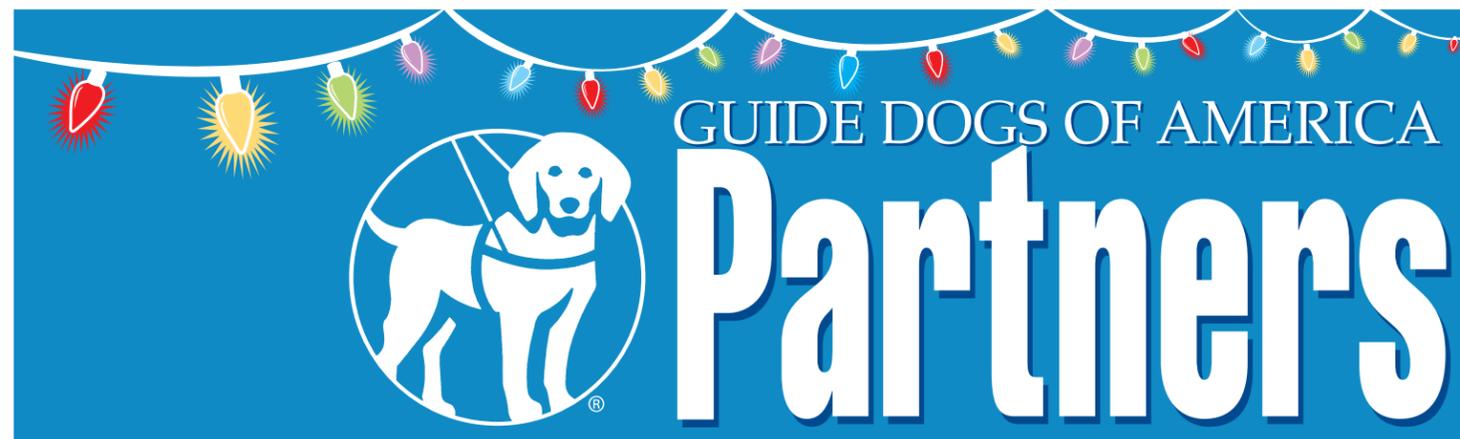




GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA

13445 Glenoaks Blvd.
Sylmar, CA 91342

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2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT GDA

GRADUATIONS 2008

February 3
April 27
July 27
October 19

Graduation celebrations take place four times a year on Sunday mornings at GDA. Graduations begin promptly at 10:00 a.m.

5TH ANNUAL MOTORCYCLE "RIDE FOR GUIDES"

May 18, 2008

OPEN HOUSE

June 14, 2008

For events and involvement opportunities in your area, please visit the GDA web site (www.guidedogsofamerica.org) and click on "Events Calendar."

winter 2007 volume 22 number 4

GUIDE DOGS GIVE OUR GRADUATES COMFORT AND JOY AT THE HOLIDAY SEASON

Amidst the Wrapping and Ribbons, the Kids and the Cooking, Our GDA Grads Are Making the Holidays Happy for Their Families

The holiday season is a wonderful and festive time of year, but there is extra effort involved in making them special. Sometimes it's difficult not to wonder how it all will possibly get done – gifts to buy, meals to make, cards to send. Yet, it all seems to come together in time for everyone to stop and be thankful. Every day presents our graduates with opportunities for new experiences and achievements, but like everyone, the holidays require a little more thought and planning.

In this holiday issue, we wanted to give you a glimpse into how several of our graduates that are parents enjoy the holiday season with their guide at their side.



The Moon Family. Clockwise from top left: Jamie, Jessica, John, Paul, Walker, Christie.

Graduate Christie Moon and her husband John have three children – twin daughters Jamie and Jessica, 17, and son Paul, 11. She has been legally blind since birth, but like many of our graduates, has some residual vision. While Christie enjoys wrapping the presents, she says the shopping can

"Guide Dogs Give Comfort" continued on page 3 >

SIXTY YEARS OF SUCCESS STORIES

As I look back on this past year, I continually catch myself looking toward next year and the celebration of GDA's 60th Anniversary.

Everyday I am surrounded by and reminded of the great and small accomplishments of our graduates that have been fueled by their personal commitment to living a life with increased mobility and independence. Today, GDA helps make these accomplishments possible for our students backed by the resources of a dedicated staff, hundreds of deeply committed volunteers, and many generous donors. But behind the 40 to 50 guide dog teams we now graduate each year and the thousands of teams we have graduated over the past 60 years, was the determination of one man who knew his mobility needs would best be met by using a guide dog.

At the age of 57, Joseph Jones became visually impaired. He was in need of a guide dog, but could not find a guide dog school to meet his needs. At GDA, we continue to carry out the vision of Mr. Jones who, with the help of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, founded the school and ensured it would have a policy of no upper age limits. We are proud of GDA's founding history and the mission it inspired. Led by our mission, we welcome blind and visually impaired men and women from throughout the United States and Canada and provide them with guide dogs and the instruction in their use, free of charge.

We are proud of our past, thankful for all that we have in the present, and excited about our future. As this year comes to a close, we extend our sincere gratitude to all of you for your continuing support of GDA, and send our best wishes to you and your family during the holiday season and throughout the New Year.

With sincere and heartfelt thanks,

Jay A. Bormann, GDA President

"We plan to spend the holidays together with family at the desert as we have done every year since I got my guide dog. We go camping and stay in our RV, which he absolutely loves. Even though my class was in January, my guide dog was the best Christmas present I could ever get and I am so thankful for him." CARI SHIELDS & DENVER

TAKING A PAWS FOR THANKS.

Throughout the year and across the country, fundraising events are held from which all proceeds are donated to GDA. We'd like to take a "Paws for Thanks" and recognize these organizations for their support.

JULY

- 18th Annual Hawgs for Dogs – Minnesota

AUGUST

- Great Northern Ride – Minnesota

SEPTEMBER

- District Lodge 70 – 8th Annual Car and Bike Show – Wichita, Kansas
- District Lodge 24 – 19th Annual IAM Golf Tournament – Ridgefield, WA
- District Lodge 60 and Affiliated Local Lodges – 2nd Annual Charity Golf Outing – Pinckney, MI

- 8th Annual Sacramento Classic Auto Show – Sacramento, CA
- New Horizons Retirees Club – 8th Annual Sacramento Classic Auto Show
- Kentucky State Council of Machinist's Annual Golf Scramble – Calvert City, KY
- Kentucky State Council's Annual R. Thomas Buffenbarger Skeet Shoot – Calvert City, KY
- Golden State Glendale H.O.G. Chapter – 5th Annual Fall Poker Run – Glendale, CA

OCTOBER

- District Lodge 15 – Penauille Servisair Golf Tournament – New York
- GDA Foundation Bowlathon – Canoga Park, CA
- West Coast Hawgs for Dogs 14th Annual "All Harley" Poker Run – San Jose, CA

NOVEMBER

- 7th Annual Las Vegas Hawgs for Dogs Motorcycle Ride – Las Vegas, NV
- 27th Annual GDA Charity Golf Tournament – Las Vegas, NV
- 27th Annual William W. Wnpsinger Charity Banquet – Las Vegas, NV

"My gigantic side of the family celebrates Thanksgiving as a family reunion, and by now everyone expects to be greeted with dignified enthusiasm, one by one, by my guide dog." DAVE BATES & STANLEY

In the spirit of how our guide dogs become a part of not just our students' lives, but the lives of their family, friends, and co-workers, and in particular during the holiday season, we asked some of our GDA graduates to tell us what they have planned for the holidays with their guide dogs. Their responses, like the one above, appear throughout the newsletter.

IN MEMORY

We note with sadness the passing of the following member of the GDA family:

Vince Bazzachini

Founding Member
Minnesota "Hawgs for Dogs"

A 23-year member of IAM Local Lodge 1833 in Minneapolis/St. Paul, Vince also served as the Local's President from 1994-1999. Vince was one of the original founders of the Minnesota Chapter of Hawgs for Dogs and was deeply dedicated to Guide Dogs of America. He will be fondly remembered by GDA for all his efforts to further the school's mission and will be sadly missed.

We also note with sadness the passing of the following GDA guide dogs that dedicated their lives to ensuring the safety and independence of their partners:

Raymond — Class #305

Troy (aka Terry) — Class #308

CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATES!



Class #355.5

GRADUATES from LEFT to RIGHT (Puppy Raiser in parenthesis): Jeff Jenkins & **Buster** (Joe & Janet Scavo), Chris Sirna & **Katie** (Tom & Judy Reilly), Vernice Norris & **Jonah** (Tami & Sami Semler), Debbie Jackson & **Felix** (The Behringer Family), Randy Brooks & **Franco** (The Polson Family), Bill Dailey & **Farley** (Allen & Beverly Adams)

IN-HOME GRADUATE (not pictured)
Patty Sarchi & **Othello** (Judy Kovaric)

INSTRUCTORS standing LEFT to RIGHT:
Chuck Jordan, Steve Burkman

EVERYONE WINS AT 2ND ANNUAL "PARTNER'S" AWARD DINNER AND CASINO NIGHT!



Byron

I gave my puppy up today
with unwanted tears of sorrow.
There is a job that he must learn,
We won't play ball tomorrow.

I knew this day would have to come
While he was yet a pup.
And though I know his useful need,
It's hard to give him up.

I must keep thinking everyday
What he will soon become;
The eyes of one who cannot see,
A partnership begun.

Byron isn't just a dog, you see,
He's meant to be a guide.
To walk with one who needs him more,
Now I must step aside.

Written by Jacque Butler,
GDA puppy raiser, in honor of Byron,
a German Shepherd guide dog.

Compliments of
Guide Dogs of America
Sylmar, CA 91342



At the 2nd Annual "Partner's" Awards Dinner and Casino Night held Saturday, August 12th everyone went home a winner – especially GDA. During an evening filled with dining, dealers, and dogs, a total of \$70,000 was raised for the school.

More than 300 guests, 40 exceptionally well-behaved puppies-in-training, and many graduates were in attendance at the annual event, which was held at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library Air Force One Pavilion. Honored at the dinner were Jacque & Jack Butler and Teri & Jerry Dillingham, who were presented with the prestigious "Partner's" award in recognition of their many years of volunteering and puppy raising. The couples were further honored for their continued commitment to service by Larry Grooms, District Director for Assemblywoman Sharon Runner, and State Senator George Runner, who presented them with State Resolutions.

We wish to thank our many sponsors for their support and for making our event a tremendous success: Tennenbaum Capital Partners, LLC, The Morton Family, Mrs. Macki Singer, Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Kidushim, Mrs. Eleanor Hughes, Scott Wealth Management Group of Wachovia Securities, Mr. & Mrs. Edwin Elliott, Sepulveda Building Materials, Mr. & Mrs. Steve Gittleman, and Animal Specialty Group, Inc. Additional thanks go to Tammy & Mark New for designing and donating the table décor, and Judy Reilly and her team for coordinating the silent auction. 🐾



Top photo: Our beautiful "Partner's" Awards Dinner venue.

Middle photo: (from left) Jay Bormann, Teri Dillingham, Jerry Dillingham.

Bottom photo: (from left) Jack Butler, Jacque Butler, Jay Bormann, Teri Dillingham, Jerry Dillingham.

Blackjack Table photo: Guests enjoying one of the games at the "casino."

"My Christmas will be very special this year. Last year I did not have a dog guide. This year I have enjoyed traveling and visiting with friends and I am looking forward to a special time with my guide's puppy raiser the day after the Guide Dog Users of Oregon Conference." SHARON ELY & SEBASTIAN



FUN AND FEASTING WITH THE FIREFIGHTERS One of the most popular raffles every year at the Open House Silent Auction is "Dinner with the Firemen." This year, several puppy raisers put their money in the "kitty" and were the successful bidders of the evening, which was hosted by the Pacific Palisades Fire Station. Fireman Dennis Haines, who also happens to be a GDA puppy raiser, is pictured here with puppy-in-training, Tori. Following dinner, the group toured the firehouse where several of the puppies-in-training made themselves quite at home as evidenced by the photo of the lucky dogs looking relaxed on and near one of the station's fire trucks. Pictured are: (top) Oceana, (from left) Tori, Rincon, and Yasmin.

For additional pictures, please visit www.guidedogsofamerica.org, and click on "Fundraiser Photos."

NEW EMPLOYEES

Please join us in welcoming to the GDA staff:

Karen Barger

Part-time , Puppy Department Assistant

Sandy Meyer

Receptionist

"We will spend the holidays with family, but our plans have not been finalized yet. I am so grateful for her help and for all of you who have also contributed to my keeping active. I will be 90 in December, but I don't feel that old."

LUELLA KNAPP & MADDY

"My guide dog and I will celebrate Christmas by visiting with her puppy raisers and the new puppy they are raising. This will be our Christmas gift."

JEANNIE GREEN & VENUS

NORTHWEST AIRLINES Goes The Extra "Miles" with AIRCARES® Matching Miles Program

Throughout October, November, and December, Guide Dogs of America is being featured in Northwest Airlines' AirCares® program. During this time the airline will match mileage donated to Guide Dogs of America – up to one million WorldPerks miles! – (<http://www.nwa.com/corpinfo/aircares/>). Donations through NWA will continue as usual after December. Read more about this incredible program on our web site (www.guidedogsofamerica.org).

Partners newsletter

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VET'S CORNER

GDA'S HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE FOR YOUR PAMPERED POOCH



The holidays are a time for giving. For most of us there is a special dog or dogs that deserve a little something special to celebrate the holiday season, too. GDA offers several helpful guidelines for gift giving — key among them, taking into consideration the age and size of your dog — to make you and your dog's holiday season happy, healthy, fun, and safe.

Have a Ball! – When purchasing a ball or toy for a dog, make sure it's large enough that it won't lodge in its throat. A dog's primary designs on a toy are carrying it in his mouth, chewing it, tossing it, and catching it, so it's important that the toy is too big to swallow.

Give Your Dog a Bone – Choose a bone that matches your dog's chewing rate and chewing habits. If your dog chews for short periods of time with a soft bite, a smaller rawhide bone that softens easily will be enjoyable. For more aggressive chewers harder bones will last longer and be more satisfying. Supervise chew time, and throw away bones that have become small enough to be swallowed.

Fashion with Function – A monogrammed leash and collar or a fancy new name tag that includes your home telephone number will ensure your dog's safe return if you become separated.

What a Treat – Treat dispensing toys in ball or other shapes make ideal gifts. Designed with hollow areas that can be filled with your dog's favorite (and healthy) treats or natural peanut butter (provided your pet is not allergic), these toys are great for keeping your dog occupied for long periods of time.

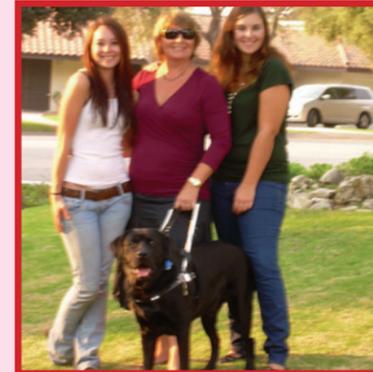
Holiday Cookies – Your dog shouldn't be fed any of your homemade holiday treats except those made from recipes specially-formulated for dogs and/or your dog's dietary restrictions. You can find wonderful recipes online or in doggie cookbooks.

Paws with a Cause – If everyday is a holiday for your pampered pooch, consider giving a gift in your dog's name to Guide Dogs of America. Check out our "Holiday Wish List" in this newsletter, or make a donation in any amount to help support our program.

A good dog gift is one that does not cause harm to your dog. With just a little forethought, you and your dog will enjoy a safe holiday season. 🐾

GUIDE DOGS GIVE COMFORT continued from page 1...

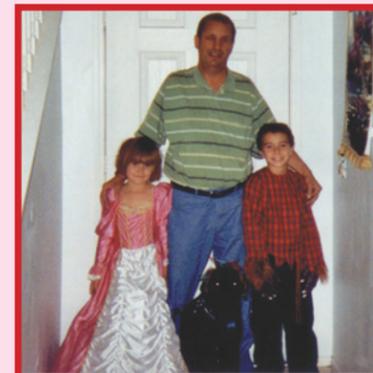
be difficult. As her vision deteriorated, it became more difficult to find clothes in her kids' sizes. Not realizing she was visually impaired, people were hesitant to offer her assistance. That changed when she received her first guide dog, Walker. "He has opened my world. Walker is my ambassador," said Christie. Together for more than three years, Christie and Walker easily navigate through crowded stores, and Christie is approached more frequently with offers of assistance. Every Christmas there is a special present under the tree for Walker – always packaged in the same gift bag with a picture of a yellow Labrador Retriever. "Walker knows that it is his bag and he goes right to it," said Christie.



Terri Kruger with Pontero and daughters Jennifer (left) and Antoinette (right).

This will be Terri Kruger's first year having a guide dog, and she is looking forward to it. She and Pontero graduated last February. Legally blind since birth, Terri had always "made do" until four years ago when her vision further deteriorated as a result of glaucoma, and she began using a cane. She used her cane until she arrived at GDA earlier this year. Teamed with Pontero, Terri enjoys the freedom and mobility having a guide dog has brought her. "During the holidays, I like to get out there and see and feel everything and get ideas. I want to find just the right thing," she said. "I think Pontero and I are going to have a lot of fun shopping together." Terri has two daughters, Jennifer, 19 and Antoinette, 18, and said she had to get more creative as the girls got older and grew out of toys and dolls. She also has had to become a better planner. "Pontero and I will probably do a lot of pre-shopping on our own, and then I'll make arrangements for my husband Jamie, or one of my friends to go back with me to pick up the gifts."

This past September, Chris Sirna graduated from GDA—for the sixth time. Blind since birth, Chris has used a guide dog for almost 30 years. His new guide, Katie, already has become an important member of the family, and this year will spend her first of many Christmases with Chris, his wife Aline, and their three children:



L to R: Serenity, Chris and Paul Sirna with guide dog Katie.

Michael, 26, Tom, 7, and Serenity, 6. As for how having a guide dog and having kids makes the holidays different for Chris, he finds that having a guide dog allows him to enjoy the holidays more. "Instead of having to worry about the congestion and the crowds of the

holiday season, having my guide dog eliminates some of that stress and allows me to enjoy the spirit of the season," he said. "Katie makes it easy for me to go to crowded places and not have to focus on mobility. I am able to concentrate on my kids and the fun they are having."



Greg Steinmetz with Proxy at Hanukah.

Nearly twenty years ago, Greg Steinmetz began to lose his vision. Diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa, Greg gradually lost his sight and began using a guide dog four years ago. Greg enjoys holiday shopping for his wife Tamie and their daughter, Emilee, 14. "Shopping has become much more complicated, but I have found since having Proxy that people are much more willing to help," said Greg. "I can do a lot of shopping online so I don't have to go to stores for everything." But it doesn't keep him from going into the kitchen. "I used to do a lot more of the cooking, and I still make a mean brisket at Hanukah," he said. "For Thanksgiving, I still make the turkey, but I don't do the carving anymore."

Blind since birth and with total vision loss, you might not expect to learn from Lorita Betraun that she loves to decorate the tree and bake cookies for the holidays. "My mom was really into the holidays and she gave that gift to me," said Lorita, for whom Valor is her fourth guide dog. And it's a gift that she is sharing with her family,



L to R: Lorita Betraun with her daughter, Michaela Brown, and guide dog, Valor.

husband Michael Brown, and their daughter Michaela Brown, 11, as she warms the house with the smell of fresh baked cookies and decorates the tree with ornaments collected over the years. Lorita employs all her senses to make the holidays enjoyable for her family and to take in all that makes the holidays special for her. "I know the cookies are ready by the smell, and my family loves them," she said. For Lorita, her biggest treat is going to the malls. "I love to go shopping all by myself with my guide dog during the holidays. It's a time of year that involves all my senses – the smells, the sounds of Christmas carols, the electricity of the season – you can feel it all around." This year as she hangs the ornaments on the tree there will be a new one for Valor to mark his first Christmas with Lorita and her family. On the ornament is the image of a black Labrador Retriever. 🐾

JOURNEY TO INDEPENDENCE BEGINS WITH A ROUND-TRIP TICKET

Our GDA students come from all over the United States and Canada, which means for many of them their 28-day training at the school begins and ends on an airplane. GDA is able to cover 100% of all our students' travel expenses, including airline tickets, by "purchasing" their tickets using frequent flyer miles that have been donated to the school.

Two airlines participate in the program: United Airlines and Northwest Airlines (see separate sidebar story about Northwest Airlines' matching miles program on page 6). If you or someone you know have unused miles with either of these airlines' programs, the miles can be donated directly to GDA. To donate your miles, have your account number ready and contact:

• Northwest WorldPerks
(800) 327-2881 or www.nwa.com/worldperks

• United Airlines Mileage Plus
(800) 421-4655 (Customer Service)

Call GDA at (818) 833-6432 for more information.

AUTOMATIC MONTHLY DONATION: JUST ONE CALL ENSURES A YEAR OF GIVING

Many of our supporters donate on a regular basis to our guide dog program. For those who would like to make a monthly donation to Guide Dogs of America, we have a plan that automatically charges your credit card at the beginning of each month. At year's end you will receive a thank you letter with a donation total for your tax records. Call (818) 833-6432 with questions or to participate.

TRUST-ING IN GDA

By thoughtfully naming GDA in their wills, trusts, and life insurance policies, the members of the *Partners in Trust Society* ensure 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.

Become a member of the *Partners in Trust Society*



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

Making Holiday Wishes Come True

There are many ways to celebrate GDA and continue to fulfill the hopes and dreams of our students – past, present, and future – at the holidays and all year round. Please take a moment to read about the many ways you can create holiday memories for years to come!

GDA GREATLY "APPRECIATES" DONATIONS OF STOCKS OR SECURITIES

Donating appreciated stocks or securities is another way you can give to GDA. This can benefit you in two ways: you will receive a deduction based on the average price of the security on the date you give the gift; and you avoid paying capital gains tax by gifting the security directly to GDA. This double benefit can work for appreciated real estate as well as appreciated securities. You also can sell a security that would generate a loss, and donate the proceeds to Guide Dogs of America. That loss could be used to offset other capital gains you may have, or if you have no other capital gains, up to \$3,000 can be used to offset ordinary income. Please consult a tax professional to verify your own particular situation. It's a great way to give a gift and minimize your taxes! Call (818) 833-6432 for details.

GDA'S HOLIDAY WISH LIST

As you are making your list and checking it twice this holiday season, please remember all the GDA puppies that have been extra nice! Donating items from the GDA "Holiday Wish List" will bring comfort and joy to our puppies during the holiday season and beyond:

General Holiday and Year-Round Kennel Wishes:

- Super-thick orthopedic dog beds
- Large sterilized bones
- Large heavy duty rubber toys
- Large compressed rawhide bones and large compressed rawhide chews
- Blankets/fluffy comforters
- Gift cards from any mass market pet store, i.e., PetCo, PetSmart

The following items are available at www.petedge.com:

- Tug Toys – Size: medium and large (\$3.89-\$4.99); Item: ZA848
- Nylabone Double Action Chews – Item: TF813
- Tough by Nature Holee Rollers – Size: 5 and 6.5 (\$4.99-\$6.99); Item: ZX335

Nursery Wishes:

- "Main Stays" print blankets; Size: twin/full

Vet Department/Recovery Room Wishes:

- Elevated dog beds: "Pipe Dreams Pet Beds" (available at www.dog.com) – Size: large; Item: 020801
- Relion Ultima Glucose Meter and Strips – Quantity needed: 1*
- Slumber Pet Fleece Beds (available at www.petedge.com) – Quantity needed: 6; Size: extra large; Item: ZW25048 *

The following items are available at Costco:

- Kirkland Pet Throws – One side fleece/one side fabric
- Kirkland Pet Beds – Quantity needed: 5; Size: large*

The following items are available from www.jbpet.com:

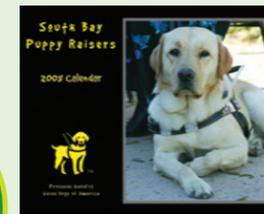
- Cordless Dremel – Quantity needed: 2; Item: 686-0101-2*
- Sanding Drum – Quantity needed: 2; Item: 686-0101-3*
- Sanding Bands – Quantity needed: 10-20; Item: 686-0101-4*
- Canine Cooler Beds – Quantity needed: 4; Size: 24x36; Item: 701-0101*
- Medi-Paw – Size/Quantity needed: large/4, medium/4; Item: 105-0100*
- Walk-a-Belly – Quantity needed: 2; Size: med/large (\$17.39); Item: 137-0112*
- Thermal Aid Treatment Packs – Quantity needed: 2; Size: small; Item: 151-0101*

*Please call (818) 833-6431 before ordering, to make sure these "wishes" have not been filled yet, as we only need a limited number of each.



FEATURED MERCHANDISE

GDA Answers "Wish" Requested by Many – Fanny-Packs Available for the First Time!



So many of you have asked how you can get one of the navy blue canvas fanny-packs with the GDA logo you see our grads wearing. GDA has just made your wish come true! The fanny-packs, which also feature three zippered compartments, are now available for purchase. Price for each fanny-pack is \$13. Shipping is included!

Don't Miss a Dog-gone Date – Purchase the South Bay Puppy Raiser Group Calendar

This full-color calendar measures 8½" x 11" and features puppies from the nursery, puppies-in-training, and breeders. The price of the calendar, which was produced by the South Bay Puppy Raisers Group, is \$15 (price includes shipping and handling).

GDA Winter ORDER FORM

**Shipping is included in prices listed.

GDA Fanny-Pack \$13 each \$

South Bay Puppy Raiser Calendar \$15 each \$

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: Winter Order Form
13445 Glenoaks Blvd., Sylmar, CA 91342

Or use the enclosed envelope.

GDA LOGO MERCHANDISE NOW AVAILABLE
For easy ordering, GDA has made many of its logo items available on our web site. Please visit www.guidedogsofamerica.org.

