



UPDATE

LEADERDOG.ORG | ISSUE 2 | 2018

LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND



Health & Wellness

Running Without Limits

Keeping Your Eyes Healthy



Greetings,

I hope your summer will be filled with sunshine, barbeques and your favorite seasonal activities!

Many of us welcome the warmer weather that allows us to spend more time outdoors. For some it's an opportunity to begin a workout regimen, while others enjoy visiting farmer's markets and working in their gardens. Whatever your passion or preferred activity, the summer months are often associated with health and wellness.

Did you know that people with vision loss have a greater risk of health and wellness issues, both physical and mental? Over 43% of people who are blind or visually impaired live with depression. Many stay home,

fearful of venturing out on their own, which results in social isolation, little physical exercise and increased family stress.

After completing white cane or guide dog training, our clients find it easier to live a healthier life. With a newfound confidence and the ability to travel independently, clients can once again—or perhaps for the first time ever—live a healthy lifestyle, benefitting their physical and mental wellbeing, regardless of the season.

In this issue of Update, we focus on how Leader Dog has an impact on the health and wellness of the people we serve.

It is because of you that we can change the lives of so many people who are blind or visually impaired and offer all our services free of charge.

Thank you for helping us make people unstoppable!

Susan M. Daniels

Susan M. Daniels
President & CEO

Lacing Up His Hiking Boots

Jeff Hawkins

CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

When Jeff Hawkins lost most of his vision to Stargardt disease, a hereditary disorder that affects the retina, he lost more than his active lifestyle—he lost his self-confidence. “I had been a paramedic for over 20 years,” says Jeff. “I enjoyed the physical nature of the work and enjoyed helping others. After becoming legally blind, I spent my days walking from window to

window in my house waiting for my wife or son to come home so I could go out with them.”

Receiving his first Leader Dog, Gracie, was a game changer in Jeff’s life. “As soon as I began working with Gracie, I felt my self-confidence return. I rediscovered my independence and I began looking for physical adventures again.”

And physical adventures he found. Jeff and his wife Linda are avid travelers and hikers. “I wanted to start hiking some more rustic trails,” Jeff says. “So I worked with Gracie on walking through narrow paths where she has to be farther out in front of me. We also work on moving slowly over uneven ground and tree roots and rocks.” Jeff has also returned to playing hockey, downhill snow skiing and water skiing.

When he lost his sight, Jeff was one of the more than 75,000 people who become blind or visually impaired in the U.S. each year. Only 10% travel independently with a guide dog or white cane. Independent travel training and aids allow people who are blind to reclaim a healthy lifestyle and maintain their physical and mental wellbeing. With your support, Leader Dog makes over 300 people like Jeff unstoppable every year.



◀ JEFF HAWKINS
HIKES A LOCAL
TRAIL WITH LD
GRACIE AT HIS
SIDE EVERY STEP
OF THE WAY.



Elaine Lubosch and LD Carly

LDB Client Elaine Lubosch wrote the following in the voice of her Leader Dog, Carly:

Do you see it? I did. That's a cottonmouth snake in strike position! We are hiking. Mom and I were just going along when I pushed her so hard to the right, she almost fell over. Kenny (her husband) ran over to see what in the world I was doing, and he immediately scooped up Simone (their daughter) and told Mom and I to stay away. It may have gotten any of us if I hadn't spotted it. What if Mom had just been using her cane? It makes her shudder to think of that. Mom says this is one of hundreds of reasons why I am so important. I wasn't trained to guide around snakes, but I used my instincts and put them to use. Mom says I'm amazing!

A few weeks ago, I was accompanying a colleague to a small hospital. A gentleman was sitting in the little waiting room where I sat, reading my book. By his feet was a beautiful German shepherd, lying quietly, out of the way of foot traffic, head on its paws, but observing everything around him.

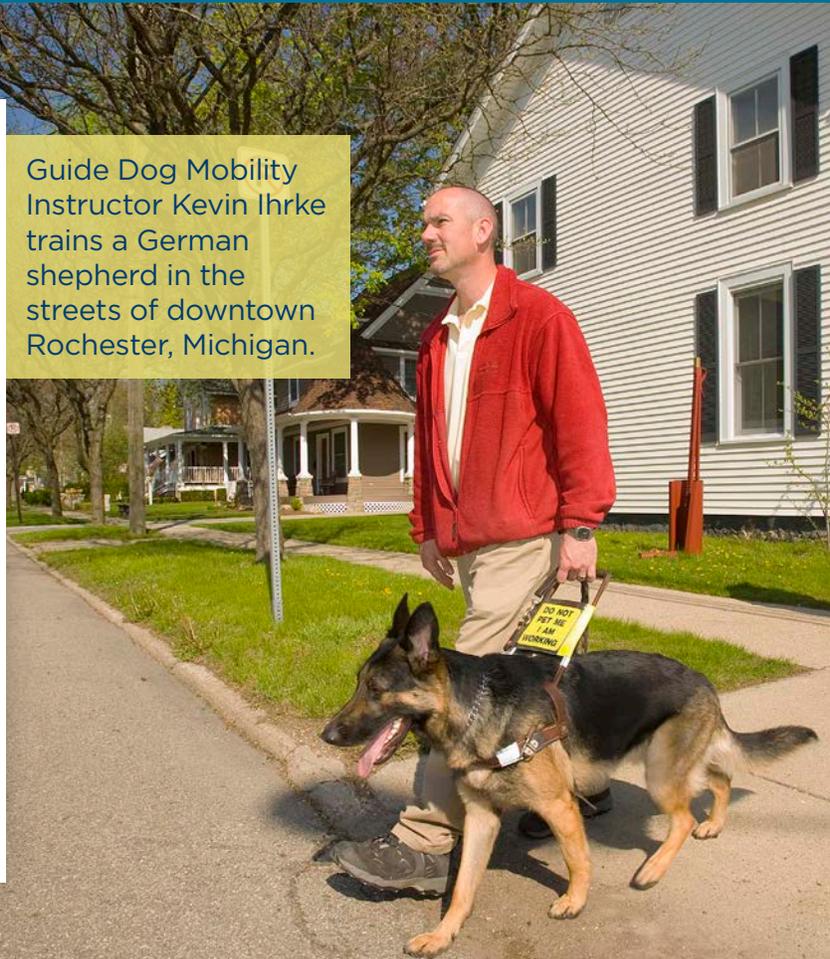
Being a dog lover, I finally said something about how well-behaved his companion was. And thus began a wonderful conversation. This gentleman began telling me about the dog's background and its training at the Rochester Hills campus and how he went down there to learn all about handling a Leader Dog, and then was matched with a Leader Dog... all at no cost to him. He could not say enough about the program and what the dog could do.

We continued chatting about the program and what it had done for his independence and sense of confidence.

Thank you not just for what you are doing on a day-to-day basis, but for helping to bridge division, bring people together and give us all hope.

LDB Donor

Guide Dog Mobility Instructor Kevin Ihrke trains a German shepherd in the streets of downtown Rochester, Michigan.



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REPUTATION IS EVERYTHING



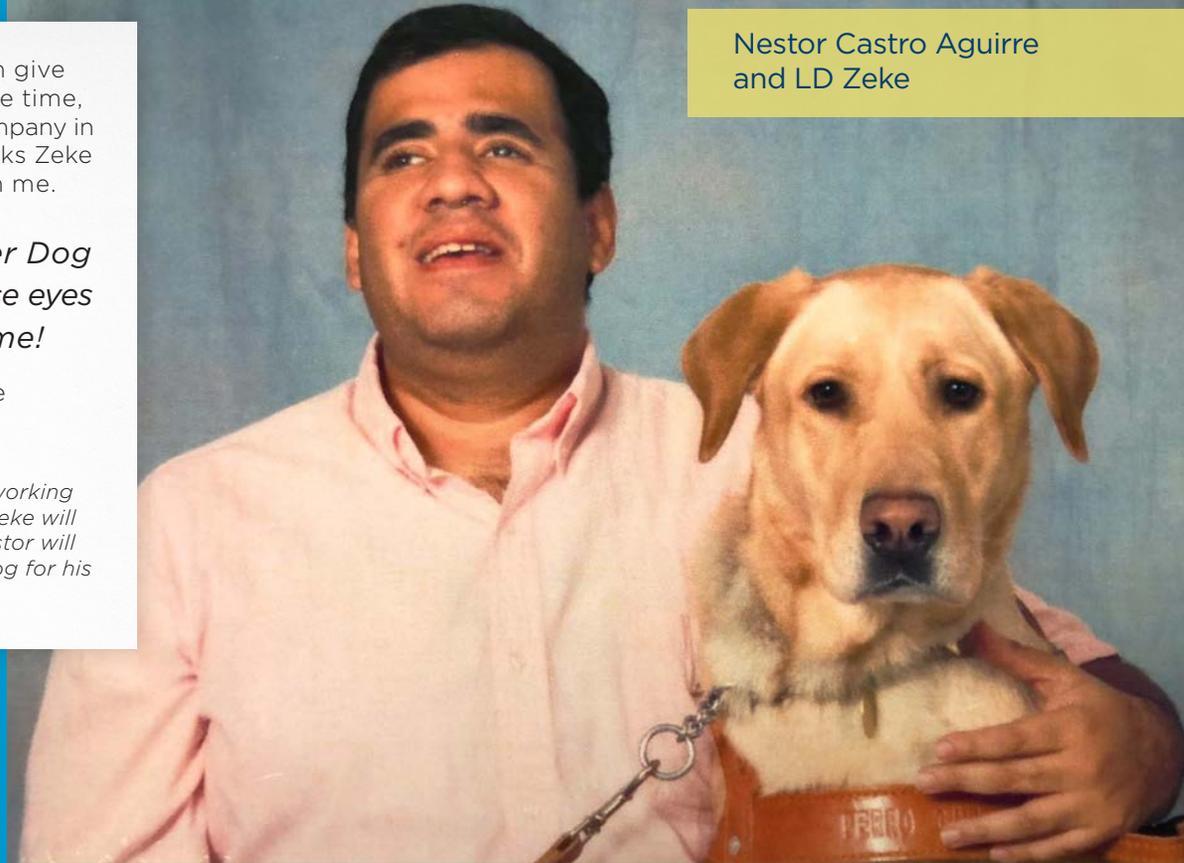
The best tribute I can give a friend is to bless the time, friendship, and his company in almost 10 years. Thanks Zeke for always being with me.

Thank you Leader Dog for giving me those eyes that life denied me!

Nestor Castro Aguirre

LD Zeke is still actively working with Nestor in Mexico. Zeke will be retiring soon and Nestor will travel back to Leader Dog for his next dog.

Nestor Castro Aguirre
and LD Zeke



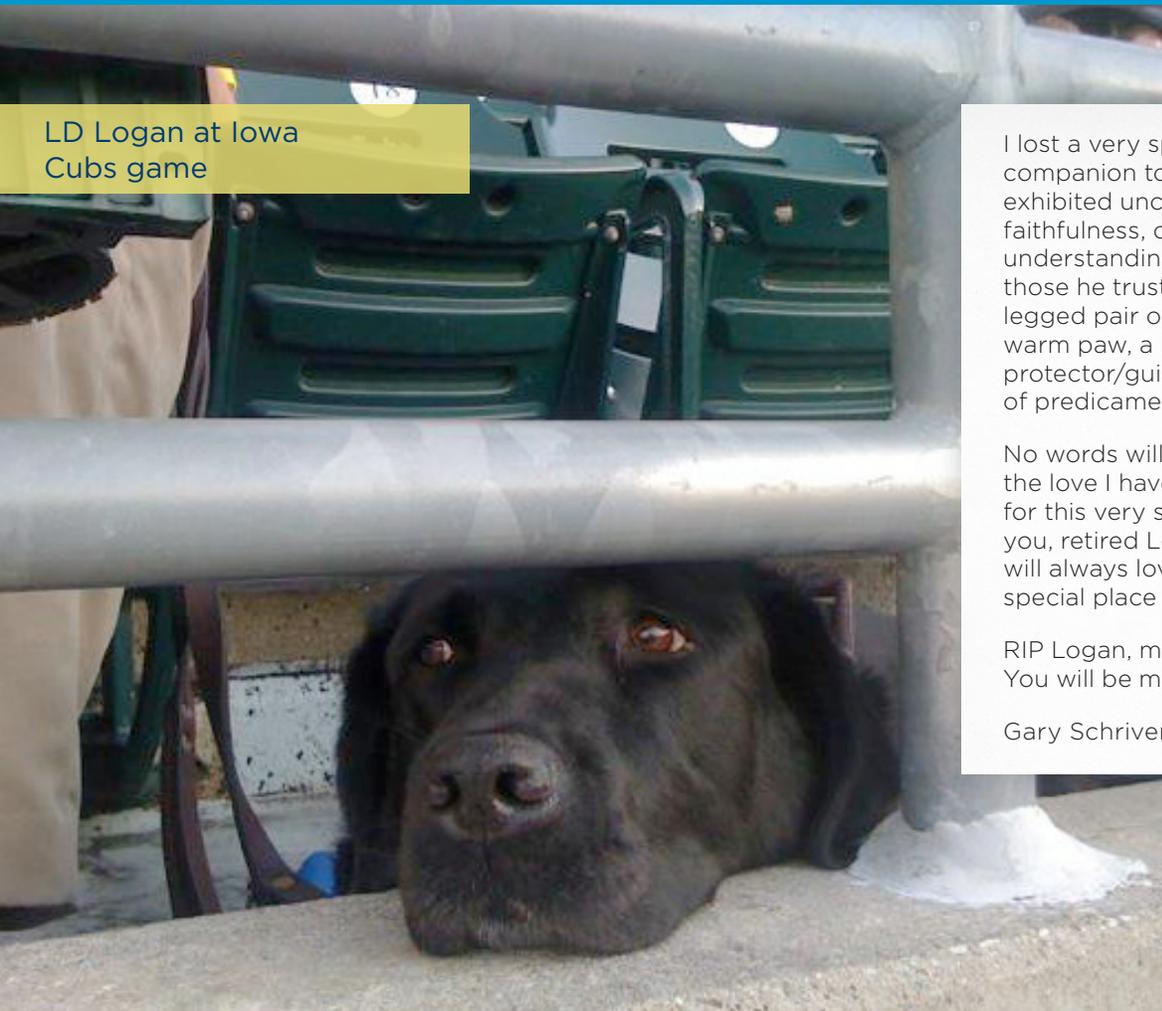
LD Logan at Iowa
Cubs game

I lost a very special friend and companion tonight. One who exhibited unconditional love, loyalty, faithfulness, obedience, compassion, understanding and devotion to those he trusted. He was a four-legged pair of eyes, who offered a warm paw, a loving kiss and a gentle protector/guide no matter what kind of predicament I found myself in.

No words will ever be able to convey the love I have and will always feel for this very special friend. Thank you, retired Leader Dog Logan. I will always love you and hold a very special place in my heart for you.

RIP Logan, my very special friend. You will be missed.

Gary Schriver



Running Without Limits



by Peggy O'Dell

As a child growing up in a military family, Angel Prince was always on the go. She played every sport available to her, and loved to swim, bike and run. “My parents always said there’s never an excuse to be lazy,” says Angel.

In grade school, she was hit by a drunk driver and had to spend a year in a cast. Angel promised herself that if she could still run when the cast came off, she would never stop. She started distance running in middle school, cross country in high school, and raced on the weekends through college and well into married life. Eventually she added running marathons and competing in triathlons to the mix. “Running just makes me happy,” she says.

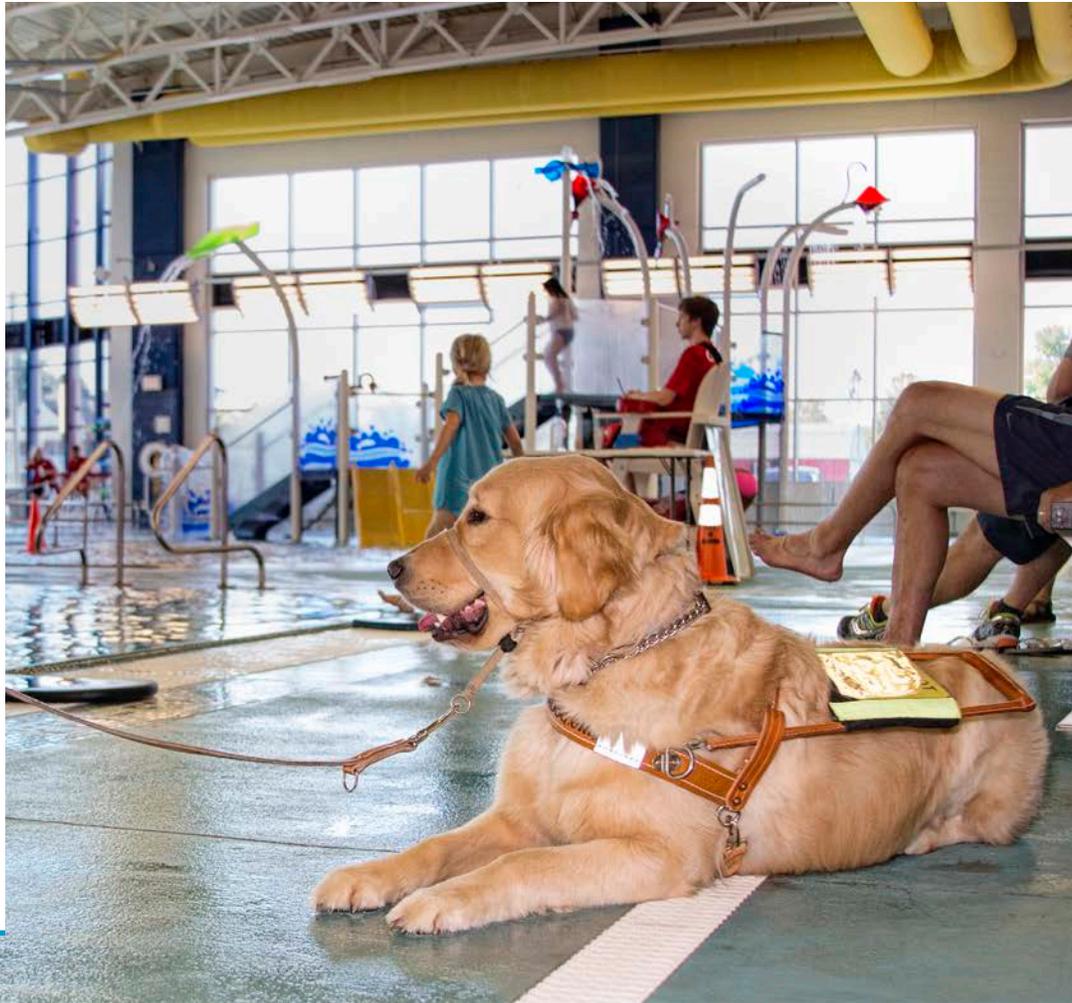
At 41, Angel’s world went dark in a single afternoon due to complications from cataract surgery. “I was miserable,” she says. “I felt my life was over, like a part of me had died. In a sense it did, and I needed to mourn.” She was certain her active lifestyle was a thing of the past.

Angel was given a cane but no training on how to use it. After a year of using her cane “like a light saber,” she came to Leader Dog for much needed orientation and mobility training to learn to use it correctly. She learned a lot and enjoyed the training, then on the last day she had the chance to walk with a dog. “That changed everything!” she exclaims. “I knew after walking with that little gal that I wanted a dog, I needed a dog. My brain and heart were

(continued on page 8)

◀ ANGEL PRINCE LACES UP HER SHOES FOR A WORKOUT AT HER TRAINING CLUB WITH LEADER DOG RADAR.

LEADER DOG RADAR ACCOMPANIES ANGEL TO THE GYM WHILE SHE TRAINS FOR HER TRIATHLONS. HE RELAXES WHILE SHE SWIMS (RIGHT), WATCHES WHILE SHE LIFTS WEIGHTS (BOTTOM) AND ENJOYS THE COOL FLOOR WHILE ANGEL AND A FRIEND SIP SMOOTHIES.



set on a path to get my life back even better than it was before I lost my sight.”

When Angel brought her first Leader Dog, Ryder, home, she had the confidence to walk to the local pool, put him on tie down at the end of her lane and swim laps. They went to the gym together to work out, took long walks in the park and even ran a few slow laps around the track.

Angel was getting her active life back.

Today, Angel plans vacations based on where she races and runs triathlons—all with her current dog, Radar, at her side. She is only two states away from running a half marathon in all 50 states. She belongs to several running clubs and competes against sighted runners. “I don’t feel that I am any different than they are, I just need someone to run with me,” says Angel. “My running partner and I attach a bungee around our waists when we run.” For biking, they ride a custom tandem bike wearing their Dr. Seuss-inspired “Thing 1” and “Thing 2” riding outfits.

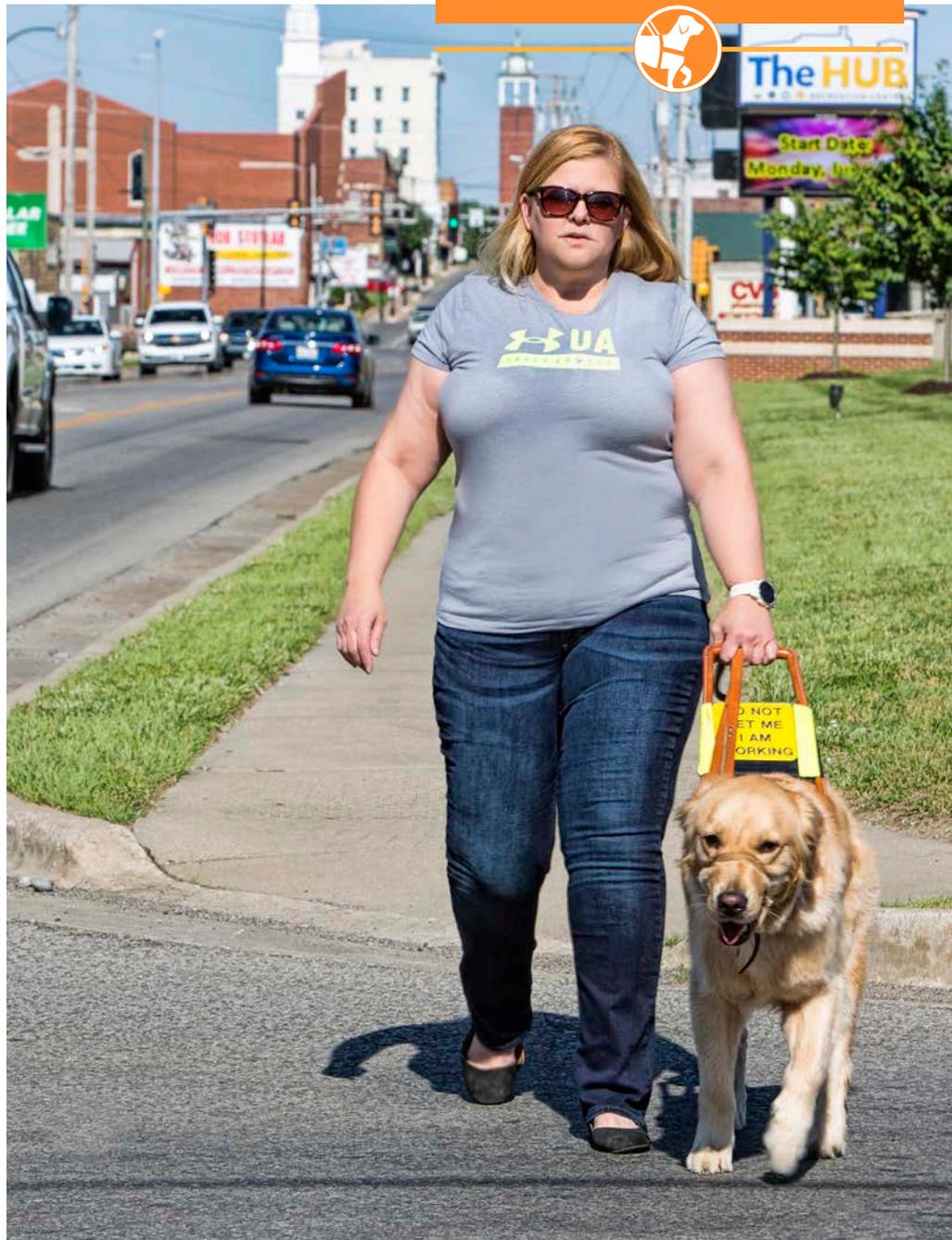
“When it comes to Leader Dog training, I believe that if a client comes with the right heart and the right mentality, it will truly change their life. I know it did for me,” explains Angel. “Leader Dog gave me my life back, and a better one at that. Though I am blind, I sometimes think I ‘see’ life more clearly than I did before. And the best part is, when I cross the finish line at every race, my Radar is always there waiting for me.”

And as for that little girl who promised herself she would never stop running? Promise kept.

ANGEL CROSSES A STREET IN HER HOMETOWN WITH HER CURRENT LEADER DOG, RADAR.



“WHEN IT COMES TO LEADER DOG TRAINING, I BELIEVE THAT IF A CLIENT COMES WITH THE RIGHT HEART AND THE RIGHT MENTALITY, IT WILL TRULY CHANGE THEIR LIFE. I KNOW IT DID FOR ME.”



Keeping Your Eyes Healthy—*Dry Eye*

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Midwest
EYE CONSULTANTS

Do you ever experience uncomfortable, gritty or “tired” eyes at the end of the day? Maybe your vision films over on occasion, especially with prolonged reading or computer activities; or your eyes water on windy or cold days. Possibly, after years of wearing them, your eyes no longer tolerate contact lenses. Does this sound familiar? If so, you may be experiencing the early stages of dry eye disease.

What is dry eye disease?

Dry eye disease affects millions of people nationwide and is more than just a mild annoyance. It is a progressive condition that without treatment can have serious consequences like pain, corneal scarring and decreased vision. It can become so uncomfortable that it affects your work performance, your hobbies and your daily life.

How do you treat dry eye disease?

After diagnosis, your doctor can initiate a treatment regimen that may include warm compresses, anti-inflammatory medications, a fish oil or Omega-3 supplement, blinking exercises or artificial tears. Some people require treatment using minor procedures to prevent progression.

Don't ignore your symptoms

You may have only mild symptoms, but it is crucial for your eye health to have them addressed by an eye care professional at their onset. Catching any disease early is key to long-term success.



For more information visit midwesteyeconsultants.com/eye-care-services/dry-eye/

by Dr. Kylie Sebastian

TAKE *Care*
of your
EYES!



EVENT RECAPS



This inaugural event raised over \$276,000 to support our mission. More than 450 guests

joined us at the MGM Grand Detroit for a dining experience like no other. Attendees navigated their meal under blindfold with guidance from a Leader Dog client which gave them just a taste of the challenges our clients encounter on a daily basis.

Save the date for the next Dinner in the Dark at the MGM Grand Detroit on March 8, 2019.



Our third annual Bark & Brew was held at the new Griffin Claw Brewing Company location in Rochester Hills. This fun event raised more than \$86,000 for Leader Dog. Guests enjoyed live entertainment, craft beers, a kids' activity area, sponsor showrooms and of course, meet & greets with Future Leader Dogs!

Be sure to save the date—Saturday, June 1, 2019—for next year's event at Griffin Claw Brewing Co.

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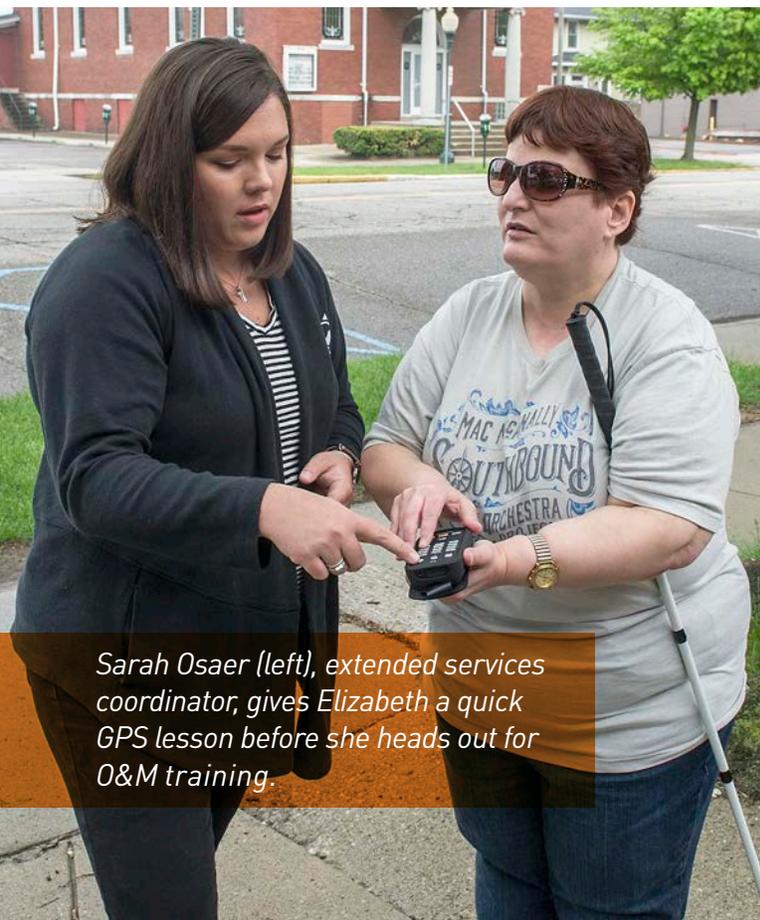
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LIVING A LIFE WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

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Sarah Osaer (left), extended services coordinator, gives Elizabeth a quick GPS lesson before she heads out for O&M training.



MISSION MOMENT

- ◀ *"I wanted to fine tune my cane skills and my GPS skills. [During O&M training] I faced my fears of escalators and moving sidewalks! I haven't had O&M training since 2007, and Leader Dog's O&M training has exceeded my expectations."
~Elizabeth Ulrich*



Paul Preketes

Boards consist of a variety of people. Some serve a few years then move on, others stay for the long run and share their knowledge and passion in many ways. Paul Preketes is in the latter category.



In 2000, Paul joined our board of trustees and began to learn about Leader Dog. His interest deepened leading him to serve as vice chair (2006-2008) and board chair (2008-2010). Paul later served as chair of the philanthropy committee (2012-2014), culminating with he and his wife,

Sheri, serving as chairs of our 2014 Lead in the Holidays fundraiser.

Paul's career as an executive with Consumer's Energy helped us obtain a \$30,000 donation for our canine center from the Consumer's

Energy Foundation. His experience also made him our choice to chair a committee that developed our comprehensive, outcome-based 2012-2015 strategic plan. He helped develop Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), which measure value to demonstrate how effectively we achieve our key business objectives.

Paul was instrumental in establishing the LDB Foundation in 2012, serving as vice chair (2012-2015) and chair (2015-2018).

As an avid golfer, proud grandfather and Florida "snowbird," we are grateful that Paul has continued his relationship with Leader Dog in his busy life.

We thank Paul for devoting so much of his time and leadership experience to Leader Dog. And we truly hope we haven't caused him to miss too many tee times!

"I've learned that our society works much better when people truly practice stewardship and share their time, talents and treasures for the benefit of others. I'm still on that journey and hope to continue serving those who benefit from Leader Dog."

LEGACY SOCIETY

Creating a provision for Leader Dogs for the Blind in your estate plans is a true partnership.

This prestigious society was established to recognize donors who have included Leader Dog in their financial or estate plans.

Please contact Roberta Trzos, CFRE, manager of gift planning, at 248.659.5014 to learn more about the Legacy Society.

NEW LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Robert and Dallas Brauningner

Erica Briest

Carole Pistey



Fleas, Ticks and Your Dog

Did you know that fleas can jump 110 times their length? And when a flea jumps, it accelerates 20 times faster than a space shuttle! Ticks, however, do not jump, and they don't fly or fall from trees. They crawl up their host from the tips of grasses and shrubs. Fleas and ticks carry zoonotic diseases, which can infect both you and your dog.

Fleas and ticks are parasites that carry all kinds of diseases, so it is important to protect your dog from them. Flea bite dermatitis is a common allergic reaction that can leave your dog itching and uncomfortable. One flea can bite your dog 400 times in one day!

Tevra Brands is the official flea and tick solution for Leader Dogs for the Blind. In their initiative to support Leader Dog and its awesome mission, Tevra Brands provides monthly flea and tick topicals for puppies and dogs in training. Tevra Brands provides TevraPet Activate II and Vetality Avantect II, which contain the active ingredients found in K9 Advantix®II* from Bayer®. This formula repels and kills fleas, ticks and mosquitoes, which means that unlike other brands, the bugs don't have to bite your dog to die. These veterinarian quality topicals provide the best protection at less cost!

Keeping animals comfortable and minimizing the risk of flea bite dermatitis is important for all our dogs, but is imperative for guide dogs that wear a harness every day.

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Protecting your best friends from fleas and ticks is not only good for them, but good for your entire family.

**Bayer and AdvantixII are not registered trademarks of Tevra Brands.*



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Kalamazoo Community Foundation



Supporting the health of our clients and canines

In recent years, our foundation giving team has worked to forge a relationship with the Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KCF). Located on Michigan’s west coast, KCF manages a variety of funds that invest in the programs, services and scholarship opportunities that represent the dynamic interests of Kalamazoo County. Their vision is a community where every person can reach their full potential, emphasizing equity and education. In Michigan alone, 227,000 people are blind or visually impaired and due to its close proximity to service providers like Western Michigan University (WMU) and the Bureau of Services for Blind Persons Training Center, Kalamazoo County is home to a thriving community of people who are blind.

Initially, KCF supported Leader Dog through the John Fetzer Institute Fund. This fund emphasizes holistic health and wellness, inclusive of mind and body, which Leader Dog clients often achieve after completing a program and once again becoming involved in their communities. Over 98% of Leader Dog clients who complete guide dog training report gains in either mental/emotional and/or physical health.

Perhaps it was the gains KCF witnessed clients making through our programming that prompted them to support the health of both our clients and our canines through the John B. and Shirley M. Myers Fund for Animals. The support, directed toward guide dog training, focuses on achieving the cornerstones of equity, education and wellness. “We are happy to support the work of Leader Dogs for the Blind in the Kalamazoo County area. Thank you for all the ways you are helping individuals lead full and independent lives,” said Elena Mireles-Hill, community investment officer with KCF.

Leader Dog programs and services remain free to clients because of the ongoing support of our donors. If you represent a foundation, fund or trust that awards funds competitively and would like to support the gains made by Leader Dog clients after vision loss, please contact Kathryn Tuck, director of foundation giving, at 248.218.6431.

A YOUNG CLIENT TRAINS IN MICHIGAN—THANKS TO THE HELP OF FOUNDATIONS LIKE KCF.





1.5K SWIM

40K BIKE

10K RUN



As the sun rises on the rolling hills of Burley, Idaho, over 2,000 people prepare for the Spudman triathlon. For 32 years the Burley Lions Club has held this event to promote health and wellness in their community and beyond.

Last year over 1,900 athletes from across the U.S. took on the 1.5K swim, a 40K bike ride and a 10K run. Individuals of all skill levels and ages participated (the youngest was 12 and the oldest was 90). To date, all 50 states have been represented at a Spudman.

Staffing this large an event is a big undertaking. The Burley Lions enlist the help of local groups including the high school football team, who stack the racers' bikes, and the volleyball team, who assist with registration. Volunteers get "paid" by donations the Lions make to their organizations. "Last year we donated \$24,000 back to our community from the event," says Lion Carl Darrington, Burley Lions Club member and race director. "It is a well-respected event in the community. Local hotels book up a year in advance and restaurants fill with participants and their family and friends."

The reach of the Spudman even impacts Leader Dog as the Burley Lions have consistently earned our Top Dog Award, given to clubs that donate \$5,000+ annually, for many years.

Way to go, Burley Lions!



LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND

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Save the Date



DOUBLE DOG DARE | SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2018

On September 22, we Double Dog Dare you to rappel down 15 stories! The first 92 individuals to raise a minimum of \$1,000 will earn a spot to go over the edge for Leader Dogs for the Blind. All money raised goes to providing lifelong skills for safe and independent daily travel to people who are blind or visually impaired.

Prefer to keep your feet on the ground?

Come watch and cheer on participants as they face their fears and go Over The Edge for Leader Dog!

Oakland Towne Center | 28 N. Saginaw Street, Pontiac, MI

For more information or to register: myleaderdog.org/DOUBLE-DOG-DARE