ALUMNI NEWS

Volume 30 – Number 1

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Audio version voiced by Michele Spitz, Woman of Her Word and Cliff Hahn, Cliff Hahn Sound

We love your participation in this newsletter. Send submissions to the editor via phone, mail, or e-mail [tstern@guidedogs.com](mailto:tstern@guidedogs.com) or [alumninews@guidedogs.co](mailto:alumninews@guidedogs.co)m

Alumni Association Mission Statement

The Alumni Association will support the vision of GDB, “using our power of partnering to improve quality of life”, by building a strong sustainable community of support among our Alumni. We will work to support Alumni success with their guide, in building relationships with others, and actively participating in the greater GDB community.

Alumni Association Board of Directors Mission Statement

Connecting our community through leadership, advocacy, communication and outreach

Alumni News is available electronically, in Braille (upon request), and on audio CD (upon request). The audio version of this newsletter and Guide Dog News can be found on our website, guidedogs.com. If you are able to access email and would like future issues sent to you electronically, please let Theresa Stern know at [tstern@guidedogs.com](mailto:tstern@guidedogs.com). Email allows us to get the news to you in a timely manner and is easy on the environment!

We'd like to send our very special thanks to all of our Alumni who, by their efforts and their examples, refer others to our program.

Interested in a career with GDB? Check out our opportunities at: <http://guidedogs.com/careers>

Browse all GDB’s newsletters, including back issues of Alumni News at [www.guidedogs.com/news](http://www.guidedogs.com/news)

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# FROM YOUR ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Editor’s Note*:*

*The Alumni Association Board Committee that helps to produce this newsletter is trying something new! Each issue will have a theme – as you will see, this issue focusses on Spring Gardens! Our next issue, scheduled to come out in June 2022 will feature articles on Summer Fun, travel adventures, outdoor activities, BBQs . We need your help, please submit your articles, poems, BBQ recipes, etc. to* [*alumninews@guidedogs.com*](mailto:alumninews@guidedogs.com)

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## Contest Alert!!

By: Maia Scott with Gleam

Summer is just around the corner and some of us dream longingly of the sounds of sizzling as juices hit the coals and the smells of your favorite barbecue eats waft tantalizingly on the warm summer wind.

There’s no time like the present to get prepared and fire up those favorite BBQ recipes.

Do you have a favorite secret recipe that make mouths water from miles around? Here’s your chance to spill the beans. Alumni News is seeking epic barbecue recipes to take center stage in our next Summer inspired edition of the newsletter.

Two winners will be published in Alumni News and two will receive an epic, barbecue worthy item from the GDB gift shop.

Ready… Flip! – Send your submission by May 15th, 2022 to [alumninews@guidedogs.com](mailto:alumninews@guidedogs.com) and use the subject line “Summer BBQ Contest”.

## 2022 Virtual Alumni Reunion

## Call for Workshop Submissions Deadline Extended

Dear GDB Guide Dog Class and OMI Class Alumni, K9 Buddy Families and Puppy Raisers,

As you may have heard, the 2022 GDB Alumni Reunion is happening virtually via Zoom from October 15th - 22nd. During our eight days connecting with GDB family, we will be celebrating Guide Dogs for the Blind’s eightieth anniversary. Our celebrating will feature a talent show, opening ceremony, vendor space and an assortment of daily break-out sessions to choose from.

This is where you come in:

If you have a topic or skill to share with GDB alumni and raisers, such as how to make something, chapter panel discussions, best practices and beyond, please send a proposal for consideration to Theresa Stern at [tstern@guidedogs.co](mailto:tstern@guidedogs.co)m by April 15th 2022. Your proposal needs to include the following:

Your Name

Your affiliation to GDB (i.e. alumni, puppy raiser, etc)

Title of your presentation

A brief description of your topic and what the participants can expect to learn, share, experience

Format considerations i.e. PowerPoint

Please plan your workshops for sixty minutes, exceptions will be considered.

Over the next few months you will learn of other ways to participate and put your personal stamp on our celebrations including: a video recording for our talent show, an audio or video recording introducing you and your guide/ buddy/ puppy, or hosting a virtual booth in our vendor lounge. Stay tuned for more information on all these and more!

If there is some other way you would like to contribute to the reunion or if you have any questions, please contact Theresa Stern at [Tstern@guidedogs.com](mailto:Tstern@guidedogs.com).

Your Alumni Board looks forward to growing an amazing Eightieth Anniversary Celebration Reunion from all your voices, talents, wisdom, presence and joy.

## Speaker Series Focusing on Advocacy coming in June.

By Maia Scott with Gleam

The temperature is going up, the COVID numbers are going down and that means more and more of us are getting out.  The Summer season will see many more people traveling to new places, visiting old and reconnecting with family and friends unseen for the last two years.

Consequently, guide dog handlers and puppy raisers alike will experience more encounters with the public.  Hopefully these experiences will feature moments of joy as you pass, welcoming energy as you enter hotels and businesses and just the right amount of benign curiosity for you to handle without becoming disruptive. Sadly, many of us will encounter service denials and other microaggressions enough to make our hair stand on end and our words to tumble.  This is why it's important to empower yourself with a solid advocacy toolkit.  Think of it as an emergency preparedness plan for ADA noncompliance and scummy vibes.

The Alumni Board Communications Team and Advocacy Team are partnering to offer a resource-filled session that will leave you with a thorough advocacy toolkit to have on hand, exact date and time TBD, check your emails for an invitation later this Spring.

Meanwhile, we want to hear from you.  What advocacy questions or concerns come up for you?  Have you experienced any doubts about your rights as a guide dog handler?  And, what resources would you like to see available?

To share your questions and ideas, please email [alumninews@guidedogs.com](mailto:alumninews@guidedogs.com) by June 1, 2022.

# SPRING INTO SPRING!

## Sprouts, Snails and Puppy Dog Tails,

## How Does Her Garden Grow?

## Master Gardener Deborah Allen shares her experience gardening blind

By Maia Scott with Gleam

“Gardening comes in all forms.” Whether you are growing sprouts or an epic vegie garden, Master Gardner and GDB Alum Deborah Allen says it’s still gardening. “It doesn’t even have to be food; it can just be for your pleasure.” From planting a single flower to plotting entire gardens, Allen shares how her love of gardening has grown and evolved.

Allen grew up nourished by her mom’s love of gardening. “Even though we moved frequently during my childhood, my mom gardened at every new home.” Allen’s father was in the navy. “My earliest gardening memory was when my mom let me plant a begonia tuber when I was about three or four. Watching it grow and bloom was magical.”

Gardening delves deep into Allen’s ancestral roots. “My mom is a holocaust survivor who lived her early years in a Nazi concentration camp.” Through telling her mom’s story, Allen shared the empowerment that comes with being able to grow one’s own food. “One memory Mom shared about living in the concentration camp is powerful for me. She talks about seeing an apple tree growing outside the barbed wire of the camp and not being able to pick the food while she was starving.”

Professionally, Deborah Allen works as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. Her passion and pleasure is with the earth, working the soil in her own garden to grow food and aromatic plants and as a Master Gardener with the University of Idaho, Ada County Extension Agency. “Master gardeners go through a course of study to learn about gardening, botany and general horticulture practices.” Allen explains that Master Gardeners are expected to learn then share what was learned through volunteer services. “Not only do you learn, you volunteer your time and have the opportunity to enhance the lives of others through the process of growing plants.”

Allen says people who are interested can [find their local county extension agency](https://mastergardener.extension.org/) to learn more and possibly sign up for training.

Deborah Allen shares some ideas and adaptations for gardening blind. “Some of the techniques I used when I had low vision included having brightly colored landmarks and borders that I could easily see.” As Allen lost the rest of her sight, some of her adaptations and techniques changed. “I use many different adaptations as a totally blind gardener. These are techniques I have developed over the years as a blind gardener and by talking with other blind gardeners.”

Some of Allen’s adaptations for eyes-free gardening include:

* Use narrow beds,
* Avoid circular patterns
* Use short handled tools
* Add tactile markers to feel with feet or hands
* Use tactile landmarks such as fences, rocks or larger plants to define smaller areas.
* Consider a system to ID new plants such as creating tactile markings and a Braille key.
* Plant extra just in case of accidental weeding of the wrong things.
* Avoid expecting perfection in gardening.
* Keep your guide contained away from you while pruning or using sharp tools.
* [NLS](https://nlsbard.loc.gov/nlsbardprod/login/NLS) has an extensive selection of gardening books with further ideas and suggestions.

Allen expands on this latter suggestion. “I don’t have Scone outside when I am pruning because I never know if she is going to come up and put her nose in the wrong place to say hello or push a ball into my hand.”

When a curious dog adds to the joy and serenity of your garden sanctuary, safety precautions need to be considered. “If you have a scarfer, it’s really important to know what you are planting is not poisonous to your dogs. There are things that aren’t poisonous to us that are poisonous to our dogs.” Allen also warns, “It’s not just the plant material, its what we use to grow them.”

Some things to be careful of your dog ingesting include:

* Grapes and currents
* Chrysanthemums and Daisies
* Even that healing Aloe plant
* Compost and fertilizers
* Woods such as cherrywood
* Snail bait and pesticides
* Loose equipment such as wire ties and other garden refuse.
* A much longer list of plants harmful to dogs can be found as a PDF on the ASPCA Website entitled: [Plants Toxic to Dogs](https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/dogs-plant-list)

It’s not just what your dog could potentially eat. “If you have a dog who enjoys sniffing the herbs and flowers, be sure to avoid things that may release a barb or seed that could go up her nose. Foxtails are a nightmare!”

Believe it or not, Allen’s guide dog plays an important part in helping the garden grow. “I love to groom Scone outside when the weather is nice because dog fur is high in nitrogen which is a good fertilizer.”

Scone enjoys the fruits of Allen’s labors. “My dog loves, loves, LOVES fruit. I grow blackberries and other small fruits that we enjoy together.” Allen goes on to share, “I also grow herbs I mainly use for teas.” Scone prefers the real thing while ambling at Allen’s side. “I do a lot of fragrant gardening and we both enjoy just stopping to smell the flowers and the herbs.”

## Martinez’s Garden

**By Cheri Owen and Martinez**

Martinez, a 70lb yellow, nearly white, English Lab, lays on the back brick patio sunning himself. He is awake but his eyes are closed. He yawns and gently lifts his head.

“There you are,” exclaimed Maria, a beautiful green and red hummingbird, hovering overhead.

“You sound like a drone coming at me,” Martinez replied.

Maria continued to buzz around Martinez. “You better be careful. The new landscapers have planted some new foliage. Not sure if it’s good for you so don’t go eating it!”

Martinez slowly got up from his nap, and stretched languidly, his body fluidly arching into downward dog pose.

“I don’t eat things out of the garden, I’m a guide dog, remember? I graduated from the Guide Dogs for the Blind.

*I* know better,” he said, rather haughtily.

Before Maria could offer a response, they both, cocked their heads, reacting to a very high-pitched chirping sound. Exchanging glances, Maria flew behind Martinez’s head. A ground squirrel popped its head from out of the ground on their side the fence, a big branch of rosemary providing partial cover. He looked from side to side and spotted Martinez, who lowered his head and stared at him warily.

“Hi!” the squirrel said. “My name is Ralph. Boy oh boy, who’s garden is this? This rosemary is delicious,” he remarked, starting to chomp away.

Martinez cleared his throat: “This is *my* garden and it belongs to *my* person.”

“Oh, you’re that guide dog I see with that blind woman, Ralph said. “Well, she can’t see me eating her herbs anyway, Dude, so chill out.”

Maria dive bombed Ralph and he rushed back into his tunnel.

She fluttered outside of the opening so that Ralph could see her, “Don’t be mean or you can’t be in our garden,” she buzzed.

Ralph slowly came out of his tunnel and shrugged. “I was only kidding. Just a joke.”

Buzzing back to Martinez, Maria said, “Martinez, why don’t you show Ralph around the garden.”

Martinez shook himself off and took a step toward Ralph. “You know you are classified as a pest, right?”

Ralph replied: “I know, but what’s new? I tell you what, you share this amazing garden with me and be my friend and I won’t dig a tunnel under the ground and destroy the root system. How’s that?”

Before Martinez could speak, Maria happily bobbed in agreement. “Deal!”

“Well, okay then,” Martinez said, “Let’s start over here. Over here we have herbs. I like it when my handler picks them, and she bakes me treats. They are delicious. She uses this basil, the rosemary, oregano, sage and parsley.”

Martinez keeps walking and Ralph and Maria follow. “Over here there is a ton of peppermint, which is great for my indigestion and my breath.”

“I love how this one smells,” Maria says, as she flutters next to the lemon balm.

“I don’t need that yet, but it’s good for memory,” says Martinez.

Ralph runs, plunging into the fennel and the milk thistle.

“What are you doing?” Martinez scolds, “Get out of there.”

“I love this milk thistle,” Ralph said.

“Of course you do – it’s supposed to help calm angry tempers,” Martinez replied, and all three laughed together.

Ralph cast his gaze at an area outside of the fence and exclaimed, “Those plants are beautiful. We should eat those!”

Martinez responded, “No! They will hurt us. That is why there is an extra fence.”

Maria flutters over the fence and calls them by name, “Sago Palm is over here, Aloe Vera and the Ivy on the outer fence are no good. They can cause GI problems, liver damage, nausea, confusion and sometimes death.”

Martinez watches the monarch butterflies in the distance gathering on the milkweed.   
“The butterflies are so beautiful, but their food is bad for me too. I can’t eat that at all. I could have difficulty breathing, liver failure and possibly even death.”

“Wow!” Ralph said. “I wonder what all this would do to a pesky ground squirrel like me?”  
He smiled and fluttered his tail as he chomped on a piece of basil.

“Do you ever stop eating?” Maria asked. Ralph then saw some tulips and daffodils and ran over to them.

Martinez didn’t follow. “Nope, not those either. Those are bad for me too.”

“Seriously?” Ralph asked.

“Yes, Ralph. Martinez must be very careful and that is why the garden is fenced off for his safety. There are only safe flowers and herbs in the section in which we are allowed to play,” said Maria.

Ralph sniffed and eyed the delicious looking red tomatoes that were ripe and ready to eat. He tossed his basil to the side and licked his little claws and twitched his nose high up in the air. The tomatoes, too, were in a wired cage not to be touched by Martinez.

“Don’t even think about it, Ralph. Those are her prized tomatoes that she makes salsa with every year. And the tomatoes are super poisonous to me. I can’t go near them, and neither can you!” Martinez walked over and rubbed his face in the milk thistle and took a deep breath. “You trying to meditate or something? I know it’s a thing these days,” Ralph laughed.

“No, I’m trying to calm my nerves to tolerate you,” Martinez said. Maria fluttered above and chuckled.

“Oh Martinez,” Maria said, smiling, “I think we have a new pesky friend.”

Martinez wagged his tail in agreement.

## The Care and Seeding of a Brand-New Puppy Club

## An avid raiser shares her thoughts on growing a new branch of the GDB Family

By Maia Scott with Gleam

Some people plant gardens, others create businesses, some raise puppies and then there are those who endeavor to grow a whole new puppy club from scratch. Enter Anna McKenna, long-time raiser and club co-leader who also happened to raise my current guide Gleam. Anna took some time out of her busy schedule to share her experience transitioning from co-leading the Snohomish puppy club to setting down roots to start a fresh new club in the Mt. Vernon area in Washington State.

I am in awe of all the work that goes into raising a puppy. The responsibility of raising a whole new team of community members up to the task is quite an undertaking. I asked Anna what inspired her to take on this task. “We started a new club because our old one was spanning portions of three counties with concentrated groups of people on the polar opposite ends. Most people were on the south end, and a group of us were in the north. It just made the most sense to let each group meet together. So, with lots of encouragement from my former co-leader and the other families up north, we decided to split.”

Anna shared that a good number of things had to be in place in order to be accepted as an official puppy raising club. “To launch a new club, we needed to decide where our group would meet, have three dogs in that area, have a leader for the group, fill out an application, and have it approved by our Community Field Representative (CFR). She had to take it higher up the chain on her end and make sure everyone was ok with it.”

Because Anna branched off from an existing, well-established club, some things fell into place more easily than others. “Our last club had co-leaders, Tawna and myself, so when we split there was no decision on who the new leader would be. For us, personally, the location was easy because we have two raiser families in one city and our third in another city nearby. While we didn't start with three dogs, we are there now and hope to grow over the next few months!”

And how exactly does one drum up interest and enthusiasm for raising puppies for GDB? “Social Media is our #1 tool to recruit new raisers. We have had raisers in the area for three years but haven't been able to recruit until now because meetings would be so far away for anyone in this area. When I started the group Facebook page on December 6th, we had 0 followers. We are up to 234 in just over two months! The first few posts I wanted to be packed with information and facts. I knew we weren't reaching our community yet, but I know when I first become interested in something I like to do a deep-dive on their social media. People will be able to find out lots of facts and answers to commonly asked questions on the page if they scroll far enough.”

A little boost from the local press certainly helps. “In addition to our Facebook and Instagram, I did an article with our local newspaper this past week, we have been featured on a popular local news and public interest Facebook page…” Check out the article featuring Anna and her fellow raisers, including photo descriptions from [Skagit County News](https://www.goskagit.com/news/local_news/skagit-county-volunteers-take-on-task-of-training-dogs-to-help-the-blind/article_cfd5fba0-ac4f-5df7-98b9-d25ab353c58d.html).

Puppies in person, however, prove the most effective means of reaching the community according to Anna, “We just keep taking the dogs out and working them in public areas. That's the best way to recruit! Get out and meet people and answer questions.

Recruiting new raisers is proving a big challenge, as is taking on the responsibilities of solo leadership. “Previously, my incredible co-leader handled a lot of the training and problem solving with raisers while I ran weekly meetings and outings, on-boarded new volunteers, and handled social media. Now I handle all of that as well as communication with our CFR and puppy club housekeeping tasks like finding a local vet to use and a meeting space. Sometimes, the amount of messages I get every day from raisers is overwhelming.”

Indeed, like raising a puppy, running a club involves plenty of clean-up and de-tailing. And likewise, victories large and small shine brightest. “The most triumphant and happy part was when we were approved to start our own club. It had been months (maybe years) in the making and it was finally our chance to sprout. Also, each time we make a new community connection I get really excited. For instance, the fire department was thrilled to schedule a training outing for us!

Having experienced a number of clubs over the years, I get the sense that each has its own culture. I asked Anna what she envisions for Mt. Vernon. “Our old club was a family. And I want that for our new club, too. I think our culture will kind of evolve as we grow. The leader sets the tone for how things will go.”

Anna goes on to share the importance of growing the club as a team. “I also think we are taking a more collaborative approach to our club structure. Together, the four of us have forty years of raising experience! One of my raisers also was a leader for a couple years in college. We are working through challenges together as we can, and working together to problem solve as far as we are able.

To sum things up, Anna speaks highly of the other raisers at her side, helping to give root for a new club to grow strong and flourish. “It has been more than I could have imagined. From excitement to personal growth to disappointment to frustration. The women I am working with to get this started are strong, creative, motivated, and I couldn't ask for a better team.”

# EATS AND TREATS FRESH FROM THE GARDEN

## SWEET POTATO AND BASIL DOG COOKIE RECIPE

**By Cheri Owen and Martinez**

**Ingredients**

2 ½ cups of brown rice flour or wheat flour

1 chopped sweet potato (very small pieces)

1 beaten egg

1/3 cup coconut oil (I prefer organic)

1.5 tablespoon crushed basil (if you have it – from your garden!)

1.5 tablespoon honey

½ cup cold water

**Directions**

1. Mix all your ingredients together in a large bowl
2. Place the bowl with mixed ingredients into the refrigerator for 15 minutes
3. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.
4. Use baking mat non-stick sheets or grease your cookie sheets
5. Take bowl out of the refrigerator and roll into one-inch balls onto the cookie sheet
6. Bake for 35 minutes.
7. When done baking, turn off the oven and let them rest in the oven for another 40 minutes.
8. When done, let the doggie cookies cool and then transfer them into an airtight container or freezer bags to store.

P.S. Be careful not to slip on the drool that will be under your oven!

Happy Doggie Baking!!

## MARTINEZ'S LAVENDER BARS (FOR HUMANS)

**Ingredients**

3 cups all purpose flour

2 Tbsp dried lavender

1/2 Tsp kosher salt

1 1/2 cups butter. Make sure the butter is at room temperature. (If you like a bit more salt then use salted butter instead of adding salt)

3/4 cup granulated sugar

**Instructions**

1. Preheat your oven to 350F.

2. Stir flour with lavender and salt in a medium bowl.

3. Beat butter and sugar with an electric mixer in a large bowl until smooth. This usually takes no more than 2 minutes. (If you like things a bit more tart, add a tablespoon of fresh lemon juice here)

3. Slowly and gradually stir in the flour mixture with the butter and sugar mixture until all combined. Knead this with your hands until the dough forms a ball in your hands.

4. Spray 2 8x8 baking pans with cooking spray and line them with parchment paper, having a bit of the parchment paper hanging over for easy removal of the bars.

5. Divide the dough in half and press each half into the baking pan. Use a fork to prick holes throughout the dough.

6. Bake in the oven for 30 minutes. Cool on a rack for 2 hours. Remove the shortbread from the pans by lifting up on the parchment paper. Cut your bars and enjoy!

# CHAPTER CHAT

## GDB Creatives Alumni Chapter to Launch Next Month

By Maia Scott with Gleam

I have been craving creative community more and more as the pandemic invites us to turn inward, stay put and isolate. This in mind, I am reaching out to the Guide Dogs for the Blind family at large to build an alumni chapter with the soul purpose of supporting each other’s creative practices, whatever they may be.

Are you a – okay, take a deep breath - poet, choreographer, illustrator, digital artist, painter, crafter, beat boxer, costume designer, arts activist, vocalist, altar maker, scrapbooker, entrepreneur, tincture maker, calligrapher, photographer, song writer, sculptor, collager, builder, jeweler, thingy maker or explorer of anything that generates those creative juices; then this may be a group to consider joining.

In our Second Sunday Salons, I would love for us to create a safe and supportive space in which we can support one and other’s work in progress, create in community and offer supportive feedback to those seeking it. I envision it as a lighthearted and mindful vibe in which compassion and playfulness work side by side with accountability and structure to create sacred space where the messy vulnerabilities of creating or not creating feel as okay to share as a project successfully completed.

While we all share a love of GDB and the wonderful puppies, dogs and partnerships that thrive; you don’t have to be creating dog doodles or puppy poems to join. We may engage in some quick, ten-minute processes generated from guide dog inspired prompts. Beyond that, subject matter is open ended. Though one’s creative vision may be clear, our sight definitely varies which will invite exploration of audio description of work both in the literal sense and as an ekphrastic response.

If you also crave creative community, consider taking the GDB Creatives Alumni Chapter for a test drive. Information and Zoom details will be available in the next Alumni Chapter Calendar. I hope to meet some of you there.

## NEW: VETERANS CHAPTER

By, Cheri Owen with Martinez

Call for Blind and/or visually impaired veterans of the armed forces out there!

Please join me on the 2nd Wednesday of every month beginning on April 13th at 6pm PST in establishing this new chapter for Veterans. As a USAF veteran myself, I am eager to have other veterans join me in engaging conversation with various aspects of life with a guide dog. The issues that will be discussed each month will be self-determined, that is, they depend upon us. Some preliminary ideas: how our guide dog has changed our lives, events that we can participate in with our guide dog within the VA system or resources that are available to us as Guide Dog alumni from not only GDB but also from the VA health system. Let’s make a difference in our lives and others. At our first meeting, we will have a simple meet and greet, and discuss possible topics of interest for the coming months. Check out the April E Calendar for the Zoom link.

# NEWS YOU CAN USE

## Bookshare in 2022

## Learn about the new features that make reading easier and more enjoyable

BY: George Kerscher with Kroner

### What’s New

Many of the Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) alumni will know about Bookshare from years past, but perhaps you do not know about all of its recent improvements. Bookshare started with blind people scanning books and sending them to Bookshare to distribute to registered blind people all over the U.S. While some scanning still takes place, a lot has changed.

Today, publishers are collaborating with Bookshare and providing high-quality files for inclusion into the Bookshare library. Over one million titles including best sellers, nonfiction, award winners, career resources, and more are now in the collection, making it the largest repository of accessible books in the world, and over 90% are publisher quality. Gone are the scanning errors and lack of images. Many publishers are even providing descriptions of the images and graphics.

### Reading Made Easy

Bookshare supports reading on many devices including smartphones, tablets, computers, and assistive technology devices. On these devices, members can customize their reading experience with ebooks in audio, refreshable braille, and other formats.

Bookshare supports ebooks in five different file formats – DAISY, Microsoft Word, Braille Ready Files (BRF), MP3, and EPUB 3. EPUB 3 is the latest format used by the mainstream publishing industry. It is fully accessible and provides a superior reading experience for blind and low vision users.

### Bookshare Reader for Smart Speakers

 Bookshare now supports reading on an Alexa-enabled device (beta). Members can access the entire library of books by using their voice. Learn more. <https://www.bookshare.org/cms/get-started/reader/smart-speaker>

### Who Qualifies for Bookshare?

Bookshare is available only for individuals who have a qualifying reading or perceptual disability, a visual impairment, or a physical disability that affects their ability to read printed works.

When you sign up for Bookshare, you will need to provide a proof of disability. If this is a problem for any GDB graduate, please contact George Kerscher for assistance at [kerscher@montana.com](mailto:kerscher@montana.com).

Bookshare is free for free U.S. students of all ages through an award from the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), U.S. Department of Education. For non-students, the cost is $50 a year for unlimited reading.

To learn more, visit Bookshare today. <https://www.bookshare.org/cms/bookshare-me/adults>

*George Kerscher is Chief Innovations Officer for the DAISY Consortium and a Senior Advisor for Global Literacy at Benetech. He lives in Montana with his guide dog, Kroner.*

# IN MEMORIAM, IN MEMORY, IN TRIBUTE

## In Memoriam – remembering GDB Alumni who have died.

Sandra Shelby of Tulsa, OK with Neptune, male Lab/Golden Cross (OR 346 – October 2017)

Chris Divers of Fort Worth, TX with male Black Lab guide dog Sirius (CA 729 – December 2011 )

## In Memory – Remembering guides who have died.

Jet, female Black Lab guide for Sandra England of West Jordan, UT (CA 712 – September 2010)

Neema, female Black Lab guide for Linda Boose of Houghton, MI (August 2007)

Dooley, male Yellow Lab guide for Rachel Schneider of Torrance, CA (CA 713 – October 2010)

Tulia, female Black Lab guide for Kim Kilpatrick of Ottawa, ON (OR 182 – Septembeer 2010)

## In Tribute – Honoring guides who have retired.

Wander, female Yellow Lab guide for Jamie Sibson of Austin, TX (OR 303 – September 2015)

# GIFT SHOP NEWS

**GIFT SHOP NEWS *– March 2022***

By: Michelle McNew

GDB's Online Gift Shop Gets a Glow-Up!

Our online gift shop has recently undergone a number of significant changes to enhance the shopping experience for our community. The store now has a fresh look and feel, and many behind-the-scenes upgrades to store's infrastructure. We worked with a team of web developers, as well as two different digital accessibility consulting companies, to maximize the usability and accessibility of the store, where possible. As part of GDB's commitment to diversity and inclusion, the updates to the store include gender-neutral product categories, sizing, and descriptions, larger and clearer images, and a faster checkout.  As our software vendor makes accessibility updates in the future, we plan to roll them out in a timely manner. Happy shopping!

Listed below are new items that have arrived in the gift shop recently:

**4 Guides Auto Sun Shade (55x31)**

This nylon auto shade not only will keep your interior cool, but will also win you many fans! Featuring a picture of 4 guide dogs in harness laying side by side in a row on the sidewalk with a beautiful background including fall colored foliage.  From left to right: yellow labrador in harness, golden retriever in harness, black labrador in harness, yellow labrador in harness and a GDB logo across the top left corner in white. Get them while they last!  Be sure to measure your windshield before ordering, to ensure a great fit. Measures 55"L x 31" . Collapsible and folds up for easy storage.  **$15.00**

**Adult Contoured Fit Hoodie – black**

Cozy up in this 6.9 ounce Poly Sweater Fleece/ Micro Fleece Sleeve. Adorned with the GDB logo on the left chest on a brown patch. The sleeves are a black soft fleece material and the bodice is a sweater like material. Featuring black drawstrings at the hood. Available in sizes Small thru 2XL.  **$30.00**

**Adult Contoured Fit Cowl Neck with drawstring pullover**

Warm up in this Cowl Neck pullover with drawstring. This Cotton/Polyester Fleece Pullover with a crossover cowl neckline with drawstrings, ribbed bottom band, ribbed cuffs with thumbholes, and welted pockets is adorned with the GDB logo in white on the left chest. Available in Small through 2XL in soft teal. Get them while they last!  **$37.00**

**Adult Contoured Fit Logo V Neck Tee**

A staple to any wardrobe, grab a new GDB tee!  At 4.5 oz. and made of 65/35 polyester/combed ringspun cotton, featuring a white log on the left chest. Available in burgandy in sizes Small through 2XL**. $25.00**

**Adult Contoured Fit Wordy Tee**

Back by popular demand!  This v neck tee features a white GDB logo on the left chest.  The dog design on the back consists of words that represent what a GDB dog means to our communities.  Some words include, adventure, companion , etc. This  tee is 50/50 cotton/poly.  This is a GDB Exclusive design, get them while they last! Available in deep royal in sizes XS through 4XL **$25.00**

**Adult Relaxed Fit Wordy Tee**

Another awesome design from our GDB team! This crew neck tee features a white GDB logo on the left chest.  The dog design on the back consists of words that represent what a GDB dog means to our communities.  Some words include love, adventure, companion , etc. This tee is a blend of 65% polyester and 35% cotton.  This is a GDB Exclusive design, get them while they last! Available in indigo in sizes Small through 3XL **$25.00**

**Adult Relaxed Fit 80th Anniversary Tee**

Celebrate our 80th Anniversary with this amazingly soft limited edition tee!  Adorned with a large 80 design with a person and guide illustrated in the middle of the zero and the GDB logo underneath in white. The back of the tee has the guidedogs website in white across the shoulders. Made of 52% airlume combed and ring spun cotton, 48% polyester , weighing in at 4.2 ounces.  Available in heathered forest in sizes Extra Small through 4XL**.  $25.00**

**Adult Relaxed Fit Logo Pullover Hood Sweatshirt**

Weighing in at 7.4-ounce and made of 80/20 cotton/poly, this GDB logo pullover hoodie is sure to keep you toasty thru this winter. Featuring a white GDB log on the left chest, front pouch pockets and white cinch ties. Available in burgandy in sizes XS through 3XL**.   $35.00**

**Adult Relaxed Fit Logo Tee**

A staple to any wardrobe, grab a new GDB tee!  At 4.5 oz. and made of 65/35 polyester/combed ringspun cotton, featuring a white log on the left chest. Available in smoke in sizes Small through 3XL**.  $25.00**

**1 cup Kibble Scoop**

Get your scoop on with this GDB branded 1 cup kibble scoop! BPA free and dishwasher safe. Measuring 8 3/4" H x 4 1/4" W x 2 1/16" deep with a 1 cup capacity to the rim.  Adorned with the GDB logo on the handle. Available in purple, blue, green and red.  **$5.00**

**Dog Bowl with rubber grip bottom**

Made of high quality stainless steel featuring the GDB logo at the bottom of the bowl. Each bowl is lined with a non-slip, BPA-free silicone bottom, which gives it extra grip and prevents the bowl from sliding around and spilling while your pet eats and drinks out of it. Capacity of 8 cups

**$17.00**

**Poop Bag Holder**

This slim profile poop bag holder can be secured to most flat nylon/cloth leashes, rope leashes and guide dog harness.  This pouch carries 1 roll of dog poop pick-up bags and attaches with hook-and-loop strips.  Featuring an easy to pull out bag system through a side opening and a GDB logo in white. Holds 1 standard roll of poop bags . Available in black or purple. As pictured, we recommend attaching the velcro straps above and below the GDB placard on the harness. **$8.00**

**3 guides 10 inch tablet sleeve**

This Neoprene Laptop Sleeve features a Zipper Closure, Interior pocket & Padded Interior. Decorated on both sides with a photo of 3 guide dogs in harness. A golden retriever in harness, a black labrador in harness and a yellow labrador in harness sit side by side in a garden setting. The background is filled with green leaves while the dogs sit on a cement step.   An orange GDB logo is located in the top left corner of the photo. This sleeve is made of soft 2.5 mm flexible, durable Neoprene material.

Fits 10" Tablet

Size: 11.22 " x 8.66 " **$18.00**

**Dog Bone Photo Holder**

 This white GDB Bone Shape features a slot to hold a photo, business card, memo, table place cards, appointment cards and more! Adorned with the GDB logo in teal and packaged in a decorative kraft box. Get them while they last! measures 4 3/4" x 2" **$6.00**

**Small Puppy Big Dreams Puzzle**

This 150 piece puzzle features a sitting yellow labrador in harness with a reddish colored puppy labrador in green puppy coat, sitting in front of him. With a background in greens, oranges and reds and a GDB logo in white at the bottom.   **$15.00**

**Stadium Blanket**

Show that GDB Spirit with this cozy sweatshirt blanket. Measuring at 50" x 60' and made of cotton/polyester fleece  this blanket features a GDB logo in the center in gray and a leather patch adorning the GDB logo in the bottom right corner. Get them while they last! Available in black, royal blue and navy. **$30.00**

**80th Anniversary 16.9 oz Stainless Steel Bottle**

This insulated 16.9 ounce stainless steel water bottle is here for a limited time!  Featuring a carrying handle, threaded dual opening lid, stainless steel base and powder coat finish. Adorned with the GDB 80th Anniversary logo in white. Available in teal.  Specs: 9.4 H x 2.8 W care and use: hand wash recommended **$18.00**

**24oz Tumbler with straw – light blue**

Go Green with this 24 oz double wall 18/8 stainless steel thermal tumbler. Featuring copper vacuum insulation, stainless steel rim and base and a threaded snap fit Tritan lid. Can be used for hot and cold and flexible wide silicone straw included. Adorned with a large paw print on each side of the tumbler. The paw print has a GDB logo inside of it, along with guidedogs.com. Available in light blue with a tone on tone design. **$22.00**

**Paw Shape Bottle Opener Keyring**

This paw shaped bottle opener features and orange paw, outlined in silver. A GDB logo in located in the center paw pad in silver.  A silver key ring attached.. measures 2.5 x 1.5 inches  **$8.00**

**Cuff Knit Beanie**

Keep your dome warm with this acrylic knit cuffed beanie. Adorned with a square leather patch with our GDB logo. Available in black, royal blue, grey and forest green.  **$16.00**

**Military Houndstooth Hat -** Get this fashionable hat to add to your GDB collection! Made of 100% cotton houndstooth with a 100% cotton lining, it features a low profile and hook and loop closure. Adorned with the GDB logo in white. Available in  black/charcoal houndstooth. **$16.00**

**Waterproof Hat – black**

Don't let the rain stop you! This three-layer technical performance waterproof fabric is constructed with sealed seams.   Featuring breathability and an adjustable reflective web strapping facilitate perfect comfort and sizing. Adorned with the GDB logo in light gray. Available in black. One size fits all. **$26.00**

**17oz Etched Mug – Navy**

The GDB mug is designed with an etching of the GDB logo, also including braille. The braille reads Guide Dogs for the Blind. This 17 ounce mug is made of porcelain and available in navy. **$17.00**

**26oz Glass treat Jar**

Give that good dog a treat from this 26 ounce glass GDB treat jar! The design on the front is in teal blue and features a bone with the word TREATS inside of it, accompanied with the GDB logo underneath. The jar is made of glass and the lid make of bamboo. Measuring 4 ¾" H x 4" W x 4 ½" D, Meets FDA requirements, BPA free. Hand wash recommended. **$10.00**

All orders are subject to applicable tax and shipping fees.

You can order Gift Shop merchandise online 24/7 at [www.guidedogs.com](http://www.guidedogs.com) , or you may call 415-492-4151 and leave us a message. We return phone calls and ship online orders on Tuesday and Thursday mornings, only. For faster service, order 24/7 at [www.guidedogs.com/shop](http://www.guidedogs.com/shop).

Gift cards can be purchased and redeemed online, as well as in person and over the phone.

Please check our website periodically for new merchandise updates.

# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**2021 – 2022 Meetings**

**Sept 18, Dec 4, March 5, June 4**

**Officers:**

**Chair – Amy Salger/*Marsala***

**Vinton, IA**

[**asalger@guidedogs.com**](mailto:amymsalger@outlook.com)

**Vice-Chair: John (Jack) Heim /*Scout***

**Madison, WI**

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**Secretary - Deanna Lewis/ *Mambo***

**Cincinnati, OH**

[**dlewis@guidedogs.com**](mailto:dlewis@guidedogs.com)

**Members at Large**

**Deborah Cook/ *Praline***

**Clarkston, WA**

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**Chris Yoon/*Sadie***

**Bellevue, WA**

[**cyoon@guidedogs.com**](mailto:cyoon@guidedogs.com)

**EX-Officio Members**

**Amit Ahuja / *Tashi***

**Santa Barbara, CA**

[**aahuja@guidedogs.com**](mailto:aahuja@guidedogs.com)

**Vice President Outreach, Interdisciplinary Client Services and Engagement**

**Theresa Stern / *Wills***

**Novato, CA**

[**tstern@guidedogs.com**](mailto:tstern@guidedogs.com)

# Guide Dogs for the Blind Alumni Chapters

## USA

### Arizona

**Desert Dogs of Phoenix**

* **Location: Phoenix, Arizona**
* **President: Scott Wilcock,**[**stitchbert@gmail.com**](mailto:stitchbert@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Brian Mucyo,**[**brianmucyo@gmail.com**](mailto:brianmucyo@gmail.com)

**Northern Arizona High Country Walkers**

* **Location: Northern Arizona**
* **President: Patricia Clingman,**[**patriciaclingman@yahoo.com**](mailto:patriciaclingman@yahoo.com)
* **Vice-president: Doug Reber,**[**dougib4586@gmail.com**](mailto:dougib4586@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: Vicki Reber,**[**vreber78@gmail.com**](mailto:vreber78@gmail.com)

### California

**Foggy Doggies**

* **Location: San Francisco, California**
* **Email:**[**fogdog@groups.io**](mailto:fogdog@groups.io)
* **Co-president: Lauri Shay,**[**laurishay@gmail.com**](mailto:laurishay@gmail.com)
* **Co-president: Jan Robitscher,**[**jbrobit@aol.com**](mailto:jbrobit@aol.com)
* **Secretary: Alysa Chadow,**[**chadowab@gmail.com**](mailto:chadowab@gmail.com)

**OC Guide Dogs Alumni Chapter**

* **Location: Orange County, California**
* **Web Site:**[**ocguidedogs.com**](http://ocguidedogs.com)
* **President: Mindy Wulff,**[**minwulff@gmail.com**](mailto:minwulff@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Jeff Senge,**[**jcsenge@outlook.com**](mailto:jcsenge@outlook.com)
* **Secretary: Carla Ross,**[**info@ocguidedogs.com**](mailto:info@ocguidedogs.com)

**Paws of Fame**

* **Location: Los Angeles County, California**
* **Web Site:**[**www.pawsoffamela.com**](http://www.pawsoffamela.com)
* **President: Joseph Landau,**[**jklandau@yahoo.com**](mailto:jklandau@yahoo.com)

**Sacramento GDB Alumni**

* **Location: Sacramento, California**
* **Email:**[**sacgdbalumni@gmail.com**](mailto:sacgdbalumni@gmail.com)
* **Web Site:**[**www.sacgdbalumni.com**](http://www.sacgdbalumni.com)
* **President: Christopher Pitcher,**[**christopher.pitch@icloud.com**](mailto:christopher.pitch@icloud.com)
* **Vice-president: Debra Thompson,**[**adrinamom@gmail.com**](mailto:adrinamom@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: Shelby Haines,**[**Shelby-Haines@scusd.edu**](mailto:Shelby-Haines@scusd.edu)

**San Diego Alumni Chapter of Guide Dog Handlers**

* **Location: San Diego, California**
* **President: Launa Hardy,**[**Launahardy@gmail.com**](mailto:Launahardy@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Monique Fenton,**[**Moniquegdb14@gmail.com**](mailto:Moniquegdb14@gmail.com)

### Colorado

**Colorado Rocky rovers**

* **Location: Denver, Colorado**
* **Email:**[**CoRockyrovers@gmail.com**](mailto:CoRockyrovers@gmail.com)
* **President: Beth Gustin,**[**bethglpc@gmail.com**](mailto:bethglpc@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Veronica Rodriguez,**[**Veronicarodriguez1954@gmail.com**](mailto:Veronicarodriguez1954@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: Pat Hein**

### Florida

**Sunshine Guide Dog Teams of Florida**

* **Location: Florida**
* **Description: We talk about our guide dogs and support each other with once a month calls and a once a year in person meeting.**
* **President: Marcia Bukala,**[**mjbukala@yahoo.com**](mailto:mjbukala@yahoo.com)
* **Vice-president: Jim East,**[**jim.east.mhs@gmail.com**](mailto:jim.east.mhs@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: Reggie Alvarado,**[**reggie.alvarado@gmail.com**](mailto:reggie.alvarado@gmail.com)

### Illinois

**Windy City GDB Alumni**

* **Location: Chicago, Illinois**
* **Description: Chicago and Northern Illinois**
* **President: Pete Berg,** [**pberg55555@gmail.com**](mailto:pberg55555@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Terry Ann Saurman,**[**saurmann@access4less.net**](mailto:saurmann@access4less.net)
* **Secretary/Treasurer: Marian Roberts and Maureen Reid.**

### Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio

**Guide Dog Handlers of the Midwest**

* **Email:**[**GDB\_Midwest+subscribe@groups.io**](mailto:GDB_Midwest+subscribe@groups.io)
* **President: Deanna Lewis,**[**Deannakay03@gmail.com**](mailto:Deannakay03@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Paul Walker,**[**herospaw2002@gmail.com**](mailto:herospaw2002@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: LuAnn Bowers**

## Montana

**GDB of Montana Alumni Chapter**

* **President: Ed Worrell,**[**ed.worrell@icloud.com**](mailto:ed.worrell@icloud.com)
* **Secretary: Aaron Page,**[**ampage87@gmail.com**](mailto:ampage87@gmail.com)

### Oregon

**GDB HaRT of Oregon**

* **Location: Portland, Oregon /Southern WA**
* **President: Chari Chauvin at** [**finn986@gmail.com**](mailto:finn986@gmail.com)

### Utah

**Greatest Paws on Earth**

* **Location: Utah**
* **President: Sandy Ruconich,**[**sruconich@gmail.com**](mailto:sruconich@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Patty Mueller,**[**plmueller@q.com**](mailto:plmueller@q.com)

### Washington

**Washington State GDB Alumni**

* **Location: Washington State**
* **Description: Supporting each other and keeping everyone up to date about GDB**
* **Email:**[**wagdbalumni+subscribe@groups.io**](mailto:wagdbalumni+subscribe@groups.io)
* **President: Danette Dixon,**[**danettedixon63@gmail.com**](mailto:danettedixon63@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Jeanne Jacobs,**[**Jeannelavernejacobs@gmail.com**](mailto:Jeannelavernejacobs@gmail.com)

## Canada

### British Columbia

**BC Dogwoods GDB Alumni**

* **Location: British Columbia**
* **Email:**[**BC Dogwoods Alumni Group talkadvocacy@hooh.ca**](mailto:BC%20Dogwoods%20Alumni%20Group%20%20%20%20talkadvocacy@hooh.ca)
* **President: Heather Walkus**
* **Advocacy: Lisa Bentz**
* **Outreach: Matt Salli**

### Quebec

**Isee Paws Guide Dogs**

* **Location: Montreal, Quebec**
* **President: Kim Holdbrook,**[**kimholdbrook3@gmail.com**](mailto:kimholdbrook3@gmail.com)

## Special Interest

### GDB Bibliodogs

* **Description: Book Club**
* **Email:** [toBibliodogs+subscribe@groups.io](mailto:toBibliodogs+subscribe@groups.io)
* **President: Leigh Moss**

### GDB Creative Tails writing group

* **Description: Writing**
* **Email:**[**GDBCreativeTails@groups.io**](mailto:GDBCreativeTails@groups.io)
* **President: Lisa Gilmartin,**[**lsg1144.lg@gmail.com**](mailto:lsg1144.lg@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Dorianne Pollack,**[**Doriannepollack@gmail.com**](mailto:Doriannepollack@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: Launa Hardy,**[**launahardy@gmail.com**](mailto:launahardy@gmail.com)

### GDB Guide Dog Handlers All Ways

* **Description: GDB grads and other guide dog handlers with multiple disabilities**
* **Co-president: Kim Kilpatrick,**[**kimjkilpatrick@gmail.com**](mailto:kimjkilpatrick@gmail.com)
* **Co-president: Jo Elizabeth Pinto,**[**jopinto@msn.com**](mailto:jopinto@msn.com)
* **Vice-president: Sarah Gales**
* **Secretary: Deanna Lewis,**[**Deannakay03@gmail.com**](mailto:Deannakay03@gmail.com)

### GDB Mommies with Guides

* **Description: Focus on parenting**
* **President: Tara Chavez,**[**tmatzick06@gmail.com**](mailto:tmatzick06@gmail.com)

### GDB Paws Around the World

* **Description: Travel**
* **President: Marcia Yale,**[**dragoncatmc@gmail.com**](mailto:dragoncatmc@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Kay Malmquist,**[**kay.malmquist@gmail.com**](mailto:kay.malmquist@gmail.com)

### GDB Raisers and Handlers

* **Description: Bringing raisers and handlers together.**
* **President: Danette Dixon,**[**Danettedixon63@gmail.com**](mailto:Danettedixon63@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Paul Walker,**[**herospaw2002@gmail.com**](mailto:herospaw2002@gmail.com)
* **Secretary: Mary Flynn**
* **Outreach: Andrea Barnhurst,**[**atl\_braves1fan@yahoo.com**](mailto:atl_braves1fan@yahoo.com)

### GDB Tech Dogs

* **Location: International, meets via Zoom**
* **Description: Sharing tips, tricks, and techniques related to technology**
* **Email:**[**techdogs@groups.io**](mailto:techdogs@groups.io)
* **Web Site:**[**www.tech-dogs.net**](http://www.tech-dogs.net)
* **President: Deborah Kendrick,**[**Kendrick.deborah@gmail.com**](mailto:Kendrick.deborah@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Paul Walker,**[**herospaw2002@gmail.com**](mailto:herospaw2002@gmail.com)

### GDB Stitch and Bitch

* **Description: Needlecrafting of all types**
* **Email:**[**GDBStitchAndBitch@groups.io**](mailto:GDBStitchAndBitch@groups.io)
* **President: Dorianne Pollack,**[**Doriannepollack@gmail.com**](mailto:Doriannepollack@gmail.com)
* **Vice-president: Jack Heim,**[**john@johnheim.com**](mailto:john@johnheim.com)
* **Secretary: Deanna Lewis,**[**Deannakay03@gmail.com**](mailto:Deannakay03@gmail.com)