



Happy holidays from Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guide (LFCDG)!

We wish you a joyous holiday season and a happy new year. We are so thankful for all your generosity over the year. Together, we can continue to provide life-changing Dog Guides to those who need one.

Please note that from Friday, December 22nd to Monday, January 1st, we will be operating on a holiday schedule. Starting on Friday, December 22nd at 12pm (EST), the foundation will have limited staff available. If you have any questions or would like to make a donation during the holidays, please visit www.dogguides.com/donate or call 1-800-768-3030 ext. 0. Somebody will be at reception to answer calls and process donations over the phone on Dec 27-29th.



Graduate Updates

Launch of the Canada Disability Benefit Regulations Online Engagement Tool

The Government of Canada is taking the next step in implementing the Canada Disability Benefit, with the launch of the Canada Disability Benefit Regulations Online Engagement Tool, which will give all Canadians, but especially Canadians with disabilities, the opportunity to have their say in the development of regulations for the benefit. The tool will be open for comments until December 21, 2023. Visit the [Canada Disability Benefit Regulations website](#) to share your feedback.

Iker joins New Brunswick's Facility Support Dogs Marielle and Jaz

Iker is the third accredited Facility Support Dog (FSD) to join the Centre de ressources et de crises familiales Beauséjour, located in New Brunswick. He joins current FSDs Marielle and Jaz. His role is to provide support and calming companionship to victims of crime as they navigate the criminal justice process. The name "Iker" has both Basque and Spanish roots translating to mean "visitation" and "making meaningful connection".

Since the inception of the program, which saw Marielle serve as the first accredited Facility Support Dog to be granted permission to provide direct testimonial support, the program has helped over 300 children and vulnerable victims of crime share their truth with courage and determination.

FSD Jaz joined the team in October 2022, but the continued demand for support resulted in Iker joining the team.

Marielle and Jaz continue to serve as critical members of the Beauséjour Centre, and many victims have shared that utilizing their support has made all the difference in their navigation through the justice system.

"Having to testify in court can be one of the most difficult experiences that anyone must go through, and Facility Support dogs provide a steadfast support in ever changing systems" says CEO of the center and Primary handler, Kristal LeBlanc.

Iker completed his first official deployment on October 12th, 2023, supporting a victim during a judgement at the Moncton Law Courts.

Alessia & Bay Take on Kindergarten Together

Congratulations to Canine Vision team Alessia and Bay for becoming permanent staff members of the Hamilton Wentworth Catholic School Board (HWCSB). After 6 years of contract jobs, Alessia and Bay are officially full-time staff. Bay will be the first Dog Guide to have clearance to be in a kindergarten classroom in HWCSB!

Alessia is an Early Childhood Educator and thanks to Bay, she has been able to work:

“Bay has helped me tremendously throughout my vision loss. From gaining my independence and confidence back, I am now persistent in my career and I’m not giving up,” says Alessia.

“Bay keeps me safe in so many ways. At school, he stops in front of every door for me to feel where the handle is. He stops in front of every step or uneven ground to prevent me from falling or tripping. If I get disoriented, I simply give him the command “find the class” and he takes me straight to my classroom. He has been such an asset in my career.”

We’re sure Alessia and Bay’s classroom will be the most popular room in school!



Mini “Journeys” Donated to Halton Regional Police

A woman who was supported by the Halton Regional Police Victim Services Unit (VSU) kindly donated mini replica plushies of Facility Support Dog Journey, for others needing a helping hand.



Andrei & Beryl Invited to Ottawa for World Diabetes Awareness Month

Last month, the Diabetes Alert Dog Guide team Andrei and Beryl were invited to Ottawa to do the opening speech for Diabetes Awareness Month. Andrei was invited to Parliament to be there for when they lit the flame of Parliament blue for Diabetes Awareness Month. He was also invited to sit down with the new Health Minister of Canada to discuss diabetes and to explain all the amazing things Beryl does for him. This was such an accomplishment for the team. Andrei and Beryl did a great job representing LFCDG and educating government figures on what it's like to live with Diabetes. Way to go Andrei and Beryl!

Dog Guide Teams in Action!

If you would like to be featured, share your photos or tag us on social media! Follow us on our social media accounts:



@lfcdogguides



@lfcdogguides



@lfcdogguides



@dogguidescan

Megan & Buffy, Autism Assistance team
@meganwithdog

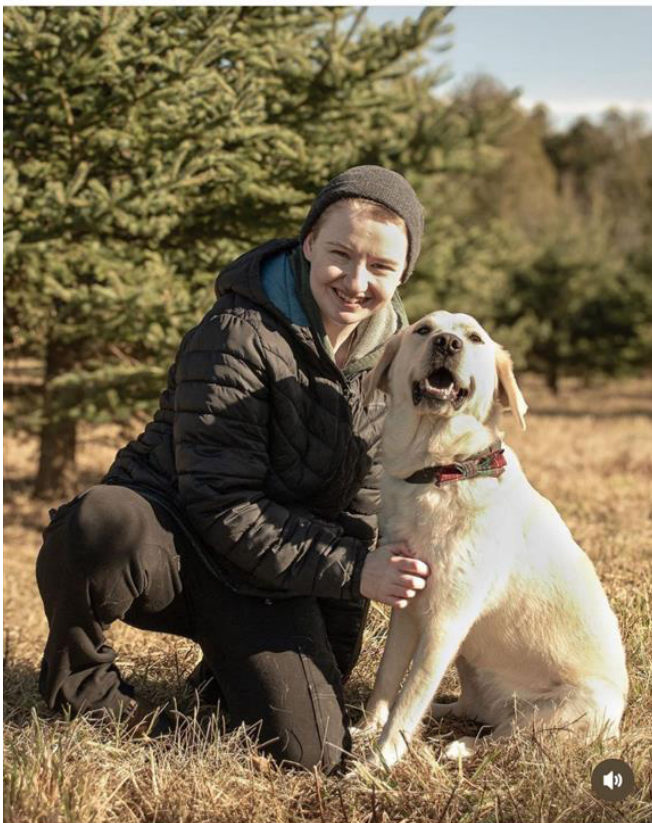
Taylor & Kooper, Autism Assistance team
@taylor_kooper24



meganwithdog

🎵 Bing Crosby, London Symphon...

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taylor_kooper24

➤ PhatCap! - Sleigh Bells (PhatCa...

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Thank You for Your Loyal Service

A tribute to Kadence, Beloved Autism Assistance Dog Guide

In August, Autism Assistance Dog Guide Kadence passed away. Bella received Kadence when she was six years old. Kadence helped Bella and her family tremendously. Kadence provided Bella with an increased level of independence and kept her safe in public spaces. In memory of Kadence, Bella's mom Andrea has written a lovely tribute on her blog Mom Behind the Label. [Goodbye Kadence - autism disability grief loss \(mombehindthelabel.com\)](https://mombehindthelabel.com)

This month, we give thanks to the dogs below who recently retired from duty or have passed:

Adi	Freedom	Kiwi	Viola
Agent	Freesia	Lana	Violet
Alba	Frodo	London	Volt
Ashton	Frost	Maclean	Wabi
Baffin	Gem	Marley	Wendell
Bali	Gibson	Merlin	Willa
Bamboo	Gilly	Molly	Yager
Bently	Gore	Nanna	Zimba
Beta	Guy	Naveed	Zoom
Beth	Haley	Ned	
Birch	Harvey	Nessa	
Boots	Hilda	Nitro	
Brook	Howard	Norma	
Charm	Howie	Persia	
Christina	Indie	Pheonix	
Dayton	Indy	Quill	
Donut	Isben	Ryden	
Dudley	Jenkins	Tango	
Effie	Joule	Tess	
Ekko	JP	Thai	
Eugene	Kadence	Thor	
Fargo	Kendal	Travis	
Fenway	Kilo	Vernon	
Floyd	Kingsley	Vine	

LFCDG Happenings

Upcoming Holiday Graduation

Join us this Wednesday, December 13th at 7:00 pm (EST) to celebrate over 40 graduates in all seven Dog Guides programs! We're so thankful and proud that we were able to match so many amazing teams.

Save the date for a holiday celebration!

Our graduation will be available on our [YouTube channel](#) to watch afterwards, in case you are not able to watch live.

In addition to the YouTube Dec 13 graduation, we will also be sharing on Zoom on Dec 14 at 7pm (EST) with an ASL interpreter. If you would like to join the Dec 14 graduation with ASL interpretation, please use this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88596587366>

Facility Support Dog Program Update

We are excited to share that the Facility Support Program will be reopening their waitlist on January 2, 2024. If you're interested in applying, please visit our website and read the Discovery Package for this program.

Facility Support Dogs are trained to assist Canadian professional agencies working with vulnerable people who have experienced trauma. These dogs can work at police departments, child and youth advocacy agencies and victim services agencies.

Please note that waitlists are currently closed for our other programs. We will, however, continue to accept re-applications from our successor clients who have previously had a Dog Guide from us.

Working Together to Improve the Service Dog Industry

Breeding Collaborations Continue to Allow for High Standards

Collaborations with other service dog schools are very important to allow us to increase genetic diversity in our breeding population while maintaining the high standards we strive for in our working dogs, both in health and temperament. Breeding collaborations provide a win-win situation for all schools involved and can include sharing stud services, and exchanges of puppies or adult dogs.

We recently sent six poodle puppies to two schools in the US – Paws with a Cause and 4 Paws for Ability. Some of these puppies were produced from cooperative breeding, and some were fully bred by us to send new genetics to these two programs. In exchange, we have already received some poodle puppies who are being raised in our puppy program and will be considered for our breeding program as they mature.

For poodles, there are fewer organizations that use poodles in their program compared to labs and goldens, so it is very exciting to have connections with other schools that breed and train this breed. We have also received three new dogs for our breeding program from Paws with a Cause.

We are so thankful for all the schools we collaborate with, and we look forward to continuing to work together to improve industry breeding.

Hearing Dog Guide Team Collaborates with Paws with a Cause

Dog Guides has a close relationship with Paws with a Cause and have been collaborating with them for some time. Next week, our Hearing program will be having a virtual “show and tell” with instructors from Paws with a Cause to talk about their programs and swap tips and tricks. Schools from around the world may have different techniques they use in training, but it’s important that we can come together and learn from each other.

Diabetes Dog Guides in training visit the Banting House in honour of Diabetes Awareness Day

On Tuesday, November 14th, in honour of World Diabetes Awareness Day, our Diabetes Alert Dog Guide team visited Sir Frederick Banting's historic home. Back in 1923, Banting won the Nobel Prize for his discovery of Insulin, changing how we treat and manage Diabetes to this day.



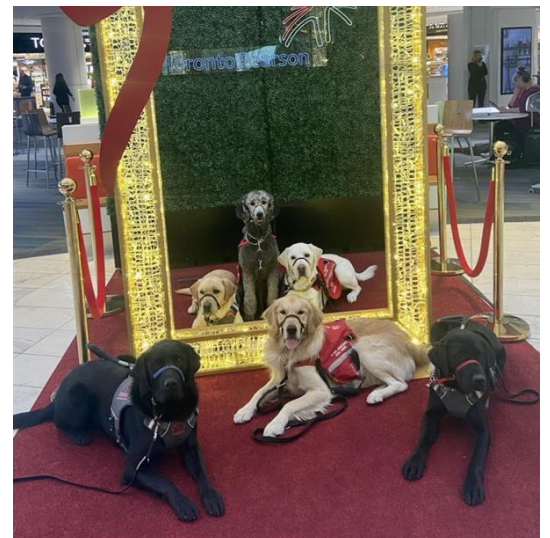
Dog Guides Invited to Speak at New Charity Documentary Screening

Last month, the Oakville Community Foundation hosted a premiere of the new documentary "UnCharitable." Dog Guides CEO Bev Crandell was invited to the screening and was asked to speak on a panel discussion following the movie. What an incredible movie! We are so honoured to be invited to the panel discussion. To learn more about the documentary, visit their [website](#).



Last Airport Training Session of 2023

Our training at Toronto Pearson airport comes to a close for the year. Thanks to our partnerships with Pearson International airport and WestJet, Dog Guides in training get the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the whole airport experience. Our Dog Guides and instructors are able to go through customs, security and board an actual aircraft!



Donor Recognition

Giving Tuesday Success

On Tuesday, November 28th, LFCDG participated in Giving Tuesday- a global movement to do good in the world. The original goal was to raise a collective \$140,000, to empower four lives to unstoppable heights by providing them with a Dog Guide each. We are thrilled to announce we surpassed that goal and raised an astonishing \$216,194 , enough money for SIX DOG GUIDES!

Thank you to the generosity of Frank Apa from Lexus of Oakville, who partnered with Lexus Canada to match donations up to \$20,000 on Giving Tuesday. They have supported this initiative for the past seven years and since then, Lexus of Oakville has donated over \$85,000 to the Giving Tuesday campaign. We thank them for their generosity over the years.

This phenomenal achievement was also made possible by the unwavering support of our incredible Dog Guides Family, spanning coast to coast. Throughout the day, the outpouring of donations flooded in, a testament to the collective spirit of compassion that fuels LFCDG's mission.

As a special touch, donors had the opportunity to suggest names for six future Dog Guides, and we are excited to announce the selected names:

Foxy – in memory of Mary Siemiesz.

Stella – because these dogs are “stars”.

Flame – means holding a torch for another.

Ruby – to mark the 40th anniversary of the foundation.

Vista – the Spanish word for sight.

Gracie – Latin origin meaning generosity.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Giving Tuesday campaign. Here is some media coverage we received on the day:

[CTV Morning Live Ottawa](#)

[CP24 Morning Live Toronto](#)

Pawtners in Success: Google

Embarking on the journey of raising, training, and placing a Dog Guide is a collaborative effort and LFCDG is thrilled to welcome Google as an integral part of our supportive village.

In partnership with Pet Valu, and in tandem with Google's Holiday Giving Campaign, Google employees were presented with an opportunity to contribute to the causes close to their hearts. LFCDG was honoured to be chosen as one of the beneficiaries. The campaign raised over \$22,000 and will be directed towards a scholarship to support the journey of Autism Assistance Dog Guide Bard. Notably, Bard draws his name from Google's collaborative Artificial Intelligence technology.

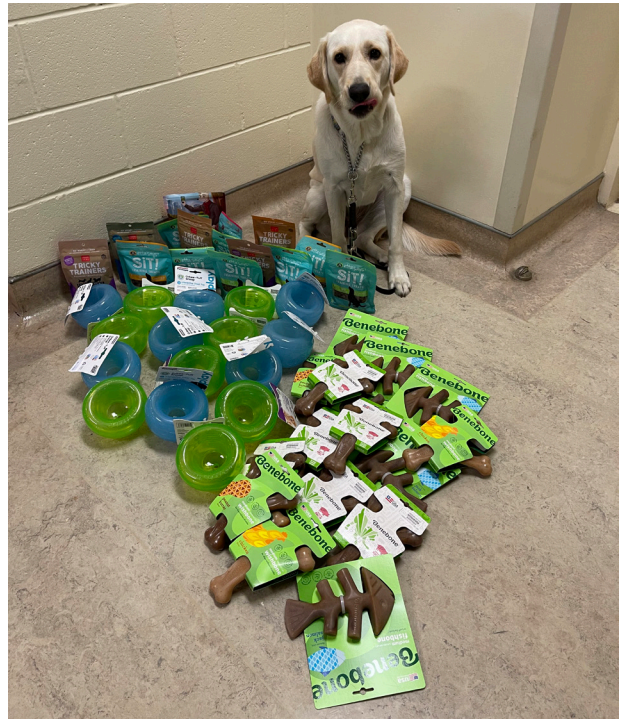
This generous commitment ensures that Bard will not only fulfill his vital role but will do so with the utmost impact, providing safety, companionship, and confidence. To Google and its dedicated employees, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for this transformative journey. Thank you, Google, for being true partners in our pursuit of making a difference.

Last month we were invited to Google's Toronto head office to share more information about how we help Canadians with disabilities. We took a few future Dog Guide puppies with us and invited Diabetes Alert Dog Guide team Ellen and Vesper!



Pawsome Donation for New Day School Volunteers

Thank you Nancy Chaisson for donating new toys and treats going to new dogs going to Day School volunteers. Gilly says thank you on behalf of us all!



Wheelchair Donation to the Service Program

Thank you to Debbie Taylor for donating a manual wheelchair to our service program. Debbie donated the wheelchair in honour of her father who passed away.



Volunteer Corner

Career Change Dogs Available for Adoption

Not all our dogs are meant to be working Dog Guides, and that's okay! Some stop their training due to medical reasons or are just not the right fit for our programs. These dogs need to be matched with loving homes. Currently, we have a few dogs up for adoption. Please visit our website for more information- [Interested in Giving a Dog a New Home? - Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.](#)



Fostering Poodle Puppies

Raise a poodle puppy AND change your life and someone else's!

Did you know that volunteers who care for puppies are doing something amazing for other people and doing something amazing for themselves and their families? Research shows that volunteer foster families benefit physically and mentally from their experience, with improved companionship, exercise, well-being and social life.

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides is looking for volunteer foster families to help raise standard poodle puppies. These hypoallergenic pups are destined to grow up to change their lives.

"People often ask us how we give up the puppy...Working dogs have a destiny, and as much as we love them, they have a purpose higher than to be our pets. Our family teaches good manners, basic training and socialization; then they go to Dog Guide University, where they learn all the required skills to begin their career and fulfill their purpose. Volunteering with Dog Guides is a rewarding and fun experience." - Kelly Potter, Foster Mom

Join our Foster Puppy Program today or learn more about it by visiting [Foster Puppy Program - Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.](#)

Day School Volunteer Workshop

Last month, we held our first workshop for Day School volunteers at our Oakville facility. We had 22 volunteers attend for an information session and demonstrations. Our volunteers learned more about dog care topics like crating, feeding, and commands. We plan to continue these workshops monthly. Thank you to everyone that participated!

If you are interested in becoming a Day School volunteer and learning more, please visit [Off-site Volunteer Programs - Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides.](#)

Medical Sitters Needed

Are you a compassionate animal lover with a flexible schedule and a nurturing home environment? LFCDG Vet Clinic is seeking dedicated individuals to assist in the care of our special dogs in training. If you live close to Oakville and can commit to various periods or time, from 10 to approximately 14 days for spays/neuters, or 4-6 weeks for other medical procedures, we need your help!

Your support can make a significant difference in the lives of these remarkable dogs, helping them on their journey to becoming life-changing canine companions. If you are ready and willing to open your home to a dog in need and can meet the qualifications mentioned above, we urge you to reach out.

For more information or to fill out an application to become a volunteer Medical Dog Sitter, please visit <https://www.dogguides.com/how-to-help/volunteer/> or contact Evelyn Marshall at emarshall@dogguides.com.

Litter Updates

We are pleased to announce the arrival of 27 new LFCDG puppies. Welcome to the Dog Guide world little ones!

- O Litter: Erie and Freddy – 7 puppies
- P Litter: Saffron and Ollie – 4 puppies
- Q Litter: Hovis and Freddy– 6 puppies
- R Litter: Geneva and Ernest – 10 puppies

Would you be interested in helping us raise these little pups? We're currently looking for fosters that live in the GTA, Hamilton, Niagara, Kitchener and Guelph. Foster families play a crucial role in setting up a future Dog Guide puppy for success. To apply to become a Foster Family to a future Dog Guide puppy, visit Foster Puppy Program - Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides

