



Partners

GDA Puppies Go To 'Nursery' School

New Enhanced Enrichment Program Gives Pups a 'Paw Up'



Guide Dogs of America has always strived to give its puppies a “paw up” right from the start. GDA has its own breeding program to provide the best quality dogs possible for our blind and visually impaired guide dog recipients. The puppies are born in our nursery where they are cared for by our staff and a group of “selected” volunteers. These volunteers give the puppies attention and handling soon after they are born. This socialization is an important part of their development.

Puppies that get early and adequate interaction and exposure to different experiences tend to be more confident and comfortable in new settings and surroundings and more connected with their handlers.

Last September, we had the opportunity to host Suzanne Clothier, a renowned expert in puppy development and dog training. Clothier spent two days at GDA, working with staff and many volunteers to design an enhanced and structured puppy development program.

“We always want to do whatever we can to support the development of our puppies and set them up for success,” said Yvonne Martin, GDA’s Director of Programs. “By tapping into Suzanne’s knowledge and incorporating her Enriched Puppy™ practices with our program, we have taken another step in giving our puppies an advantage that will help them to develop to their full potential.”

From birth to four weeks the puppies in the nursery are exposed to humans who handle and cradle them and provide age-appropriate stimulation. At four weeks of age, the next phase of the program begins.

[GDA Puppies Go To 'Nursery' School](#) continued on page 2 »

President's Message



Over the years, Guide Dogs of America has transformed from a small organization to a world-class guide dog school. The steady growth and enhancements to the program have been accomplished through the dedication and hard work of our puppy raisers, volunteers and staff, and the generosity of all of our donors

We have made some recent changes in our Nursery and Puppy Departments by incorporating a puppy enrichment program. We are seeing great results with this program and are excited to share the details with you in this issue of *Partners*.

In addition, starting next year, GDA is transitioning from 28-day classes to 21-day classes for our clients in the United

[President's Message](#) continued on page 2 »

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.



Puppy enrichment program volunteers have a "ruff" job.

A personalized program is created for each puppy. Our dedicated volunteers and staff implement the exercises and monitor and document each puppy's progress to ensure he or she is ready for each new experience. These experiences include: spending alone time in the indoor development room; starting to wear collars and bibs; and being introduced to leash walking and sitting for their food. The puppies also start traveling around the GDA campus in a "Puppy Mobile" — seeing and hearing all types of new things and venturing out into the new outdoor puppy development yard.

The development yard may look like puppy playtime, but everything in it was carefully chosen to stimulate the development of their minds and their bodies. The yard is equipped with a swinging bridge, tunnels, snow saucers and many different tactile surfaces, as well as climbing stairs, special playground equipment, and lots of moving and noise-making toys.

"Important developmental milestones are being met in the yard," said Martin. "This enriched environment supports neuro-muscular development and results in coordinated, connected, competent and confident puppies, as proven out through Suzanne's years of research and experience. We are already seeing positive results in our puppies."

At about seven weeks of age, toward the beginning of the week before the puppies will go home with their volunteer puppy raisers, their development continues under the care of the Puppy Department. On Monday mornings, the puppies are transferred to the main kennel where two dedicated runs have been turned into a puppy play paradise.

In their new environment, the puppies continue with their one-on-one training. For the next five days, the puppies are exposed to even more new sights, sounds, people and a whole new development yard. Here, they encounter bigger steps, a teeter-totter, a bigger swinging bridge, ramps, skateboards, shopping carts, motorized cars, and a never-ending supply of mind developing and interactive toys. They even go off campus for car rides around town.

"We are so pleased and delighted with our newly enhanced puppy development program," said Martin. "Our puppies are leaving here not just well bred, but more developmentally ready and confident to take on their next step in the puppy raising program."

"GDA would like to thank the Nursery and Puppy Departments and our specially trained volunteers for their commitment and dedication to our new expanded program," added Martin. 🐾

President's Message continued from page 1

States and Canada who receive the gift of a guide dog at absolutely no cost to them.

It costs \$42,000 to graduate one guide dog team, and each class has up to 10 teams. Another change that we are considering is to have an additional class added to our schedule. This change comes with unique challenges. Adding a class will require more time from our trainers and staff, as well as increased fundraising efforts. Thanks to our generous donors and GDA's stewardship of the funds we receive — 83 percent of all our funds raised are available for program services — we are able to make it possible.

As I begin my sixth year at GDA, I am excited about all that we have accomplished together and look forward to the changes and growth ahead of us. Thanks to all of you, GDA is more alive and vibrant today than ever. I am filled with pride for our school and deeply grateful to all of you for what we have become.

Sincerely,
Dale E. Hartford
President

A GDA Wag Of The Tail

Yvonne Martin Selected as IGDF Assessor



Guide Dogs of America is proud to announce that Yvonne Martin has been selected as an International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) assessor. Martin is one of nine newly recruited assessors by the IGDF. She joins an elite team of 27 assessors worldwide.

Along with continuing to be GDA's Director of Programs, Martin will begin her work with IGDF this year. In her role as an assessor, Martin will evaluate required organizations to determine that IGDF standards are met and provide verbal and written reports of each assessment. Areas covered include all aspects of each school's program — from applicant selection and instruction; to follow-up of the guide dog teams; to breeding, raising, veterinary and kennel care, as well as administration, training, buildings and transportation.

Please join us in congratulating Martin on this very prestigious appointment.

Vet's Corner

People Food Is Not Dog Food

Thinking that you're treating your dog by giving him people food — even if it's a little bit here and there — can actually turn out to be a toxic treat.

The following is a list of the most toxic foods for your dog and the symptoms they can cause. You may not have fed any of these foods to your dog; he may have gotten into them on his own. As with any toxic exposure, minutes count so it's important to react quickly. Make sure you have the phone number of poison control, your regular veterinarian and an after-hours hospital posted in your home in case you know or suspect your dog has ingested something dangerous. It is best to wait until you reach poison control or your vet before you do anything. Also, try to have an idea of how much of the substance your pet ingested and how long ago it happened.

It should also be noted that the amount of damage these foods can do varies by the specific breeds and size of your dog. Like humans, all dogs are different and can react differently to foods.

This list includes foods that are very toxic to dogs but there are many other foods that can cause distress for your pooch. The best way to avoid potential problems is to not feed your dog "people food" unless advised or approved by your vet.

Do not feed	What can happen
Avocado	The leaves, seeds, fruit and bark contain persin, which can cause vomiting and diarrhea.
Bacon and fatty foods	Can cause pancreatitis. Once dogs develop pancreatitis, their pancreas becomes inflamed and stops functioning correctly.
Bones from fish, poultry or other meat sources	Can cause obstruction or laceration of the digestive system.
Cat food	Generally too high in protein and fats and may cause vomiting and/or diarrhea.
Chocolate	The amount and type of chocolate will determine the toxicity. The darker the chocolate is, the more serious the poisoning can be — making baker's chocolate and cocoa powder more dangerous than milk chocolate. Symptoms of chocolate poisoning include vomiting, diarrhea and seizures.
Grapes, raisins and currants	Can cause kidney failure in dogs; with vomiting, increased urination and increased thirst potential symptoms of poisoning.
Macadamia nuts	Can cause neurologic symptoms like hind end weakness, tremors and lethargy.
Onions and garlic (raw, cooked or powder)	If eaten in large amounts, onions and garlic can cause the destruction of red blood cells and lead to anemia in dogs. Lethargy and a reduced appetite can be symptoms of a toxic reaction.
Xylitol (artificial sweetener)	An artificial sweetener found in sugarless gum, candy and baked goods that can cause liver damage and a life-threatening drop in blood sugar in dogs.



In Memory

GDA is sad to have lost one of its family members, Ed Elliot, who was a GDA board member, as well as a GDA graduate.

It is with sadness that we mark the passing of one of our graduates:

Mark Grimes — Class 340

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

Amelia — Breeder

Flora — In-home

Kate — Class 340

Lorax — Class 347.5

Pacey — Class 351.5

Sela — Breeder

GDA Las Vegas Charity Weekend



More than 1,000 attendees gathered at the 35th-annual William W. Winpisinger Charity Banquet, which capped off Guide Dogs of America's largest fundraising event of the year: the three-day Las Vegas Charity Weekend. Leading up to the banquet were three additional annual fundraising events. All of the funds that were raised during the weekend help support the school in its mission to provide guide dogs, at no cost, to those without sight.

The weekend started with a "bang" and a "vroom" on Thursday, Nov. 21. The 4th-annual sporting clay event, which was hosted by IAM&AW Local Lodge 845, attracted more than 60 participants. The 15th-annual Hawgs for Dogs motorcycle ride set another new record this year with more than 100 participants. On Friday morning, more than 250 golfers teed off at Angel Park for the 35th-annual Golf Tournament.

"Every year, I think there's no way this event can get any better and, each year, it does. There are so many people to thank for making this weekend possible," said GDA President Dale Hartford.

"I am deeply grateful to our generous sponsors for their support of the weekend's activities. To all of those in attendance, on behalf of everyone at GDA, I would like to express our appreciation for your support. And, to all of our dedicated volunteers, I extend a very special thank you. I want to thank all of you for the contributions you have made to the school by being a part of this very wonderful weekend and for all that you do during the year," added Hartford.

Throughout the weekend, graduates, puppy raisers and puppies-in-training greeted all those who gathered and thanked them for their participation.

The fundraising weekend culminated at Bally's Hotel and Casino Grand Ballroom with the 35th-annual William W. Winpisinger Charity Banquet. Here, two outstanding members of our GDA family were recognized for their support of Guide Dogs of America and were presented with the prestigious "Gift of Sight Award."





Gift of Sight Honorees



Robert Roach

Robert Roach, Jr. is the 11th general secretary treasurer since the founding of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers in 1888.

Roach started in the IAM as a ramp serviceman for TWA in 1975 and was a member of Local Lodge 1056 in New York. Soon after, he transferred to Local Lodge 1445 in Newark, NJ, where he served his local as a shop steward, grievance committee chair, trustee, vice president and president before becoming a general chairman for District Lodge 142 in 1992. In 1994, Roach was selected to become a special representative in the IAM's Transportation Department and became a Grand Lodge representative in 1996. Three years later, Roach became the general vice president of the IAM's Transportation Department — the position he held until becoming the IAM's general secretary treasurer in 2012.

Since retiring as general secretary, Roach has become the president of the Alliance for Retired Americans.

Roach and his companion Smoky (a black Labrador Retriever) live in the greater Washington, DC area.

John W. Granger

John W. Granger II graduated from the University of Texas with a bachelor's degree in economics, specializing in money and banking. He is an institutional consulting director at Graystone Consulting's Houston offices and is a member of Morgan Stanley's CIO strategy committee, which provides asset allocation and portfolio construction for discretionary client portfolios.

Granger holds numerous professional designations and is a well-respected member of the investment community.

Granger and his wife Julie have two sons, Wells and Alex, and reside in the Houston, Texas area.

Donor Spotlight: William And Betty Schertle Introduce New Generation To GDA

When Betty Schertle passed away last year, the trust that she and her husband William (Bill) had drawn up years earlier was read. In the trust, the couple named five charities to be recipients of a portion of their estate, among them was Guide Dogs of America.

Rather than simply sending a check to the charities, the Schertles' niece, Carrie Contreras, chose to hand deliver the disbursement with a biography and photo of the couple, who were married for 65 years. "Uncle Bill and Aunt Betty came from the 'greatest generation' of hardworking Americans who thought of others, respected everyone, were happy to see a beautiful day, and are admired greatly by their proud family," Contreras said. "It was important to me that their memory and generosity were honored, which is why I wanted to meet with Guide Dogs of America."

Her aunt and uncle were private people so she didn't know why they chose the charities they did, but her visits revealed a common thread. "No one is paying a dime to receive the services provided by these organizations," Contreras said. "That these services are provided free of charge is something that cannot be overstated. It became very clear that my aunt and



uncle had considered each charity very carefully before naming it in their trust."

As for Guide Dogs of America, the couple had always had a dog. Her uncle had been diagnosed with macular degeneration in his later years. Contreras feels that, had his vision loss happened at an earlier part of his life, he would have gotten a guide dog.

"We can always learn from our elders," Contreras said. "Carrying out my aunt's and uncle's wishes, I learned about GDA, which is actually very close to where we live. My husband and I have always had a Golden Retriever, one of the breeds GDA trains for its blind students. It was meant that I learn about the school and how it provides guide dogs free of charge to their blind students. GDA is now on our list of charities that we give to."

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

Congratulations Graduates

Class #391



Graduates (Puppy Raiser in parentheses):
Front row from left to right: William Shilling and General (*Linda Barber*); Patty Rasmussen and Basie (*The Hollander Family*); Chris Soldan and Blade (*Butch and Karen Reyburn*); Michele Nall and Tabor (*Brett Suydam and Jill Wardrop*); Joe Morgan and Bear (*The Semeleng Family*)

Instructors: Left to right: Linda Hawes, Melinda Romero

Partners in Trust



Make your gift to Guide Dogs of America last a lifetime and beyond. 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. Providing life income gifts and bequests lets your gift continue working beyond your lifetime to help others achieve their goals with increased mobility and independence through a partnership with a loyal and loving guide dog. Charitable organizations are not subject to gift or estate taxes so your gift continues to support the causes close to your heart, like Guide Dogs of America, without being diminished by the IRS.

You will receive our special "Partners In Trust" crystal jar as a way of thanking you that you can display proudly, knowing the difference you are making in the lives of others through supporting Guide Dogs of America. Please call Rhonda Bissell at (818) 833-6432 for more information.

2016 Raffles

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, who 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 at the GDA December puppy raiser holiday party. Winner does not need to be present.

GDA Bike Raffle

This year, the GDA motorcycle raffle is for a custom 2016 Harley-Davidson Road Glide, two-tone red. The winning ticket will be drawn on Nov. 19, 2016 at the Guide Dogs of America Annual Banquet in Las Vegas. (Winner need not be present to win.) Visit the GDA website (guidedogsofamerica.org) for additional details and photos. Tickets are \$5 each or five tickets for \$20.

2015 Bike Raffle Winner!

Harley Winner

Congratulations to Tim Buck of New Castle, Penn. His ticket was pulled by GDA graduate Teresa Blevins during the 35th-annual William W. Winpisinger Charity Banquet benefiting Guide Dogs of America held Saturday, Nov. 21, at Bally's Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. In a twist of fate or just plain good luck, Buck was attending a GDA casino night fundraiser hosted by IAM District Lodge 98 when his name was drawn in Las Vegas.

Winter Merchandise

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.



2016 GDA Lapel Pin

This year's pin features the Guide Dogs of America logo above the letters "GDA" in bright red script and the year, 2016, at the bottom. Made in the U.S.A., the silver metal pin is 3/4". Price: \$8 (includes shipping and handling).

WINTER 2016 Order Form

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

Mail this entire form with your payment.

Merchandise

2016 GDA Lapel Pin — \$8 per pin _____ \$

Raffle Tickets

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

2016 GDA Bike Raffle — \$5 per ticket or \$20 for 5 _____ \$

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____ **\$**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Credit Card (check one) Visa MasterCard Discover AMEX

Card Number: _____ Expiration Date: ____/____

Signature: _____ CVC: _____
required for credit card purchase 3-4 digit code

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

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



Published by: Guide Dogs of America
13445 Glenoaks Blvd. Sylmar, CA 91342
(818) 362-5834 FAX: (818) 362-6870

E-MAIL
mail@guidedogsofamerica.org

WEBSITE
guidedogsofamerica.org

CONTRIBUTOR
Dale Hartford

EDITOR
Lorri Bernson



**GUIDE DOGS
OF AMERICA**

13445 Glenoaks Blvd.
Sylmar, CA 91342

© 2015 GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA 28

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LOS ANGELES, CA
PERMIT NO. 2181



New Employees

Eric Hawes, Gardener
Alejandra Maldonado, Apprentice Instructor



2016 Graduations

Graduations are held on Sundays and take place at Guide Dogs of America. Graduations will begin promptly at 10 a.m. on April 24, July 10 and Oct. 23.

6th-Annual Holiday Card Contest

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

Be sure to look through all those holiday photos you took; you just may have the winning photo for our sixth-annual Holiday Card Contest. Send us the best picture of your posed pup to enter. Be sure to follow the submission guidelines below.

Submission Guidelines:

- All photos **MUST BE TAKEN IN HIGH RESOLUTION (300+ dpi)** and submitted via email as an attachment by Feb. 28, 2016 to partners@guidedogsofamerica.org
- Winner will be notified on June 15, 2016 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