



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO THE PRESS

November 30, 2004

### **Nonprofit Calls for Dog Caretakers to Bring Their Animals in as Temperatures Drop; Dusty, one Dog Rescued from the PA Cold**

Contact Person: Tammy Grimes, 814.941.7447, Fax 814.742.8679  
E-mail [Tammy@dogsdeservebetter.org](mailto:Tammy@dogsdeservebetter.org)

Dogs Deserve Better, an organization devoted to bringing man's best friend into the home and family, has launched it's winter campaign urging all caretakers to bring their dogs in from the cold.

A dog who is left outside at this time of year is subject not only to loneliness, fleas, worms, a lack of food, water, and exercise, but also to intense cold, numbing wind, frozen water, and blowing snow in northern states.

Tammy Grimes, founder of Dogs Deserve Better, states "Dogs are pack animals who need to feel part of the family, and that means being physically close to humans, especially in cold weather. It is at best neglectful to chain a dog for life, but in the frigid winter months, neglect becomes the ultimate form of cruelty."

Dogs Deserve Better urges everyone to raise awareness for dogs living outside in frigid conditions today. DDB helps with housetraining, and even assists with fencing for dogs brought into the home as funds are available. They also foster and find new inside homes when possible, and encourage all volunteers to work for improved laws for the dogs in their community.

Grimes tells the story of Dusty, a dog recently saved from the extremely cold PA winter temperatures, and whose photos and story can also be found at this link: <http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org/dustysuccess.html>

"I got the call about Dusty on a Friday evening. I don't often go out to see a dog immediately anymore, since we receive so many calls, both for our local PA area and across the country. Our normal pattern is to send a letter and see if anything good comes of it first.

But since I would be doing a booth in his area on Saturday, and since his plight sounded so dire, I told the anonymous caller that I would stop by Dusty's home in Houtzdale, PA the next day.

With the weather turning so cold, I felt ill thinking of him, and all the dogs who live chained and penned, without a warm bed to sleep in or food and water in their tummies. Even getting ONE off those chains or out of that pen helps me feel like I'm making some small difference.

I was told that he was just a puppy, a black lab mix, and his chain was completely wrapped up in cords from a rug. He could barely move, had only about three feet of space, and he had no food or water anytime he was checked on.

At the booth I spoke with both the dog warden and the local spca, in case I needed to make a report that week. I wanted to know where to send the photos, and hope that help was there if need be.

When I got to Dusty's home, he was there alone...I left information and a note for his caretaker to call me before Monday. Then I turned to assess Dusty, who was just left of the door where I'd been knocking. I wanted to document the case really well, as I've learned over time that photos are our best chance of getting help for the dog. He was a sad sight, although his coat was shiny and he appeared to be an otherwise healthy puppy. The conditions he lived in were downright shameful!

A doorless shed, affixed to the house, full of garbage, tools, and other various sundries was his home. I immediately wondered how he could possibly fit anywhere. His chain was indeed wrapped through the cords as I was told, bundling up so greatly I feared there was not much chance of getting it undone. His empty dog dish sat behind him, atop a green pronged rake laying along the floor.

I gave him some biscuits so he'd know I was his friend, and then I set to work trying to get some of the cords out of his chain so that he could move a little freer, have even one more foot of room.

Somehow in my work with his chain, I set him free (I swear it was an accident!) and next thing I knew he was off and running. I thought, "Oh, no, I'm in trouble now!" There had been at least two neighbors out there eyeing me up, and I knew they'd probably taken my license plate in case they needed to report any evil-doing on my part. If that puppy ran off, I would certainly be hearing about it, and not in a good way.

However, to my surprise and relief, the poor little guy just ran up to my Dogs Deserve Better-covered-van and sat by the door, under the sign, waiting to get in. As if to say, "this sign IS about me, right?"

It was the hardest thing I've ever done, leading him back by his choke collar and chaining him up again. Everything in me screamed, "No, don't do that to him! He's trusting you to help him, and you're just putting him back."

I replaced him on the chain, and I hunkered down and hugged him with all that I had to let him know I was sorry. He leaned up against me as if to say, "Please help me. Don't leave me."

I left heartbroken, with a sole-full of doggy-doo to remember him by on the drive home.

I was determined to get him out of that situation! I knew it was already cold out, and it was only going to get worse. A sense of urgency grabbed me. When Monday came and there was no phone call, I took further action.

I sent a letter to his caretaker, with some of the photos I'd taken, pointing out that I wanted to help with the dog, but I would be forced to turn these photos over to the authorities if I didn't receive a phone call by Monday. I also pointed out that there were several violations of animal cruelty law in these photos...a too-short chain, no real shelter, and no visible water.

I got the call the next day.

I talked with her, a single mother, about the options we have available. I had mailed her the action form, so she was already familiar with it. We discussed fencing and giving him up to rescue. She was torn, because she knew her kids wanted their puppy, but she was at school and work about 12 hours a day. It was just too much for her to deal with a dog right now, and she knew it.

I made an appointment with her for Friday at 4:00 p.m. to take Dusty into the Dogs Deserve Better foster program. By signing the action form, she was also agreeing not to chain or pen any more dogs for life. Each and every time this form is signed my heart sings with joy, for that's one less person who will ever chain or pen a dog again. And one less dog out in the cold tonight."

To get posters or for more information please go to the website at: <http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org>

Tammy Sneath Grimes, Founder  
Dogs Deserve Better: No Chains!  
First Prize Winner, ASPCA Pet Protector Contest  
<<http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org>>  
P.O. Box 23, Tipton, PA 16684  
1.877.636.1408 • 814.941.7447