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Select Dog Breeds Banned from Marine Corps Bases *What Servicemen and Women Can Do To Keep Their Pets*

San Diego, Calif., Sept. 19, 2009 – The most decorated canine war hero in United States history was a pit bull, but now this breed is no longer welcome on Marine Corps installations. The rule, which was signed Aug. 11, 2009, prohibits purebred and mixed breed pit bulls, Rottweilers and canid/wolf hybrids aboard Marine Corps installations.

Residents who already own one of these breeds were given 60 days to apply for and meet the guidelines of the “grandfather” clause waiver. The waiver is only open to currently registered dogs and would only apply until Sept. 30, 2012. To meet the waiver’s provisions, owners must receive approval for the waiver from the local installation commander, and the dog must pass a “nationally-recognized temperament test, administered and interpreted by individual(s) who have been certified in technique and evaluation of the test results, at the service member resident’s expense. Such tests include Canine Good Citizen (AKC) and the Delta Test (Delta Society).”

Local trainers are offering additional classes and discounted classes to help dogs prepare for passing the Canine Good Citizen test, a 10-part test that includes accepting a friendly stranger, sitting politely for petting, walking on a loose lead, walking through a crowd, sit and down on command and staying in place, coming when called, reaction to another dog and to distraction.

This new ban will likely place further strain on shelters that are already at capacity from the housing and economic crisis. With the 60-day deadline fast approaching (Oct. 11), Pit Bull Rescue San Diego (PBRSD) encourages pit bull and Rottweiler owners living on Marine Corps installations to work to obtain the waiver and can provide trainer recommendations. PBRSD also has a list of pit-friendly housing in San Diego should a family choose to live off base with their dog(s).

Unfortunately, breed-specific legislation is a growing trend across the country. Respected organizations, including the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), the ASPCA and the Center for Disease Control, are against breed-specific legislation because it is not effective in solving issues with dangerous dogs. HSUS states: “While breed is one factor that contributes to a dog’s temperament, it alone cannot be used to predict whether a dog may pose a danger to his or her community. ... Communities that have banned specific breeds have discovered that it has not been the easy answer they thought it would be. ... If the goal is to offer communities better protection from dogs who are dangerous, then thoughtful legislation that addresses responsible dog keeping is in order. Legislation aimed at punishing the owner of the dog rather than punishing the dog is far more effective in reducing the number of dog bites and attacks. Well enforced, non-breed-specific laws offer an effective and fair solution to the problem of dangerous dogs in all communities.”

ABOUT PIT BULL RESCUE SAN DIEGO:

Pit Bull Rescue San Diego is a volunteer run, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (ID#20-3957702) devoted to rescuing, rehabilitating and re-homing pit bulls in San Diego area shelters, educating the public on responsible pet ownership, and advocating against the inhumane activity of dogfighting and the unethical practice of backyard breeding. Since its inception in 2004, PBRSD has saved more than 300 dogs that are now happily living as family pets.