

Lions Foundation of Canada

Report to District

November, 2010

[Lions Foundation of Canada Web Site](#)

Lion Rick Letton, District Chair, Lions Foundation of Canada

I would like to thank all the Lion Clubs that held a [Purina Walk for Dog Guides](#) in May and in September. The goal for the 2010 Dog Walk was to raise one million dollars and through everyone's effort LFC came within \$ 10,000.00 dollars of making the goal. The goal for 2011 Dog Walk is to raise 1.2 million dollars!

This year the London Dog Walk was in the top 10 fund raisers across the country raising over \$ 9,700.00.

My wife and I were at the Foundation yesterday and had a tour of the new facilities. The kennel expansion is amazing and designed to give the dogs an opportunity to see each other and the people who come into the room. It is designed to cut down on the barking as the dogs can see what is going on, but it is cute as one standard poodle was leaping straight up in the air on all four paws to look over the wall instead of standing on its hind legs and watching what is going on.

The vet clinic is complete and it has really improved the quality of life for the dogs as they can be tended to right at the clinic instead of driving them to an offsite clinic and have them boarded there and looked after by people who don't know them.

The area for the dogs to be able to relieve themselves has also been vastly improved, with proper drainage, waste disposal and ventilation inside, instead of taking them outside for them to go. In winter time this lead to a whole new set of problems as people in motorized wheel chairs were being stranded on the frozen urine.



The renovations are approximately 99% completed and the balance should be done by year end.

Now that the major capital expenses are done, the LFC needs your help in outfitting the kennels with dog beds, water bowls and toys etc. There are 2 dogs to an oversized kennel as they are social animals and like being together.

Last year, 128 teams graduated from LFC. This year they are on track to graduate 150 teams and they are working on reaching their goal of graduating 200 teams a year by 2014. An interesting statistic is, approximately one third of the teams graduating consist of replacement dogs for existing clients.



LFC is unique in the world as they provide service dogs for five different areas. Most service dog organizations specialize in one type of service dog such as a dog for the visually impaired, dogs

for autism etc.

I could go on about all the important things that LFC do and how they have a profound effect on their clients, but suffice it to say, they still need your support to be able to continue to carry out their fantastic work.



If I could impose upon your patience for a minute, I would like to talk about being a Lion.

You know how sometimes you are working at a Lions project in really bad weather, or its scorching hot or it is the same old same old every week and you wonder why are you doing this when you could be at home with your family doing all those things you have put off, or just haven't found time to do yet. You are thinking does this matter, does anyone really care if we raise money for whatever the cause maybe, are we making a difference?

Then something happens and you say, this is why I became a Lion so I can help make a difference. I had one of those moments a little over a month ago! I had the privilege of representing our club at the LFC graduation. Our club had sponsored a dog guide for a visually impaired person. I got to the ceremony (surprisingly I was early) and could not believe the crowd there. The graduates had their family and friends, the foster parents of the dogs and people and groups who had sponsored a team were there. The whole

ceremony was very emotional and the one graduate from the hearing dog course was profoundly deaf and mute, so she was constantly signing Thank You, with tears rolling down her cheeks as she was so grateful to be able to live independently. Afterwards the staff were telling me that now for the first time since her husband past away, she could have her grandchildren come and stay with her. Lucy was the person our club sponsored and she thanked me again and again for giving her life back to her.

Lucy had lost her eye sight approximately 3 years ago and had to depend on others for everything. Now she goes to the malls, does her own grocery shopping, takes walks around the neighbourhood and is no longer afraid. She and her dog Hedda are growing stronger together in their trust of each other.

Lucy has become a member of our club as she is so grateful to Lions for her dog, the LFC and all the work Lions do. In fact Lucy is working at our weekend BBQ at Cdn Tire on Wonderland as we speak. She was a trooper on Friday working in the freezing cold, worked Saturday and as I mentioned she is back again to work today.

Lucy has become a great ambassador for Lions and she can't believe that we don't have people lined up out the door wanting to join as she thinks and knows we do such great work. As a matter of fact Lucy is sponsoring a new member for our club and has a friend in another town who wants to join Lions because of all the positive things Lucy has told her. Her friend has received her third dog from LFC and wants to work with and for the Lions to repay them for their support of her over the years. LFC talks to each graduate and suggests to each of them of the ways they can help LFC from joining local Lions clubs to running a Purina Walk for Dog Guides. In our district there is 2 dog walks run by the "Friends of LFC" one in Ridgetown and one in Windsor.

Lions if you are every wondering do we make a difference, or your spouse says are you out again for Lions, take them to a graduation at LFC, or go to an open house at LFC or take a tour and see the facilities, meet the employees (they have a world wide reputation for excellence) and trust me, your faith will be restored and your spouse will see that what you are doing does make a difference!

Thank you

Lion Rick Letton