

March 2025



## Canine Vision Dog Guide Waitlist Opens March 31st – Limited Spots Available!

We're excited to announce that the waitlist for our **Canine Vision Dog Guides** will open on **March 31st!** These incredible Dog Guides provide life-changing support for Canadians aged 14 and older who are blind, helping them navigate daily obstacles such as stairs, crowds, and public transportation. By enhancing safety and reducing stress, a Canine Vision Dog Guide fosters greater independence and confidence for its handler.

**With only 10 spots available, now is the time to prepare your application!**

- Breeds Available: Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers and Lab/Golden crosses
- Ideal for: Individuals confident in traveling within their community

The waitlist will remain open for two weeks (closing April 14), or until all spots are filled.

A Dog Guide is more than a companion—it's a dedicated partner in navigating the world. As a primary handler, you will be responsible for their training, care, and success, building a strong and lasting partnership.

To learn more, review our [Discovery Package](#).

For assistance with the Expression of Interest form, contact our Client Services team at [client-services@dogguides.com](mailto:client-services@dogguides.com).

Don't miss this opportunity to gain a life-changing partner in independence!

# Events

## You're Invited: 2025 Spring Open House

We're excited to welcome you to our 2025 Spring Open House on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at 152 Wilson Street, Oakville. Join us for a day of inspiration, learning, and community as we showcase the incredible work of Dog Guides.

**Doors Open: 9:30 AM / Event Runs Until: 3:00 PM**

Experience the Mission of Dog Guides in Action

- Meet our incredible dogs-in-training and their dedicated trainers
- Watch live demonstrations of future Dog Guides in action
- Connect with our Puppy Program team and learn how to get involved
- Celebrate with community partners who help make our mission possible

This free event is open to everyone. While admission is complimentary, donations are welcome to support our life-changing work.

Come see how we're making a difference this spring—we look forward to welcoming you.

For more details, visit [www.dogguides.com](http://www.dogguides.com).



# Join Us for Our Inaugural Mother's Day High Tea

Celebrate the special women in your life at the Inaugural Mother's Day High Tea, hosted by Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides. Enjoy a delightful selection of fine teas, delicious treats, and an elegant atmosphere—all in support of a life-changing cause.

## Event Details

**Date:** Saturday, April 12, 2025

**Location:** 152 Wilson Street, Oakville

**Morning Seating:** 9:30 AM – Limited spots remain!

**Tickets:** \$35.00 per person

## Reserve Your Spot

Secure your seat today by emailing [events@dogguides.com](mailto:events@dogguides.com) or purchasing tickets directly: [Mother's Day High Tea Tickets](#).

This special gathering is an opportunity to honour the important women in your life while supporting Dog Guides Canada.

A heartfelt thank you to our presenting sponsor, **Green Capes Trust Foundation**, for their generous support.

We look forward to celebrating with you!

# Empowering Brighter Futures. Unlocking Countless Possibilities

The Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides is back this year, launching a movement to create brighter futures and unlock countless possibilities for Canadians living with disabilities. Together, we can help build a future filled with freedom, independence, and endless opportunities.



## Save the Date: Sunday, May 25, 2025

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Walk, and we have set an ambitious goal to raise **\$1.6 million**. These funds will support the raising, training, and matching of life-changing Dog Guides for people in need—at no cost to the recipients.

## Here's How You Can Help:

Every donation towards the Pet Valu Walk for Dog Guides has a direct impact. Your support is essential to helping us continue providing these incredible services.

Join us on this inspiring journey! Whether you participate in the event, donate, or spread the word, you're not just helping provide a Dog Guide—you're unlocking endless possibilities for someone in need.

Register today at [www.walkfordogguides.com](http://www.walkfordogguides.com) and find a walk near you.

Together, we can create futures without limits. We look forward to celebrating with you!

## Autism Awareness Month is Approaching

As we look ahead to **April**, we prepare to recognize **World Autism Month**, a time dedicated to raising awareness, fostering acceptance, and celebrating the incredible individuals on the autism spectrum. Mark your calendars for **April 2nd—World Autism Awareness Day**—when communities worldwide come together to promote understanding and inclusion.

At Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides, we are proud to support children with autism through our Autism Assistance Dog Guide program. These specially trained dogs provide safety, companionship, and emotional support to children aged 3-12, helping them navigate the world with greater confidence and independence.

Stay tuned throughout April as we share inspiring stories, facts, and ways you can help create a more inclusive world.

# LFCDG Happenings

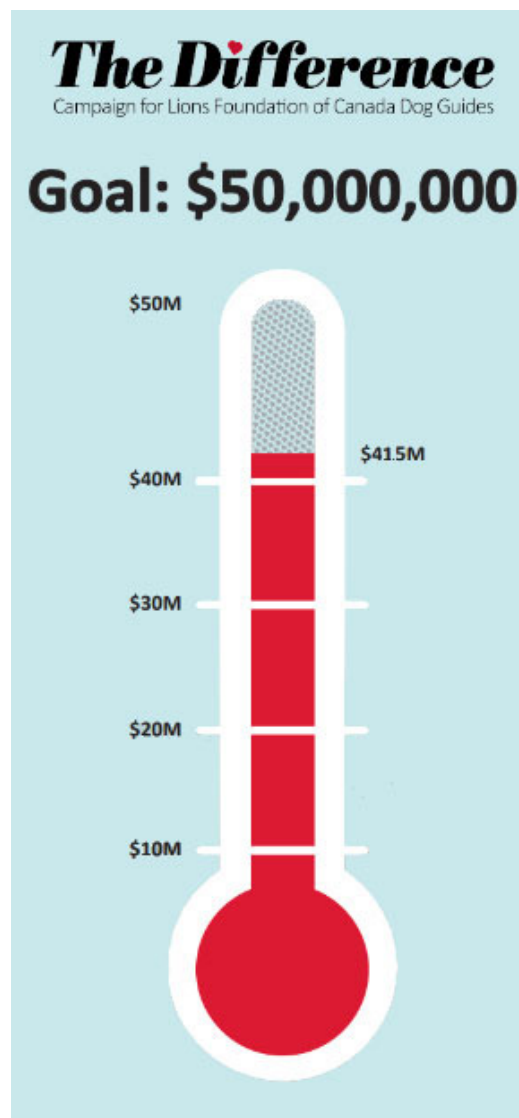
## The Difference Campaign

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides can't wait to make more Dog Guide matches possible in the new national training school. One of the most important parts of creating more successful Dog Guides matches is, of course, the dogs! Providing future Dog Guides with comfortable and purpose-built living space is essential to their training. With 62 state-of-the-art kennels that will home 2 dogs together, there will be ample room for dogs to rest and live in the new school.

Each kennel is designed for optimal comfort, safety, and well-being for dogs in training. These kennels also open into some vital spaces; the play areas! Because future Dog Guides work hard, they need the time and space to play as well. Currently, LFCDG's training school is making use of one courtyard but it is not designed for dogs at play. Rocky footing and limited square footage pose challenges for play time.

In the new school, future Dog Guides will have custom-built indoor play areas with specialty rubber footing to ensure comfort. With 7 separate indoor spaces connected to the kennels, LFCDG's dogs will have the spaces they need to relax, enjoy, and be prepared for training.

If you'd like to help build a home for Dog Guides in the new national training school, please visit The Difference campaign website. For more information or to donate, you can also reach out to [thedifference@dogguides.com](mailto:thedifference@dogguides.com) or call 1(800) 768-3030 or (905) 842-2891 ext. 218.



# Diabetic Fitness Influencer Jason Christo Visits Our Oakville Facility

We were thrilled to welcome diabetic fitness influencer Jason Christo to our Oakville facility, where he had the opportunity to learn more about Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides and our life-changing programs.

During his visit, Jason met Ribbon, Winter, and Mackie—three Diabetic Alert Dogs in training. Our expert instructors, Amanda and Nicky, provided insights into the Diabetes Alert Dog Program, explaining how these incredible dogs are trained to detect changes in blood sugar levels and assist individuals living with diabetes.



Reflecting on his visit, Jason shared:

*“As a Type 1 diabetic, visiting the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides was an eye-opening and inspiring experience. Seeing firsthand how these highly trained Diabetic Alert Dogs can detect low blood sugar and provide life-saving support was truly incredible. Managing type 1 diabetes is a constant challenge, and having a dog that can alert you before a dangerous drop in blood sugar adds an extra layer of security and independence.”*

He also highlighted the foundation’s mission:

*“What makes the Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides so special is their dedication to providing these life-changing service dogs at no cost to those in need. Their commitment to rigorous training, personalized matching, and ongoing support ensures that each dog is not just a companion but a vital part of someone’s diabetes management. As someone who understands the daily struggles of Type 1 diabetes, I deeply appreciate the impact this organization has on the lives of so many. It’s more than just training dogs—it’s about empowering people to live safer, more confident, and more independent lives.”*

Want to see more from Jason’s visit? Check out his [YouTube Channel](#), where he takes you on a tour of our facility and shares his experience with these incredible dogs in action!



## Making a Difference: Hunter & Yazar's Story

Hunter Estabrooks, a recipient of one of our incredible Dog Guides, and his mother, Courtnee, were recently featured on CTV News Atlantic. Joined by Hunter's Dog Guide, Yazar, they shared their journey with Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides and the profound impact these specially trained dogs have on the lives of Canadians with disabilities.

During the interview, Courtnee spoke about The Difference—our national campaign dedicated to building a state-of-the-art Dog Guide training school. This vital project will allow us to train and place even more life-changing Dog Guides, ensuring that individuals like Hunter receive the support they need at no cost.

We invite you to watch their story and learn more about The Difference Campaign: Watch on CTV News Atlantic



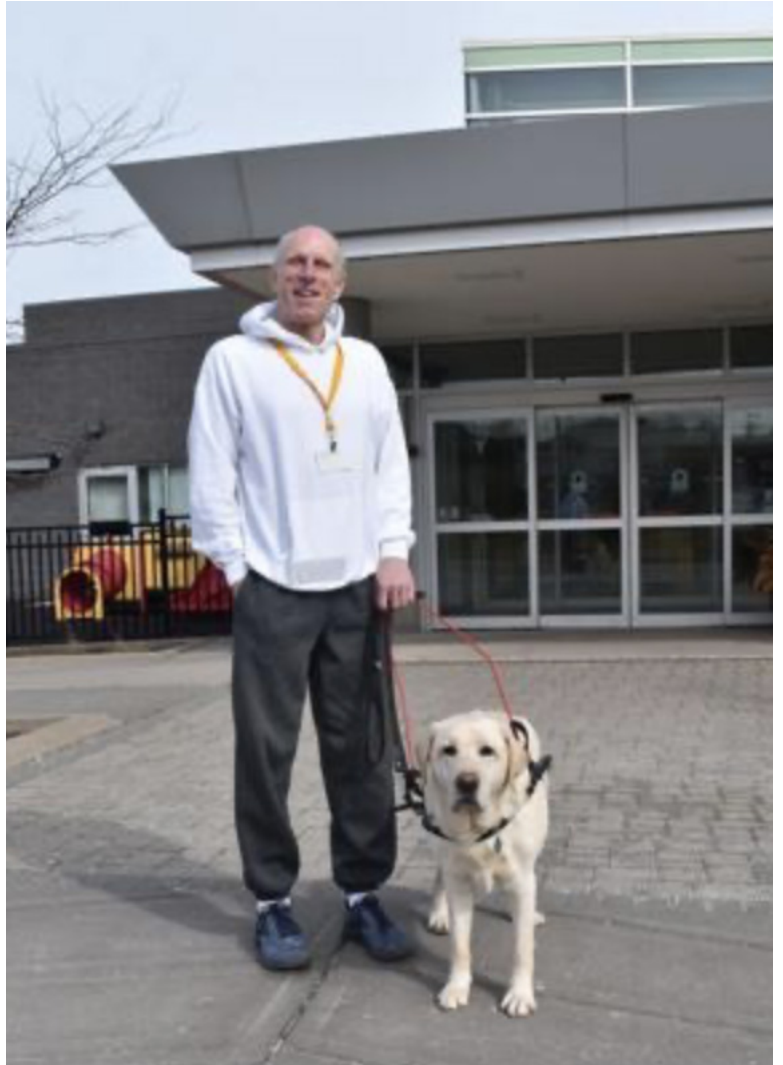
With your support, we can make this vision a reality. Help us build the future of Dog Guides by donating today: [www.dogguides.com/thedifference](http://www.dogguides.com/thedifference)

# Celebrating Stephen Barker's Story in Niagara This Week

Stephen Barker, a recipient of one of our Canine Vision Dog Guides, was recently featured in Niagara This Week! His journey with his Dog Guide, Austin, highlights the independence and confidence these specially trained dogs provide to individuals with disabilities.

Stephen, who is visually impaired, shares how his life changed after receiving his first Dog Guide in 2008. Before then, he struggled with isolation, but his Dog Guides have given him the freedom to navigate the world safely. Austin, his third Dog Guide and one of our Canine Vision Dog Guides, helps him with daily tasks like locating doors, avoiding obstacles, and stopping for safety.

Stephen also advocates for The Difference, our national fundraising campaign supporting the construction of a new Dog Guide training facility in Oakville. This expansion will allow us to train and place more life-changing Dog Guides at no cost to Canadians in need.



We are so proud of Stephen and his dedication to giving back to our mission!

Want to read more about Stephen's journey? Check out the full article in [Niagara This Week](#) and join us in celebrating the incredible bond between Dog Guides and their handlers!



## Graduate Corner

On April 1st, LFCDG will proudly celebrate another in-person graduation, recognizing the teams who completed our Hearing, Service and Juvenile Diabetes Alert programs.

Congratulations to all! It's inspiring to see these new partnerships take their next steps, and we look forward to the positive impact they will have.

Check out our [YouTube page](#) to watch past graduations and stay tuned for this month's graduation ceremony upload!

## Volunteer Corner

### Day School Volunteers Needed at Our Breslau Facility (Near Guelph)

Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides is seeking dedicated volunteers to support our Dog Guides in training at our Breslau facility.

As a Day School volunteer, you will:

- Provide a loving home for the dogs on weekends and some holidays.
- Drop off and pick up the dog from our training facility Monday to Friday.

This program is perfect for those who can offer a welcoming home in the evenings and on weekends. Not every Dog Guide thrives in a kennel—your home can make a real difference in their journey.

Ready to help? [Learn more](#) and sign up today

# Volunteer Spotlight

## Celebrating 36 Years of Volunteering: Angela & Barrie Watts

Angela and Barrie Watts have been dedicated volunteers with Lions Foundation of Canada Dog Guides since 1988. Their journey began after attending a Dog Guides Open House in 1987, which inspired them to start fostering puppies, beginning with their first, Josie, a black lab.

Since retiring, they've become even more involved, attending events, mentoring puppies, and fundraising with the Green Capes Lions Club. They are passionate supporters of The Difference campaign, which has a meaningful impact on those in need.

Angela also joined the enrichment program, initially in Hearing and now in Diabetic Alert, finding it incredibly rewarding. They value being part of the Dog Guides community, appreciating the supportive staff, amazing dogs, and the chance to make a real difference.

Their most memorable moment? Watching their third puppy graduate with an 11-year-old girl with cerebral palsy, witnessing the incredible bond they formed.

For Angela and Barrie, volunteering with Dog Guides goes beyond fostering—it's about making a lasting impact. They encourage others to join, calling it one of the most rewarding, inspiring, and fulfilling experiences!



# Litter Update

We are pleased to announce the arrival of 10 new LFCDG puppies. Welcome to the Dog Guide world little ones!

**F Litter:** April (black lab) and Kody (golden retriever) – 4 puppies born February 25, 2025 – 1 black male, 1 yellow male, and 2 black females.

**G Litter:** Iko (brindle lab/golden X) and Ollie (golden retriever) – 6 puppies born February 26, 2025 – 3 black males, 1 yellow male, 1 black male, and 1 yellow male.

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)





## La liste d'attente pour Chiens-Guides de Vision canine s'ouvre le 31 mars - Places limitées !

Nous sommes ravis d'annoncer que la liste d'attente pour nos **Chiens-Guides de Vision canine** s'ouvrira le **31 mars** ! Ces incroyables Chiens-Guides apportent un soutien qui change la vie des Canadiens âgés de 14 ans et plus qui sont aveugles, en les aidant à surmonter les obstacles quotidiens tels que les escaliers, les foules et les transports publics. En améliorant la sécurité et en réduisant le stress, un Chien-Guide de Vision canine favorise une plus grande indépendance et confiance pour son maître.

**Avec seulement 10 places disponibles, c'est le moment de préparer votre candidature !**

- **Races disponibles** : Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers et croisés Labrador/Golden Retriever
- **Idéal pour** : les personnes qui se déplacent en toute confiance dans leur communauté

La liste d'attente restera ouverte pendant **deux semaines** (jusqu'au **14 avril**) ou jusqu'à ce que toutes les places soient pourvues.

Un Chien-Guide c'est plus qu'un compagnon : c'est un partenaire dévoué qui vous aide à naviguer dans le monde. En tant que maître-chien principal, vous serez responsable de sa formation, de ses soins et de sa réussite, en établissant un **partenariat solide et durable**.

Pour en savoir plus, consultez notre trousse de découverte : [Programme de vision canine](#)

Pour obtenir de l'aide concernant le formulaire de manifestation d'intérêt, contactez notre équipe de Service à la clientèle à l'adresse [client-services@dogguides.com](mailto:client-services@dogguides.com).

Ne manquez pas cette occasion de trouver un partenaire qui changera votre vie en vous rendant indépendante !