

For further information  
Contact  
Chris Cline  
Communications Director  
Tele: 573/522-1118  
Direct FAX: 573/751-4099  
P.O. Box 236  
Jefferson City MO 65102



*For Immediate Release...*

## *Corrections News*

April 4, 2011

### **Puppies for Parole celebrates 250<sup>th</sup> dog adoption milestone**

On February 1, 2010, the Department of Corrections (DOC) launched the Puppies for Parole Program at Jefferson City Correctional Center. Since its inception, Puppies for Parole has spread to 13 institutions. A 1-year-old female Border Collie named Faith is the program's 250<sup>th</sup> adoption.

Faith's life prior to Puppies for Parole could be described as "rocky" at best. The Texas County Animal Shelter received Faith from a man who pulled up in a truck and said he had a dog he no longer wanted. When the staff at the shelter informed him that they would check and see whether they had space for Faith at the shelter, he immediately informed the staff that if they did not take the dog that he would shoot her and leave her to die. Faith showed signs of abuse and was very skittish, especially around men.

On January 28, 2011, Faith arrived at South Central Correctional Center (SCCC) in Licking for training. Offender handlers were charged with the task of rehabilitating Faith. The two handlers said they used a lot of positive reinforcement to earn Faith's trust.

The hard work and patience paid off as Faith passed the Canine Good Citizenship Test on March 2. She was adopted by SCCC Institutional Activities Coordinator Tina Holland. Holland said Faith is "smart as a tack" and that she fell in love with the dog while watching her go through the Puppies for Parole training.

"My daughter actually saw her and immediately wanted her," Holland said. "Faith is the type of dog who just wants to please her owner."

Puppies for Parole is the result of the DOC's partnerships with animal shelters and animal advocate groups throughout the state. The program pairs rescued dogs with offenders at prisons.

The dogs' training consists of a two-month period in which they learn verbal commands and general obedience. The offenders and the dogs go through the rehabilitative process together. The culmination of the training is the graduation ceremony at the end of the program, during which time the dogs are administered a Canine Good Citizenship Test they must pass.

Puppies for Parole does not receive state funding and is supported by donations only. In 2010, Puppies for Parole received the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity.

For more information about Puppies for Parole or the 250<sup>th</sup> adoption, visit [http://doc.mo.gov/division/dai/puppies\\_250.php](http://doc.mo.gov/division/dai/puppies_250.php).

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