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AFTER SIX DAYS, SIX CONTESTANTS REMAIN LIVING AS CHAINED DOGS IN UNIQUE PENNSYLVANIA CONTEST

11 Contestants Began Living Chained July 1st; July 6, 6 Remain

Altoona, PA—Dogs Deserve Better, a nonprofit working to bring dogs into the home and family, continues its first-ever Chain Off Contest at Leidy Park in Mundys Corner, Pennsylvania approximately 1 hour east of Pittsburgh. Of the 15 people slated to compete, 10 showed up, plus an alternate for a total of 11.

Contestants from Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, Florida, South Carolina, and New York converged on the little town of Mundys Corner, PA to begin a contest like no other. They are living chained to doghouses until only one remains, up to a period of two weeks. They are competing to survive the boredom of this life . . . no books, TV, radio, smoking, or even visitors, except for members of the press. For only 1/2 hour each day they may see family members or call home, reach out for some semblance of normality. They are allowed the bare minimum in hygiene, no showers or baths, but only cleanliness routines undertaken within the confines of four tiny port-a-john walls. They are stripped of all the comforts we take so much for granted: in their place, they receive only a chain, a collar, water, food, doghouse, sleeping bag, and shade.

A night of heavy rain knocked out two contestants July 4th, Jacob Pittman from Cape Coral, Florida, and Shawn Fox of LaJose, Pennsylvania. Jacob, around 1:00 a.m., just as the first inch of rain fell, decided enough was enough; Shawn Fox endured 4 more hours, lasting until 5:00 a.m. Fox felt his lack of familial support really hurt him--he could see everyone else talking, laughing, with family during visiting half hour, but he rarely had that interaction to buoy him up.

Don McKendree, the only contestant with a chained dog at his home, seems to have undergone a metamorphosis in his feelings on chaining a dog. He writes in his journal: "My pen is a low area, and it doesn't drain. Last night was the roughest night--it seems when you get wet and it continues to rain [there are] lots of mixed emotions--I could imagine the torture dogs must go through when people chain them outside. Sure, you can feed them, water them, and talk to them occasionally...but I'm talking about the feelings a dog has to go through but are unable to communicate. I sure am having a difficult time. I have been and done a lot of difficult things in my life, but being tied (chained) to a doghouse has got to be the roughest. Stripped of human communication ability sure puts things into the proper perspective. Let's unchain our dogs."

To view photos, excerpts from all contestant journals, and vote for the People's Choice Award Winner, go to <http://www.dogsdeservebetter.com/chainoffday5-6.html>.

Dogs Deserve Better is a 501c3 nonprofit organization headquartered in Tipton, Pennsylvania, is the 2003 First Place Winner of the ASPCA Pet Protector Award, and currently has 141 area reps in 37 states as well as in Canada and Australia.