

Denver, Guide Dog Puppy-in-Training



My name is Denver, and I am a Guide Dog puppy in training for Guide Dogs of America. I was born on June 23, 2018. I am a yellow Labrador Retriever and I was donated to GDA along with my brother, Doppler, who is also a yellow Lab. I am being sponsored by Sepulveda Building Materials Charity Golf Tournament. This is the third installment of my progress on my journey to become a Guide Dog!

I have been practicing being a good guide dog puppy-in-training since my last report! This sponsorship report covers the time period from February 2019 to April 2019. I am now 10 months old! I weigh about 55 pounds and I am very well behaved. I enjoy going to new places with my puppy raising family. I hope you enjoy watching me grow and learn!



One of the things I have been working on is proper placement under the table when we go out to eat in restaurants. In the first two pictures, I practiced sitting in a pretend booth while I was at one of my GDA South Bay meetings. The picture on the right is of me under an actual table at a real restaurant. When we got up to leave, the people around us were surprised that I had been under the table and they hadn't noticed! Mom says it's always good if people aren't aware that I'm there – that means I'm doing a great job!

On March 10th I got to go on a very special outing with the Orange County GDA Puppy Raisers. Brian and Nancy Matthews (the area leaders of the South Bay GDA group) chose me to go because they thought I was ready to handle being in a more challenging environment. We got to go visit a real fire station! We explored the buildings and trucks, got to interact with the fire fighters while they were in their "turnouts", and even experienced the fire trucks with their lights and sirens on! Mom wasn't sure that I would be able to handle all of the excitement, but I showed her and everyone else that I was really ready! I handled everything like a pro, didn't get stressed, and behaved very, very well. The loud noise from the siren didn't bother me at all! I had a great time and learned that fire fighters are my friends! I hope you enjoy all of the pictures that Mom and Nancy took.



We are practicing our obedience before going into the fire station.



I was one of the younger puppies-in-training, but I listened to Mom and remembered my commands.



Mom and I practiced our loose leash walking and I remembered not to pull.



There were many interesting smells inside the firehouse. It was fun to get to smell their "turnouts". I thought everything smelled good!



The emergency truck had lots of different equipment that the firefighters can use to help rescue people.



I love it when Nancy takes my picture!



I was happy to make new friends and the firemen were very happy to pose with me.



Getting to greet the fireman in his "turnout" was my favorite part of the day! Mom wasn't sure whether I would be scared or not, because the fireman was breathing through a mask that made him sound like Darth Vader! Some of the other puppies weren't sure that he was safe to approach. Mom made me wait until she gave me the command of "Go say Hi!" Even though I was excited to go and greet him, I knew I had to wait until Mom said it was okay. Once I got the green light, I was very excited to greet him. I didn't mind the funny noise from his mask at all. I did think it was strange that his hands smelled and felt strange, but Mom said that was because he was wearing gloves. Mom said later that it was important for me to not be afraid of the fireman. She said that it's natural for dogs to be afraid of new noises, but that she was glad I wasn't afraid. This is because if there were ever a fire, she wouldn't want me to run and hide from the firefighters who would be trying to rescue me. I thought it was a lot of fun!



Mom and I and Brian Matthews and Paddy got to pose in front of the engine from Station #54. Just as we finished taking the picture, the station got a call and the firefighters had to leave. We waited, hoping they wouldn't be gone long, and they weren't. We practice some sit-stays and down-stays while they were on their call. We also took time to take a group picture and an individual picture in front of the Station #54 sign.





I had a great time visiting the fire station and it was great training for me. I proudly represented Guide Dogs of America, and several of the fire fighters commented on my jacket and that it was wonderful that Sepulveda Building Materials is sponsoring me. I think so too!



Another important skill that I continuously work on is called “settling”. Guide dogs obviously have an important job getting their blind or visually impaired partner from Point A to Point B. But once we get there, we have to know how to “settle”. This means sitting or laying quietly on the floor while our partner does his/her job or takes care of whatever business they have to take care of. These pictures are of my brother, Doppler (that’s him on the left) and me. We were at a South Bay GDA meeting. We were practicing “settling” while our leaders talked about important GDA information. Doppler and I love each other so much that we thought it would be okay to give each other some kisses while we “settled”. Mom and Doppler’s puppy raiser are friends, so we get to see each other a lot. I’m glad we live close to each other so we can play, but we also know we have to behave and practice our commands so that we can grow up to be real Guide Dogs.



At the beginning of April, I got to go on another exciting adventure! Brian and Nancy were going to Las Vegas for a special GDA event. They took Paddy, their puppy-in-training, and they asked Mom if I could go too. Of course Mom said yes, because she knows it's important for me to get out to experience new things. I had never been to Las Vegas before. I had also never stayed with Paddy before. She is about 17 months old, and is ready to go to Guide Dog College! I loved hanging out with her and cuddling with her. In the picture on the right, you can see that it almost looks like we were holding "paws". Nancy said the music at the event was kind of loud, and I didn't really like it. But having Paddy there with me made me feel good, and I wasn't worried about the music. I also got to meet Russ Gittlen, the President of Guide Dogs of America. He held Paddy's leash and Brian held mine for the picture, and I made sure that I was on my best behavior so that he would know how much I want to be a Guide Dog! Paddy was on her best behavior too!





Thank you again to my wonderful sponsor Sepulveda Building Materials. I am so thankful for your sponsorship and will try very hard to continue to make you proud of me. I will check back in a few months and will let you know how my training is going. Until then,

Wags and Licks!

Denver