

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

Chairman's Report 2/19/2009

Dear Member Club 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, 2009.

I am pleased to report that most Member Clubs continue to respond to requests to assemble appeal packets and open donations (see Club Activity Summary sheet). Continued thanks to the Club Directors who have been so cooperative in responding to Lion Jim Martin's requests for Lion volunteers to accomplish these tasks.

Our third (of five) \$35,000 payment honoring our \$175,000 pledge to the Upstate New York Transplant Services (UNYTS) Transformations Capital Campaign was presented to CEO Lion Mark Simon on November 28th. The occasion was UNYTS Annual Board Installation / Recognition event held at the Westwood Country Club.

At our 2008 Annual Meeting, the Directors voted to distribute 4% of the Fund's assets to the Member Clubs. Unlike recent years there was some discussion regarding the distribution percentage; ultimately all but one of the Board Members present voted to make this distribution recognizing that it would result in a decrease in the Fund's assets. We continue to act as responsible fiduciaries of the Fund's assets for future generations of Lions and continuing support of the Eye Banking portion of UNYTS. This has been a difficult challenge and charge given the current state of the US economy, and unfortunately the year ahead appears just as daunting. Later this evening we will discuss this year's distribution amount for Member Clubs.

Each year since becoming Chairman, I have reported that the Executive Committee has made changes we believe have the possibility of both increasing potential donor generosity and maintaining our Lions presence in the WNY community. I feel that we again achieved those goals this past year. For example: we seeded a "Fund post-it" pad in over 2,500 letters to entice greater donations and hopefully new donors; we actively participated in the UNYTS "Bear Open" fundraiser giving us the opportunity to talk with a number of other community leaders about our organization; we again sent a follow up letter to previous donors who had not responded prior to our second opening in January. Secretary Lion Len Thornton will report the results of these initiatives during his report. Other changes related to our fundraising operation were sending a thank you letter to all donors of \$5.00 or more; and enclosing another envelope for a subsequent donation if the donor so chooses. For the coming year we will investigate the use of a one-piece mailer that will dramatically reduce our prospecting expenses.

The Executive Committee continues to meet regularly throughout the year to review plans for our annual appeal and the day-to-day management of the Fund. Your officers also participated in several sessions to assemble appeal packets, record donations and prepare donor acknowledgement letters. Each elected officer contributed many hours of service to the Fund in addition to formal meeting attendance.

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

- Presented \$35,000 donation to UNYTS as third payment on our \$175,000 pledge.
- Mailed 2500 Lions Blind & Charity Fund self-adhesive note pads, 2,000 to repeat high donors and 500 to a select group of prospective donors.
- Mailed 488 appeal packets using first-class postage to previous "high donors".
- Mailed 237 follow up letters to unresponsive previous "high donors".
- Set Fall appeal mailing of approximately 50,000 packets for November 2009.
- Mailed personalized appeal letters to over 2,339 donors from past appeal campaigns and all Lions of our Member Clubs.
- Mailed over 42,177 prospect appeals with personalized salutations and captioned photos.
- Mailed personalized "Thank You" letters to all donors of \$5.00 or more.
- Responded to hundreds of calls to the Lions Blind & Charity Fund telephone.
- Maintained a database backup stored in Lion Koch's office.
- Officers completed a "Conflict of Interest" form indicating what financial involvement they have as a vendor to the Fund. This is an annual requirement.
- Initiated conversation with UNYTS regarding Fund recognition plaque in UNYTS Lobby.

During this past year we received notice of the following bequest:

- Theodore J. Syzdek Residuary Beneficiary \$16,113.47 Received

During this past year we received notice of the following annuity bequest:

- Janet Tober Annuitant \$32,591.67 Received

United Way donations received for the year ending 1/31/2009 were:

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| • State Employees Federated Appeal (SEFA - code # 571040) | \$ 724.51 |
| • United Way of Buffalo & Erie County | <u>\$ 120.08</u> |
| Total | \$ 844.59 |

I am proud to have served as your Chairman this past year, and thankful to the Lions of the Member Clubs who responded to requests to help open returns, prepare 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 PDG Thomas H. Reinagel
Chairman, Lions Blind & Charity Fund, Inc.