



UPDATE

LEADERDOG.ORG | ISSUE 1 | 2021

LEADER DOGS FOR THE BLIND



Getting Back to the Top of Her Game

Virtual Success

Silver Linings



Greetings.

With the start of a new summer, we are thrilled that we are now able to lessen some of the pandemic restrictions to our operations. As such, I cannot help but reflect on the evolution and achievements here at Leader Dogs for the Blind. In response to the numerous challenges we faced over the last year, our team created many new initiatives that served us well during the height of the pandemic and will continue to serve us well in the future.

Every organization wants to adeptly change with the times, but this year has been so much more than evaluating a technology upgrade or adding new activities to our classes. With the dedication of our entire Leader Dog community, we

found ways to safely train our clients, connect with our community, and continue to support our team members and volunteers. At this time, clients are learning how to travel safely with a white cane or meeting and training with their Leader Dogs, solidifying a successful partnership for years to come. We take immense pride in these achievements.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Update. We have stories of how two of our clients managed throughout the pandemic and highlights of the initiatives our team members count as silver linings throughout this past year.

On behalf of the entire Leader Dog team, I wish you a safe, happy and healthy summer. As always, thank you for everything you do in support of Leader Dog as we work together to make people unstoppable.

Sincerely,

Susan M. Daniels

Susan M. Daniels
President & CEO



Virtual Success

Eric Smith

We are checking in with LDB client Eric Smith (Update Issue 1-2019) to find out what kept him busy during the pandemic.

Eric works as a certified mediator handling divorce and domestic violence cases for the Georgia Office of Dispute Resolution. Since May 2020, he had been working virtually but was able to return to the office in late May 2021. When virtual, his workload was considerably reduced, giving him the opportunity to bring to life an idea he had been toying with for years.

Eric wanted to start a nonprofit organization to help people who are visually impaired become more independent and to introduce them to programs that can help them achieve this goal. In early 2020 he began recruiting board members for his organization and by September, the group established LEOTO (Living Everyday On Their Own).

ERIC SMITH AND LD EXCEL POSE FOR A PHOTO IN THEIR BACKYARD GARDEN.



CLIENT SPOTLIGHT

In addition to being president of LEOTO, Eric has been teaching braille classes through the organization. The group's long-range goal is to establish a high rise building that is accessible for, and 80% populated with, people who are blind, deaf or use a wheelchair.

In his "spare time," Eric continues to play bass, bass guitar and piano with the Epitome Showband and make sure his Leader Dog, Excel, gets lots of opportunities to work guiding Eric around their neighborhood.

As for how Excel handled this past year, Eric said, "He just went with the flow."

LD EXCEL ENJOYS LISTENING TO ERIC PRACTICE THE BASS.





My son, Christopher, of Las Vegas, Nevada was approved for cane training and a guide dog. Leader Dogs for the Blind has changed my son's life by giving him back his freedom, the ability to do things he had been leery about before Leader Dog. Misty came into his life, such as walking to the store or library, and flying.

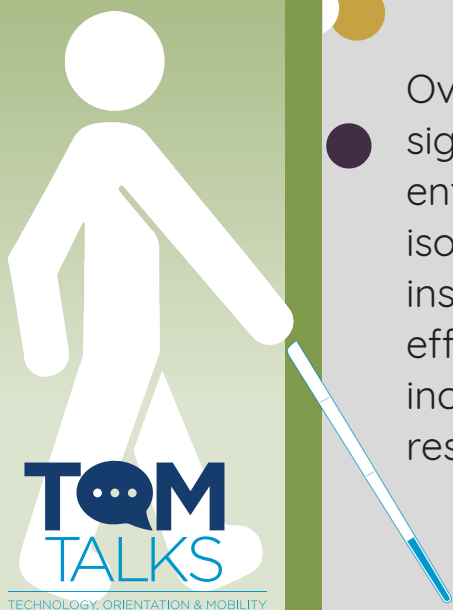
Chris came home for the first time in 16 years for Thanksgiving two holidays ago—all because of LD Misty and Leader Dog. He flew to North Carolina with the confidence of knowing this beautiful and faithful animal would keep him safe and secure. They will be coming back this summer for a month at which time he will be with family and friends. I had the chance to see what Misty can and does do for my son. I know Chris is beyond grateful for her as am I. God bless all of you for what have done for Chris and those that you help each and every day.

Veronica B
North Carolina

Thank You!

Over the last two years I have been trying to reconcile significant decreases to my already limited vision. The entire situation began to feel overwhelming and isolating. Your energies and efforts have provided insight and direction on how I can improve my self-efficacy, self-advocacy and quality of life. I am incredibly thankful for the community, support and resources that T.O.M Talks built.

KEISHA BAILEY



To Laura (Macy's puppy raiser),

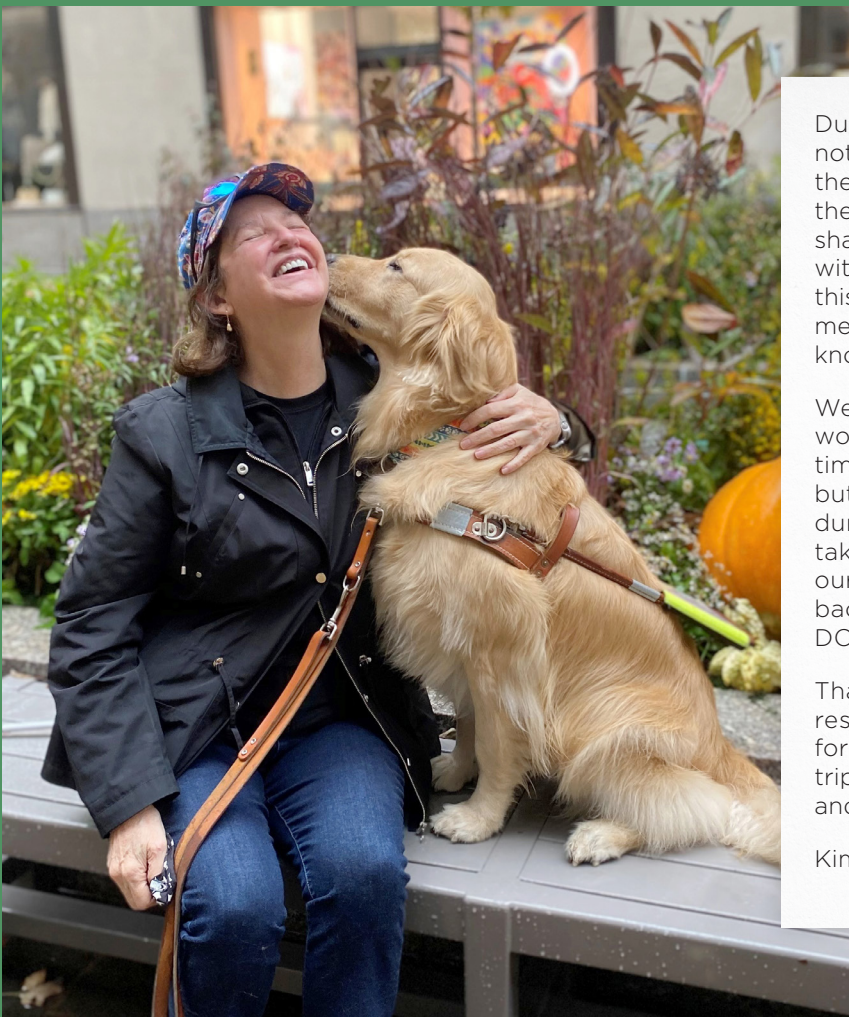
Macy and I continue to enrich one another's lives, as we work and play together, ever since Macy was issued to me, October 20, 2010. I owe the person I am today entirely to Macy's devotion.

Everywhere I go, Macy is admired and adored by everyone we encounter. We have been living in a beautiful, peaceful apartment in an independent living community of seniors, some of whom have disabilities. This primarily residential neighborhood has so many sidewalks for us to navigate.

Macy's tail is constantly wagging as we travel to our favorite coffee shops, restaurants and stores. If I even say the word "harness," Macy races joyously to the door. Macy's health and energy level is very youthful and she keeps me active, energetic, and enables me to contribute much of my time as a volunteer at a local crisis intervention center and at a children's grief healing center.

Since you raised Macy for me, and gave her up so she could be my guide and companion, I wanted to share how much happiness she brings.

My utmost gratitude and best wishes to you,
Nan D and LD Macy



During our daily walk to Rockefeller Center, I noticed something different and determined they were pumpkins. Stopped to put Emily on the bench and take a photo, heard passersby sharing how lovely, asked them to take a photo with me and Emily together and they captured this priceless moment of Emily choosing to kiss me for sitting next to her (and because she knows the camera loves her).

We cannot thank all of you enough for your work creating our team. We had some rough times, and everyone is in some tough times, but we have come into our own as a solid team during this pandemic, I am happy to share. It takes a village, and I am proud Leader Dog is our village for independence. We just came back from a Greyhound bus ride to Washington DC, where we visited my son.

Thank you from both of us for your role in restoring independent travel and we look forward to the end of the pandemic and more trips around the country, visiting family, friends and the USA.

Kim P

Getting Back to the Top of Her Game



Working as a critical care nurse in a Level 1 trauma center is mentally, physically and emotionally taxing. It takes a strong person to do this work. Now, add on a few additional responsibilities—volunteering as a medic with the fire department and working as a flight nurse—and you get a life that not many people could handle. But Kim Busboom did, and she loved it.

Diabetic since age 11, the disease caught up to Kim in the form of diabetic retinopathy that slowly reduced her vision. After moving from hands-on nursing to a desk job, Kim realized that the glare of a computer monitor was putting too much stress on her already diminished sight. So, after 30 years of a career she loved, Kim retired.

Kim's years of helping others gave way to the need to help herself. She relied heavily on skills she learned when becoming a certified life coach over a decade earlier. As a life coach, Kim helped people get to the

top of their game. She now coached herself through the three steps she coached her clients in. 1. Tear down. 2. Clean up. 3. Rebuild. She began taking the small steps that would lead to a big change in her life.

"My life has changed so much."

A friend of a friend brought Leader Dogs for the Blind into Kim's life. "As soon as I heard about Leader Dog and researched the programs, I couldn't apply quick enough," said Kim. "Being from the healthcare field I didn't know what to expect; the training was above and beyond what I could imagine."

Kim came to Leader Dog's campus in August 2020 for Orientation and Mobility Training. "I'm getting tears in my eyes thinking about that week and how much it meant to me and changed my life,"

O&M SPECIALIST TOMMY FOLLOWS KIM AS SHE TRAVELS AROUND AN OBSTACLE DURING TRAINING IN DOWNTOWN ROCHESTER.

Kim reflected. "My instructor, Tommy, never made me feel like a novice. I think he understood that I had been on the top of my game during my whole career and didn't need to feel like I was at the bottom of the barrel. He gave me a lot of credit for being where I was at with a cane."

"What sticks in my mind is being at a busy intersection in downtown Rochester. I started to take off and second guessed myself. 'Right there,' Tommy said, 'That driver didn't know how to read you. When you go out in that intersection, you make a big entrance. Make them know you're here.' And that is what I do."

Four months later, Kim spent two weeks in the hospital fighting COVID-19. "I remember thinking that I have a dog waiting for me and I have to get over this. It helped me so much."





Then February 24, 2021 came and LDB Guide Dog Mobility Instructor John Detloff arrived for home delivery training with Leader Dog Farley. “That day will never leave my mind,” recalled Kim. “The doorbell rang, and John walked in and my eyes went right down to Farley. I got on my knees and hugged him; I kind of forgot that John was there. Then John answered a lot of questions my husband, Maury, and I had. Farley sat at my feet the entire time like he knew that was where he should be. It was like he knew he was home.”

Home delivery proved to be an intense 10 days that Kim found challenging yet wonderful. “Things are amazing so far with Farley. We’re both very high energy. He’s such a smart, smart dog, and I love the little bitty mohawk on the edge of his nose.”

“I’m getting tears in my eyes thinking about that week and how much it meant to me and changed my life.”



CLIENT KIM BUSBOOM AND HER HUSBAND, MAURY, TAKE SOME TIME TO RELAX AT HOME WITH KIM’S LEADER DOG, FARLEY.

(continued on page 8)



Looking toward the future, Kim wants to help others find what she has found at Leader Dog. “I could not have gotten a guide dog on my own if I had to pay for it. Leader Dog’s donors have inspired me. By them making all this available to me, it has inspired me to want to become a better person, to do more, to give back as well. Thank you.”

Kim Busboom wants to “do more.” Imagine that.



KIM AND
LD FARLEY



PAYING IT FORWARD

When Kim started researching Leader Dog, she went straight to Leaderdog.org, where she saw our Match Campaign. Kim sold 100 Mary Kay lip balms (she’s a representative) and donated the \$500 profit to LDB. She then went to her women’s philanthropy groups and got another \$500 to sponsor a puppy.

“I wanted to be involved in LDB the quickest way I could.”

Next Generation Grantmaker "Levels Up"



FOUNDATION HIGHLIGHT

Six years ago, Leader Dog learned about the Talbert and Leota Abrams Foundation and reached out. While cold calls seldom result in a donation, the foundation's board agreed to a tour and was excited to include two of its Next Generation Grantmakers, Breanna (Bre) and Riley Patzer.

Shortly after, the foundation made a gift, which was the first grant Bre and Riley made in their new role. Over the years Bre Patzer became more engaged with the Leader Dog mission—she shadowed in the vet clinic, participated in events at Up Dog Yoga and kept the work of Leader Dog in front of her family. Her heart never drifted far from our four-legged friends.

▼ BRE TRAINS FLD HARLEY AT A PUPPY RAISER OUTING

Bre's commitment to our mission can be seen in the foundation's \$26,000+ in grants to Leader Dog. But this past year, Bre "leveled up" and brought her family along with her—as puppy raisers! The Patzers welcomed Future Leader Dog Harley, a female yellow Labrador retriever, in May. They decided that one of the most disruptive periods in history, the COVID-19 pandemic, would be the perfect opportunity to spend their time in service to Leader Dog.

Leader Dog is grateful that the Talbert and Leota Abrams Foundation brought a new generation of grantmakers to the table and is imparting the importance of family philanthropy in support of a diverse nonprofit sector. Earlier this spring, the Patzers and FLD Harley joined our foundation giving team for their virtual Pinot and Puppies event. These stewardship events helped connect donors to the day-to-day excitement and challenges on Leader Dog's campus while we were closed to visitors.

If you represent a foundation interested in engaging youth in philanthropy, our director of foundation giving, Kathryn Tuck, is available to discuss opportunities to combine grantsmanship and service in meaningful ways at ktuck@leaderdog.org.



When Chief Financial Credit Union broke ground on a new Rochester branch location on May 18, there was a déjà vu moment with Leader Dog representatives on hand as a community partner, just like in 2015 at the ribbon cutting for their original Rochester branch. In 2015, Tom Dluzen, Chief's president and CEO, promised to be a true corporate neighbor and they continue to fulfill that promise.

Over the past six years, Chief Financial has contributed more than \$345,000 to Leader Dog—and Chief's Community Crew shows up to support all Leader Dog events! Most recently, the Community Crew supported our Bark & Brew 5K participants by cheering at the finish line and supplying great swag for both humans and canines (pictured right)!

Chief Financial Credit Union culture has grown but has never strayed from its original purpose: People Helping People. Helping Leader Dog empower our clients to be unstoppable is just one way Chief helps; they also empower individual financial success and inspire creative philanthropy through financial solutions like the Kasasa Cash® Rewards checking account with 5% APY* (167 times the national average) and the Leader Dog Visa credit card that offers 0% interest for the first six billing periods and automatic donations to Leader Dog through the Share the Rewards program.

Chief Financial Credit Union allows you to support Leader Dog and earn amazing rewards—start today!

Kasasa Cash® Rewards Checking: www.chiefonline.com/FIVE
Leader Dog Visa: www.chiefonline.com/LEAD

**APY=Annual Percentage Yield. Chief Financial Credit Union is Federally Insured by the NCUA and is an Equal Housing Lender.*



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

Anonymous

James & Mary Beth Halushka

C. Lauer

Cathy Meo

Rodger J and Joanne M Rooney

Rick and Jayne Stier

Jean Taaffe in memory of Dorothy Taaffe



Silver Linings

The dictionary defines “silver lining” as a “consoling or hopeful prospect” or “a sign of hope in an unfortunate or gloomy situation; a bright prospect.”

It is likely that most of us consider the past year to be gloomy. Yet, Leader Dog team members defied the gloom, finding and creating silver linings in abundance.

The global pandemic didn't reduce the need for Leader Dog services; in fact, the feelings of isolation created an even greater need for Leader Dog to connect with and continue serving our clients.

Our team harnessed the ability to connect virtually and developed new platforms and programs to support and serve our clients. These include:

Alumni Hour - A monthly event for clients to catch up on Leader Dog news and connect with one another

T.O.M. Talks - Adults ages 18-24 with a visual impairment learn about independent travel, professional readiness and networking

Virtual Summer Experience Camp - Like our traditional program, participants met and gathered with their peers for a week of learning and fellowship. The 2020 program was so successful, we decided to go virtual again in 2021.

We also continued to engage our 400+ puppy raisers and breeding hosts, whose support is critical to our mission, with virtual training opportunities.

- Our puppy development team created online learning modules to help guide puppy raisers through the basics of raising a Future Leader Dog.
- Our breeding team moved their quarterly host home meetings online, which allowed everyone access to the important information of how to keep our LDB moms, dads and puppies healthy.

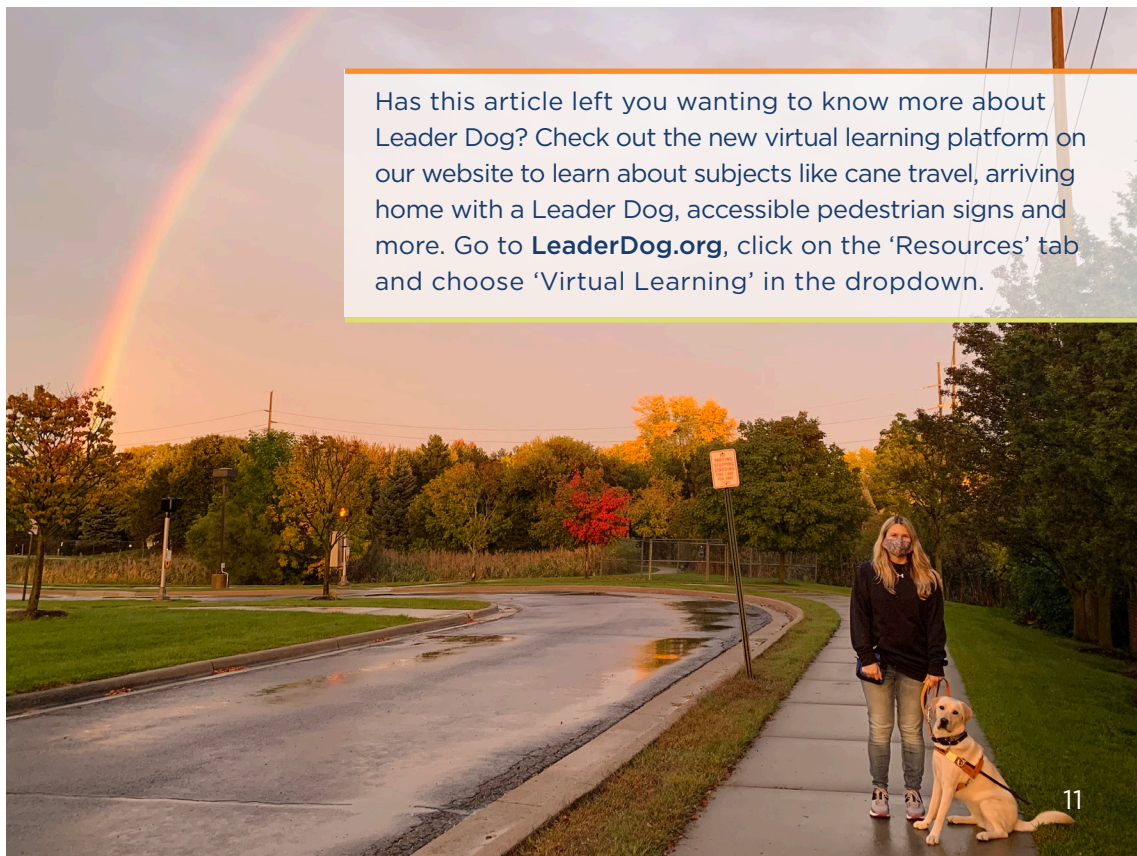
Because we depend on the immense generosity of our supporters to provide our programs free of charge to our clients, our donors got their own special online programming.

- We launched a series of virtual events that have given us the opportunity to reach donors nationwide. We introduced attendees to clients, puppy raisers and staff, AND provided behind-the-scenes access to our residence and canine center.
- We created a “virtual tour” of our campus, which we will use post-pandemic for people who want to see our campus but can't get here in person.
- Dinner in the Dark, our premier fundraising event, was transformed to allow people from anywhere to join via a virtual program and event kits mailed to participants. The event, which usually draws 500+ attendees from southeast Michigan, attracted more than 1,000 attendees from 28 states and Canada!

The best is yet to come. As restrictions subside we can welcome the entire LDB community back to our campus, these new programs and initiatives will continue and allow us to reach and serve more people than ever before.

With all of these silver linings, Leader Dog's future has never looked so bright.

Has this article left you wanting to know more about Leader Dog? Check out the new virtual learning platform on our website to learn about subjects like cane travel, arriving home with a Leader Dog, accessible pedestrian signs and more. Go to LeaderDog.org, click on the 'Resources' tab and choose 'Virtual Learning' in the dropdown.



It's common for an organization working with animals to have a veterinarian on their board, but we are lucky to have one that is both highly respected in the industry and deeply committed to our mission.



In 1989 Dr. Franklin Carmona began practicing at North Hills Veterinary Hospital after graduating from Michigan State University's College of Veterinary Medicine. Just three years later he became a co-owner of North Hills.

Dr. Carmona joined the Leader Dog Board of Trustees in 2014 and

has served on the philanthropy committee for seven years. However, his connection to Leader Dog began decades ago. "I have supported Leader Dog for over 20 years through my work with the Southeastern Michigan Veterinary Medical Association (SEMVMA)," said Carmona. "While SEMVMA president, we started

Franklin M. Carmona, DVM

(pictured with wife Jackie [left], Sue Daniels and Dr. Dave Smith at a past Bark & Brew)



a fun run and a golf outing to raise funds for Leader Dog. The golf outing continues to this day." (see article on page 15.)

In addition to his volunteer work with LDB, Dr. Carmona has volunteered with the Detroit Zoological Society and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation. He has received several awards including the Michigan Veterinary Medical Association's W. Kenneth McKersie Service Award for cumulative service and accomplishments benefitting the profession of veterinary medicine and the 2020 SEMVMA award for Outstanding Service to the Community.

Dr. Carmona is married to Jacqueline Walsh, DVM and they have two children. Their pets include a box turtle, a career changed Leader Dog named Wesley and a certified therapy dog.

"As a veterinarian, the human-animal bond is one of the most important parts of my profession. Leader Dogs for the Blind does an excellent job of supporting that bond. They provide visually impaired people an opportunity to improve their lives and give the dogs the best care possible. For these reasons, I have and always will support Leader Dog."



MISSION MOMENT

"I feel like I have a pretty great life as a person with no eyesight. But LD Lena is going to enhance that and make my life even bigger. She's going to open up my world. I can't wait to get out there with her."

~Kathleen B and LD Lena



Jim and MaryBeth Halushka Making an Impact in Several Ways



DONOR HIGHLIGHT

Like many kids, Kellie Halushka wanted a dog; her parents, Jim and MaryBeth, decided to test the waters by becoming Leader Dog puppy raisers. The more they learned about Leader Dogs for the Blind, the more impressed they became. They especially liked that all funding comes from philanthropy and all services are provided free of charge.

The puppy they raised, Batman, graduated and was matched with Ken Clark. The family kept in touch with Ken and learned about the ways Leader Dog Batman transformed his life. In 2018, after eight years of a wonderful partnership, LD Batman passed away. "We saw a change in Ken," Jim and MaryBeth said. "He became more isolated and reliant on people to help him."

Their experience watching the impact Batman made on Ken's life was one reason Jim and

MaryBeth decided to make Leader Dog a beneficiary in their will. Their second reason was the accidental death of their daughter Kellie. Knowing her love for Batman and what he meant to her, they are happy that their future gift will make a positive impact on someone's life.

Like many people, Jim and MaryBeth had put off updating their will for years, then they began to think about retirement and decided it was finally time to act. "We think Leader Dog is a wonderful charity," they said, "And we know that when we pass, we will still be helping people." Jim, a career attorney, said, "It's not fun to talk about plans for when you die, but it is important."

When Ken found out about Jim and MaryBeth's gift to Leader Dog, he felt honored. "Jim and MaryBeth are wonderful people," Ken said. He then shared that he recently completed arrangements for his own burial and will have Batman's ashes with him.

Leaving a legacy gift might be easier than you think. If you would like information on how to make a future gift, we are here to help you. Visit our website at leaderdog.planmygift.org or contact Lora Cabarios at 248.650.7109 or Lora.Cabarios@leaderdog.org.

KEN CLARK AND LD BATMAN WITH KELLIE, JIM AND MARYBETH AT "MEET THE PUPPY RAISER NIGHT."



BATMAN'S FIRST BIRTHDAY!



TEVRA PET FLEA AND TICK PREVENTION

Tevra Pet Activate II Flea and Tick Prevention for Dogs is a veterinary quality topical used around the country by pet owners and Leader Dog clients alike. The groundbreaking formula provides your dog with a safe and effective solution to fleas, ticks and mosquitoes.

Tevra's formula contains the same active ingredients as K9 Advantix II for dogs but costs much less. The high level of efficacy and the safety of the formula has made it a staple part of the lives of countless Leader Dogs.

Tevra's mission is to help pets and their owners live their best life! High cost should not be a barrier of entry to quality flea and tick protection. Their products are always backed by a money back guarantee!

This year Tevra is giving Leader Dog's supporters 25% off on tevrapiet.com with the code LEADER25.

So help your dogs live their best life with Tevra Pet Activate II for Dogs!

ACTIVATE THE POWER

FLEA & TICK PROTECTION

Compare to K9 Advantix II for Dogs active ingredients*

*This product is not manufactured or distributed by Bayer, the maker of K9 Advantix II for Dogs. K9 Advantix II for Dogs is a registered trademark of Bayer.

The advertisement features a brown and white dog looking up, with green arrows indicating protection against fleas and ticks. Below the dog are four boxes of Tevra Pet Activate II for different dog sizes: Small Dog (4-10 lbs), Medium Dog (11-20 lbs), Large Dog (21-55 lbs), and Extra Large Dog (over 55 lbs). Each box lists the benefits: 'Repels and Kills Fleas, Flea Eggs, Ticks and Mosquitoes'.



SHOP ONLINE AT LEADERDOG.ORG/SHOP

Are you smitten with the mitten? Be sure to shop our online gift shop for Michigan themed and other Leader Dog themed merchandise. Use code **MICHIGAN** to receive **20% off your entire order** now through **August 31, 2021**.

No other discount codes may be used with this offer. While supplies last.

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

Leader Dog prides itself on being innovative and nimble in a quickly changing social landscape. Lions have had to do the same this past year. With events cancelled and postponed, we quickly focused on how to remain connected to our Lions and clients.



Thanks to non-event fundraisers and virtual meeting platforms, our Lions team has been able to remain connected to Lions from Alaska to Florida and even Canada. To date, our team has presented to more than 2,500 Lions from virtual club visits to multiple district conventions. Lions have participated in Leader Dog/Lions Trivia events, inviting clients and puppy raisers as their guest speakers.

While anxiously awaiting the return to in-person fundraisers, Lions have taken to social media and non-events to raise funds and awareness for Leader Dog. The Atlanta Lions Club (Georgia) raised \$3,000 on a Facebook fundraiser (left), the Austin Founders Lions Club (Texas) held a virtual club auction of Leader Dog swag. The Lake Orion Lions Club (Michigan) hosted Dollars for Dogs, where local businesses “sold” paper LDB dog tags for a donation.

As we look forward to the upcoming year, we will continue to offer virtual presentations and non-event fundraisers for our Lions. Non-event fundraising is ideal for small and large clubs in all sizes of communities! To share Lions and Leader Dog with your club, contact Lion Kathleen Breen at kbreen@leaderdog.org or head to the Lions tab at LeaderDog.org.

SEMVMA GOLF OUTING “SWINGS” BACK FOR 2021!

The Southeastern Michigan Veterinary Medical Association (SEMVMA) is excited to announce the return of their annual golf outing on Wednesday, August 11, 2021 at Tanglewood Golf Club in South Lyon, MI. This year’s annual event is being co-chaired by Leader Dog Trustee Dr. Franklin Carmona and Dr. Dave Smith, director of canine health at Leader Dog. Veterinarians, hospital staff, family members, friends of the SEMVMA, and anyone who enjoys a fun day in the sun with great people are invited to participate! All proceeds will be donated to Leader Dogs for the Blind. Since partnering together, this event has raised nearly \$82,000 to support our programs and services.

SEMVMA Golf Outing

When: Wednesday, August 11, 2021
10:00 a.m. Shotgun Start

Where: Tanglewood Golf Club | South Lyon, MI 48178

Format: Four-Person Scramble

Cost: \$100.00 per golfer includes 18 holes of golf with cart, box lunch and dinner banquet.
(A to-go-dinner box will be provided if we are not allowed to gather).



To register for the SEMVMA golf outing, please visit www.LeaderDog.org/semvma.



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