

Lions support Leader Dogs program

FOR THE FROSTBURG EXPRESS

FROSTBURG — The Frostburg Lions Club, along with other Western Maryland Lions Clubs, continued their support of Leader Dogs for the Blind, raising and donating more than \$5,000 to the organization.

Leader Dogs for the Blind, established in 1939, was created by Michigan Lions to provide a means for blind people to acquire guide dogs. There is no cost to blind clients, as Lions Clubs around the county fund, with other private donations, all aspects of the program.

"It is why we have all those chicken fundraisers," said Frostburg Lions President Bill Munck. "Keeping vision in sight, is our main objective."

Lions from around the region recently gathered in Oakland for a discussion on the Leader Dogs program. Pauline Ulrey, a guide dog user, discussed her experiences, and updated Lions on current happenings with the program.

District Governor Lion Susan Timmons said, "This is one of the many programs Lions totally support. This is a 'from the ground up' independence program."

Frostburg Lion Pat Gormley, who is also vice president of the Cumberland Chapter, National Federation of the Blind, concurred with Timmons and said, "Independence is paramount to success for the sighted, as well as the blind, and this program helps people achieve that independence."

Leader Dogs for the Blind



Frostburg Lions President Bill Munck presents a grant check to Pauline Ulrey, representing Leader Dogs for the Blind. District Governor Susan Timmons receives the Frostburg check.

was founded by three Detroit-area Lions Club members in 1939. The trio led the purchase of an old farmhouse in Rochester Hills, Mich., to house training facilities. Since then, the school has raised, trained and graduated more than 14,000 Leader Dogs.

Leader Dogs for the Blind provides dog guides to people who are blind and visually impaired to enhance their mobility, independence and quality of life. Each year, over 270 students attend the 26-day residential training program and are paired with a dog guide. This can be a life-changing event that opens the doors to independence, safety and self-worth for the students.

Over the years, some 14,000 blind people from virtually every state and dozens of foreign countries have received guide dogs. There is no charge to the individual for training and the dog. Leader Dogs activities are made possible through donations and support from Lions Clubs and Lions International fund.

In addition to fundraising, Frostburg Lions accept direct donation to the Leader Dogs program. Interested people can send a check to the Lions at: Frostburg Lions Club, P.O. Box 371, Frostburg, MD 21532. Checks should be marked guide dog, or Leader Dogs program to ensure that the funds are properly credited.