# **The CAGDU Barker**

# Summer 2021 Issue

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## **Retrieve This**

*By CAGDU Vice President, Rachel Grider*

Because travel has been limited over the past year, I have had to find creative ways to entertain my Seeing Eye dog Demi while at home. I have taught her new skills and invented games to keep her mind active, and, I have to say, these activities have proven to be just as entertaining for me as they have been for Demi.

One of my favorite examples of this has to be the time I taught Demi how to bring me my shoes. She already knew how to bring me toys, but this was my first time encouraging her to pick up other types of objects.

Armed with treats, I started by taking my flip-flops and waving them around while telling Demi to get them in an over-the-top enthusiastic voice. When she was thoroughly interested, I threw them and asked her to "Go get my flip-flop!"

Now, before I continue, there is something that you need to understand about my guide dog. Demi is a Labrador, and, like most labs, food is one of her greatest joys in life. She is also a very intelligent and obedient dog, but when she knows that I have treats in my pocket, her desire for food seems to drive away most of her common sense.

As soon as Demi understood that I wanted her to bring my flip-flops to me, she reasoned that it didn't really matter what method she used to bring me my shoes, as long as they got to me. So Demi proceeded to take a shoe in her mouth, throw it in my general direction, run after it, and repeat the process until the shoe would get to me. When she was satisfied that she had performed her task, she would run and do the same thing with the other one. I tried to get her to just take the shoe in her mouth and bring it to me, but she simply would not have it, though she did use other methods, including kicking the shoes to me, flicking them with her paws, and "surfing" them. (The latter is a term which I define as when Demi puts her front paws on an object and running across the floor only using her back legs, scooting the object in front of her).

I was laughing so hard during Demi's antics that it is hardly fair to blame her for not taking me seriously when I tried to get her to simply bring me my flip-flops. It was especially funny when she would throw a shoe in the wrong direction or when, once after she brought me my first shoe and collected her treat, I told her to go get the other one, and instead she took away the shoe she had already brought, and ran off with it. It was quite an amusing spectacle.

Eventually, I was able to teach Demi how to bring me items with a little more poise, but throwing items is still her favorite way to do it. Sometimes, I will be walking through the house, and I will feel something hit me in the back of the leg. I'll turn, and it will be a shoe; not far away, Demi will be standing there, wagging her tail and looking expectant. How can I possibly be bored with this dog?

## Emergency Preparedness Part 2

## An emergency can happen to anyone at any time - with or without warning. As a guide dog handler, being prepared for an actual emergency will give you peace of mind even if you never need to take action. It will also be safer and less stressful for you and your dog if you’re prepared. Being prepared comes down to planning. Anticipate your needs.

Part 1 of this article published in the previous issue of Alumni News

https://www.guidedogs.com/meet-gdb/news dealt with things you can do in advance to be prepared. Part 2 covers what you should do during an emergency.

* As a person with a disability, emergency preparedness is essential for you. In any emergency, your health and safety comes first. Make sure you are safe then take care of your dog.
* First responders, police, firefighters, and EMT’s may need guidance on how to deal with you and your dog. Make sure first responders realize that you have a disability and that your dog is a service animal. Don’t take this for granted.
* Inform emergency service providers that Guide Dogs for the Blind, Inc. is ready to assist by providing information or direct assistance in an emergency. The GDB emergency contact number is 1-800-295-4050. Inform the emergency person-ell that they can find this number on a tag on your dog's collar.
* If you must be transported via ambulance, your dog should be allowed to ride with you. If able, inform emergency personnel that your dog is well trained and is very friendly under normal circumstances. In an emergency, your dog may become frightened or confused. Your guide may react by clinging to you, trying to escape, or in rare cases, by becoming aggressive. Do your best to calm your dog. Speak in a soft, low voice. Be generous with food rewards.
* If you can’t manage the dog yourself, the next best thing is to have another person the dog is familiar with take control of your dog. If your dog has to be left with a person he is unfamiliar with, GDB should be contacted immediately.
* An emergency situation may require you to be evacuated from your home. Keep in mind that you have the legal right to be accompanied by your service dog. In the case of an evacuation, bring along a water-proof pouch with a photocopy of both sides of your dog’s GDB identification card, vaccination records, micro-chip records, and a recent photo of your dog. You should also bring along 2 weeks of food in a waterproof container,   cleaning supplies, extra leashes and collars, and toys.

Note:
Emergency shelters are in violation of the ADA if they refuse to allow service animals. You can’t be separated from your guide dog - even if pets are normally prohibited in the shelter, or if shelter staff or volunteers can provide the same assistance as your dog. Also, you can’t be separated from others because you have a service dog. You have the right to ask for reasonable modifications at security checkpoints so you’re not repeatedly subjected to long waits simply because you must take your dog outside for relief.

Emergencies can be extremely disruptive to your daily life. Proper planning and knowing what to do can make it safer and less stressful for you and your dog.

## China has 8 million blind people, but only 200 guide dogs

*By Nectar Gan*

CNN, November 23, 2020

**Blind runner makes history with help from furry friends**

At the age of 11, Yang Kang lost his vision due to a rare type of eye cancer. But he considers himself one of the lucky few among China's millions of blind people -- he has a guide dog.

Yang splits his time between living in Beijing with his wife and running a piano studio in his hometown Tangshan, a sprawling industrial city some 100 miles away.

His weekly journey consists of a high-speed train ride, two bus rides and three subway transfers through often-crowded stations. It would have been impossible for most blind Chinese, but Yang is blessed with a furry companion that guides him every step of the way -- Dick, a four-year-old Labrador.

Guide dogs like Dick are so rare in China that Yang waited five years to get one. According to state broadcaster CCTV, China only had some 200 dogs in service as of April -- which makes them even rarer than the giant pandas.

The service dogs' scarcity is all the more striking considering the large number of people who could potentially benefit from their help. The China Association of the Blind estimates the country's visually impaired population to be over 17 million. According to the World Health Organization, eight million Chinese are completely blind -- roughly equal to the whole population of Switzerland. That's one guide dog for every 85,000 Chinese people who have partially or fully lost their eyesight.

In comparison, about one in 50 blind and visually impaired people in the United States work with guide dogs. In Britain, over 1,000 guide dogs are trained each year for a total of 36,000 people who are registered as blind or partially sighted.

### Dangerous streets

Navigating Chinese cities can be a daunting task for the blind to manage on their own.

A 2016 survey by the China Information Accessibility Product Alliance found that 30% of the country's visually impaired seldom leave their homes; only one in four regularly go outside by themselves, with the remainder mostly shepherded by family and friends.

Before Dick came along, Yang had to rely on his white cane to get around -- but he said it was difficult and dangerous to cross the multi-lane highways and navigate the numerous pedestrian overpasses and tunnels that make up the Chinese capital by himself. "I was in constant fear," he said. "The most terrifying thing is that I have no idea what the road ahead is like."

After three years of researching and making calls, Yang finally found out where to apply for one -- a guide dog training center in the northeastern city of Dalian.

Founded in 2016, the China Dalian Guide Dog Training Center is China's first such facility.

Wang Jingyu, an animal behavior expert at Dalian Medical University, decided to train China's own guide dogs after noticing that, unlike their Western counterparts, blind Chinese athletes did not have guide dogs to help them during the 2004 Athens Paralympic Games, said Liang Jia, a staff member at the Dalian center.

Without any prior knowledge or experience, Wang researched online how to train guide dogs and sought help from international experts.

When the center opened in 2006, about 50,000 people called from across China to apply for a guide dog -- but Wang only had two to offer. "Our office phone was ringing off the hook," Wang told state-run news agency Xinhua.

The facility has expanded over the years -- it now keeps 100 in various stages of training, and more than 20 graduate each year.

The puppies -- mostly Golden Retrievers and Labradors, chosen for their gentle, friendly nature -- are first sent to foster families for a year to learn to live with humans, before returning to the center for another year of professional training. It is a lengthy and strict process -- along the way, about 60% of the dogs will be disqualified and put up for adoption as pet dogs. The causes for disqualification can include showing aggression, having excessive energy, being overly sensitive to pressure, and lacking the ability to remained focus, as well as suffering from car sickness. After passing all the evaluations, a qualified guide dog will be matched with an owner and undergo another 40 days of joint training, before it can follow the owner to its new home.

### Limited by funding

Over the past years, a few smaller guide dog training centers have opened in China, but the Dalian center remains the country's largest, and one of the only two recognized by the International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF). In general, it's hard to get the funding to start or continue running a center.

And to be qualified by IGDF, a center needs to pass a strict evaluation process, which can be difficult for those without sufficient funding.

The other IGDF-approved school, Yunnan Erxin Dog Guides, opened in Shanghai in 2018. Before that, the Shanghai Disabled Persons' Federation had been commissioning a police dog training center in the nearby city of Nanjing to train guide dogs for its visually impaired citizens.

The lack of funding is a key constraint for China's guide dog schools, Liang said. As a nonprofit, the Dalian center provides guide dogs to applicants for free, but each animal costs about 200,000 yuan ($30,353) to train. In the early years, Wang used his own savings to keep the center running. Then, in 2010, the Dalian government started to subsidize the center with 60,000 yuan ($9,106) for each guide dog it trains. The center also receives donations from the public, but they're often not enough to cover the cost -- currently, it faces a 30% budget deficit, according to Liang.

"If we had more sufficient funding, we'll be able to train more guide dogs,"

Liang said. "But the reality is, we can only operate on the money we've got."

The center currently has about 30 instructors. Many of them are young university graduates who are passionate about dogs and helping others -- and are committed enough to accept a monthly salary 60% below the city's average income.

Liang, who graduated from university in 2011, gave up her job offer as a civil servant to join the center as an instructor -- against the advice of everyone around her. "My parents disapproved it, and my boyfriend broke up with me because of it, but I had my mind set on the job -- it is a cause that's worth devoting my passion and youth for," she said.

Liang hopes the government -- especially the central government in Beijing

-- can offer more funding, given that its guide dogs are offered to applicants not just from Dalian, but all over China. The center is also trying to raise public awareness about guide dogs on social media, hoping to bring in more donations.

### Public acceptance

Yang, and other guide dog users, said that guide dogs have become more accepted by the Chinese public in recent years. More often than not, they are allowed on subways, buses and trains, especially in first-tier cities such as Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen.

 But some other cities still have a long way to go. In April, in an attempt to test public acceptance, a traffic officer in Taiyuan, Shanxi province, pretended to be blind and tried to board a bus with a guide dog. He ended up being waved off the bus by the driver and scolded by some passengers for wasting their time.

The video of his encounter went viral on Chinese social media, drawing calls for more public awareness on the difficulties faced by the country's blind.

While guide dogs have allowed Yang and others to travel more freely, there are also obstacles -- many hotels still don't accept guide dogs, and buying a plane ticket can sometimes turn into a bureaucratic nightmare. Even if a guide dog has valid work permit and proper vaccine certificate, many airlines requires a separate health certificate -- the kind needed for the transportation of pets and farm animals, which can be tricky to obtain.

Chinese laws are vague on the use of guide dogs in public. The Law on the Protection of Disabled Persons says "blind persons shall comply with relevant state regulations when entering public places with guide dogs," but it doesn't specify what the "relevant state regulations" are.

Some cities have issued their own policies to allow guide dogs in public places and transports, but enforcement can be spotty. Yang said he had been turned down by bus drivers, hotels and restaurants, but he wasn't discouraged. Instead, he treated every refusal as an opportunity to let one more person learn about guide dogs.

"There are only some 200 guide dogs in a country of 1.4 billion people -- the chance of meeting one is extremely low," he said. "That's why we need pioneers to introduce them (to society.)"

## Cool Treats for Hot Dogs!

Recipes for Summer

Clipped from The Spruce Pets Web Site, thesprucepets.com

*Written by Jenna Stregowski, RVT*

Updated 03/31/20

When temperatures rise outside, your dog can easily get overheated. Heatstroke is just one of the many summer hazards that can affect our dogs. There are many ways you can help keep your dog cool in the hot weather. Chilled or frozen dog treats are a great surprise for your dog. Not only will they help cool your dog off, but they can also help relieve boredom when it is cooped up inside. Here are some ideas for healthy, cold treats your dog will love:

### Doggie Ice "Cream"

Dogs love real ice cream, but it's unhealthy for them. The sugar makes the calorie count is too high and the excess dairy can cause vomiting or diarrhea. Brands like "Lick-a-lots" and "Frosty Paws" make healthy dog ice "cream" that dogs love. However, if you want to save money or would rather not run out to the store, you can make a version of them yourself at home. Here's what you need:

dog ice "cream"

Ingredient’s

1 ripe banana

4 ounces of plain yogurt

1 tablespoon of peanut butter(creamy is best)

### Directions

Mix ingredients together in a blender or food processor. Pour mixture into three or four different small containers and freeze overnight. You can adjust the amounts of each ingredient to get the taste and texture your dog likes best. Leave the treats in the container and serve one to your dog, but be sure to supervise (so he doesn't eat the container). These treats will last longer if you don't pop them out of their containers. Experiment with mix-ins like finely diced apples, carrots, or lean meat.

### Puppy Ice Pops

For fast and easy frozen pops that dogs will love, all you need is one ingredient: chicken broth or beef broth. Look for one that is fat-free, unsalted or low-sodium, and contains no onion ingredients.

### Directions

Pour the broth into ice cube trays or mini-muffin pans and freeze overnight. You can feed a few alone as treats for your dog. Or, try placing the pops on top of kibble or in the water bowl to enhance flavor. Again, experiment with mix-ins like finely diced carrots, apples, or lean meat.

For a fruity pop, try freezing diluted juice with no added sugar. Or, you can cut a watermelon into chunks and freeze them. Dogs love these mildly sweet frozen treats on a hot day, and you might enjoy them too.

### Frozen Kong Stuffing

The Kong is a wonderful stuffable dog toy that, when filled appropriately, can occupy just about any dog. There's virtually no end to what you can put in this toy. Fill it with a mushy concoction of foods and put it in the freezer (the longer it's in, the harder it will freeze, but you can serve it as soon as two hours after stuffing it). For the serious chewers, try the Extreme Kong compare prices filled with yummy food and then frozen overnight. There are other Kong-like stuffable dog toys on the market you can try. Experiment with mixtures of the following ingredients:

### Possible Ingrediants

Yogurt (plain)

Bananas

Canned pumpkin (no more than about a tablespoon per serving as more can cause diarrhea)

Canned dog food

Ground beef or other ground meat (plain, lean)

Shredded chicken or turkey (plain, lean)

Diced carrots and/or apples

Mini dog treats

Your dog's kibble

### Directions

Mix the desired ingredients together. You can do this by hand or with a blender or food processor. For easy stuffing, put the mixture in a frosting piping bag. If you don't have this, try filling a plastic zip-top bag and cutting one of the bottom corners off. Squeeze the bag's content into the Kong or another stuffable toy. Freeze for at least two hours (but overnight is best) before serving.

Baby Food Pops

Don't feel like mixing up treats? Pick up some baby food from the grocery store (the kind in plastic containers is a safer bet). Beef, chicken, sweet potato, and fruit formulas work especially well. Freeze in packaging overnight, then serve.

Warning

Be sure to choose formulas that contain no toxic food ingredients (like onions).

Always supervise dogs when feeding these treats to prevent them from chewing or ingesting the container.

When feeding any dog treats, remember that treats should never make up more than about 10 percent of your dog's daily food intake.1

## NAGDU at the 2021 NFB National Convention

Raul A. Gallegos / President

Mark your calendars and make plans to join the National Association of Guide Dog Users for our 2021 Annual Seminar and Annual Business meetings.

This year’s NAGDU Seminar will take place on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, from 1 PM to 4 PM Eastern. The seminar committee has been working hard to ensure that our seminar will be filled with great information, and of course our traditional
door-prizes. This year’s theme is “Celebrating Puppy Raisers Everywhere.” In addition, the seminar will feature a veterinary piece, updates from guide dog training programs and our advocacy component will prepare everyone for this year’s resolutions. The NAGDU annual business meeting will take place on Thursday, July 8, 2021, from
1 PM to 3 PM Eastern. During the business meeting we will hold our annual elections, hear from our legal department, and learn about all the things NAGDU has been up to over the past year.

Please use the below link to register. Registration will close at midnight Eastern
July 6. Remember, to be eligible for door prizes, you must register. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in July.

https://bit.ly/2T5FWBI