

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

**Chairman's Report 2/17/2011**

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, 2011.

I am pleased to report that most Member Clubs continue to respond to requests to help assemble appeal packets and open donations and I thank them for their help (see attached Club Activity Summary sheet). I hope that in the future **clubs with lesser participation** will recognize their responsibility to share not only in the charitable distributions, but also in the work it takes to generate these resources.

Our fifth (and final) \$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 30, 2010. The occasion was UNYTS Annual Board Installation / Recognition event held at Rich Renaissance.

At our 2010 Annual Meeting the Directors, after considerable discussion, voted to distribute 4% of the Fund's assets to the Member Clubs. This is the third year in which the majority of Directors opted to continue a higher distribution than the Fund derived from contributions and income generated from capital appreciation and dividends. It is incumbent on us (Officers and Directors) 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 United States economy. While the current financial picture is brighter, there is no guarantee what the year-end results will be. Later this evening we will discuss and vote on 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. Perhaps the most significant change this year was the inauguration of offering donors the option of giving via credit card. We will monitor this option to determine if it is cost-effective, as there are fixed costs associated with credit card donations and extra office work as well. This year only minor changes were made in the mailing. However, with the Williamsville Lions Club closing, this year's mailing to prospective donors included the entire Williamsville 14221 ZIP code. In the past we only mailed to certain carrier routes within the town to respect the Williamsville Lions geographic service area. Lion Len Thornton will provide more details of this initiative in his report.

The Executive Committee continues to meet regularly throughout the year to plan for our annual appeal and the day-to-day management of the Fund. This past year has been especially busy as an Ad Hoc Finance Committee was formed and many meetings held to discuss a possible change in the manner in which the Fund's assets are invested and managed. A letter was sent to all Member Club Presidents and Directors asking for names of firms that should be included in our Request For Proposal (RFP) mailing. A total of nine firms responded to our RFP and four of these were selected for in-depth interviews. The Executive Committee recently voted to at least

temporarily delay a change from the current Vanguard management. All firms who responded to the RFP were formally thanked for their time and interest in assisting the Fund. Additionally your officers 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:**

- Received a refund of \$185 from the United States Postal Service after successfully arguing that their charge was inappropriate as we had met their mailing requirements.
- Presented \$35,000 donation to UNYTS as the final payment of our \$175,000 pledge.
- Mailed **215** appeal packets to previous "high donors".
- Mailed **318** follow up letters to unresponsive previous "high donors".
- Set Fall appeal mailing of approximately 50,000 packets for November 2011.
- Mailed personalized appeal letters to over **2,403** donors from past appeal campaigns and all Lions of our Member Clubs.
- Mailed **671** personalized "Thank You" letters to new and repeat donors.
- Responded to over 300 calls to the Lions Blind & Charity Fund telephone.
- Officers completed a "Conflict of Interest" form indicating any financial involvement they have as a vendor to the Fund. This is an annual requirement.

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

- Marilyn F. Conway \$2,000.00 Status - Pending

United Way donations received for the year ending 1/31/2011 were:

• State Employees Federated Appeal	\$ 1,330.09
• <b>United Way of Niagara County</b>	<u>\$ 36.21</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,366.30</b>

As a result of sharing Member Club donation histories, in order for the Fund to recognize Lions who elect to donate through the United Way, two things must occur: first the donor must request the Fund to be notified of the donation by sharing the donor's name and secondly, because the Officers do not personally know the name of every Lion in every Club, Lions who donate in this fashion must also personally advise the Fund of their gift.

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 Tom*

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