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# GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA

# Partners

VOLUME 19  
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**Participants** (seated left to right): Rhonda Bissell, Louise Grim, Judy Reilly, Nancy Hayes, Mike Carland, Dona Carruth, Kristin Pitt, Andi Krusoe.

**Trainers** (standing left to right): Bob Wendler, Trina Began, Yvonne Martin.

## Blindfolded For Nine Days...



No, it isn't the concept of a new reality TV show. It was an innovative class for some brave GDA Staff and Puppy Raisers. One of the most challenging things about working with Guide Dogs of America is that few of us with sight can ever truly understand what it's like to be blind. Nor can we fully appreciate what it's like to have a wonderful guide dog change your life by furthering your mobility and independence.

To get a little closer to that kind of understanding and appreciation, six GDA employees and two GDA Puppy Raisers recently underwent "blindfold training." All the students were blindfolded when the class began. The blindfolds remained on for nine days, while the students went through training in mobility, at first without a dog, and later, with a guide dog.

This kind of training had never been done by a guide dog school before, and GDA's president Jay Bormann has received compliments and kudos for agreeing to such an innovative program.

In this first of a two-part report on the experiences of the participants, the students explain why they gave up their vacation time to put on a blindfold and go to school.

- **Andi Krusoe** has been a GDA employee for 14 years, and is currently GDA's Admissions and Graduate Services Manager: "I've seen hundreds of men and women attend our program and go on to continue their full and active lives. I've lived vicariously through their experiences by spending time with them and listening to what they've told me. So when the blindfold class was offered, I jumped at the chance to stand a moment in their shoes."
- **Mike Carland** works in the Maintenance Department at GDA "I asked to be in the blindfold class just for the experience of it. In the years that I have been at GDA, I have wondered how these incredible animals – guide dogs – really worked."
- **Nancy Hayes** is GDA's Data Systems Administrator: "I chose to take the class because I thought it would be the chance of a lifetime. I have been both a Puppy Raiser and an employee of GDA. I thought being in the class would bring me great insight and help me in both areas."
- **Rhonda Bissell** is GDA's Development Coordinator: "I was really curious to better understand what it's like to go through a class and learn to use a guide dog. From a Puppy

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## PARTNERS NEWSLETTER

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### Blindfolded For Nine Days continued from page 1

Raiser's perspective, I wanted to find out more about what my pup would go through. Obviously, I will never know what it's really like to be blind, but this was an opportunity for a unique experience in a safe environment."

- **Dona Carruth** has worked in GDA's kennels for nearly 15 years: "Every once in a great while an opportunity arises which allows an individual the chance to see into another's world in such a way that it alters that person's view for life. It's ironic that a temporary loss of vision could help you to see, but that's what I expected of this class. I have been a Puppy Raiser, worked in the kennel, the Puppy Department, cared for the boarding guide dogs at GDA, and the dogs in for training. I have seen dogs and people come and go for all this time, but I wanted a more direct understanding of WHY we do all this."
- **Louise Grim** is a kennel technician at GDA: "I was interested in the experience of living as a blind person for 24 hours a day, every day. I wanted to learn and experience what a student must face when in our class. I hoped that it would make me a better employee, and maybe a better person."
- **Judy Reilly** is a Puppy Raiser for GDA: "I wanted a tiny glimpse of what it must be like to not be able to see, and then to appreciate just what one of our wonderful pups can do to enhance your feeling of freedom and independence."

- Kristin Pitt is a Puppy Raiser for GDA: "I must admit that when the time for the class drew nearer, I got nervous. I worried that I'd feel claustrophobic in a blindfold for nine days. But my husband encouraged me to go, so I got up my courage and joined the class."

The fears that Kristin expresses were not unusual. Everyone worried about how they'd handle the blindness, the separation from home, issues of compatibility with their guide dog ... all the issues our real students deal with when they come to GDA.

To help the participants adapt to blindness, a special sponsor tried to prepare each student with a care package filled with items that would help them with their ordinary daily activities. A few weeks in advance of the special blindfold class, she sent each participant a blindfold, a talking watch, textured paint and raised dots for marking belongings, rubber bands, safety pins to clip outfits together, and tips to prepare them for a world without sight.

Despite these preparations, adjusting to a sightless world without any orientation or mobility training proved difficult for all the participants, which only made them appreciate working with a guide dog even more. In a way, the exercise presented an accelerated experience of what a person who is blind lives through.

In the next issue of Partners, we'll tell you what the participants had to say about their life-changing experience. Hopefully, this will give you a new perspective on what it means to be blind, and how you help a guide dog change a life. 🐾

- SECURITY
- INDEPENDENCE
- FREEDOM
- COMPANIONSHIP

**In about two years, a blind man or woman will experience all these things thanks to this puppy.**

Your CFC contribution helps Guide Dogs of America breed, raise and train extraordinary guide dogs. For over 50 years, blind men and women have chosen to depend on the trustworthy assistance of our intelligent guide dogs as they strive to live their lives to the fullest.

GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA  
(818) 362-5834  
www.guidedogsofamerica.org



Member of Animal Charities of America  
Special thanks to IAM members.



Special thanks to all the federal employees and members of the uniformed armed services who contribute to GDA through the Combined Federal Campaign.

Our designation number is 1807 and you'll find us listed under Animal Charities of America in your CFC brochure. Your extraordinary generosity continues to inspire us. 🐾

## Come to the GDA Foundation All Howls Eve Bowl-A-Thon!



On October 17th, 2004, the GDA Foundation will host a Howl-o-ween Bowl-a-thon at Canoga Park Bowl in Canoga Park, CA to raise money for GDA. Sign-in starts at 11:00 AM and the balls start rolling at Noon. The cost is \$25 in advance, or \$35 on the day of the event, and includes shoe rental, three games of bowling, lunch, and one free raffle ticket. Or, if you just want to cheer on the bowlers, join us for lunch and get a free raffle ticket for \$15 in advance, or \$20 at the door. It's a great family event for a great cause. For more information go to GDA's website at [www.guidedogsofamerica.org](http://www.guidedogsofamerica.org). 🐾



# The First – and definitely not the last – GDA Ride For Guides

Over the years, many groups have held motorcycle rides for GDA. These events turned out to be such great fun and great fundraisers to help provide guide dogs to people who are blind that we decided to hold our own last May.

When only 27 riders registered in advance, however, we were afraid our first ride might be our last. But as the bikes rolled into our parking lot, it was clear that our first Ride for Guides was going to be a roaring success. More than 125 riders as well as their guests made the 80 mile round-trip through the Santa Clarita Valley. At GDA and at each of three stops, we had puppies-in-training waiting to encourage and thank the riders.

A delicious barbecue and a great raffle at the school topped off the day. With so much interest, and so many asking when we'd hold our next Ride for Guides, the decision was an easy one. We're already planning for another ride next May. Thanks to all who helped organize this great event, and to all who participated. See you next year!! 🐾



## PARTNERS IN TRUST... A generous gift made 40 years ago

Forty years ago, Alice Munnings made out a will and listed International Guiding Eyes (now Guide Dogs of America) as one of three charity beneficiaries. When Alice died in 2002 with no surviving heirs, her estate was worth \$1.3 million dollars.

The original of Alice's will could not be found, however, and the designated Trustee bank was no longer in operation. This predicament prompted the need to hire an attorney and delayed execution of Alice's intentions. Given this uncertainty, several of Alice's distant cousins disputed the will. Thankfully, the legal process eventually authenticated the will, and the cousins dropped their challenge. GDA will soon receive a very generous gift made 40 years ago!

Sadly, we have no record of Alice in our files. If you know anything about Alice, and her extraordinary

commitment to providing guide dogs for the blind, please call us.

Naming GDA in your will or trust as Alice did is a great way to help GDA plan for our long term financial health. Please let us know if you include GDA in your will or trust – or better yet, give us a copy of your will to help ensure that your wishes are carried out.

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

- Lorraine Barth
- Ida A. Masters
- Elizabeth Crawford McMurray
- An anonymous donor

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



## WISH LIST

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

- \* NEW STANDARD PILLOWS for our dorm – 20 needed
- \* FOUR-FOOT FOLDING PLASTIC TOP TABLES – two needed
- \* LIVING AIR PURIFIER
- \* THERMAL DOG CUSHIONS (XL – 36"x54")
- \* BISSELL STEAM MOP or EUREKA ENVIRO STEAMER
- \* TWIN SIZE BLANKETS (comforter or flat type)
- \* STERILIZED BONES AND NYLABONES – large 10"-12"
- \* COMMERCIAL OUTDOOR HEATERS – six needed
- \* TALL COMMERCIAL STANDING FANS – five needed
- \* AWNINGS – 10' x 10'
- \* NEW CRATES – ten #200 crates and ten #300 crates needed
- \* TOP PERFORMANCE PRO PET BLOW DRYERS – two needed (available through PetEdge)





# GRADUATION DAY

**Class #343**

## IN-HOME GRADUATES

(not pictured): Dominic Sposeto received **Schooner**, raised by Kathy and Jerry Zechmeister.



Class #343 students (seated) from left to right: Darin Dobson and **Paxton**, Christy Moon and **Walker**, Kari Butler and **Shasta**, Brad Rollinson and **E.J.**, Karla Westjohn and **Dreamer**, Latice Harris and **Emmett**, Trey Walters and **Phineas**, (not shown) Roberta Huffman and **Gem**.

Puppy Raisers (not pictured): **Paxton** – Barry Hayes, **Walker** – Roger Hansen, **Shasta** – Betty & Ken Iverson, **E.J.** – The Schmid Family, **Dreamer** – Nikole Bannerman, **Emmett** – Susan & Bill Renwick, **Phineas** – Brenda Kenworthy & Howard Fitzer, **Gem** – The Steve & Teri Jensen Family.

Instructors (standing) left to right: Bob Wendler, Joe Bramlett, and Yvonne Martin.

## STOCKING UP ON STOCKINGS TO STUFF



Our dogs are part of the family, so they get their own stockings and their own Christmas treats as well. These tapestry-style dog stockings are great for the special canines in your household... or buy them for the whole family. All proceeds go to GDA, so your purchase helps provide guide dogs to those who need them.

Stockings are \$20 if personalized, and \$15 if not. Add \$5 for shipping up to two stockings.



**SPECIAL ORDERING INFORMATION:** Fifty different dog breeds are available. For more information or to ship larger orders, call GDA at (818)362-5834, ext. 309. Please print names for personalization in ALL CAPS and order by November 5 to ensure delivery before Christmas.

**Make checks payable to Guide Dogs of America Foundation (GDAF) and mail to 19360 Rinaldi, #229, Northridge, CA 91326 (Do not mail in the enclosed envelope.)**

### STOCKINGS

ITEM	QUANTITY	PERSONALIZATION (PRINT)	PRICE	SUBTOTAL
A. Golden Retriever				
B. Yellow Labrador				
C. Black Labrador				
D. German Shepard				
E. Cats				
F. Bones				

**Make checks payable to Guide Dogs of America Foundation (GDAF) and mail to 19360 Rinaldi, #229, Northridge, CA 91326 (Do not mail in the enclosed envelope.)**

#### PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Check: make payable to Guide Dogs of America Foundation (GDAF)

Visa  MasterCard Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Your purchases help support the work of Guide Dogs of America. Thank you!

#### \*SHIPPING AND HANDLING

1-2 Stockings Add \$5

When ordering several items, please call for custom S&H costs. For more information call GDA at (818) 362-5834, ext. 309.

\*Shipping and Handling:

TOTAL ENCLOSED:

Check here if you wish to pick up your stockings at GDA.

# A Guide Dog Puppy In Every Classroom – Improving Education For All

We all know how much our guide dogs improve the lives of people who are blind, but recently, we received three separate reports of how our guide dog puppies-in-training can improve our education system. Maybe it's time for a guide dog puppy in every classroom and library!



## Very Special Education - Gordy

The students in **Diona Durham's** special education classroom at the Olga Reed School in Los Alamos, CA, have a

wide range of abilities and range from kindergarten to eighth grade. But they all have one thing in common – they love **Gordy**, Diona's black Lab guide dog puppy-in-training.

*“Besides academic learning, social skills such as responsibility, caring, sharing, persistence, trustworthiness, and most importantly, doing your best, are also important. Raising a puppy has brought meaning to these character traits in a real life situation.*

Since bringing Gordy to class, Diona noticed marked improvement in several of her students. For example, one child, who previously had problems fitting in with his peers, was elected Student Body President of the entire 7th grade.

*“It was an amazing year. Gordy brought love into our classroom, and it changed everyone!”*

## The Four-Footed Library Guide - Amelia

**Ann-Marie Biden** has been a children's librarian for more than 17 years and believes passionately in her mission to lead children to the world of books and information. To Ann-Marie, the idea of bringing a guide dog puppy-in-training, whose future mission would be to lead her partner through the world, fit perfectly with the mission of the Upland, CA library where she works.

The rest of the library staff wholeheartedly agreed, so **Amelia**, a black Lab puppy, became a daily fixture at the library. This provided an ideal training ground for Amelia, and a wonderful opportunity



to educate children and their parents about guide dogs.

*“The lessons the children learn from Amelia are wonderful: You should always ask before petting a dog. At story time we sit quietly and listen. Yes, even dogs have jobs sometimes. Some people can't see as well as we can, so they can get helper dogs to guide them.”*

When it came time for Amelia to be returned to GDA for training last February, it was decided that her most valuable role would be as a breeding dog. So, to the delight of the children, Amelia returned to Ann-Marie's home, and to her role at the library.

## The Value of a Guide Dog in-training in the Classroom – Drew and Marshall

College of the Canyons student **Kristen Stauch** was told by many of her classmates how relaxing it was to have puppy-in-training **Drew**, a yellow Lab, in the classroom, even though all he did was sit quietly at Kristen's feet.

Kristen was intrigued by this feedback, so when she had to design a study for a psychology class, she attempted to measure the benefit. With the help of fellow GDA Puppy Raiser, **Paul Appolinario** and his puppy-in-training, **Marshall**, a yellow Lab, Kristen studied the effect of a puppy-in-training on high school students. Her initial results were promising, so she's expanding her study.

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Dogs like **Amelia**, **Gordy**, **Drew** and **Marshall** are so wonderful, it wouldn't surprise us to find that they have a measurable effect on the stress level of all the people around them. And the help they provide in classrooms and libraries is more proof that these are some incredible dogs. 🐾



## Welcome to New GDA Employees!

GDA is continually blessed to attract some hard-working dog and people lovers. The latest additions to our great staff are **Laura Bramlett** who joins us as a Puppy Development Coordinator, **Joe Bramlett** is an apprentice trainer, and **Diane Anesi** who is our newest part-time Kennel Technician. Welcome to GDA! 🐾



## 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.

### Wish List Gratitude

We are especially grateful for recent donations of items from our **Wish List**—Thanks to all!

- **Kari Weber** donated a table and chairs for our kennel break room.
- **William Grubbs** donated lots of great toys for our puppies to go home with when they leave us to live with our Puppy Raisers.
- **Judy Reilly** and **Nancy Hayes** read our minds and donated forty sets of new fluffy towels for our student dorm before the request even made it to our Wish List.



More than 10,000 spectators watched several GDA graduates and their guide dogs lead the parade through the streets of Santa Barbara, CA, followed by GDA instructors and more

than 40 puppies-in-training and their Puppy Raiser families.

As Grand Marshal, GDA also received a portion of the proceeds from the day's events. At the end of the day, Animal Planet's Matt Gallant handed out prizes, but thanks to Big Dog Sportswear, GDA had already won the biggest prize. Thanks to all!!

### Thanks to the People behind the Costumes

The **Disneyland Cast Community Fund** makes donations in the name of the cast of Disneyland, and encourages employees to get involved in volunteer activities. They graciously welcomed us to their recent expo, where GDA staff and Puppy Raisers answered questions about GDA. **Lady**, a yellow lab puppy sponsored by the Fund, was a big hit with all who attended the expo.

Thanks to all the members of the Disneyland cast for supporting our puppies-in-training!

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

## Donate to GDA Just by Shopping!

Several major retailers have set up programs to contribute to GDA when you shop with them. All you have to do is shop as you normally would, and GDA wins! Here are the specifics:

**Albertson's and Savon Drugs** - Call GDA at (818) 362-5834 to request a Community Partners Card. Show your card at checkout, along with your Albertson's Preferred Savings Card, and 2-5% of your total purchase amount will be donated to GDA!

**Ralph's Groceries** – If you are a Ralph's Club Card Member, call GDA at (818) 362-5834 to enroll in Ralph's donation program. Ralph's will donate 2-4% of your total purchase amount to GDA.

**Amazon.com** – Whenever you shop at Amazon.com, remember to connect to the site through the link on our website ([www.guidedogsofamerica.org](http://www.guidedogsofamerica.org)). When you do, 7.5% of your purchase amount will be donated to GDA.

These programs are a great way to give to GDA just by doing what you would have done anyway.

Thanks! 🐾

- And an anonymous supporter donated a much-needed grooming table for our dogs.

### A Doggone Big Thanks to Big Dog Sportswear!

The Annual Big Dog Parade and Canine Festival has become a yearly treat for dog lovers. This year's 10th Annual parade featured over 800 dog participants and their owners dressed in often humorous costumes. It also featured Guide Dogs of America as the Grand Marshal of the parade.



## IN MEMORY

Guide Dogs of America recently lost a great friend, who passed away on April 17, 2004. **Jim Edwards** was a retired business representative for the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, District #190, who supported GDA at every opportunity. He will be sorely missed by his family, his friends, and by GDA.

We also recently lost two wonderful guide dogs, who gave a lifetime of service and companionship:

- **Decker** – Class #296
- **McCoy** – Class #293

Also, memorial gifts to GDA were made on behalf of two U.S. soldiers who recently served in Iraq.

- **Leland "Mark" Potter** died on June 3rd, 2004 after service in Iraq. Mark was a highly decorated soldier and a wonderful family man. He also left instructions to donate his eyes to the blind. His loss is mourned by his wife, children, and loyal dog.
- **Clayton W. Henson** was killed in action in Iraq on April 17th. Clayton grew up in Stanton, TX, and will be missed by all, especially his parents and grandparents. 🐾

# What Has Two Wheels and Four Feet?

The answer is the unique partnership between motorcycle riders across the country and our great dogs. Over the years, many dedicated and kindhearted members of the IAM&AW union (the union that founded the school over 50 years ago) have established some remarkable motorcycle rallies to raise money for GDA.

- Minnesota Hawgs for Dogs Ride
- Tacoma Run for the Dogs
- New Bern, North Carolina Hawgs for Dogs Ride
- Midwest Hawgs for Dogs Ride
- Ashland, Ohio Run for the Dogs
- Milwaukee Run for the Dogs
- Seattle Puppy Putt



Our grateful thanks go out to the IAM members and volunteers who recruit, organize and implement these fun annual events, as well as the thousands who ride their bikes for the camaraderie that comes from enjoying a good ride and helping a good cause. 🐾



## Four Footed Holiday Cheer

### GDA cards...

a popular way to spread holiday cheer to friends and loved ones. Our cards come in packages of 15 cards with matching envelopes.

- A. **Boy by Window** (Inside message: blank) \$10 per package plus \$3 shipping & handling.
- B. **Two Pups** (Inside message: blank) \$15 per package plus \$3 shipping & handling.



### K-9's in the Kitchen

- C. GDA's new cookbook features 300 fabulous recipes for people and puppies and is the perfect gift for the cook on your holiday shopping list. Each book is \$20 or 2 for \$35 plus shipping & handling. (See chart for shipping costs.)



Begin your Holiday Shopping!

## GDA FUN STUFF ORDER FORM

Order by December 6 to ensure delivery by Christmas.

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

### PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Check: Please make payable to Guide Dogs of America.

Visa  MasterCard  Discover

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Your purchases help support the work of Guide Dogs of America. Please allow 2 weeks for processing and delivery. Complete and mail this entire form with your payment in the enclosed envelope. THANK YOU!

Item	QTY	Price	Subtotal
A. Boy by Window Card		\$10.00 ea.	
B. Two Pups Card		\$15.00 ea.	
C. K-9's Cookbook	1	\$20.00 ea.	
	2	\$35.00	

\*Shipping and Handling

TOTAL ENCLOSED:

### \*SHIPPING AND HANDLING

#### FOR CARDS

QUANTITY	COST
1 package	Add \$3
2-4 packages	Add \$6
5-10 packages	Add \$8
10 or more packages	

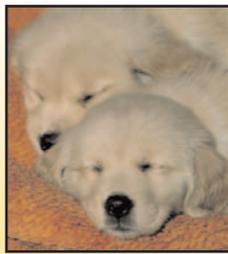
Call GDA at (818) 362-5834, ext. 0 for custom rate.

#### FOR COOKBOOK

QUANTITY	COST
1-3 books	Add \$2.50
4-6 books	Add \$3.50
7 or more books	

Call GDA at (818) 362-5834, ext. 321 for custom rate.

# WHAT'S BLACK AND YELLOW AND FULL OF LOVE?



GDA Labrador puppies, of course! Here are our recent births:

Breed	# of Puppies	Date of Birth
Black Lab pups	2	6/14/04
Black Lab pups	6	7/5/04
Black and yellow Lab pups	7	7/9/04
Black and yellow Lab pups	7	7/18/04
Black and yellow Lab pups	9	7/25/04
Black and yellow Lab pups	4	8/2/04

If you'd like to be a puppy raiser to one of these future guide dogs and live on the west coast, please call Louise Henderson at (818) 362-5834, ext. 234. 🐾

## PLEASE NOTE PLEASE NOTE PLEASE NOTE

If you receive multiple copies of Partners, please let us know so we can unclutter your mailbox and save GDA money. Please contact us at [newsletter@guidedogsofamerica.org](mailto:newsletter@guidedogsofamerica.org) or by mail at Newsletter, Guide Dogs of America, 13445 Glenoaks Boulevard, Sylmar, CA 91342. Please list all the names under which you receive Partners and let us know which one is the correct one. Thanks! 🐾



## GUIDE DOGS OF AMERICA

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## HATS OFF TO ALL OUR OPEN HOUSE GUESTS!

More than 1,000 guests showed up for our Annual Open House on June 12, 2004 to learn about GDA, show their support, have a great time, and wear silly hats. One of the highlights of the day, as usual, was the Puppy Trials. Guests of all ages enjoyed watching 150 puppies show off their skills and strive to ignore distractions like food, farm animals and crowds. They also practiced using air-line stairs and demonstrated their obedience work.

Our third annual "Day With The Trainers" raffle was won by Ann Benya and Suzanne Breaw. These two lucky winners have already enjoyed their special day with GDA's dedicated trainers and some remarkable dogs.

And our Silent Auction was the biggest and best ever, and raised record amounts of funds to help provide

guide dogs to men and women who are blind.

Everyone who attended enjoyed the day immensely. Thanks to all who helped set up the Open House (and cleaned up after), and special thanks to all who participated – especially those of you wearing outrageous hats! 🐾