ALUMNI NEWS

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Editors: Pete Berg, Kelly Egan, Maia Scott, Leigh Moss, and Amy Salger,

Audio version voiced by Cliff Hahn, Cliff Hahn Sound

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

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.

The Mission of The Alumni Association Board of Directors is **to support Alumni and the vision of GDB. AA Board Directors will serve on committees with focuses that includes but are not limited to: advocacy, outreach, communications, and education.**

Alumni News is available in various electronic forms. 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 Amy Salger know at [asalger@guidedogs.com](mailto:asalger@guidedogs.com) Email allows us to get the news to you in a timely manner.

NEW! Alumni News is now available as a podcast, you can find it at Apple Podcasts, search for Alumni Updates. Please note that the recording of the newsletter takes some time so issues will post at a later date than the email version.

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

## From the Board Chair

2024-Forward

The wonderful and creative theme for this issue of the Alumni Newsletter and upcoming Speaker Series comes from the inventive minds of Maia Scott and Kelly Egan. As GDB continues evolving to meet the needs of clients with the addition of staff, organizational alignment, restructuring of the puppy raising program and other exciting changes, the theme of moving forward emerged, 2024-Forward.

As individuals we strive to move forward in our relationships with our guides, K9 Buddies, and people in our lives, careers, learning and with our well-being. We know that life’s journey is not a linear one. Obstacles and barriers are encountered along our paths. We sometimes move over or around them, while other times we move forward and need to take a step back to re-group, two steps forward, one step back.

One goal of the changes within GDB is to gain more meaningful feedback from alumni. The Alumni Board is one vehicle for gathering information on the needs and ideas of alumni.

Please send along your ideas and thoughts on the newsletter and anything else to [asalger@guidedogs.com](mailto:asalger@guidedogs.com). Looking “Forward” to hearing your wonderful ideas.

Pete and Lloyd

## Alumni Association Board Applications

Seeking Candidates for the Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) Alumni Association Board of Directors

Attention All GDB Alumni!

The GDB Alumni Association Board of Directors (AA Board) is seeking applications to serve on the AA Board. The Board is looking for people who are hardworking, dedicated, focused, and able to represent the diverse range of views and experiences of GDB alumni.

\*Please note, Applications will be accepted beginning February 1, 2024, and the deadline to apply is February 15, 2024.

Responsibilities of Directors of the GDB Alumni Association Board:

In support of the Alumni Board mission, each board member is expected to serve on several project teams and complete various tasks independently outside of meetings. The project teams vary dependent on visions of the AA Board.

Board meetings are typically held on Saturday morning, approximately four times a year. Project team meetings vary in frequency, days and times but are scheduled among those members according to their schedules as much as possible. Most communication is done by e-mail and phone.

Quarterly and Team meetings are held via zoom. Once a year there will be an in-person meeting at the San Rafael or Oregon campus. (Transportation and accommodation costs for in-person meetings are covered by GDB).

Board members are elected to serve a 3-year term which may be renewed for a second 3-year term, with Board approval.

The Board works hard, but members have a terrific time doing so!

Eligibility:

Guide Dog Program: Two years working a guide dog.

Orientation and Mobility Immersion Program (OMI): Six months following completion of the OMI program.

K9 Buddy Program: Six months following receiving K9 companion.

\*GDB Alumni must be 18 years or older to serve on the AA Board

Open Period for Applications:

Applications will be accepted from February 1 through February 15, 2024. Any application received after February 15, will not be considered.

How to Apply:

1. In an email, send a resume and audio or video recording/ file, containing a brief description of yourself and your reasons for applying to the Board. Audio or Video files should not exceed 1 minute in length.

2. For the subject line of the email, use: "2024 AAB App”.

3. Submit your resume and audio or video file as two separate attachments, (or 1 file for the resume and a web link for the audio or video). Each file should be titled with your name and the type of information it contains. For example, if your name is Jane Smith, your attached documents would be titled: “Smith, Jane Resume” and “Smith, Jane Video”.

Send your application to: Pete Berg at: [pberg@guidedogs.com](mailto:pberg@guidedogs.com) and to Amy Salger at: asalger@guidedogs.com.

If you applied for a position on the board in the past and were not selected, you are encouraged to apply again. Each year the Board receives many outstanding applications for a limited number of open positions.

If you have any questions, please contact Pete Berg at [pberg@guidedogs.com](mailto:pberg@guidedogs.com) or (630) 263-0579.

## Pete’s Song List

Songs, Dogs and Relationships

Songs can remind us of a great memory, a place, a person, or a special time in our lives. Songs can invoke strong emotions of sadness, joy, celebration, and passion. The lyrics in songs can appeal to us because of their meaning to our own situations or we simply enjoy the tempo and rhythm of the song.

GDB Alumni Board members were asked what song best describes the relationship between them and their guide. See below their responses. There is a wonderful mix of musical genres in the responses.

Do you have a song that describes the relationship between you and your guide? Share it and we may include it in a future issue of the Alumni Newsletter. Send it to asalger@guidedogs.com.

Listen and enjoy!

Melba and Chad

[I Wanna Be Your Dog](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gsWt7ey6bo)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3gsWt7ey6bo

The Stooges

Kelly and Caspian

[no one](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rywUS-ohqeE)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rywUS-ohqeE

Alicia Keys

Derek and Koa

[Old Friends](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SU8gxrhs1g)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4SU8gxrhs1g

Ben Rector

Claire and Tulane

[Good Riddance (Time of Your Life](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnQ8N1KacJc)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CnQ8N1KacJc

Green Day

Amy and Marsala

[Lean on Me](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOZ-MySzAac)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fOZ-MySzAac

Bill Withers

Theresa and Wills

[Give yourself to Love](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMIJwDtuXT4)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMIJwDtuXT4

Kate Wolf

Pete and Lloyd

[This is Love](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqWkBk2ixs8)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wqWkBk2ixs8

George Harrison

Maia & Gleam

["Catch the Gleam"](https://youtu.be/2QlUjQ4b0U4?si=HTkKRirouIc1Veh8)

[https://youtu.be/2QlUjQ4b0U4?si=HTkKRirouIc1Veh8](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fyoutu.be%2F2QlUjQ4b0U4%3Fsi%3DHTkKRirouIc1Veh8&data=05%7C01%7Cpberg%40uic.edu%7C412c1c003e1a4c91250a08dbc8f96497%7Ce202cd477a564baa99e3e3b71a7c77dd%7C0%7C0%7C638324745689902687%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=tMPqTtQs6wKJDruJem6FPkOeFA%2BRN50ytpiPvSjnCvM%3D&reserved=0)

Kindo

Leigh and Aviva

[What A Wonderful World](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBrd_3VMC3c)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rBrd_3VMC3c>

Louis Armstrong

# Theme Related Topics

## Lynn Dubinsky

**What do you call an award-winning poetic whisky queen fancied by an ostrich who cruised around LA-LA Land in a car full of canes?**

**Want a clue? She works at GDB.**

By Maia Scott

Meet Lynn Dubinsky, our new Vice President of Client Engagement and Impact, a brand-new position at GDB.  Lynne will oversee a myriad of programs and services including Admissions, Residential Programs, Psychosocial Support, the Support Center, Youth Services, Outreach and Advocacy, and Alumni Engagement. Lynn sums up the gist of the job, “Much of the focus of my work, and one of the things I’m most excited about, is working to meet the more holistic needs of clients. Also, to ensure that the client voice is heard and incorporated into everything we do.”

 Lynn moved north to work with GDB after a long career with Braille Institute of America (BIA). However, the route she took into this field featured some fascinating stops along the way. “My path to this field was somewhat circuitous.” She earned a degree in literature from UC Santa Barbara’s College of Creative Studies. She went on to earn a master’s degree in creative writing, poetry, from Boston University where she was mentored by the U.S. Poet Laureate Robert Pinsky and Nobel Prizewinner Derek Walcott then won an Academy of American Poets Prize upon graduation. Following her studies, she taught college in the Boston area for six years. Eventually, Lynn was drawn back to Santa Barbara where she did some freelance work and eventually turned a corner into the Braille Institute.

During her first fourteen years, she managed a full roster of educational programs. “In addition to the more typical courses in Adaptive Cooking and Independent Living Skills, Adaptive Technology, and 1:1 Orientation & Mobility, I developed programs to better address the more holistic needs of our students—classes that support body, mind, and spirit. These included more counselor and peer-led support groups for students and families, evidence-based classes for students managing diabetes, a robust studio arts programs, yoga, gardening with a focus on sensory awareness and evening programs for Spanish speakers.”

Along the way, Lynn kept enhancing her skill set. “I became a Certified Health and Wellness Coach. I also earned a certificate from USC’s Leonard Davis School of Gerontology which has helped inform my work with seniors. Add to that a certificate in Mixology complete with an award willing cocktail for which she was named, “The Whisky Queen of Santa Barbara”.

In 2016, Lynn transferred to the Los Angeles Center as Education Program Manager where she eventually became Director and oversaw a team of specialists serving more than 800 clients with more than 60 weekly classes.

As a child, Lynn was no stranger to the Blindness Community. “My mother, Nancy, was a counselor for the blind and visually impaired with California’s Department of Rehabilitation. Her car had a trunk filled with white canes, roller tips, HI Marks, and bump dots; and she drove all around greater Los Angeles serving her clients in their homes and communities. Lynn speaks sweetly of her mom and the influence she had on her. “She *loved* her work and set the most wonderful example. I feel blessed—and sometimes still surprised—to have followed her into this field.”

Lynn’s love of animals also goes way back. “My mom says that even in my highchair and crib, I would kick my legs with delight every time I saw a dog.” During childhood, she was “that kid” who would bring home every stray cat or dog and want to care for them.

And it didn’t stop there. “I worked at veterinary offices during high school and later, for some months, I was a zookeeper in Israel taking care of a variety of animals including baboons, rock hyrax and ostriches.” Lynn went on to share, “One ostrich developed a serious crush on me and went into a mating dance every time he saw me.”

Like so many in the GDB community, Lynn shares a deep love of dogs. “Among several dogs while I was growing up, I had a standard poodle and a Samoyed.”

With the love comes the loss. “My “soul dog” as an adult, was Ella, my Australian shepherd, who I adopted at 5 months and loved passionately until she died early in the pandemic at 14 years. I still miss her fiercely.

Lynn has a new dog in her family. “For the past year and a half, my husband, Norman, and I have had the great good fortune to live with Lucy, a rescue cocker spaniel who is the most cheerful girl imaginable. She’s loving her new life in San Rafael and adjusting to my coming home from work reeking of other dogs!”

GDB has been on Lynn’s radar for a good while. I had long admired GDB, and I was very much aware of their reputation for meeting its mission and the level of excellence of its services.”

In fact, Lynn was puzzled why more of her students didn’t choose the guide dog lifestyle. “Working in this field I was always struck by the difference in the level of independence and self-advocacy of BIA students who had guide dogs.”

“While I loved my job, I can’t deny that I harbored a fantasy of someday working at GDB.”

She kept an eye on GDB’s job listings and her persistence paid off. “I was excited to see a job posted that seemed in near perfect alignment with my experience, interests, and passions.”

Now, Lynn Dubinsky is all in. She got the job for love of dogs… and the t-shirt. “Life is richer and more joyful with a dog. I never tire of observing and interacting with my dogs, or ANY dogs. I completely agree with the slogan on the new GDB t-shirt that I proudly wear: “Life is better with a dog.”

## 2024ward Speaker Series

GDB Alumni Association Speakers Series

Title: 2024ward (Moving Forward)

Date: January 29th, 2024

Time: 7:00 ET.

6:00 CT.

4:00 PT.

Session Description:

Join us for the next Alumni Board Speaker Series to hear from new GDB staff Lynn Dubinski, Vice-President Client Engagement and Impact, and Amy Salger, Alumni Engagement Manager. Learn about the roles Lynn and Amy play in the restructuring GDB undertook last year. They will explain how their new positions interact with Alumni and answer questions you may have.

## Aviva’s Resolutions

By Leigh Moss and Aviva

The New Year is the time for reflection and growth. This year why not work with your guide to help them prioritize their own resolutions. Aviva and I sat down at the beginning of December to make some decisions about her goals for 2024, and we’d like to share them with you.

Aviva’s Top 10 New Year’s Resolutions:

1. Drink plenty of water. While the weather is cooler now, we live in Texas and during those summer months nothing helps more than keeping hydrated (and it’s a great way to keep a beautiful complexion as well)
2. Prioritize health (a fit and healthy dog is a happy one, so we’ll be sure to stay on top of our annual vet well checks. After all, every time we go to the vet, they tell me I’m the best dog they’ve ever met.)
3. Travel to new places. We love an adventure. Plus, every time I get to learn a new route, you know what that means….more kibble! Which leads me to
4. Cut back on those treats. (Aviva does not agree with this one but is willing to swap some of her treats for the occasional ice cube in order to
5. Keep that guide-dog-in-training bod. Aviva loves to work and promises to keep up the active routes and travel plenty in order to stay fit!
6. Kick that licker problem. Wait? Doesn’t everyone love licks?
7. Keep an active mind - when home, what better way to stay in top mental shape than with a puzzle toy or a frozen Kong or learning how to target a new spot!
8. More belly rubs! I’m pretty sure I’m like a genie - anyone who rubs my belly has good luck coming their way.
9. Improve my work-life balance - work hard - play hard is Aviva’s motto, but when she’s not working or playing her goal is always to
10. Get more sleep - because it’s critical to store up all that energy and love for the hard work and play!

## Martinez Story

**Martinez and Friends’ Holiday Adventure**

**By Cheri Owen**

Suitcases and more suitcases. Boxes being delivered to the door and she whips out clothing for me gleefully, calling my name: “Martinez, come! This is supposed to be a beautiful hunter green. Let’s try this on you!” I suddenly feel like Ralph from *A Christmas Story*, being forced to try on his aunt’s bunny suit. Ralph is outside and every time a UPS or FedEx truck comes around the corner, he runs to whatever window in which I am sleeping, drowsily soaking up my Vitamin D, and warns me that a package is coming. “Yo, Martinez, here comes another one!” he shouts, while chomping on a branch of rosemary.

Maria flutters along. It’s getting cold in California: it is the week after Thanksgiving and there is a chill every evening until the sun warms up the day. Maria rests at night, getting her breathing down to such a level she almost appears dead. Ralph says so all the time: “Maria, why do you make yourself look like a corpse?”

“It’s called *torpor*, Ralph. It helps me stay warm. It’s what hummingbirds do.”

Martinez laughs at their banter.

Ralph turns to Martinez: “Where are you going, man?”

“Washington D.C.,” Martinez replies, “I guess it’s supposed to be really cold there. I have so many tummy warmers, boots, and a brand-new raincoat. I have no idea. You are coming, right, Ralph? Maria?”

Maria flutters past and nervously exclaims, “Oh my goodness, I can’t possibly, my dear friend, Martinez. This is my climate here. There are no flower nectars I desire in that part of the world.”

Ralph stops eating his rosemary and looks up at Martinez. “No way, Dude. I’m not going anywhere cold. The ground will be freezing, and what will I eat? You have the best fanciful garden in the world right here.”

Martinez sighs. “OK, but please reconsider, Ralph.” His ears prick up: he hears Cheri calling him again and runs upstairs to meet her.

“Okay, Boy, you ready for this?” Cheri says, while she gently caressed his ears. She gives him a big kiss on his head. “We will be home soon. I promise.” Martinez leaned into his person, assuring her that he was ready for whatever came his way, so long as they were together.

The Arrival

Check-in was a breeze at United and they all set off for their East Coast adventure. The flight was a bit bumpy, but they arrived. Martinez was the first one up when the tires hit the tarmac at Dulles, and he couldn’t wait to get off the plane.

Cheri stood up and picked up her backpack. She frowned slightly, thinking she felt something move. Martinez saw Ralph pop his head out of the side of the backpack. His eyes got wide and he started wagging his tail excitedly to immediately create a distraction to save Ralph.

Cheri bent down and patted Martinez’s head, praising him: “You are such a good boy. We are almost there, Buddy!”

It worked! She thought he was just eager to get off the metal tube.

As they exited the plane, Cheri chucked her backpack over her shoulder and Ralph hunkered down, holding on for dear life, jammed between a set of headphones and Martinez’s squeaky toy, which happened to be a candy cane. Ralph marveled at the giant cane and started to salivate. “Yum,” he said, “all for me!” Then he licked it, and came away with a mouthful of fuzz. “Blech, yuck!”

They made their way to the apartment, and Martinez guided like a champ. They went into the complex and were greeted by a security person and received a tour of the building. When they got to the 4th floor, there was a courtyard garden, right outside. This was Ralph’s chance! Martinez nudged the bottom of the backpack with his nose, and Ralph unzipped the largest compartment a single inch, squeezing his way out and dropping into the closest concrete planter he saw. The dirt was hard, and cold, but a mylar wrapper rattled beneath a stick. Ralph scrambled over and to his delight, found a last bite of an energy bar with dates and caramel. Dates and caramel! That must be why they called this place D.C.!

Martinez let out a sigh of relief. Now, he could really focus. He had been worried about Ralph and doing his job – multitasking was too hard! Now, he didn’t have to worry about Ralph any longer. Turning his attention to the task at hand: the pavement was different. Where were the elevators? What floor was he guiding his person to? Did he know how to count that high? Where was the fitness center that his person so enjoyed? Where was her coffee shop?

“I’m going to have to learn all of these new things,” he thought to himself. And, they were off! “Come on boy,” Cheri said. She clicked once. She had the clicker!

“Oh, I love the clicker!” Martinez thought. He wagged his tail. “She thinks I can’t remember the door without the clicker, but it only takes me once, but I enjoy the training.” Cheri trained Martinez with the clicker to the elevator. She trained Martinez with the clicker to the apartment door. He stopped worrying how high he could count, and started drooling at the thought of clicker-associated treats. Peanut butter-scented, Christmas treats.

Cheri made her way down to the fourth floor and walked outside to the open area with Martinez. Rays of sunlight streaked through the clouds, and provided a welcome warmth to both of them. Ralph popped out of the plant container, a piece of bark resting on his head. He sniffed the crisp air and dug a hole under the leaves of the plant. Martinez noticed him and shook his head at Ralph and mouthed: “Behave, please!”

Suddenly, Ralph heard a low, Adele-like voice purr, “Hey, Sexy Fella!” He looked this way and that. Was the voice talking to him? He looking down at himself. He *was* a sexy fella, with his short gray fur, and long white tummy. But he still couldn’t figure out where that beautiful voice was coming from. Martinez looked at Ralph, then looked up toward the sky. Ralph followed Martinez’s gaze and saw a squirrel on an electrical wire, way, way above him!

Ralph shuddered with fear, and yelled: “Oh my goodness, be careful! What, are you crazy?”

The squirrel fluttered her eyes at Ralph and laughed hysterically.

“What are you doing digging a hole in that planter box?” she asked.

Martinez had never seen Ralph so completely flustered, he stood tall, then crouched down. He swished his tail, then turned three times before clearing his throat.

“I’m Ralph, the ground squirrel,” he announced, standing shyly on his hind legs.

She replied: “I’m Shirley, the tree squirrel. Nice to meet you, Ralph!”

Martinez smiled to himself and kept focusing on his work, finding Cheri a chair at the table nearby. Cheri sat down and Martinez lay down beside her. Now, he could watch the drama between Shirley and Ralph unfold. Would Ralph actually go up on that wire and meet Shirley? Would Ralph share his food? “No way. Not gonna happen,” Martinez predicted.

Martinez was correct: Shirley made her way down the wire to meet Ralph. She jumped in the planter box, flicking her tail curiously. Ralph nervously turned a circle and wrapped his tail around his little body, comforting himself like a blanket. Martinez watched, paws crossed in front, amused, while his person drank her cup of coffee.

Shirley asked: “What zone are you from? I haven’t seen you around here.”

Ralph responded, “What? Am I in a *Hunger Games* audition? Where are the cameras?” He looked around excitedly.

Shirley laughed and explained to Ralph that the city is separated by zones, and then asked Ralph to join her on the wire above so she could show him around. Ralph turned Albino white since he’d never been higher than a garden box more than four feet off the ground. He looked high above and shook his head emphatically: “No way, not gonna happen. Ever. You are NUTS!” Shirley didn’t understand, “Well, how in the world do you survive without being up in the trees?”

Ralph explained, “I don’t go in the trees. I live above ground and have tunnels underground. That’s my buddy over there,” he pointed to Martinez. Martinez raised his one eyebrow and sighed.

Ralph asked, his mouth watering, “Have you ever had rosemary? Where I live, in her garden,” this time he pointed to Cheri, “it’s so delicious!” Shirley was completely confused, but she did notice that Ralph seemed to be shivering a little, and that his coat wasn’t as thick as hers.

“Oof,” she said, “When it gets colder, you are going to freeze.”

Ralph laughed. “No way,” he said. “I can just hop in her backpack and head upstairs with all of them. You should try out MY world for a day. I bet you’d like it down here on the ground. And all the fruit, seeds and nuts! I’m not good with change, anyway.”

Martinez perked up and said: “Ralph, how many times have I told you that the only thing that *is* permanent is change? As much as I love a routine, I have to be prepared for change. So do you. Why don’t you give the wire a try?”

Ralph eyed Shirley. He really liked her voice. She smiled at him encouragingly. Ralph knitted his eyebrows together a few times. “Nope. No way. Football is on soon anyway.” He kept digging his hole into his planter box and encouraged Shirley to join him. Shirley thought to herself: “Doesn’t he realize he’s digging a hole in a planter box, where his tunnel will only go in circles?”

Cheri finished her coffee and stood up, and Martinez stood up with her. Ralph popped up with a mound of dirt on his head and asked: “Where are you going, Big Guy?” In that moment, Cheri commanded: “Martinez, Door!” and they were off. Ralph watched Martinez guide his person to the door with his tail wagging side to side. He tunneled back down in his planter box with Shirley watching him from above.

When Martinez and Cheri came off the busy Metro, they were at the National Mall. Martinez looked across the street and had never seen such a big Christmas tree! It was huge, he thought. He guided Cheri across the street, careful to navigate through the people. When they got to the other side, Cheri halted him, listened to her device and said: “Martinez, Left.” They were going away from the big Christmas tree and entered into a park-like area with a lot of grass and sculptures. Across the street sat a huge Abraham Lincoln starting across at them.

Martinez then guided Cheri to what appeared to just be grass. He was trying to find his path to walk and then he saw it: he knew just where to guide her. There was a wall. On the wall there were many names and the wall started off very low, got high, then low again but it was lined with pavement lights and wreaths for him to closely follow, a large low angle set in the grass.

It was Christmas Eve and the path was empty. The mood got solemn. His person served in the United States Air Force and he remembered her talking about her father, that he had served in the Army in Vietnam, and had come home a different person.

But, on this wall, these were the service members that didn’t come home. Cheri paused at the highest point of the wall and Martinez guided her to the wall and stood. She touched the wall, feeling the engraved names and he stood still alongside her, her other hand touching my head. Martinez could tell she felt sad. They continued along the path and made a right. Martinez continued guiding forward, until the two of them reached the trees that lined the Lincoln Memorial reflecting pool. The moon shimmered on the water’s surface. Martinez stared ahead and awaited further instructions from his person. The air was crisp and clean on this Christmas Eve, and the silence was welcoming. Just as they were both taking a deep breath together, I heard Jenni coming up behind us, saying: “I found the ice cream truck!” Martinez smiled to himself and already prepared himself to turn. He knew the exact directions his person was going to give him.

Back at the apartment, Ralph had managed to dig himself an entire tunnel, in a big circle. He kept popping his head out and continuously saw Shirley staring back at him, always ending up in the same place. He finally came all the way out of the planter box and sat by her. It was so quiet.

Finally, Ralph asked, “Have you ever been in an underground tunnel?”

Shirley said: “Oh, never. I’m afraid of the dark.”

Ralph replied: “But I’m afraid of heights.” They both stared at each other, neither blinking.

Ralph said: “Do you want to try?”

Shirley sighed, took a deep breath, then squished her body down in the tunnel, with Ralph following closely behind. She scampered cautiously through the large loop that Ralph had dug, then returned to the surface, as did Ralph. They sat on their hind legs together, both breathing deeply, understanding they were the same, but also, very different. Shirley relished the profundity of the moment. “What are you thinking, Ralph?” she ventured.

Ralph replied, without missing a beat. “I bet I’m missing out on some ice cream.”

# From GDB

## Betty Rose

The Marketing Department is excited to share a new video story about BettyRose, a guide dog puppy who was named in tribute to the iconic actress, Betty White, and the character she played on the sitcom "Golden Girls," Rose Nyland. Betty was a longtime friend and supporter of Guide Dogs for the Blind before her passing at the age of 99 on New Year's Eve in 2021.

Nearly two years later, BettyRose has gone on to do great things, and as is par for our mission, is making a positive impact in someone's life. I won't spoil the plot, but you can probably correctly guess that this video story comes full circle with BettyRose's GDB journey.

[The Story of Betty White (YouTube link)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FajqUJNgw7s)

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| [A person holding a dog  Description automatically generated](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FajqUJNgw7s) | [The Story of BettyRose](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FajqUJNgw7s)  This is the story about a very special dog from Guide Dogs for the Blind, BettyRose. She was named in tribute to the iconic actress, Betty White, and the cha...  [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com) |

## Gift Shop

GIFT SHOP NEWS – January 2024

By: Michelle McNew

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

**Tea Towel $15**

This adorable oversized and lint free Tea Towel is the perfect conversation starter! Pictured on the towel is a line up of GDB program dogs sitting on a bridge. Listed in order from left to right is a golden retriever puppy in a green puppy jacket, a golden retriever in a blue breeder scarf, a black labrador in a teal K9 Buddy scarf and a yellow labrador in a harness. Printed above this picture is the GDB logo in orange. Each towel comes with our exclusive Versa-Loop™ hanging feature sewn into the back. Measuring 20" x 26. This product is white with an orange logo and a photo.

**Relaxed Fit DAMFP Zippie $43**

Cuddle up in this super soft and warm zip hoodie sweatshirt. The Front is decorated with a white GDB logo on the left chest and the back features a silhouette of a yellow labrador guide with the words, Dog are My Favorite People inside the silhouette.  Made of 60/40 ring spun cotton/polyester with a jersey lined hood and two front pockets with a full front zipper. Available in Heather Navy in sizes Extra Small  through 3XL. Get them while they last!  To ensure a great fit, please refer to the size chart below.  Care instructions: Machine wash cold with like colors. do not bleach, tumble dry low or hang dry

**Contoured Fit DAMFP Zippie $43**

Keep warm in this 8.1 ounce GDB sweatshirt! Made of 55% recycled cotton and 39% post consumer recycled polyester and 6% recycled rayon. Featuring a recycled natural color draw cord.  Adorned with a black GDB logo on the left chest and the back features a black labrador in harness with the words "Dogs are my favorite people" written inside the dog silhouette. Available in heather gray in sizes XS - 3XL.

**Belt Bag $20**

This belt bag is made of 100% nylon with a 210D polyester lining. This handy accessory includes a zippered main compartment with interior mesh pockets as well as a back zippered pocket for all of your essentials. Featuring an adjustable strap. Adorned with the GDB logo in white across the front bottom. Available in black. Wear it around your waist or over the shoulder sling style. A great way to carry your keys, wallet, phone and other essentials.

**Tumbler with Straw $20**

This acrylic 32 ounce tumbler features a silicone sleeve with matching straw. Including a cleaning brush for the straw and adorned with the GDB logo in white. Makes a great gift!

**Ornament – Paw $10**

This silver metal finish ornament in the shape of a dog paw features the Guide Dogs for the Blind logo inside the paw and Guide Dogs for the Blind in braille on the opposite side. Included is a red ribbon attached to a loop on the top. A black velvet cinch bag is included. It makes for a great gift! Limited quantities! Measuring  2.5 inches x 2 inches

**Fleece Romper DAMFP $24**

This fleece romper will keep those babies toasty warm! This 7.4 ounce combed ringspun cotton/poly fleece romper is adorned with a black labrador puppy in a green jacket with the words " Dogs are My Favorite People' in black above the dog and a black GDB Logo below the dog. Available in heather in sizes 6M through 24M.

**Relaxed Fit ¼ Snap Pullover $48**

This Sherpa pullover features a snap front closure, front yoke, contrast color binding/snaps/inner placket. Made of Polyester Fleece, it is sure to keep you cozy! Adorned on the left chest with a brown leather patch with the GDB logo on it.  Available in Khaki in sizes Extra Small through Three Extra Large.  Please refer to the size guide below to ensure a great fit!

**DAMFP Onesie $16**

Even out smallest GDB fans can show their support! The front of this onesie is adorned with the words Dogs are my people in black, underneath that is a black labrador puppy in a green puppy jacket followed by a GDB logo in black.   The back of the onesie is blank. Available in Lime Green in sizes 6 months, 12 months, 18 months and 24 months.

Contoured Logo Hoodie Pullover $40

For those of you who love pink - this is is your next hoodie purchase!  This lightweight fleece hoodie is made of 55/45 combed ring spun cotton/poly fleece. This sweatshirt features a cowl neck that converts to a hood. Slightly longer length. Available in Heathered Pink Azalea in sizes Extra Small through Four Extra Large. Refer to size chart below to ensure a great fit.

Youth Dogs Are My Favorite People Zip Hoodie $30

At 7.8 ounces this 50/50 cotton/poly fleece zip sweatshirt will be a hit with the kiddos! Featuring a white GDB logo on the left chest and the back is adorned with a yellow labrador in harness in a sitting position. Inside the silhouette of the dog reads " Dogs are my favorite people" in blue letters. Available in Carolina Blue in sizes Extra Small through Large.

Relaxed Fit SS Pocket Tee $25

This 100% pigment dyed ring spun cotton tee will become your favorite tee! Adorned with a GDB Logo in white on the left chest above the pocket. Weighing in at 5.5 ounces, this tee is super soft!   to ensure a great fit, please refer to the size chart below. Available in Mist Blue in sizes Small through 4XL.  Care instructions: Machine wash cold, inside out with like colors. Tumble dry medium. Do not iron.

Toddler Dogs are My Favorite People Zip Hoodie $28

At 7.8 ounces this 50/50 cotton/poly fleece zip sweatshirt will be a hit with the kiddos! Featuring a white GDB logo on the left chest and the back is adorned with a yellow labrador in a green puppy jacket in a sitting position. Above the puppy reads " Dogs are my favorite people" in white letters. Available in red in sizes 2T,3T and 4T.

Contoured Fit Dogs are my favorite people zip hoodie $40

Cuddle up in this super soft and warm zip hoodie sweatshirt. The Front is decorated with a white GDB logo on the left chest and the back features a silhouette of a golden retriever guide with the words, Dog are My Favorite People inside the silhouette.  Made of 100% combed ring spun cotton with a jersey lined hood and two front pockets with a full front zipper. Available in Charcoal in sizes Extra Small through 3XL. Get them while they last!  To ensure a great fit, please refer to the size chart below.  Care instructions: Machine wash cold with like colors. do not bleach, tumble dry low or hang dry.

Relaxed Fit Dogs are my favorite people hoodie $40

Cuddle up in this super soft and warm zip hoodie sweatshirt. The Front is decorated with a white GDB logo on the left chest and the back features a silhouette of a golden retriever guide with the words, Dog are My Favorite People inside the silhouette.  Made of 60/40 ring spun cotton/polyester with a jersey lined hood and two front pockets with a full front zipper. Available in Royal Frost in sizes Small through 3XL. Get them while they last!  To ensure a great fit, please refer to the size chart below.  Care instructions: Machine wash cold with like colors. do not bleach, tumble dry low or hang dry.

K9 Buddy Dog in Scarf Plush $20

Super soft plush dogs with a teal blue K9 Buddy Dog Scarf.  Available in black Lab, yellow Lab or Golden Retriever. Kids will love this as a gift!   7 inches tall and 10 inches wide.

Breeder Dog in scarf plush $20

Super soft plush dogs with a blue Breeder Dog Scarf. Available in black Lab, yellow Lab or Golden Retriever. Kids will love this as a gift!   7 inches tall and 10 inches wide.

Sling Bag – Black $30

Made of waterproof nylon fabric and polyester lining. Features a large main pocket to store mobile phone, laptop, ipad, and other essentials. A front zippered pocket for easy access to small items. The side pocket allows to store water bottle or umbrella. You can carry the with a top handle or use it as a crossbody bag  to free your hands. Adjustable straps and buckle waist closure to help  prevent slipping. Perfect for travel, hiking or camping. Measures 21.26"L x 14.17"Wx5.9"H. Available in black. Adorned with a white GDB logo.

Stashable Backpack $40

The ultimate packable travel backpack.  This lightweight backpack cleverly rolls up and flips into its built-in pouch so it folds up small and is easy to fit in your luggage.  Features a zipper closure at the top and a small pocket on the outside. At your destination, this small packable backpack holds all your day-trip essentials so you’re hands-free to explore and trek.  With its rucksack style, this lightweight bag is perfect for travel and weighs just a few ounces. Featuring the GDB Logo in white. Available in colors lime and black. Made of 100% recycled PET. Care- machine washable. Size- 15" wide, 16" tall, with a 5" gusset. Compacted size 15" x 4" x 1"

Foldable Shopping Bag – Orange $6

This super sturdy all over print foldable shopping bag is made of Denier Polyester. The photo in this design features a yellow labrador in harness and a golden retriever in puppy jacket laying side by side. The orange background color is sprinkled with many paw prints in many sizes and colors and a white GDB logo is located at the bottom of the bag. The same photo image is printed on the attached bag pouch. It measures 17.7 inches x 26 inches.  Get them while they last!

You can order Gift Shop merchandise online 24/7 at www.guidedogs.com, or you may call our customer service number at 503-668-2115 and leave us a message. All orders are subject to applicable tax and shipping fees. We return phone calls and ship online orders on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from our Oregon campus. 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.

If you have product suggestions, feel free to email me at [mmcnew@guidedogs.com](mailto:mmcnew@guidedogs.com).

# Alumni Webpage Updates

Is there something you have been looking for? Check out the recent additions to the Alumni section of GDB’s webpage.

Speaker series July 2023: “What We Do Not See”

Speaker Series October 2023: “Blaze Your Own Trails”

Alumni News 2022: All Issues (Written and Audio Format)

Alumni News 2023 Issue 1 (Written Format)

Alumni News 2023 Issue 2 (Written Format)

Active GDB Alumni Chapter List

# [IN MEMORIAM, IN MEMORY, IN TRIBUTE](#a11)

Yumi, Female Yellow Lab guide for LaRee Brosseau, LaCenter, WA passed away August 20, 2023

Atlanta (age 11), a Guide for SheriCohen passed away on Thursday, September 28, 2023.

Joelle, Female black Lab Guide for John Prescott of Oakland CA passed away.

Vander, a male, black labrador retriever Guide for Leah Gardner has retired.

# Alumni Announcements

Alysa Chadow

Alysa Chadow married her long time partner and best friend Brian Fisher on December 10, 2023 in Berkeley, California. Both they and Alysa’s black lab/golden retriever mix are happily living in Alameda, California. Feel free to email her at [chadowab@gmail.com](mailto:chadowab@gmail.com) if you want to catch up.

# Participation Research Opportunities

Below are opportunities to participate in outside research studies and surveys related to blindness and the guide dog lifestyle. The following opportunities are not affiliated with or endorsed by Guide Dogs for the Blind in any way and the links will lead you to third-party sites that are not associated with our organization.

## Illinois Institute

The Illinois Institute of Technology and The Chicago Lighthouse are seeking participants for a clinical research study regarding a new, wireless Intracortical Visual Prosthesis (ICVP) designed to help restore some light perception for people who are totally blind. Individuals who lost their vision as an adult, but who had normal or near normal vision for the first 10 years of their life, may apply for initial screening, though participation in the clinical study will require additional inclusion and exclusion criteria beyond vision. Restoring vision is not the goal of this study and should not be the expectation. For more information visit:  <https://chicagolighthouse.org/icvp/>

## Rosie the Riveter National Historical Park

My name is Sajja Koirala, and I am a PhD student at the University of Hawaii. I am researching how Audio Description can be better used to support blind people’s visit to national parks, especially when they are in the preparation stage of the visit. As a part of my research, I am interested in conducting a field study with a small group of blind and low vision people at Rosie the Riveter National Historical Park on Saturday January 27, 2024 from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

I am looking for a group of five to seven blind or low vision people (sighted companions are welcome) to take part in my study. I will arrange for a guided tour at the park. Participating in my research involves completing a brief demographic questionnaire before the visit, listening to the audio described brochure of the park before the visit, visiting the park, and participating in a focus group after the visit. I will provide $50 to each research participant for their time and effort. If you are interested in participating, please e-mail me at [sazza@hawaii.edu](mailto:sazza@hawaii.edu) or call me at 808-255-2206.

Thank you for your consideration,

# Alumni Association Board of Directors

**Officers:**

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**Naperville, IL**

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

**Vice-Chair - Claire Stanley / Tulane**

**Rockville, MD**

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

**Secretary - Leigh Moss/*Aviva***

**Austin, TX**

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

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**Clarkston, WA**

[**dcooklewis@guidedogs.com**](mailto:deb@lewissound.net)

**Kelly Egan/*Caspian***

**San Diego, CA**

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

**Derek Daniel/Koa**

**Indianapolis, IN**

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

**Maia Scott/*Gleam***

**San Francisco, CA**

**(415) 290-6242**

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

**Melba Velez Ortiz/*Chad***

**Allendale, MI 49401**

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

**Chris Yoon/*Sadie***

**Bellevue, WA**

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

**EX-Officio Members**

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**Santa Barbara, CA**

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

**Amy Salger/*Marsala – Alumni engagement Manager***

**Vinton, IA**

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

# Roster of GDB Alumni Chapters

USA

Arizona

Desert Dogs of Phoenix

Location: Phoenix, Arizona

President: Scott Wilcock, stitchbert@gmail.com

Vice-president: Michael Woody mwoody03@gmail.com

Northern Arizona High Country Walkers

Location: Northern Arizona

President: Patricia Clingman, patriciaclingman@yahoo.com

California

GDB Alumni Foggy Doggies Bay Area Chapter

Location: San Francisco, California

Email: fogdog@groups.io

Co-president: Lauri Shay, laurishay@gmail.com

Co-president: Jan Robitscher, jbrobit@aol.com

OC Guide Dogsfor the Blind Alumni Chapter

Location: Orange County, California

Web Site: ocguidedogs.com

Alan Holst-President, alanholst@me.com

Vice-president: Jeff Senge, jcsenge@outlook.com

Secretary: Carla Ross, info@ocguidedogs.com

Paws of Fame Guide Dogs for the Blind Alumni Chapter

Location: Los Angeles County, California

Web Site: www.pawsoffamela.com

President: Joseph Landau, jklandau@yahoo.com

San Diego Alumni Chapter of Guide Dog Handlers

Location: San Diego, California

President: Launa Hardy, Launahardy@gmail.com

Vice-president: Monique Fenton, Moniquegdb14@gmail.com

Secretary: Ethel Miranda

Colorado

Colorado Rocky rovers

Location: Denver, Colorado

Rocky Rovers email: GDB-RockyRovers@outlook.com

President: Richard Faubion, rfaubion@fightblindness.org

Vice-president: Andre van Hall

Treasurer: Kathy Hahn

Secretary: Sharon Greenberg

Director at Large: Veronica Rodriguez

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.

Email: GDBSunshineGuideDogs@groups.io

President: Marcia Bukala, mjbukala@yahoo.com

Vice-president: Jim East, jim.east.mhs@gmail.com

Illinois

Windy City GDB Alumni

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Description: Chicago and Northern Illinois

President: Maureen Reid- maureen.shenberger@gmail.com

Vice-President: Cyndi Fosco cyndifosco@comcast.net

Secretary: Ethan Edwards- eedwards008@gmail.com

Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio

Guide Dog Handlers of the Midwest

Email: GDB\_Midwest@groups.io

President: Deanna Lewis, Deannakay03@gmail.com

Vice-president: Paul Walker, herospaw2002@gmail.com

Secretary: LuAnn Bowers

Montana

GDB Montana Alumni Chapter/Montana Dog Guide Group

Location: Montana

President: Ed Worrell ed.worrell@icloud.com

First Vice-President: Jacob Krissovich

Second Vice-President: Lisa Chamberlain

Oregon

GDB HaRT of Oregon (Handlers and Raisers Together)

Location: Portland, Oregon

Description: Join Oregon Handlers and Raisers as we learn, have fun, and strengthen our shared bonds.

Email: GDBHaRTofOregon@groups.io

Web Site: https://www.facebook.com/groups/gdbhartoforegon

Co-president: Chari Chauvin, finn986@gmail.com

Co-president: Jenny Collins, puppycruisedirector@gmail.com

Utah

Greatest Paws on Earth GDB Alumni Chapter

Location: Utah

President: Sandy Ruconich, sruconich@gmail.com

Vice-president: Patty Mueller, plmueller@q.com

Washington

GDB Washington State Alumni

Location: Washington State

Description: Supporting each other and keeping everyone up to date about GDB

Email: wagdbalumni@groups.io

Co-president: Holly Turri, holly.turri9@gmail.com

Co-president: Danette Dixon, danettedixon63@gmail.com

Canada

BC Dogwoods GDB Alumni

Location: British Columbia

Email: BC Dogwoods Alumni Group talkadvocacy@hooh.ca

President: Heather Walkus

Advocacy: Lisa Bentz

Outreach: Matt Salli

Isee Paws Guide Dogs

Location: Montreal, Quebec

President: Kim Holdbrook, kimholdbrook3@gmail.com

Special Interest

GDB Bibliodogs

Description: The GDB book club. Meets on the third Thursday of each month at 4:00 pm Pacific.

Email: bibliodogs@gdbalumniassociation.groups.io

President: Sue Wilkening, smsw57@gmail.com

GDB Creative Tails writing group

Description: Writing

Email: GDBCreativeTails@groups.io

President: Lisa Gilmartin, lsg1144.lg@gmail.com

GDB Paws Around the World

Description: Travel

Email: travel@gdbalumniassociation.groups.io

President: Sue Wilkening, smsw57@gmail.com

Vice-president: Erika Wolf, wolf67120@gmail.com

Secretary: Lillian Goodman, lilliangoodman98@gmail.com

GDB Tech Dogs

Location: International, meets via Zoom

Description: Sharing tips, tricks, and techniques related to technology

Email: techdogs@groups.io

Web Site: www.tech-dogs.net

Co-President: Marcia Yale, dragoncatmc@gmail.com

Co-President: Deborah Kendrick, Kendrick.deborah@gmail.com

Vice-president: Paul Walker, herospaw2002@gmail.com

Secretary: Terry Ann Saurman, saurmann@access4less.net

Gdb Stitch and Bitch

Description: Needlecrafting of all types

Email: GDBStitchAndBitch@groups.io

President: Dorianne Pollack, Doriannepollack@gmail.com

Vice-president: Jack Heim, john@johnheim.com

Secretary: Deanna Lewis, Deannakay03@gmail.com

Send updates and questions to Pete Berg at pberg@guidedogs.com