



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO THE PRESS

NONPROFIT DELIVERS VALENTINES TO 5277 DOGS IN ITS 4TH ANNUAL HAVE A HEART FOR CHAINED DOGS WEEK, FEBRUARY 7-14, 2006

Dogs Deserve Better, a nonprofit working to bring dogs out of the backyard into the home and family, delivered a total of 5277 Valentines, treat coupons, and brochures to chained and penned dogs nationwide and in Canada the week of February 7-14th, exceeding its goal by 777 Valentines. Valentines went to every state in the nation except Alaska, Mississippi, North Dakota, and Nevada. Pennsylvania dogs received the most valentines, with a total of 1290, followed by Ohio with 422, and then North Carolina and Indiana with 391 and 327 respectively.

The campaign serves as an education tool and reminder both for those who created Valentines and those who receive the Valentines as to the proper way to care for the family dog.

Preparations for the event started in early January, when the group sent out a press release and e-mail requesting help from students and other groups to make Valentines for the project. Tammy Grimes, founder of DDB, states, "We were thrilled to see an overwhelming response to our plea this year! We received a total of 5,971 Valentines from 119 different groups and individuals, along with some tremendously touching letters, such as this one from Jessica Smith of Illinois, who wrote: 'I work with chemically dependent males age 12-18, and I thought making Valentines for Dogs Deserve Better would be a wonderful way for them to tie in service work to their treatment...'"

Another letter came from Brenda Trojanoski, Connecticut: "We are a 4-H group that loves dogs. We get together at least once a month to train our dogs and learn how to help them live happier lives. We all think it's mean and cruel to chain up your dog, and we think it shouldn't happen. Each Valentine was hand made by us, and begs with the dog's owners to bring their dogs in. We know you will pass along these Valentines to the dogs who need them most."

Of the packages of valentines mailed to Dogs Deserve Better, 30 of the 119 came from school classes, 9 from other school youth clubs or groups, 7 from area reps, 5 from scout troops/4-H groups, 3 from adult facilities, 3 from families, 2 from humane groups, 1 from a church group, 1 from a corporate group, and 58 from individuals.

Valentines came in from 33 states, with the most coming from Pennsylvania, where 16 groups or individuals participated. New York was a close second with 11, and New Jersey was third with 8 groups or individuals participating each. We also received valentines from volunteers or groups in Connecticut, Virginia, Georgia, Washington, Illinois, Arizona, Oregon, Tennessee, Massachusetts, Kentucky, North Carolina, West Virginia, Maryland, South Carolina, Texas, Missouri, Florida, California, Ohio, Alabama, Mississippi, Nevada, Oklahoma, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kentucky, New Hampshire, Maine, Michigan, and Maine.

58 Area Reps across the country contributed addresses to the campaign, and the group held a contest in which the top 5 reps received a DDB item of their choice from the Dogs Deserve Better store, while the top two reps are to be featured in the next newsletter. Robin Maisel of North Carolina won first place, with a total of 93 addresses contributed; Shari Strader of North Carolina won second place with a total of 64 addresses contributed. Christy Dotson of Ohio, Sandy Lynn of Missouri, and Marie Belanger of Indiana all won DDB items as well for their excellent efforts.

So far, as a direct result of the campaign, the organization has provided funding for 2 fences, and is working on other cases who've asked for help either in fencing or rehoming dogs. They've also received several reports from concerned citizens that dogs near them are no longer chained in the yard.

A photo synopsis of the event is available for viewing on the website at www.dogsdeservebetter.org.

Dogs Deserve Better, the 2003 First Place Winner of the ASPCA Pet Protector Award, currently has 115 area reps in 30 states as well as two in Canada and one in Australia.

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