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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WVMA Convention Raffle Proceeds Benefit R.E.A.D. Program

The Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association (WVMA) along with the Wisconsin Veterinary Practice Managers Association, Wisconsin Veterinary Technicians Association, and the Fox Valley Humane Society were able to raise over $2,600 for the Reading Education Assistance (R.E.A.D.) program in Wisconsin.

Intermountain Therapy Animals of Utah launched R.E.A.D. in 1999 as the first comprehensive literacy program built around the idea of reading to dogs, and the program has been spreading ever since. The R.E.A.D. program has been offered in Wisconsin since 2004.

The mission of the R.E.A.D. program is to improve the literacy skills of children through the assistance of registered therapy teams as literacy mentors.

The R.E.A.D. program improves children's reading and communication skills by employing a powerful method: reading to a dog. But not just any dog. R.E.A.D. utilizes registered therapy animals that have been trained and tested for health, safety, appropriate skills and temperament. R.E.A.D. dogs volunteer with their handler as a team, going to schools, libraries and many other settings as reading companions for children.

The handler provides support while the child gets the supervised reading practice necessary to build vocabulary, increase understanding of the material, and gain fluency as a reader. Participating children make enormous strides in reading and communication skills while, along the way, building self-esteem, confidence, and social skills.

Today, thousands of registered R.E.A.D. teams work throughout the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, and beyond.

The R.E.A.D. dogs in Wisconsin will receive the remarkable donations raised at the WVMA Annual Convention, held on October 20-23 at the Monona Terrace in Madison.

For more information on the R.E.A.D. program, visit www.therapyanimals.org.

The mission of the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association is to advocate and promote veterinary medicine, while enriching animal and human health. Founded in 1915, The Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association has nearly 2,300 members.

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