

Lions Blind & Charity Fund, Inc.
P.O. Box 2011
Buffalo, NY 14226

Chairman's Report 2/23/2005

Dear Member Clubs Presidents and Directors:

It is my pleasure as Chairman to report the status of your Lions Blind & Charity Fund, Inc. (Fund) for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2005.

Most member clubs continue to respond to requests for help assembling appeal packets and opening donations. Continued thanks to the Directors who have been so cooperative in getting Lion volunteers from their club to accomplish these tasks. Due to increased costs, the Executive Committee decided to inform future prospective donors that effective with the next annual appeal, we will only acknowledge donations of \$20.00 and higher.

We continue to support the Upstate New York Transplant Organizations (UNYTS) Annual Community Recognition Dinner as a major sponsor. This event provides us a great venue to present our annual gift to UNYTS and gives us recognition in displays and program booklet. We again invited Member Lions clubs to attend; six clubs were represented this year.

At the 2004 Annual Meeting the Board deliberated on next year's distribution. A decision was made to wait until the 2005 Annual Meeting to decide an appropriate percentage based upon the level of Fund's assets as of 1/31/05. I strongly urge the Board to consider the fact that our donation history continues to mirror that of other charitable organizations. That is the number of donors and donations received continues to decline. Because the financial marketplace remains unsettled, I recommend a conservative approach for this year's distribution; an approach that provides a decent return compared to effort expended, but at the same time conserves the Fund's assets until the financial markets demonstrate a period of sustained growth.

Each year since becoming Fund Chairman I have commented that we achieved progress during the past year. From my perspective this year is no less rewarding. The Executive Committee continued to implement the Board direction to consolidate our assets with the Vanguard Group. A second Board decision, to hold a Planned Giving Seminar, did not occur due to lack of interest from most member clubs. Of course, another notable change was moving the Annual Meeting to a public venue to provide an opportunity for socialization before the business meeting.

The Executive Committee met regularly (8 meetings) over the past year to establish plans for the next fund raising appeal and the day-to-day management of the Fund. Additionally, this group participated in several sessions to assemble appeal packets, record donations and prepare donor acknowledgement letters. It is also fitting to note that each elected officer contributed countless hours of service to the Fund in addition to formal meeting attendance.

Some notable accomplishments since last year's Annual Meeting are:

- Presented \$30,997 donation to UNYTS.
- Mailed 51,600 appeal packets using a "stamp" vs. bulk mail indicia through Compu-Mail.
- Set Fall appeal packet mailing ~ 53,000 for November 2005.
- Mailed personalized appeal letters to over 4,300 donors from past appeal campaigns.
- Mailed personalized "Thank You" letters to all previous donors of \$10.00 or more.
- Responded to approximately 400 calls to the Lions Blind & Charity Fund telephone.
- Maintained a database backup copy stored in Lion Koch's office.

At present there are no pending bequests to the Fund.

During the past year we received the following United Way related donations:

• Combined Federal Campaign of Niagara Frontier	\$403.02
• State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA - code # 571040)	\$692.68
• United Way of Buffalo & Erie County	\$312.13
• State Employees Federated Appeal – Niagara County	<u>\$244.94</u>
Total	\$1,652.77

I respectfully request that all Fund Directors encourage their Club members who are working to donate through the United Way by donor designating the Lions Blind & Charity Fund this coming year. By United Way directive we may promote this type of donation only from Nov. 15 through Aug. 15 of each year.

I urge that Lions who are retired, or who work for companies that don't have a United Way campaign, to respond to our annual appeal as a show of support for the work that we do.

I am proud to have had the opportunity to serve this past year as Chairman, and thankful to the Member Clubs who responded to requests for help in opening returns and preparing appeal packets and thank you letters.

In closing this report I would like to especially note the work of the current Officers of the Fund: Lion Richard Koch, Treasurer; Lion James Martin, Vice-Chairman; and Lion Len Thornton, Secretary. Each has many times this past year taken on tasks that were over and above their normal duties. We owe them a loud Lion's roar and a debt of gratitude for their efforts.

Yours in Lionism,

Lion Tom Reinagel

Lion PDG Thomas H. Reinagel
Chairman, Lions Blind & Charity Fund, Inc.

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Chairman's Report 2/25/2004

Dear Member Clubs, Presidents and Directors:

It is my pleasure as Chairman to report the status of your Lions Blind & Charity Fund, Inc. (Fund) for the fiscal year ending January 31, 2004.

This past year we continued scheduling a single day for appeal packet assembly with great success. The resurgence of interest in helping with this process and also opening donations and preparing donor thank you letters is gratifying. As in recent years, personalized thank you letters were sent to all donors of \$10.00 or more and to anyone making either a memorial or honorarium donation. Thanks to the Directors who have been so cooperative in getting the Lion volunteers necessary to accomplish these tasks.

We continue to support the Upstate New York Transplant Organizations (UNYTS) Annual Community Recognition Dinner as a major sponsor. This event provides us a great venue to present our annual gift to UNYTS and recognition in displays and program booklet. We again invited Member Lions clubs to attend; seven clubs were represented this year.

The Board of Directors at the last Annual Meeting authorized a 5% distribution of the Fund's assets as of 1/31/04. Due to the Fund's conservative investment approach and the improving stock market indices our assets are somewhat better than last year. However, our donation history continues to mirror that of other charitable organizations in that the number of donors continues to decline. I recommend that the Board adopt a 4% distribution for the year ending 1/31/05. This slightly more conservative approach should still generate a regular distribution that is higher than every recent year (except the one authorized for 2004) and reduce the possibility of having to liquidate assets to meet the distribution requirements.

In previous reports I have commented that we achieved progress during the past year. From my perspective this year is no less rewarding, as your officers continue to implement changes we feel are in the best interest of the Fund. We would welcome, a higher level of participation at Executive Committee meetings. These meetings are held at Lion Richard Koch's office on Millersport Highway adjacent to the I-290 (aka Youngman Expressway). Future meeting dates are posted on our website: **LBCFundInc.org**.

Following last year's Annual Meeting an investigation was undertaken to determine what financial impact, if any, there would be to either Southeast Works, or Autistic Services if we were to discontinue contracting with them for packet appeal. Through evaluation of their publicly available financial reports it was determined that our contracts accounted for only a small fraction of 1% of their total income, and thus not detrimental to their operations. It should also be noted that neither Southeast Works nor Autistic Services contacted us to inquire about a continuation of these same contracts.

Our multi-year Directors and Officer Insurance policy ended this past years, and due to changes in the marketplace we were unable to renew this insurance for more an one year at a significantly higher premium. The current policy continues to provide us \$1,000,000 in coverage with a \$1,000 deductible. The premium is \$930.00.

We were also subject to a routine audit by the Internal Revenue Service. The results of the audit revealed that one 990 form had not been filed (rectified as part of the audit), and that we are in substantial compliance and no penalties were assessed.

During the year ending January 31, 2004, the Executive Committee (and other interested Lions) met regularly to establish plans for the next fund raising appeal and the day-to-day management of the Fund. Additionally, this group participated in several sessions to assemble appeal packets, document donations and prepare donor acknowledgement letters. It is also fitting to note that each elected officer contributed countless hours of service to the Fund in addition to formal meeting attendance.

Some notable accomplishments since last year's Annual Meeting are:

- Presented \$20,903 donation to UNYTS to provide stem cell program operating funds and seed money to enhance eye-banking advertising.
- Purchased a multi-year supply of self-adhesive seals from a new vendor.
- Mailed ~ 51,000 appeal packets using a "stamp" vs. bulk mail indicia through Compu-Mail.
- Set Fall appeal packet mailing (~ 50,000) for November 2004.
- Mailed personalized appeal letters to over 3,258 donors from past appeal campaigns.
- Mailed personalized "Thank You" letters to all previous donors of \$10.00 or more.
- Responded to approximately 400 calls to the Lions Blind & Charity Fund telephone.
- Backed up database with a copy located in Lion Koch's office.
- Improved mailing list with added ZIP code information reduced prospect-mailing cost.

I am proud of each of the above accomplishments and most proud of the Member Clubs who responded to requests for help in opening returns and preparing appeal packets and thank you letters.

At present there are no pending bequests to the Fund, but we were notified that the Fund has been named as a beneficiary on a Single Premium Deferred Annuity Account.

During the past year we received the following United Way related donations:

• Combined Federal Campaign of Niagara Frontier	\$255.32
• State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA - code # 571040)	\$878.27
• United Way of Buffalo & Erie County	<u>\$469.22</u>
Total	\$1,602.81

Unfortunately due to decreased donations we are at present unable to meet the United Way Combined Federal Campaign requirements and will see an elimination of funds from this source until we again meet their threshold for participation. I respectfully request that all Fund Directors encourage their Club members to donate through the United Way by donor designating the Lions Blind & Charity Fund this coming year. By United Way directive we may promote this type of donation only from Nov. 15 through Aug. 15 of each year.

In closing this report I would like to especially note the work of the following current Officers of the Fund: Lion Richard Koch, Treasurer; Lion James Martin, Vice-Chairman; and Lion Len Thornton, Secretary. Each has many times this past year taken on tasks that were over and above their normal duties. We owe them a loud Lion's roar and a debt of gratitude for their efforts.

Yours in Lionism,

DG Lion Thomas H. Reinagel
Chairman, Lions Blind & Charity Fund, Inc.