



November 2018

Hi there, it's me, Winston dreaming about snow days ahead. There's snow on the ground in Calgary and it's time to have some fun playing outside in it again!

My BC & Alberta Guide Dog Instructor, Sandra, is very happy with my progress. I have definitely overcome so many things that used to distract me and make my mind go different directions. When I met my buddies at Princes Island Park in downtown Calgary this summer for example, I didn't even budge when the geese and ducks got really close to me. Even though they were right in front of my nose, but I didn't get ruffled at all. Big cheer for me!

During this part of my training I am also working on getting more exposure to escalators and elevators. I am really good on these, and much more confident with stairs now. I can go up and down just like the graduated BC & Alberta Guide Dogs and Service Dogs.

I was a big star at the Puppy Appreciation Sponsorship Paw-ty in Calgary. My four Puppy Sponsorship buddies and I were there to meet and greet all the guests. When I entered the Community Hall, I really thought this was a special toy store. What else would a bunch of stuffy toys on the registration desk mean? And they all looked just like me and my classmates! Well, it turns out BC & Alberta Guide Dogs sell mini-Winston's at special events. I almost took one with me until my Puppy Trainer sat me down beside the desk with one in front of my nose encouraging me to, "leave it". Those are magic words that help me listen and not get distracted.

I am working on recall. That is when someone calls me to come to right away. Sometimes I take a short moment to think about it before coming and that isn't quite what my Instructors want to see. Recall can be a little tricky especially when I am off-leash with my buddies in the park.



I have been getting lots of practice with overcoming dog and food distractions. I can now walk by containers of peanut butter, cheese, chocolate chips and nuts without wanting to eat any of them. Can you? The popcorn on the floor at the Puppy Paw-ty was no big deal either. I love pleasing my Puppy Trainer more than anything and the reward I get when I am such a good listener makes both of us feel awesome!

Obedience classes are always interesting and really challenge my thinking. During one recent class Instructor Sandra put a lot of obstacles everywhere on the floor. I was really curious about one item called a vase. But my curiosity got the better of me when I tried to smell it. In my excitement my whole head got stuck inside. What a weird toy! I could not see a darn thing with it on my head. But you would be proud of me because I was chill and did not panic!

I have had lots of opportunity to visit busy areas in the community and travelled on rapid transit to downtown Calgary to visit MegaSys Computer Technologies, and Calgary Shawnessy Super 8 Motel Ltd. and The Calgary Humane Society. My favorite shopping place in the city is still Stephen Avenue Mall because there are so many interesting people and things going on there. The shopping is also fantastic and best of all it is outside, where I love to be.

Even after a busy day of training, playing and exercising I still love to curl up at my Puppy Trainer's feet or beside Hunter after a good play. This is still one of the favorite parts of my day.

In my next letter I am hoping to update you about whether I am ready to take my training to the next level and enter the Advanced Training Program. That is where all the basic skills I have been learning are brought together for the next phase of my training so hopefully I can become a Guide Dog, Autism Support Dog or PTSD Service Dog. Keep cheering for me!

Thank you for supporting the Puppy Sponsorship Program and especially me!

Love and tail-wags,

Winston