucoma can make a person dizzy or put pressure on their

eyes when bending over,” explained Hawes. “Being unable to bend makes it difficult to continue obedience training practice or to give the dog praise, both of which are so much a part of a successful working relationship,” said Hawes.

The environment in which the guide dog was raised as a puppy is another factor. If a student has children and/or pets at home, a dog that has been raised with either or both will be accustomed to the distractions inherent in these situations and will be able to better adapt when the team arrives home.

As time for each class approaches, dogs that have completed formal training are assessed to identify potential matches for the incoming students. Students spend 28 days at GDA, during which time they are instructed in the use of their new dog, as well as how to care for their new partner.

“To make sure we have an excellent match for each student, we usually have up to 20 dogs prepared for a typical class of 10 students,” said Hawes. “But we don’t match a dog and a person right away. For the first few days we do what we call ‘Juno’ training. The instructor uses a harness and acts like the student’s guide dog. This gives the instructor a feel for how the student would handle a real guide dog and a better idea about the pace, strength, personality and needs of the student.”

Hawes added, “The first few days of class give us the information that we need to finalize the matches and set up the team for success from the very beginning. The students meet their dogs for the first time at the end of the third day.”

It is an extensive process, and the reward is in the results.

“It is so gratifying to watch the teams walk across the stage at graduation with such confidence and to know that we are sending them off with a solid foundation to be a successful team for many years to come,” said Hawes. 🐾

Congratulations To Yvonne Martin, GDA’s New Director Of Programs



Guide Dogs of America is pleased to announce that Yvonne Martin has been promoted to Director of Programs. In her new role, Martin oversees the Veterinary, Kennel and Puppy Departments, as well as the Nursery.

“We conducted an extensive search, but did not find anyone who could match

Yvonne’s qualifications and knowledge,” said GDA President Dale Harford. “She brings nearly 15 years of experience here at GDA and is familiar with every department, the people and our processes. I have every confidence in her ability to handle any situation that may arise and trust her judgment to make the best decisions regarding the welfare of the school, the staff, the dogs we are responsible for, and those who use our services. Please join me in congratulating Yvonne.”

Martin’s most recent position with GDA was the Director of Canine Development. Yvonne is a licensed guide dog instructor and also a puppy raiser.

Congratulations Graduates

Class #384



Graduates (*Puppy Raiser in parentheses*):

left to right: Donna Bennett and Havana (*Hayley Schum*); Latashe Bense and Acton (*The Hessel-Epstein Family*); Debbie Cook and Newton (*Lynette Lubrant*); Teresa Eaton and Eski (*Rebecca Tribelhorn*); Jessiaca Evans and Kaiden (*The Hughes Family*); Arroyo Fields and Alice (*Raul and Crystal Rodriguez*); Danette Goodman and Ibby (*Mary Quinton*); Robin Schneider and Alex (*Sandy Steinblums*); Ramsina Szanto and Kyla (*Michael and Maribeth Butler*)

Instructors: left to right: Nick Terrones, Jamie Viezbicke and Christopher Medina

In-home Graduates:

Tony Connett & Vito (*Tom and Gabriela Park*)
Instructor Mindy Romero

Sue Burdyshaw & Honey (*Denise Brown*)
Instructor Steve Burkman

Graduate Question

So, just how magical are the matches GDA's licensed instructors make? We asked our students: What are some traits that you see in your current (or most recent) guide dog that make you realize why the trainers matched you as a team?

I'm always amazed at how the trainers are so good at matching us with our guides. In addition to the mechanics of matching us (like pace and such), Cash and I are so similar in that we are both laid-back and easygoing. We're both ready for an adventure and enjoy being out and about.

— Greg Steinmetz & Cash

Henry is the best of both worlds. He loves to work and works hard, yet he loves to play. I have some balance issues, and he is a very careful worker, walking as slow as I need to. His playful personality makes me smile every day.

— Carla Dawson & Henry

The trainers couldn't have made a better match. Purdue and I are both persistent, curious and have outgoing personalities. He is a hard worker, and you can tell he loves to please.

— Victoria Herrera & Purdue

I think I was matched with Loman because of my poor balance and his willingness and concern about my needs. He will not go off of a curb or step unless I tell him that it's OK and he sees my foot go up or down the curb or step. Loman is the best dog I've had in 45 years of using a guide dog.

— Alberta Hall & Loman

Jethro is a perfect match because my lifestyle holds both busy times, and times when I really need my guide's focus, but I also love to have fun! I did not know then that I would be having a baby, and I am fortunate that Jethro was raised in a family with children.

— Hayley Edick & Jethro

Gracy and I both work hard with confidence and play hard with a free spirit. We were both built for endurance given the amount of walking we do on a daily basis and, finally, we both love the social aspect of Thursday night pub night.

— Mike Moore & Gracy

I am a very social person, and Cari is a very social dog; however, when she is in work mode, her concentration is on me. Cari is constantly looking for changes in the terrain in order to make certain that I don't stumble. I have been a guide dog handler for 51 years, and Cari is my 14th guide dog. She is the best I have had in all that time.

— Ken Metz and Cari

My current guide, Waylon, is very calm, even in his play. He is steady and not very distractible in his work. His pace might be considered slow, but not for me.

— Mari Dole & Waylon

Ticklish is a great match for me because he's really good at what I need the most. He is very energetic, loves to work and go on walks, which I really needed to do more of. He encourages me to get out more and he actually walks as fast as I do. And when I need to laugh he is really a goofball.

— Paul Dang & Ticklish

Early on, my GDA trainers recognized that I preferred to walk fast and identified my desire to have a high-spirited dog. Fortunately, Mitch has been a terrific match. He and I love to walk our neighborhood trails averaging four miles daily, allowing both of us to maintain good health.

— Joe Morgan & Mitch

Tyler and I are highly social and like to go, go, go. I think they used magic to match us because Tyler is the coolest companion and guide I could have ever hoped for!

— Brent Avery & Tyler

My Basha is so like me, she is laid-back but full of energy. When she comes into a place she lights it up with her attitude and fun-loving nature just like her "mama."

— Tina Sutton & Basha

I find my Sunny to be an excellent match because she loves to work; enjoys her environment; and, above all, is able to weather the ups and downs of life. She is not an anxious dog and is a grand pleasure to work and play with.

— Jan Brown & Sunny

Maisy is fast, fast, fast and is extremely playful. I have always had shepherds, but my trainer was right in stating, "Maisy is a Shepherd in a Labrador body."

— Sharlene Wills & Maisy

Puppies-In-Training And Puppy Raisers Have An Amazing Time At The “Amazing Race” Challenge



Twenty-three teams of puppies-in-training and their raisers had an amazing time running the “Amazing Race” GDA-style at the Ventura County Fair. This interactive adventure, fashioned after the popular reality show, was created by Puppy Raiser Area Leaders Bob and Pam English and was designed to put the skills of each team to the test.

The race included multiple checkpoints along the way, where teams received a clue that would take them to different locations within the fairgrounds. Teams encountered “Challenges,” “Detours” and “Speed Bumps”



on every leg of the race; each of which required that they successfully complete an obedience training skill such as loose leash walking and timed “sit and stay” and “down and stay”... with distractions. Among these were children eating ice cream, a scarecrow and farm animals, and working machinery. As each team completed the task, a checkpoint judge stamped their passport and handed them the next clue on their race to the finish line.



“It was a great day,” said Pam English. “Our puppy raisers did such a wonderful job with their puppies-in-training. The ‘Amazing Race’ was a fun way to put into practice all of the hard work each of them puts into teaching our puppies the skills they need on their journey to becoming a working guide.”



In Memory

With sadness, we note the passing of GDA family member:
Nancy “Nan” Lewis – Class #356

We also note with sadness, the passing of the following guide dogs:

Egan – In home	Kansas – Class #339.5
Harrison – Class #348	Noah – Class #341
Haven – In home	Ryker – Class #341
Hondo – Class #326	Shiloh – In-home

Give Monthly, Give Mobility

Guide Dogs of America prides itself in giving the gift of guide dogs at no charge to blind and visually impaired individuals in the U.S. and Canada. With your monthly donation, you can help us reach our goal of supplying the gift of mobility to at least 50 people each year. GDA receives no government funding and relies solely on donations from companies, organizations and individuals such as you. Your monthly gift will go toward the breeding, raising and training of our dogs, along with the instruction that each blind recipient needs in order to comprise a successful team. This method of payment ensures reliable, consistent income for our organization and, because the donation is made electronically, it is more cost effective for the school.

By giving monthly, you are giving mobility to those who need it. Please visit guidedogsofamerica.org, then click on **How to Help**, then click on **Recurring Donations**.

If you have any questions, please call (818) 362-5834.

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, 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, 2013 to June 30, 2014).

Anonymous (1)

Amy J. Baker

Jack & Jacque Butler

Dan & Maria Carmean

Michael & Janice Frank

Marcia L. Goodman

Douglas M. Reid

Arline Wilck — In Memory of Reba

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:

Richard & Valerie Aronsohn

Elaine C. Boerbon

Gerald C. Carter

Patricia Custer

Richard & Suzie Faren

Jill Hill

Eunice Holcomb

Eleanor Hughes

Gloria L. Johnston

Patricia Jubb

H. Lee Moody

Judith Pimental

Lee & Olga Randall

David W. Sussman

Doris Welke

Donor Spotlight

Lucille & Eugene Peters



When Eugene and Lucille Peters began to research a cause to name in their trust, two things led them to Guide Dogs of America: their mutual love of dogs and Lucille's decades-old memory of her co-worker, whose son was blind.

"It just hit our hearts," said Lucille Peters.

"We love dogs and we know how important they are to blind people. We wanted to find a good organization to put in our trust. It's not a lot of money, but we know that any amount will help to make a difference. We felt GDA was very worthy. They are providing such a blessing to the blind men and women who come to the school."

The Peters, both in their 90s, became Partners in Trust in 2003. They have never visited the school, but feel they have learned so much about GDA from reading the materials and watching the school's video. "I had no idea how much training both the dog and the blind partner must have to become a successful guide dog team," said Mrs. Peters.

She also spreads the word about GDA to residents of the retirement community where she and her husband live. "We have a common reading area, and I make sure that after I have read the latest news and information from GDA that I leave it there so someone else can learn about what wonderful work the school does," she said. "My hope is that it will inspire someone else and, like us, they will make the decision to name GDA in their trust."

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

Spread the News



"Partners" is published four times a year, but we are always posting news and photos to our Facebook page and Twitter account. Also, check the up-to-date **News & Events** page on our website to see if there is an upcoming event in your area.



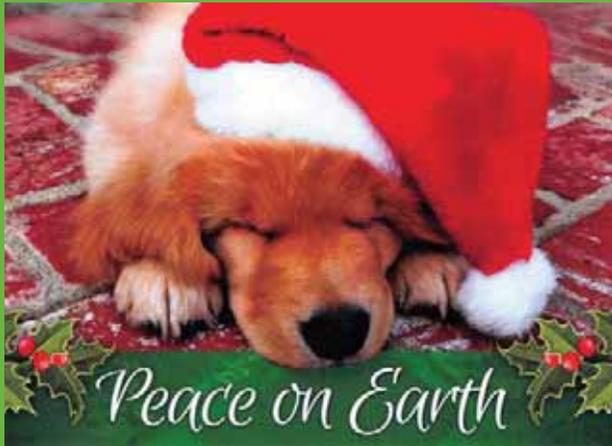
"Like" us on Facebook ([GuideDogsOfAmerica](https://www.facebook.com/GuideDogsOfAmerica)) and/or follow us on Twitter (twitter.com/GuideDogsGDA) or [@GuideDogsGDA](https://www.instagram.com/GuideDogsGDA).

We also post "Partners" on the GDA website if you would like to read past issues or share the newsletter electronically with family or friends. Simply go to our homepage: guidedogsofamerica.org, scroll down to the **Partners Newsletter** icon on the right-hand side of the page and click!



2014 Holiday Cards

Peace-ful Puppy



Thank you to each and every one of you who took the time (and the photos) to enter the 4th Annual Holiday Card Contest. They were all beautiful, which made it difficult to choose just one.

The winning photo was taken by GDA puppy raiser Margaret Jackson of puppy-in-training "Major." Outside message: "Peace on Earth." Inside message: "Faith, Hope, Peace and Love"

Holiday cards measure 5" x 7" and are bundled 15 cards (with envelopes) to a pack. Price: \$18 per pack, INCLUDES SHIPPING AND HANDLING. Please use the order form on this page to place your order. Questions? Call (818) 833-6429

Fall Merchandise

Find holiday gift ideas online at Shop GDA

Whether buying a gift or something for yourself, you'll find lots of great GDA logo items at Shop GDA. Go to 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 (818-833-6429) or at GDA.



Two new polo shirts have recently been added to the GDA store. These easy-wear, easy-wash polos are a 96% polyester and 4% spandex blend. Great for golf, tennis or everyday wear.

Women's Polo — Lime green shirt with GDA logo embroidered on the sleeve with matching color stitching. Women's sizes: S - L, XL, 2X, 3X. Price: \$40 (includes shipping).

Men's Polo — Sage green shirt with white GDA logo embroidered on the sleeve. Men's sizes: S - L, XL, 2X, 3X. Price: \$40 (includes shipping).



2014 Quilt Raffle

Last chance to be the lucky winner of a one-of-a-kind quilt

This year's quilt, "Whirlpool Party," was crafted and donated by the Orange County Quilters Guild. The quilt, which measures 52" x 52", features 36 hand-stitched blocks and includes several

blocks with intricate embroidered canine designs.

Purchase tickets using the order form on this page and mail it to GDA postmarked by Dec. 3, 2014. Tickets are \$2 each or six for \$10. Drawing to be held on Dec. 13, 2014 at the GDA December puppy raiser holiday party. Winner does not need to be present.

New And Returning Employees

GDA welcomes back...

Janice Tyler, Breeding Department Assistant

And welcomes...

Tiffanie Tayrien, Part-time Kennel Technician

Samuel Wallace, Maintenance Superintendent

FALL 2014 Order Form

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

Mail this entire form with your payment.

Merchandise

Women's polo — Size S-3XL \$40.

SM MED LRG XL 2XL 3XL \$

Men's polo — Size S-3XL \$40.

SM MED LRG XL 2XL 3XL \$

Holiday Cards — \$18 per pack

2014 Holiday Cards \$

Raffle Tickets

2014 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.**

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 going 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 — Dec. 2 -14, 2014

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 Dec. 2-14. We encourage you to share this information with your family, friends and co-workers and to share the link biddingforgood.com/guidedogsofamerica on your social media. (Note: link only active during campaign dates.)

A gift for you... Your donation is a tax deduction, and the end of 2014 is just around the corner.

Please note: This is NOT an auction; all items are available for purchase as listed.

amazon.com[®] Online Shopping Smile

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

GDA will receive .5% 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**. 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; as long as you log in from the same device (computer, smartphone or tablet) you used previously, 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!

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 (details follow) and designating GDA, a percentage of your total grocery bill is donated to the school every time you shop. The following provides important instructions about how to register your club card to begin or renew your support of GDA.



Register or renew (each September) your Ralphs Rewards Card through the Ralphs website at ralphs.com to designate Guide Dogs of America as

your charity of choice. To register your card for the first time, click on **Services**, then **Community Contributions**, then **Enroll**. In the **Find Your Organization** field, type Guide Dogs of America. If you have registered your card previously, Ralphs requires that you renew your registration each

September in order to continue to contribute to GDA. Login to your account, confirm your information is correct, click on **Edit Community Contributions Information** and, once again, designate Guide Dogs of America. Click on **Save Changes** and log out.

A percentage of your purchases will begin accruing within 72 hours of your online registration/renewal. Within seven to 10 business days, you will see at the bottom of your Ralphs receipt: "At your request, Ralphs is donating to Guide Dogs of America."

If you have questions or need assistance, please call (818) 833-6438.



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.

Give to GDA as Your Gift to Family, Friends and Loved Ones 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 their employees. These programs match, dollar-for-dollar, charitable contributions made by an employee, doubling the donation made to Guide Dogs of America!

If you are thinking of making a donation 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.

If You Would Like to Lend a Paw...

GDA does not receive any government funding and 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, guidedogsofamerica.org. You can also contact us via e-mail at: mail@guidedogsofamerica.org or by phone at (818) 362-5834.

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GDA 2013 Annual Report



The Guide Dogs of America 2013 Annual Report is available online on our website: guidedogsofamerica.org.

CFC Pledge Card



You know what your pet means to you; now imagine what this future guide dog will mean to a blind person.

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.

5th 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 5th 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, 2015 to partners@guidedogsofamerica.org
- Winner will be notified on June 15, 2015 and will be posted on our website
- Please make sure that the email includes your full name, dog's name, and your phone number
- All photo entries become the property of GDA
- Credit for the winning photo will be given

