

Lions' school gets boost from Georgetown

The Lions Club of Georgetown has become substantially involved in one of the order's "most dramatic and best-known service activities" by contributing \$500 to the Leader Dog School for the Blind.

Georgetown chapter president Al Martin made the formal donation on the club's behalf to Jim Astles of the Meadowvale Lions, who serves as leader dog chairman in this area, at the club's dinner meeting last Tuesday.

Conceived by three Detroit area Lions several years ago, the Leader Dog School in Rochester, Michigan, has become one of the largest and finest dog guide schools in the world.

Lions have contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to Leader Dogs and have made it one of their major projects. Last year, Lions contributed \$1,054,688, with the Lions of Ontario, Quebec and Labrador contributing 21 per cent of the total.

Although the cost of training and matching a Leader Dog is approximately \$4,500, there is absolutely no cost to the applicant. Classes always start on a Sunday and run for four weeks. Any person is eligible who cannot see well enough to travel safely, is in good health, over the age of 16, emotionally stable, of good moral character and able to walk several miles per day at a fairly brisk pace.

The Leader Dog School offers its services through the Lions of all Provinces and States. The Lions of Georgetown are no exception and are proud to be able to contribute to such a worthy cause. Should anyone know of a blind person desiring to become independent, please contact any member of Lions or write to: Lions, P.O. Box 73, Georgetown, Ontario, L7G 4T2.

The whole enterprise began with great courage in 1939, during an era of slow economic recovery following the depression, when the Detroit Lions purchased an old farmhouse which today still stands in the multi-million dollar complex adjacent to an estimated 45 per cent of the blind population of the United States. The school continually adds to its annual graduation output.

During the early years of operation, very few people graduated. In fiscal 1978, there were 254 Leader Dog Team graduates who were able to go out into the world to live a life of independence, despite blindness. Since its inception, more than 5,000 Leader Dogs and graduates have passed through its doors.

During the past 40 years,

Bachelor Defined
A bachelor is a man who not only has bad habits, but is allowed to enjoy them. An optimist, on the other hand, is a bridegroom who thinks he has no bad habits.



Lion chief Al Martin, right, presented a cheque on behalf of the Georgetown Lions Club to Jim Astles, past president of the Lions Club, District All, who is a representative of the Leader Dog School. The school trains blind people with guide dogs to give them more mobility. The local Lions Club says it would be happy to sponsor any local blind people to attend the school and to pay for a seeing eye dog for them.

(Herald photo)

Viet refugees expected to arrive at any time

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald staff writer

After months of uncertainty, area sponsor groups awaiting the arrival of Vietnamese refugees expect to hear further news any day.

Although no one is giving specific dates, government spokesman contacted about the delay have indicated that more "boat people" can be expected to start arriving within a matter of days, according to several would-be sponsors who attended Wednesday's Operation Lifeline meeting, in Georgetown's St. John's United Church.

Members of groups awaiting the arrival of sponsored families were warned that they may get very short notice. A member of one Georgetown group which has already greeted its family said they had

been told they would be given a month's preparation time; in reality, it turned out to be four days.

Details about the family can be sketchy, the spokesman said, and also inaccurate.

Arlene Bruce of the Acton Lifeline group said that they were told the man in their refugee family was a truck driver. When they talked to him through an interpreter, however, they discovered he was really a truck mechanic.

Work and a knowledge of English seem to be the priorities for refugees who have already arrived, one sponsor said. Indications at this time are that the refugees want very badly to integrate with Halton Hills residents and become part of the community.

NO SPECIAL
Children attending local schools are getting no special treatment according to Karen Ferguson. The two boys in the family which her groups sponsored are simply attending classes with other children and are not receiving any special language lessons.

Don Whilam commented on Tom Whilam's special English classes for the refugee families and invited other

groups to send their families to the classes when they arrive.

"Tom said if anyone in the area wants to plug a new person into his class, give him a call," Mr. Long said. The number is 877-7203.

The Acton sponsor group is bringing refugee adults to an English course being offered in Georgetown High School on a weekly basis. Apart from that, various members of the committee are visiting the family each evening for an hour or so, trying to teach them working language, time and temperatures, and other basic information they need from day to day.

Mr. Long invited other groups to visit the warehouse where his group has stored items left over from their family. The refugees are welcome to anything they can use and can take their pick from the mountain of clothes which has also been collected.

CHECK-UPS
Mrs. Ferguson warned prospective sponsors to ensure that their family is thoroughly checked by a doctor upon arrival. Considering the unsanitary conditions in which many of them have lived in Asian refugee camps, it is

almost inevitable that they will have lice or skin conditions which require treatment, she said. While these things are easily treated, if they are not caught, children could start an epidemic at school.

Mr. Long warned prospective sponsors not to be shy about asking for help interpreting. A person he has met through Operation Lifeline said she began stopping people on the street asking if they spoke a particular Oriental language when she faced an emergency one time. She has eight interpreters who have stayed with the groups as a result of this sort of contact.

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SPECIAL NOTE
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