



## International Assistance Dog Week (Aug 4-11th)

The first week of August marks International Assistance Dog Week (IADW)! A time where Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides (LFCDG) is proud to come together with other Assistance Dog schools all over the world to celebrate our achievements, and to also raise awareness for the incredible work these dogs do and everybody that is involved in their upbringing and training. Foster families and volunteers do a tremendous job preparing our Dog Guides for their future careers. And of course, we could not do any of the work that we do today without LFCDG's staff and our generous donors.

Assistance Dogs play a vital role in the lives of individuals with disabilities by helping them with daily tasks that might otherwise be challenging, such as opening doors, alerting them to blood sugar changes or responding to a medical emergency such as a seizure. In addition, they have a profound and lasting impact on the lives of their handlers, with many reporting that their Dog Guide has helped them graduate from school or secure employment.

Earlier this year, clients were sent an email encouraging them to share how their Dog Guide helps them every day. Last week, Michelle emailed back with an update:

*"I hope you are doing well. I know you had asked me about how Bonbon has affected my confidence. Well, before I started working with her, I was too nervous to get the mail, which is just 100 meters up the road from my house. But thanks to having Bonbon by my side, we travelled—*



*just her and I—to Winnipeg and back this past week. It felt amazing, and I can never thank everyone at Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides enough for giving me my life back.”*

Thanks to everyone who has been involved in matching Michelle with Bonbon, Michelle has been able to benefit from increased safety and independence. This week, we celebrate LFCDG, our dogs and the people who support our mission and vision.

## Graduate Corner

### The Difference for Anna & Wynni

LFCDG is officially embarking on our biggest mission yet, to raise \$50 million dollars to build a new, fully accessible national training facility. This initiative will expand our capacity to train and match more remarkable Dog Guides with people from across the country. This will make a difference in the lives of so many people who set foot into the new building.

Since 2018, Anna has been matched with her Diabetes Alert Dog Guide, Wynni. Last month she shared this wonderful message:

*“I wanted to share the difference LFCDG has made in my life since receiving Wynni.*

*I don't even recognize myself before Wynni. I got Wynni when I graduated from the Diabetes Alert program in 2018 and ever since then I have been safer, healthier, happier and have had a best friend. She is my diabetes partner. When I first got Wynni, I said she didn't make me feel alone and that's still one hundred percent true to this day, but she also helped me to be grateful for my life and think of diabetes as a good thing. Type 1 diabetes isn't the most fun or safest disease but with Wynni, I have never felt as if I was unlucky to have it - and I have never been in an unsafe situation because of her. She always keeps me safe and healthy and keeps my blood sugar in a good range. She is my best friend for the daily times my blood sugar is low and I'm crying on the floor with her, and she never leaves. I am blessed to have her in my life. She has saved my life hundreds of times with her super sniffer, but she has also been my friend and every night she cuddles up against me and snores in my face is a night I will never forget. Thank you, Dog Guides, I am still here and thriving because of Wynni and because of you.*

*Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides is the most amazing and beautiful organization I have ever come across and they recently launched the Difference Campaign as they strive to make an impact on many more lives around Canada.”*



We need your help to make a difference for more people like Anna. Please visit our [website](#) to donate to The Difference campaign. By supporting The Difference Campaign, you will be contributing to LFCDG's legacy and helping others for years to come.



## U.S Updated New Proposed Rules for Dogs Entering the United States

The new rules concerning dogs crossing the border were recently updated. For more information, please visit the CDC's website: [www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs](http://www.cdc.gov/importation/dogs)

# LFCDG Happenings

## The Difference Campaign Update

Thanks to the support of Canadians across the country, The Difference has now reached \$41.5 million towards the new national training school! While this is a good start, LFCDG needs help to reach an enormous \$50 million goal. Donations given today will help make thousands of Dog Guide matches possible in a new school for years to come.

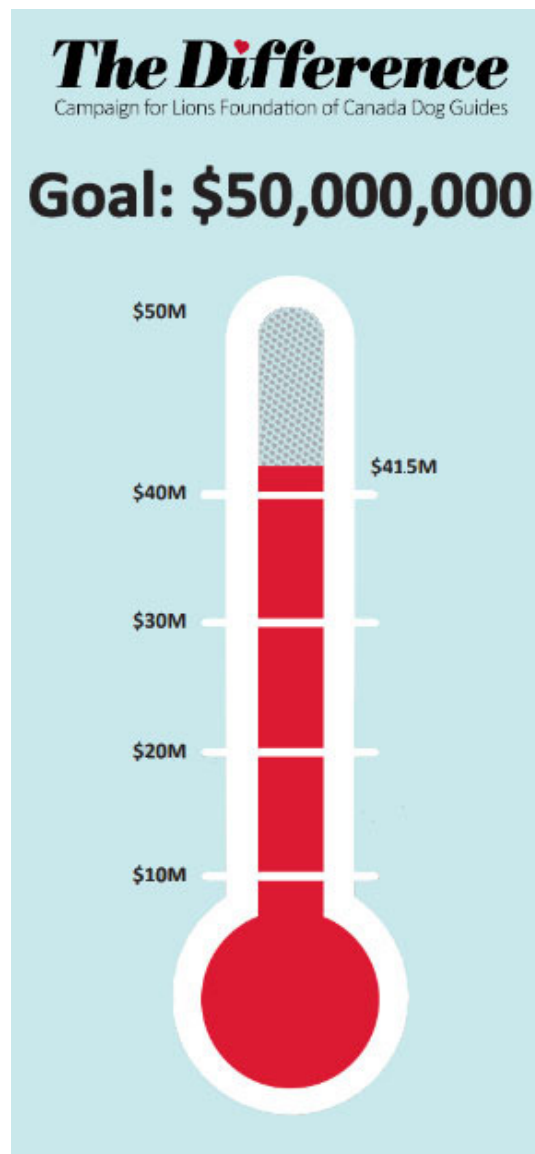
### New School Highlight: Accessibility and Comfort

With clients travelling across Canada to stay with LFCDG for up to 3 weeks at a time, a comfortable and accessible training school is vital for providing the best Dog Guide training experience possible.

The new school will have a designated wing for clients featuring 35 accessible guest rooms, a client lounge, and laundry facilities. Clients will also have direct access to dog relief areas and courtyards.

Accessibility will be greatly improved in the new school by going above and beyond the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA) regulations to achieve Rick Hansen Gold Accessibility Certification. Universal washrooms will have the necessary space and equipment to ensure ease-of-use for all guests. A passenger elevator will give guests the independence to access all three levels of the building: the underground parking and training space, the main floor, and the upper level. Extra wide hallways will comfortably accommodate people, dogs and mobility devices while the wayfinding system will be a helpful tool for navigating the building.

LFCDG is excited to offer all clients and guests an elevated experience in the new school. There is still help needed to make these drastic improvements a reality. Please consider a





special gift to The Difference campaign to help build a comfortable and accessible training school for generations to come.

Please visit our [website](#) to see the amazing renderings and learn more about the new school. It is so exciting for the future of LFCDG.

## Events Update

### **\$1,311,702 Million Raised for the 2023-2024 Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides!**

We are thrilled to announce that together, we've raised over \$1.3 million from the 2023-2024 Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides! This incredible achievement makes it the third-highest-grossing walk in our 39-year history and the top walk since 2019!

A huge thank you to Pet Valu and its family of stores, Lions Clubs, our graduates, volunteers, participants, and donors. Your support and dedication have made this achievement possible. We couldn't have done it without you!

**WE DID IT!**  
**OVER \$1.3 MILLION**

**pet valu WALK FOR DOG GUIDES**

- The Pet Valu Family of Stores -

petvalu Paulmac's Pets bosley's BY PET VALU Tisol Pet Nutrition & Supply Stores Total Pet LIONS INTERNATIONAL

# Upcoming Events

Join Us for Exciting Events with Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides!

We have some fantastic opportunities coming up to support our mission and vision at Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. Check out the details below:

## Sparky's Dog Days of Summer in Oakville

Bring the whole family for a chance to meet the fire crew, check out the fire truck, participate in activities, and get practical tips for preventing fires and staying safe.

- **Panago Pizza** will be onsite, and LFCDG volunteers will be selling pizza slices for \$2 each. Water or pop provided by Fortinos South Oakville will be sold for \$1 each. Proceeds from food sales will go directly to Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.

### Event Dates and Locations:

August 7: Forster Park, 100 North Forster Park Drive

August 14: Fowley Park, 95 Fowley Drive

August 21: Valleybrook Park, 1150 Valleybrook Drive





## Hilton Garden Inn Toronto Airport Hotel BBQ Fundraiser

Date: August 14th

Time: 12-2 PM

## Delta Bingo in Support of Dog Guides

Date: Sunday, August 11th

Time: 1PM

For more information about these upcoming events, please email [events@dogguides.com](mailto:events@dogguides.com).

# Volunteer Corner

## Foster Family Outings

Recently, Future Dog Guides Ferris and Folsom went to Landmark Cinemas for an outing at The Boardwalk in Waterloo. The dogs had the opportunity to experience the cinema and view previews in an empty theatre.

We are so grateful for public outings like these and hope to partner with more places to train our puppies. A big thank you to Landmark Cinemas and the fosters who were involved.



## Future Dog Guide Finland to the Rescue

A few weeks ago, Finland, a future Dog Guide, and his foster named Cat came to the aid of a young woman on the spectrum while they were in a store. Cat and her friend heard someone going through a hard time, so they went to investigate. They found a young woman who was overwhelmed with emotion. The mother was struggling, and her daughter's behaviour escalated to levels requiring intervention.

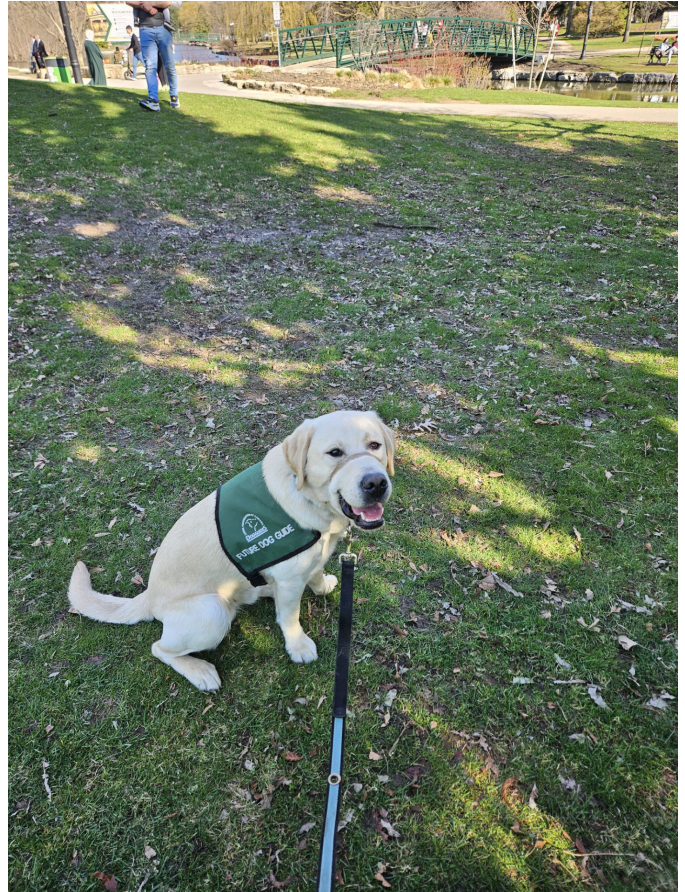
Cat approached the girl's mother and asked if her daughter liked dogs. Upon seeing the young woman in distress, Finland immediately laid down beside her and allowed her to pet him. This simple gesture helped the woman's daughter to start calming down.

When everyone thought the situation had deescalated, the young woman unfortunately started to get overwhelmed again and ran into the parking lot, but Finland was ready to act. Cat and Finland followed her to make sure she was safe. They ended up together in the parking lot, Finland lying beside her again offering assistance. Cat and Finland even ended up joining the girl in the ambulance upon request from the police on the scene as Finland was so calm and helped her calm down.

*"I've never seen Finland like he was before," says Cat. "It was like he was always meant to be a Dog Guide. We weren't even going to go in the store, but Finland was just meant to be there at that moment."*

The most amazing thing about this story? Finland was already recalled into the Autism Assistance program before this incident. He has been in school since July 15th receiving his official training.

**If you would like to become a volunteer foster family and help us raise future superheroes like Finland, visit our website to apply and learn more! Fostering is a unique way to give back and add a furry friend to your home.**





# Donor Recognition

## Rick Mercer and Becoming a Dog Guides Guardian

*"I have much-loved Canadian, Rick Mercer, to thank for making me a Dog Guides Guardian" says Aimee Norman. Aimee is a long-time foster family and volunteer for Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. Her story started over 10 years ago in February 2013, when CBC's 'The Mercer Report' ran a segment on Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides Canada. Aimee calls it "Ten minutes that showcased the people, dogs, training and everything so wonderful about this organization."*

It was the puppy program that initially drew Aimee in when she was interested in how she could make an impact. Aimee's first foster puppy, Truman, a cream standard poodle, graduated in the Service Dog Guide program and provided independence, mobility and support to his graduate for many years. Aimee says, *"that I had anything to do with it warms my heart."*



Aimee has continued her involvement in LFCDG through dog sitting and fostering. There are many pawprints on her heart - *"Amie, Bubbles, Dahlia, Fairy, Fender, Flower, Lasso, Lennon, Ora, Visor, Zoodles... Many came through my home, and it was around dog #10, while donating my time, that I decided to donate funds monthly."*

Aimee sums up her commitment like this: *"Becoming a Dog Guides Guardian means being part of a movement to help ease the burden of fundraising. A movement that can allow the*

*organization to plan for the future, to fulfill a vision of doing more things with more dogs and more wonderful trainers who can ultimately serve more people who need it. The organization needs financial support to really flourish and the greater the number of Guardians, the greater the opportunity for that to happen. Along the way, lives are made better - more goodness, kindness, equity and equality in the world. That's why I became a Dog Guides Guardian."*

[The Dog Guide Guardians monthly giving program](#) is seamless for our donors and has a low administrative overhead for us. Dog Guide Guardians, like Aimee, get the benefit of automatic donations while knowing that their gift goes each month to help match more life-changing Dog Guides to people who need them. Guardians receive a consolidated annual tax receipt each year at tax time.

## **[Become a Guardian Today](#)**

**If you're interested in the 2013 FCDG segment from the**

**Mercer Report – [Watch Video](#)**

## **Pawsibilities Grant Contributors**

Our work would not be possible without our generous supporters. Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides would like to thank our grantors:

- Hodgson Family Foundation
- Merck Animal Health
- Canadian National Autism Foundation



# Litter Updates

We are pleased to announce the arrival of 15 new LFCDG puppies. Welcome to the Dog Guide world little ones!

- N Litter: Bubbles & Cartier welcomed 8 puppies on June 30th
- O Litter: Jilli & Ollie welcomed 7 puppies on July 3rd

These little puppies will soon be looking for foster homes, would you be interested in helping us raise them? For the first year of their lives, you can take them into your home, care for them, socialize them, and teach them good manners. You will be preparing them for their careers as Dog Guides.

If you are interested, and live no more than 45 minutes away from our Oakville or Guelph facilities, please apply online at [www.dogguides.com](http://www.dogguides.com)

