

Kenai, Guide Dog Puppy-in-Training



Hi! Kenai, Guide Dog Puppy-in-Training, checking in! I've been very busy practicing my obedience and self-control and learning all of the things I will need to do as an official guide dog. As puppies-in-training, we are not allowed on the furniture. As you can see from the picture, I am being a good girl and sitting on the floor. I do like to rest my head on the couch, but I always remember to keep all four paws on the floor.



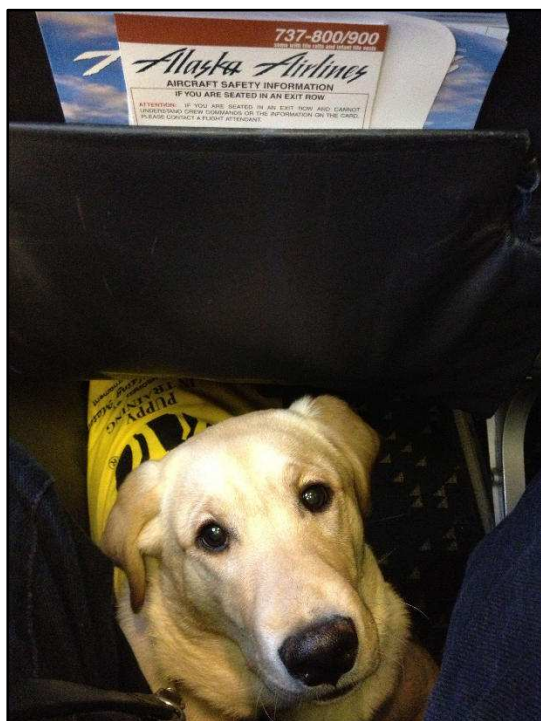
Being a Guide Dog Puppy-in-training isn't all work. I get to play a lot! I've been working on mastering the "two toys in my mouth trick" and as you can see, I've gotten very good at it!



One of the many things my puppy raiser family does is expose me to new experiences. This helps me learn how to behave in new situations. In February, I got to go to Collin's high school band concert. I was a very good girl and stayed under Janice's seat and listened to the music. Guide dogs don't dance, so I just lay quietly on the floor. The music was loud sometimes (especially the drums) but I didn't mind.



Each month, GDA has obedience classes in Sylmar. Collin always takes me so that I can learn even more. At this class, I practiced heeling nicely on a loose leash and ignoring distractions (toys, food, etc.). I also practiced sitting in the correct position. Another thing that I practice often is greeting people correctly. I sometimes get excited because I love people so much, but I am working on staying calm. I love little kids, but I am always gentle when they say hello.



In March, I flew on an airplane for the very first time! We flew from Los Angeles to Seattle on Alaska Airlines. (The LOVED me – especially because my name is Kenai, which is the name of a peninsula in Alaska!) I was such a good girl! My puppy raisers were so proud of me because I was calm in the airport through security and while waiting to board. Once we were on board, I laid down under the seat in front of Collin and fell asleep. I woke up when we took off, but then fell right back asleep. I think an airplane is just like a big car, and I LOVE riding in the car!



While we were in Washington, we visited the University of Puget Sound. Collin will be going to college here in the fall. The brick buildings were beautiful, and I really liked the flowers and trees. I was a very well behaved puppy-in-training, and everyone commented on my great obedience skills!



At the April Guide Dogs of America Graduation, I got to meet Janie Connors! I was so excited to meet her in person! My puppy raisers thanked her and Sepulveda Building Materials for sponsoring me.

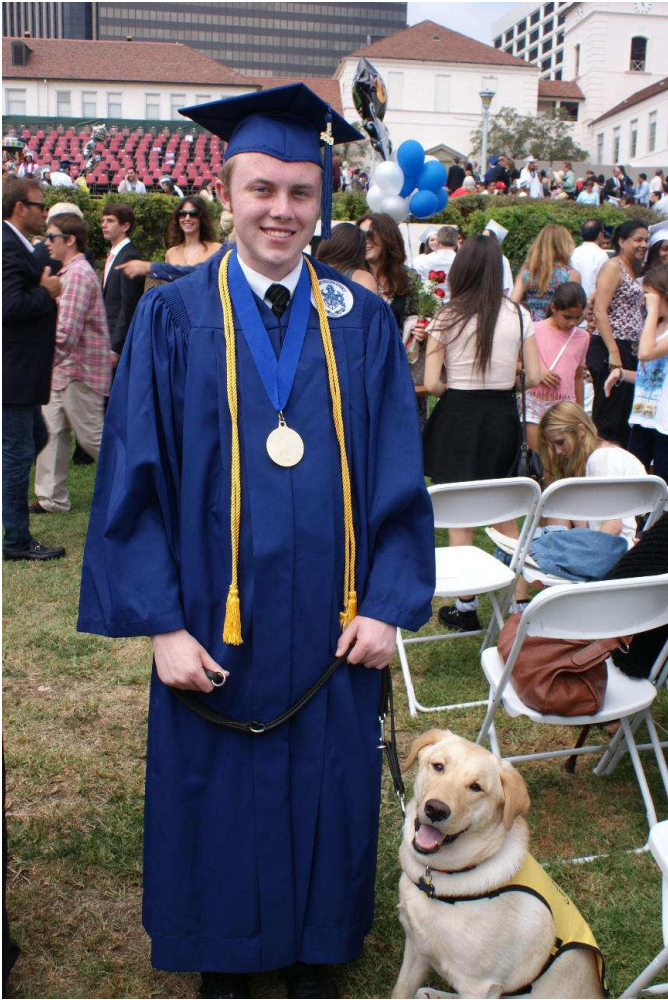


I also got to see my sister, Denali, at the GDA Graduation! She is a real, working guide dog! She was the first GDA puppy that my family raised, and they are so proud of her! I want to be a real guide dog like Denali some day!

In April, I also got to work in a GDA booth with Collin at the Pet Expo at the Orange County Fair Grounds. We met lots of people and told them about the great work that GDA does. We gave out information about being a puppy raiser, and even got some people to donate money to GDA!



I got to go to an Angels baseball game at Anaheim Stadium in May! I didn't really see too much of the game from where I was, but I still had fun and practiced my obedience. It's cool that Mickey gets to wear an Angel uniform, but I think my GDA jacket looks better! It's even embroidered with Sepulveda Building Materials name so that everyone knows they sponsor me!



June 13th was a very special day for Collin because he graduated from Beverly Hills High School! He got to wear special gold cords and a special medal too! Keep your fingers crossed for me – I hope to graduate as a guide dog someday! (But I don't want gold cords or a shiny medal – just a special harness that tells everyone I'm a real, working guide dog!)