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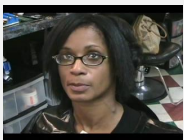


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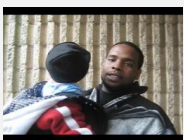
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Volunteers give soldiers' dogs a home

Perry County's Paw Prints cares for pets while personnel are away

Monday, November 10, 2008

BY ELLEN LYON

Of The Patriot-News

In the Canine Corps at Paw Prints Dog Sanctuary, the dog faces are real but the military decorum is a little lax.

The only member of this 12-dog corps with a military bearing is Zulu, and that's only because he's an English bulldog.

Zulu belongs to a member of the Pennsylvania National Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade, which recently left for training in Camp Shelby, Miss., before heading to Iraq in January.

Canine Corps members bunk at Paw Prints because their owners are Pennsylvania military personnel on deployment elsewhere. The owners include Army, Navy and National Guard members, although you'll see no inter-service rivalry among their dogs, unless there's a chew toy at stake.

The nonprofit sanctuary, on five acres in rural Spring Twp., Perry County, also houses senior dogs from rescue groups that need homes.

Paw Prints guarantees service members with dogs in the Canine Corps that their best buddies will be well cared for, free of charge, until they return. Animals divide their time between playing rambunctiously and snoozing on blanket-covered couches.

That's a great relief to Lt. Rob Krohn of the Stryker Brigade. He left two Labrador retrievers, Laykhen and Kradynce, with the Canine Corps.

"Those dogs mean more to me than just about anything. They're my babies," Krohn said. He jokingly worries that they will be so spoiled at Paw Prints they won't want to leave when he returns.

All of the current corps dogs belong to single service members who didn't have other options for their dogs' care, sanctuary co-founder Laurie Lyon said. "Our rule is they must exhaust all other resources because we have such limited space," she said.

Capt. Ryan Quinn, the director of the state family program for the Pennsylvania National Guard, said the Canine Corps is "a saving grace" for soldiers who have to leave behind dogs and don't have family or friends who can care for them.

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