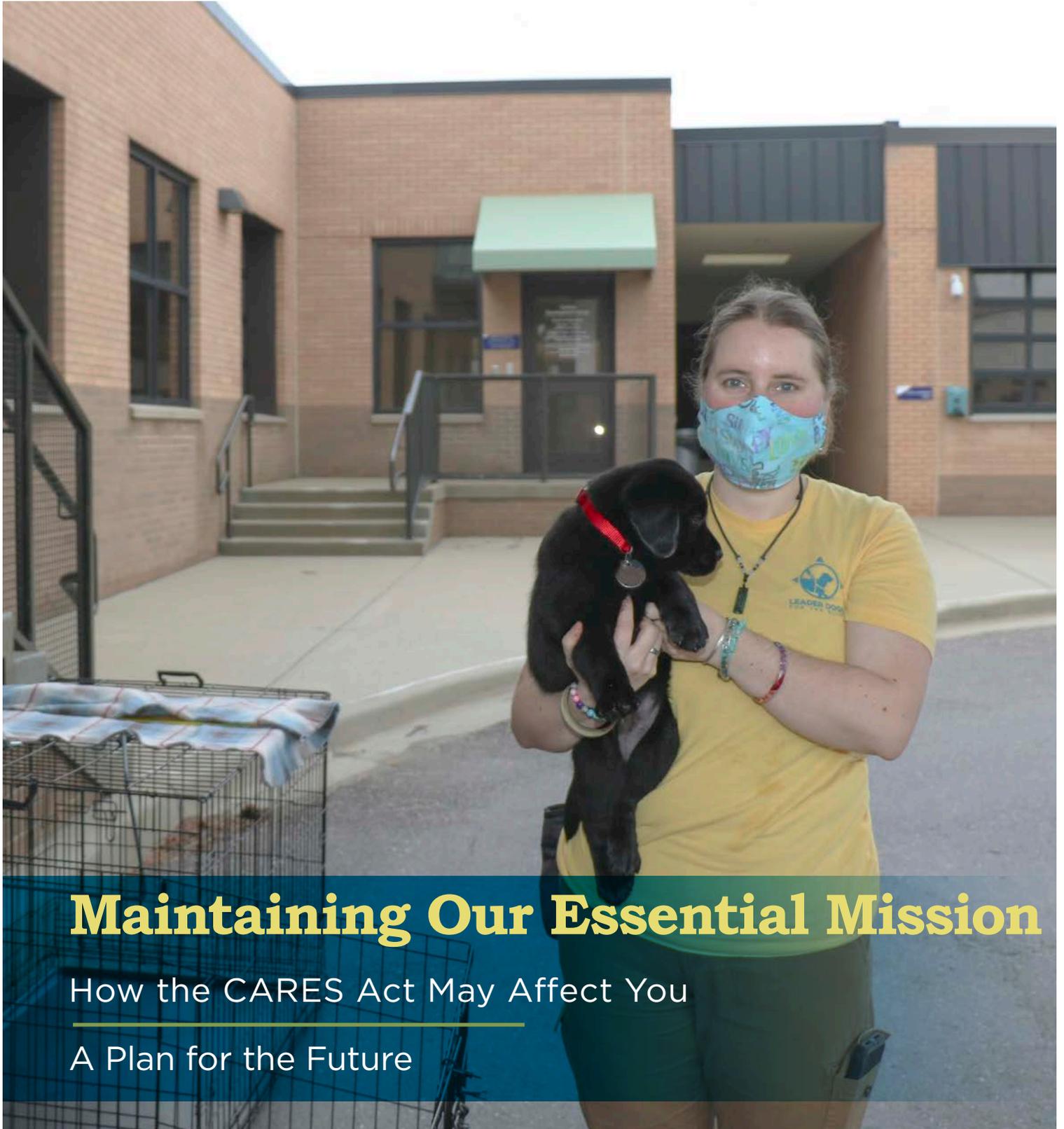




UPDATE

LEADERDOG.ORG | ISSUE 1 | 2020

LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND



Maintaining Our Essential Mission

How the CARES Act May Affect You

A Plan for the Future



Greetings.

On behalf of the entire Leader Dog team, thank you. We have been deeply touched by the ongoing support, words of encouragement, donations and offerings of assistance we have received from the Leader Dog community. We are so very grateful to all of you.

We have all been affected by the pandemic. For only the second time in our 81-year history, we had to cancel Guide Dog Training classes. The first time was in 1967 due to extreme snow and cold. We have also had to cancel Orientation and Mobility Training classes and, for the first time ever, our Summer Experience Camp for teenagers went virtual.

I am so proud of our staff who continue to train and care for our dogs, provide

support services to more than 1,500 active client/guide dog teams, and assist hundreds of puppy raisers and breeding hosts via video chat, email and phone.

Many of us have felt periodically isolated and depressed throughout the pandemic. In this issue of Update, you'll hear from Leader Dog clients who experienced these feelings daily prior to coming to Leader Dog for our programs. They highlight why our services remain as critical as ever for people who are blind or visually impaired.

While our campus has been quieter during this time, there has also been an immense amount of work going on as we prepare for the day when we can welcome clients back once again. As always, we continue to prioritize the health and wellness of every single person and dog who sets foot on our campus.

From everyone at Leader Dog, I wish you and your family continued good health and happiness.

Susan M. Daniels

Susan M. Daniels
President & CEO



Photo on cover of LDB Breeding and Puppy Care Team Leader Rachel Webber by Cheryl Sacrates (marketing).

All Revved Up & No Place to Go

by Mike Garrigan



CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

*"I was a varsity tackle and a hell of a block
When I played my guitar
I made the canyons rock but
Every Saturday night
I felt the fever grow
Do ya know what it's like?
All revved up with no place to go" - Meat Loaf*

These lyrics probably have new meaning to many people due to the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic. People not used to staying home for weeks on end have found themselves in an "all revved up with no place to go" situation.

For most people, the social distancing and stay-at-home situation is temporary. This virus will eventually subside and life will resume as before. However, there are people for whom living with social distancing and stay-at-home circumstances are a permanent situation, even before COVID-19.

I am one of those people. I have a debilitating disease called Usher Syndrome Type II, which affects both my hearing and vision, and there is no cure.

Back in the day I was "a hell of a block" as a varsity fullback. I made the "canyons rock" during my years at a global IT company. Then, as I lost my vision, I began staying at home more and essentially created my own social distancing situation. When Saturday nights rolled around, I "felt the fever grow," the fever of a deep, depressed anger because I had lost my independence and confidence.

At one point, it had been more than 10 years since I had simply crossed the street by myself. I could not have fathomed nor comprehended how difficult it would be adjusting to my sight loss. I needed help.

Then my wife found Leader Dogs for the Blind and things changed dramatically for me.

I attended Orientation & Mobility Training. With the help of LDB's awesome O&M specialists, by noon on day one I had confidently crossed a multi-lane road while walking with a white cane—by myself! I was taught to use traffic light cycles and natural elements such as the sun, shade, breeze and sounds to locate my bearings.

Today I travel with my amazing Leader Dog, Fuzz, who has had a profound impact on my life! Fuzz is an absolute rock star who can guide me through anything. Now I am all revved up with many places to go! People are drawn to him, which put an immediate end to social distancing.

The positive impact of these life-changing programs were made possible by the generosity of many donors and volunteers. Your generosity to Leader Dogs for the Blind can be a game changer for people who are living a life where stay-at-home and social distancing are the norm. Thank you for the important roles you play.



MIKE, #30, BLOCKING AS A FULL BACK.

LDB CLIENT MIKE GARRIGAN AND LD FUZZ.



LETTERS TO LEADER DOG

Many of our clients have mentioned that staying home during this pandemic mirrored their lives prior to coming to Leader Dog. Whether they lost their sight suddenly or their vision slowly deteriorated, it's a loss that brings a darkness each individual strives to overcome to regain their independence and move toward a brighter tomorrow.



Social distancing is something a blind person lives with on a daily basis. Blindness causes a great deal of isolation. In fact, many times people move away from us or ignore us altogether. If you are feeling a little closed in, then you are experiencing a part of our lives. Leader Dogs for the Blind helps break down these barriers, giving us our best shot at independence and finding our self-confidence. They have truly changed my life.

Jeff H

Before I received my first Leader Dog, I always stayed at home in front of the TV. I may have gotten outside in my backyard, but really never went for walks. Since I received my Leader Dog, I have been taking walks on a much more frequent basis.

During this state shut down, I strap my two-year-old daughter to my back and take my dog for a walk. I walk at least 15 miles a week, most of them with my daughter on my back.

So even though I am social distancing, I am getting out way more often than I was when I didn't have my guide dog.

Nick V



I'm not working currently due to COVID-19 and I was also not working prior to coming to LDB. The feelings are very similar—home all day with nothing on my calendar to do. I liked to walk alone before my vision started limiting me (depending on the weather and light issues). Even having my two adult sons living with me, I feel isolated as I did before getting Leader Dog Nutmeg. Now that I have her, I can go out for a long walk no matter the weather or light conditions. Nutmeg also helps me navigate the grocery store for the once-a-week trip for essentials. She has made the social distancing much easier, as now I am able to get out of my house on my own.

Bridget M

With stay-at-home, people who were used to going places and doing things whenever they chose to now are isolated in their homes—not able to go to work, hang out with friends, eat in a restaurant, go to school, sports or church. They have compared themselves to being in prison. But this is the reality for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Before I went to Leader Dog, I wasn't independent. I had no confidence in myself. The only time I went anywhere, even for a walk is when I had a sighted guide. In March 2015, I did a week of O&M Training, my instructor kept telling me to get out of my box. I was so isolated growing up and didn't have any positive influences and wouldn't try new things. After a few days of training I started to break the walls.

In 2015 I received my first Leader Dog, Lady. We have done so much as a team. I'm so grateful to LDB for all the amazing training I received. The word CAN'T is no longer in my vocabulary. Now it is YES WE CAN!

Dawn R



In many ways, social distancing and having to stay at home brings back some tough emotions and feelings of before I went to get training at Leader Dog. As my vision got worse, I felt lost and scared. I did not even want to leave the house because I felt very inadequate being blind with no training. I was depressed and lost as to what my future would look like.

I had lost my sight over a few years and was struggling and did not know how to proceed, Leader Dog changed all of that. O&M training gave me courage to again leave my house and walk my neighborhood and get around in stores and buildings. Getting Flynn, my Leader Dog, gave me so much more courage and opened many new doors for me.

David B



Before going to Leader Dog, I was homebound and isolated. I was scared of the world around me, of not knowing the unknown. When I attended O&M Training, I came home with more confidence and a positive outlook on life. Although this was a great step, I still felt people were socially distant and I was still alone. I made the decision to go back and get a guide dog; it's not for everyone but an additional choice.

The companionship from my Leader Dog, Ellie, and friendships made are a lifeline when you most need it. People approach and offer assistance more. They are in awe and comment what a great partner I have by my side. My freedom and independence to navigate the unknown have no limits now.

Liz F



Maintaining our Essential Mission



When the Stay Home, Stay Safe order for Michigan was issued on March 24, we acted quickly. We informed clients that classes were being cancelled, we thanked volunteers for their help and told them we'd contact them when they were allowed to come back, and we closed campus to much of our staff, many of whom continued to work from home.

But there were quite a few employees who were on campus throughout working essential jobs. Among other things, the accounting team still had to make sure vendors and employees were paid, the facilities team was keeping the buildings sanitized, and senior management helped moved the organization forward through unparalleled times.

And of course, the essential jobs of caring for the 125 dogs in our canine center and supporting the many volunteers who were hosting 10 pregnant dogs and 466 puppies.

VETERINARY CLINIC



Our veterinarians and veterinary technicians divided into two teams switching workdays so there would be fewer people in the clinic. On their days working from home, our veterinarians fielded calls from clients, puppy raisers and breeding hosts. (Pictured: Dr. Dave Smith and Vet Tech Michele Clift)



To ensure no direct human contact when a dog was brought in by a puppy raiser or breeding host, they would call the vet office upon arrival, attach the dog by leash to the tie-out on our German shepherd statue and return to their car. A vet tech would retrieve the dog and the system would be reversed when the appointment was complete.

DOGS IN TRAINING

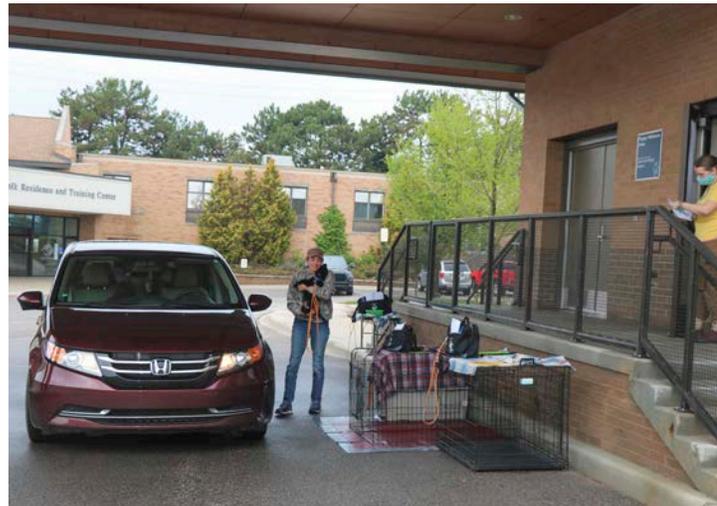


It takes a lot of people to properly care for 125 dogs in training. Now try to imagine accomplishing this with only the most essential staff. So, we looked to our staff and volunteers for some unique help. We took over 60 dogs that had been in training the longest and placed them in "foster homes." Everyone who fostered a dog received video training tips from our guide dog mobility instructors to maintain their obedience skills. The dogs received some very fun vacation time! (Pictured: Leader Dog in Training Juno; Maci, daughter of a staff member; and LDB Ambassador Dog Coco)



The 60 dogs remaining in the canine center continued their training with our guide dog mobility instructors (GDMIs) on campus and in our buildings. Some of the skills they continued to work on included going up and down stairs slowly, leading around obstacles and ignoring distractions. (Pictured left: Apprentice GDMI Monica Swanseger)

Of course, playtime with GDMIs and canine care staff was liberally scheduled which proved to be a great stress reliever for dogs and humans alike! (Pictured left lower: GDMI Alyssa Ozrovitz)



PUPPIES

Mother Nature cannot be stopped, which means puppies (64 to be exact) arriving on campus during the first two months of Michigan's Stay Home, Stay Safe period. New protocols were implemented to ensure no-contact drop-offs from breeding hosts and pick-ups with puppy raisers.

For litter drop-offs, volunteers stayed in their vehicle and a LDB team member brought the puppies into the building one at a time.

A pick-up station was set up for volunteer raisers coming for their puppies. Raisers signed required paperwork outside and picked their new puppy out of a crate shaded from the sun.

While on campus, the puppies relaxed, received vaccinations, played, ate and relaxed some more.



KEEPING CLOSE CONTACT WITH CLIENTS AND DONORS

The many staff members working from home included our client services coordinators, who kept close contact with current and potential clients. They continued processing applications and answering client inquiries via phone and online.



The philanthropy department combined limited time in the office with time working from home. Donations continued to arrive from faithful donors, which needed to be deposited and entered into our system. (Pictured: Kathy Gilchrist, Lions relations specialist, and her career changed dog, Laker)

Thank You!

A huge Thank You goes out to all our employees who maintained their normally great attitudes and hard work throughout the past months. Whether they worked on campus or from home, their dedication is appreciated.

SUMMER EXPERIENCE CAMP GOES VIRTUAL



PRESENTED BY



EXPECT SOMETHING MORE™

When we had to make the difficult decision to cancel Summer Experience Camp on campus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our extended services team leapt into action. Within days, the team had developed a plan to take our Summer Experience Camp online so the teens wouldn't miss out on the

unique opportunities and relationships that can only come from a summer camp. It turns out that our campers didn't want to miss out either; 43 campers from all over North America made up the 2020 Summer Experience Camp class! Taking our camp online allowed us to make it available to more participants and a wider age range (14-17).



The weeklong virtual camp was packed with a variety of activities including lessons in leadership, a mentor panel and an overview of what it is like to live and travel with a guide dog. But as you know, camp can't be all work and no play! There was also a trivia night and an arts and crafts session where campers built a "distance handle" (pictured left) that can be used to social distance when being guided by another person. Though it was very different from our on-campus experience, all campers received a week of valuable training and a lifetime of memories.

Keeping Your Eyes Healthy— *Cataract Awareness Month*

PRESENTED BY **Midwest**
EYE CONSULTANTS

Did you know cataracts are one of the most common vision problems in the world today and one of the leading causes of blindness in the United States!

Cataracts cause a gradual yellowing and clouding of the normally clear lens in the eye. They can occur at any stage in life but are most commonly found in people ages 55 and older. Though cataracts are a natural part of the aging process they are completely curable with modern medical technology. Early detection and monitoring for cataracts is key. The longer a cataract is left untreated the more difficult it can be to successfully remove the cataract and restore vision.

Although cataracts are not totally preventable, maintaining healthy lifestyle habits can reduce the risk of developing them and other eye diseases.

Many vitamins keep eyes healthy, including Vitamin C, Vitamin E and Zinc. Lutein and Zeaxanthin are two ocular nutrients that are beneficial to your eye health and can be found in green leafy vegetables or special eye vitamins recommended by your optometrist. Avoiding participation in detrimental habits like smoking and drinking alcohol can also reduce the risk of developing cataracts. Annual dilated eye exams play a crucial role in helping to diagnose cataracts and monitor their progression.

June is Cataract Awareness Month and Midwest Eye Consultants would like to spread the word that early detection and treatment of cataracts is critical to preserving your eyesight.

For more information visit:
<https://www.midwesteyeconsultants.com/eye-care-services/cataracts>



TAKE *Care*
of your
EYES!

Leader Dog has Innovative Solutions for #HalfMyDAF Donors



FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHT

Leader Dogs for the Blind has witnessed growth in donor-advised funds (DAF) over the past five years. This is not surprising since DAFs are the country's fastest-growing charitable giving vehicle*, increasing 55% between 2017 and 2018. In fact, 89% of nonprofits reported receiving funding through DAFs during the past three years** through community foundations (92%), national charities (38%) and single-issue charities (28%). Leader Dog has received DAF support from all of these sectors.



We have worked directly with families, financial managers or trustees to obtain DAF grants to increase capacity of our essential operations, including delivering more guide dog and O&M services in the upper Midwest and East Coast. Through the generous multi-year support of the Gray Family we redesigned our Guide Dog Mobility Instructor (GDMI) Apprenticeship training.

The Gray Charitable Gift Fund began supporting Leader Dog in 2016 after establishing their DAF in 2014 in memory of their fathers, Tadeusz Frodyma (pictured) and Fred Gray, who had macular degeneration. After thorough research, the family selected Leader Dog because we met their criteria: a mid-sized organization that remains nimble and innovative to efficiently support clients in need, and to drive a large impact with their donation.

To learn more about capital, canine and programming opportunities, or immediate needs related to COVID-19 modifications to our business operations, contact Kathryn Tuck, director of foundation giving, at kathryn.tuck@leaderdog.org or 248.218.6431.

**National Philanthropic Trust*

***The Center for Effective Philanthropy*

SIMPLE WAYS TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT



Leaving a donation to Leader Dogs for the Blind in your will or trust is a very simple but impactful way to support the work we do and ensure our future. Another way to make a lasting difference is to designate Leader Dog as a beneficiary of your retirement plan, IRA, life insurance or donor-advised fund.

To find out more about donating these types of assets or joining our Legacy Society, please contact Lora Cabarios, director of personal and planned giving at lora.cabarios@LeaderDog.org or 248.650.7109.

NEW LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Diane Lewandowski
The Duane Lowe Family
Mary C. Wagner



Avril Rinn, MC, RP

(Pictured [in red] with friends and LD Louie at 2020 Dinner in the Dark)



Some people find their passion in helping others. Leader Dog Board Member Avril Rinn is truly one of these people.

Avril became a Leader Dog trustee in 2006, just one year after receiving her first Leader Dog, Bismarck. With

experience in many areas of IT, including administration and assistive technology, she brought welcomed expertise to the board. In addition to serving as trustee, Avril has served on the Client Programs & Services Committee (2011–2014) and Technology Committee (2015–2018, 2020).



While working as the manager of program standards and development for ATN Access Inc. in London, Ontario, Avril obtained her master's degree in Counseling Psychology and now also works as a registered psychotherapist. "I've been

gradually remaking myself over the last few years," she said.

We are very grateful that Avril finds time in her life to continue her work with us. She currently travels with Leader Dog Louie after the passing of her second Leader Dog, Maverick, in 2018.

"I continue to volunteer with Leader Dog because I feel a deep attachment to the organization. After I got my first dog in 2005, I realized his value was so much more than safe travel. I believe I grew exponentially as a person after I became involved with Leader Dog and I know my dogs touched so many other people's lives in positive ways."

I have a deep respect for Leader Dog's mission and for the hard work and dedication of staff and volunteers, especially puppy raisers, who have made the dream of confident, independent travel a reality for so many. I feel privileged to be able to give back to Leader Dog in this small way."



MISSION MOMENT

◀ *"With Uggs I'm traveling a lot more because I am more confident. This is allowing me to be more social."*

~Isaah A. and LD Uggs



Lois & Rich Barb

A Plan for the Future



When Rich Barb, a Lions club member, was invited to visit Leader Dog in 2009, he thought his wife Lois might want to accompany him. “After hearing the clients speak—that was it! I had to get involved in Leader Dog and I filled out an application to become a puppy raiser,” said Lois. In 2013, after raising two puppies, Lois became a Lion and has served as a Leader Dog Chair for her club ever since.

Two of the dogs the Barbs raised became LDB breeding moms, three became working Leader Dogs: one in Spain, one was issued to a Stanford University student and most recently, one in Mexico. The Barbs are now preparing to bring home their 10th Leader Dog puppy. Lois and Rich love representing Leader Dog throughout the state of Maryland, visiting Lions and Leos clubs with a Future Leader Dog (FLD) in tow and spreading the word about how Leader Dog changes people’s lives.

Through her work sharing information about Leader Dog, Lois learned how important philanthropy is to ensure that the Leader Dog mission continues long into the future. She had already listed LDB as one of the beneficiaries of her IRA through work, but she knew it was time to make sure all her financial wishes were planned for. When she received an email from Leader Dog mentioning FreeWill, a free way to create a legal will, she and Rich took advantage of using this easy tool.

According to Lois, “The FreeWill tool was easy and took less than 20 minutes to complete. It just walks you right through the steps.” She said that the hardest part in creating her will was deciding how much to leave to her family and how much to leave to Leader Dog.

We rely 100% on the kindness and support of donors like the Barbs. You can create your will at www.freewill.com/LeaderDog. If you’d like to learn more about other ways to leave a gift to Leader Dog, please contact Lora Cabarios, director of personal and planned giving at 248.650.7109 or Lora.cabarios@leaderdog.org.



LOIS AND RICH BARB
HOLD FUTURE LEADER
DOG (FLD) ABBY. ▲

LOIS AND RICH WITH PAST
LIONS INTERNATIONAL
PRESIDENT WING KUN TAM
AND THEIR FIRST FLD. ▼





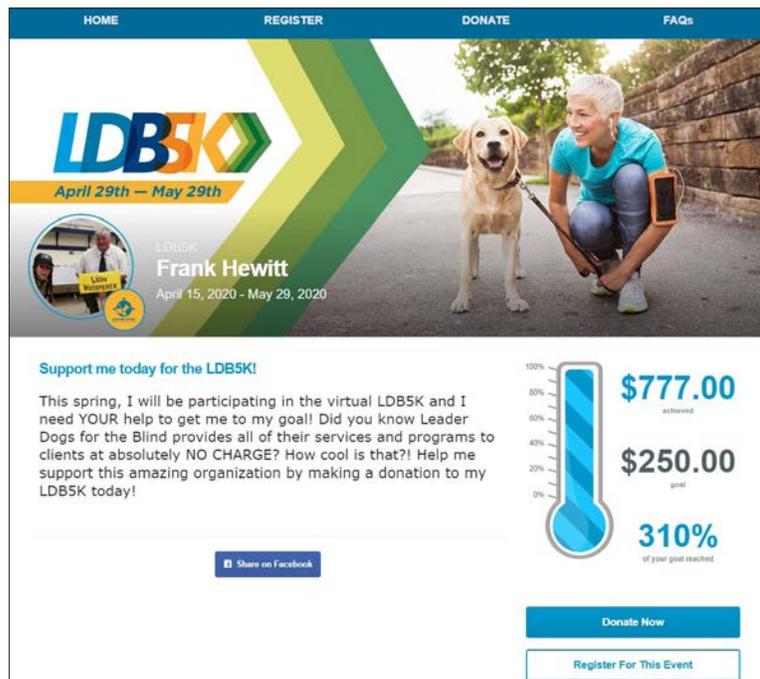
Did you know that you can raise funds for Leader Dog with just a few clicks? Whether it is a Facebook fundraiser or crowdfunding on myLeaderDog, digital fundraising is an easy way for you to raise money and share the mission of Leader Dog.

Facebook Fundraising

Is your birthday coming up? Are you celebrating an anniversary? If so, consider having a Facebook fundraiser for Leader Dog. It's easy: just visit the Leader Dogs for the Blind Facebook page, click on the "Fundraisers" link in the sidebar and click on "Raise Money." Facebook guides you through the process, including helping set a fundraising goal. Once set up, just share your fundraiser with your Facebook friends.

myLeaderDog Crowdfunding Pages

Creating a myLeaderDog page to honor a loved one or pet, recognize an anniversary, or celebrate an event are just some of the ways you can let your entire network share in your life while supporting Leader Dog. Share your fundraiser with your social networks and everyone in your email contact list. Visit leaderdog.org and click "Fundraise" to get started!



MANAGING YOUR DOG'S WEIGHT



The past few months have been strange, especially for our guide dogs. They're not getting all the activity they're used to, which could result in them putting on some extra "fluff." I've been keeping close tabs on my own guide dog, Diamond*, an 8-year-old German shepherd. She's beginning to slow down and has minor arthritis, so managing her weight is important to me.

Minor arthritis is typical of a dog Diamond's age but weight management can slow its progress. It can also help prevent heart disease and type 2 diabetes, which would end her working career and impact her quality of life.

Did you know that, on average, overweight dogs live 2.5 years less than their slimmer counterparts? That's why I love SlimPaws Weight Loss Soft Chews. Just one chew a day helps dogs lose weight and gain lean muscle mass. Diamond has never been overweight but giving her SlimPaws for maintenance has given me the peace of mind that she will live a long, healthy life!

I love my beautiful, talented guide dog. She has given me so much and it's up to me to ensure she lives her best life, which includes keeping her as healthy as possible. Maintaining her weight will always be a part of that process.



Article by Shanna Stichler for Tevra Brands

*Diamond is not a Leader Dog





IN EVERY LEADER DOG LIES THE HEART OF A LION—A Leader Dog partner since 1939.

Did you know that Lions Club International is the world’s largest volunteer organization? Impressive.

Just as impressive is how they serve people who are visually impaired or blind in their communities with Leader Dog as their partner. We are reaching out to Lions clubs to help them navigate the current world of social distancing meaning many club meetings are virtual and these clubs are unable to host many of their highly anticipated community events.

Our LDB Lions team is available to participate in or host a club, zone, regional or district meeting presentation, either online or by phone. The topics we can cover vary, but our PowerPoints always include lots of great photos of puppies and Leader Dog teams! Clubs can get a Leader Dog overview, meet a client or spend a few minutes with a Leader Dog puppy. Yes, we can do that!

We can help clubs host an “event-free” fundraiser by setting up a myLeaderDog fundraising page. The page can be tailored to each club and then club members just have to share the link with their friends.

As retail stores open, clubs can get a Dollars for Dogs fundraising kit. These kits contain everything needed to get your community involved with Leader Dog. Stores sell dog tags for \$1, \$5 and \$10, the donor writes their name on the tag and then they are displayed at the store. This is a great way to show that your local Lions support Leader Dog.

Every year we host 200 Lions from across the country for Summer Visits. These events bring Lions leadership to our campus to learn more about Leader Dog. This year, we will host our first Virtual Summer Visits! Because we will be online instead of in-person, more Lions can join in the experience. Blindfold tasks, virtual campus tours, client interactions and more will be included—all from the safety of home.

Lions are our marketers, leaders, supporters, volunteers and so much more! We are grateful to all Lions for our past 81 years of partnership.





LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND

1039 S. Rochester Road
Rochester Hills, MI 48307-3115
Toll Free 888.777.5332
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SHOP ONLINE AT LEADERDOG.ORG/SHOP

Dress up the background of your next Zoom meeting with some great Leader Dog merchandise. Spend \$40 or more on anything in our online gift shop and we'll give you a golden retriever or Labrador Leader Dog coffee mug for FREE! Everyone will be impressed by your support of Leader Dog (and they'll be jealous of the mug).

Mug must be added to cart and will be deducted at checkout. Use code: MUG (expires August 31, 2020)

No other discount codes may be used with this offer.

