



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **GROUP SET TO PAIR 10,000 VALENTINES WITH CHAINED DOGS DURING "HAVE A HEART FOR CHAINED DOGS" WEEK, FEB. 7-14**

#### **SEEKS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS, CLUBS, GROUPS, AND INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE VALENTINES FOR DELIVERY TO CHAINED DOGS NATIONWIDE**

Tipton, PA -- January 06, 2008 -- As Valentine's Day approaches, non-profit Dogs Deserve Better is asking for help from dog lovers and others in an unusual direct mail outreach which pairs Valentines created by schoolchildren with America's chained dogs.

Dogs Deserve Better, a national rescue and advocacy group dedicated to ending the suffering endured by perpetually chained dogs, annually sends Valentines and dog treat coupons to chained canines across the country. The group includes a brochure for the dog's caretakers, explaining why the antiquated practice of chaining dogs for their lives is a form of abuse. The materials encourage people to bring their dogs into the home and family or to find better homes for the animals.

By the end of January, the group needs 10,000 addresses for perpetually chained dogs, volunteers to make the Valentines, and donations of coupons for dog treats or dog food.

"Winter is a critical time to reach out directly to the people who chain their dogs, and what better excuse than Valentine's Day to send these forgotten animals a little love," says Tammy Grimes, founder and director of the five-year-old non-profit. "Every winter our rescuers see dogs that have frozen in the snow, suffered frostbite, or otherwise endured horrific living conditions because of the longstanding misperception that it is appropriate to chain a dog outside in any kind of weather."

"This is the perfect opportunity for people who pass chained dogs every day, or who live next door to these poor animals, but feel powerless to make a difference," continues Grimes. "People can anonymously provide us with the addresses of these dogs, or perhaps make a batch of Valentines, and we do the rest."

Dogs Deserve Better sees success stories every year from its grassroots direct mail campaign. "Of course, we get angry calls from people who are mired in habit or tradition and don't see anything wrong with chaining a dog for 10 or 15 years. However, on the flip side, we always learn of situations where the recipients of our Valentines take the opportunity to think about the suffering they are causing and either bring the dog inside or find the dog a better home."

The creation of the Valentines is an ideal project for schools, scouting troops, and other similar organizations. "Children have a natural affinity for animals and they enjoy making art projects," says Grimes, an artist herself.

Although the practice of 24/7 chaining is pervasive in many parts of the country, especially in rural areas, states and cities have, in recent years, started to pass laws against the practice. California passed a law in 2006 and Texas followed suit in 2007. Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and South Carolina are among the states currently considering laws that would put reasonable limits on how long a dog may be chained outdoors.

Hundreds of cities have passed, or are considering, similar legislation.

Meanwhile, countless "backyard dogs" are spending yet another winter in the cold. Often, they shiver day and night in leaky, uninsulated doghouses, suffer from thirst because their water is frozen, and pace neurotically from lack of exercise and attention. Perpetually chained dogs can become aggressive or insane from their constant confinement, often posing a danger to people.

Dogs Deserve Better provides a variety of services to people who agree to take their dogs off their chains, including providing help with socialization, housetraining, and fencing.

For more information about the Valentine's Day outreach, go to <http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org/Valentines2008.html> or email [info@dogsdeservebetter.org](mailto:info@dogsdeservebetter.org).

Valentines, addresses and donations can be sent to: P.O. Box 23, Tipton, Pennsylvania 16684.

For general information about Dogs Deserve Better go to [www.dogsdeservebetter.org](http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org).

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Note: For hi-resolution photos, please visit the site at <http://www.dogsdeservebetter.org/Valentines2008.html>.