



**PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet Reaches Milestone

June 9, 2017 – CHAMBERSBURG, PA – In a milestone event for Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet yesterday, the Franklin County Commissioners transferred ownership of the first two certified service dogs to local veterans.

Designed to help veterans with service-connected disabilities lead happier and more productive lives, the outreach program matches Franklin County veterans with service dogs. Many of the dogs are rescued from local shelters.

"The service dogs are making a tremendous difference in the lives of their new owners, and we are thrilled to be able to provide this valuable service to local veterans," said Commissioner Dave Keller, Board Chairman. "We are very grateful for the outpouring of support from the community, which has helped to make this program possible," Keller added. The service dog program has been funded almost exclusively by donations from individuals, businesses and service organizations in Franklin County, as well as grants from the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

The dogs complete a rigorous three-phase training program. After training, the dogs are evaluated for certification. Once certification is obtained, ownership of the dog is turned over to the Veteran.

Three dogs from Operation Save-A-Vet, Save-A-Pet were certified as service dogs on April 18, 2017. At the Commissioners meeting on Thursday, two of the certified service dogs were transferred over to Franklin County veterans. Alex Reed received Turk, a certified service dog, and Kenneth Hadley received Jango, a certified service dog.

It is expected that the certified service dog will work for between six and 10 years before they are retired. At that time the veteran may choose to keep the dog or apply for a new service dog.

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