September is National Guide Dog Month

History Of National Guide Dog Month

Dogs have been domesticated for around 150,000 years and have been coexisting with humans since back then. Ancient artifacts and scrolls show instances where dogs were guiding their human companions. The first attempt to train guide dogs was in Paris at the ‘Les Quinze-Vingts’ hospital for the blind.

After the First World War, when many soldiers came back blind, the use of guide dogs peaked. The demand for this service prompted the opening of the first school for guide dogs in Oldenburg, Germany. Dog trainer Dorothy Harrison Eustis is attributed with bringing the first guide dog to America, and Eustis later established the ‘Seeing Eye School’ in Morris-town, New Jersey.

Dick Van Patten was the inspiration behind National Guide Dog Month. He admired the ability of these dogs to improve the standards of life for those living with blindness but he was also aware of the time, energy, and cost that went into training these dogs. He decided to take action and raise awareness and monetary support for guide dog schools. The first guide dog fundraiser was in Southern California with the support of the Petco Foundation. Thanks to Van Patten’s effort, many guide dog organizations have now become beneficiaries of these month-long events.

(Article Courtesy of National Today)

Ways you can Participate

1. Watch Pick of the Litter on Netflix’s of Disney+.
2. Sign up for Guide Dogs for the Blind (GDB) monthly newsletter, Tales Unleashed.
3. Follow GDB on our social media channels.
4. Brush up on guide dog etiquette.
5. Learn more about raising a puppy for GDB.
6. Make a donation to GDB.
7. Tune into GDB’s Podcast, Central Bark.
8. Take a virtual tour of GDB campuses.
9. Take a virtual tour of the GDB Puppy Center (Curtness Overload!)
10. Volunteer

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