



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE TO THE PRESS

July 16, 2006

Contact: Tammy S. Grimes • founder, **Dogs Deserve Better** • [www.dogsdeservebetter.org](http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org)  
P.O. Box 23, Tipton, PA 16684 • 1.877.636.1408 • 814.941.7447 • Cell 814.207.4586

### **MAN BRINGS FAMILY PET INTO THE HOME TO LIVE AFTER EXPERIENCING 13 DAYS AS A CHAINED DOG**

#### **Pennsylvania Man States "I'll Never Chain My Dog Again"**

Altoona, PA—Dogs Deserve Better, a nonprofit working to bring dogs into the home and family, wrapped up its first-ever Chain Off Contest at Leidy Park in Mundys Corner, Pennsylvania approximately 1 hour east of Pittsburgh. 52-year-old Don McKendree, the only contestant with a chained dog living at home, placed second in the event, and then immediately went home and took his dog Nikki off the chain.

11 people began the contest Saturday, July 1. After nine days, 5 people remained chained, and players voted 3-2 to begin eliminations the next day. 1 person went home in elimination rounds each day until the final playoff Thursday, July, 13. Final elimination rounds pitted 52-year-old Don McKendree, the oldest contestant, against 18-year-old Aija Gillman, the youngest contestant. Aija topped Don by a final score of 9-7 to win the contest and the Chevy Aveo.

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 lived chained to doghouses until only one remained. They competed to survive the boredom of this life . . . no books, TV, radio, smoking, or even visitors. They were allowed the bare minimum in hygiene, only cleanliness routines undertaken within the confines of four tiny port-a-john walls. They were stripped of all comforts: receiving only a chain, a collar, water, food, doghouse, sleeping bag, and shade in their stead.

Don wrote in his journal: "My house is in a low area, and it doesn't drain. 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."

Don allowed the organization and a journalist to document the release of Nikki, and will work with Dogs Deserve Better to install a fence and a doggie door immediately for her. To view photos of Nikki's release, go to <http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org/chainoffday13-14.html>. To interview Mr. McKendree or any of the contestants, please contact the organization at the numbers above.

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.