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Man's best friend: Antidote for body and soul

Dog stories illustrate mental, emotional benefits of pet companionship

COS COB, Conn. - Fido's food, vet check-ups and pet-sitting fees can add up to a hefty cost for many dog owners. In fact, the American Kennel Club reports U.S. households on average spend \$2500 per year on the family dog. But even in an economic recession, canine lovers spare no expense when it comes to taking care of their dogs, finding the emotional and mental health benefits that come from dog companionship still outweigh the costs.

And, according to research, investing in canine companionship is a wise choice. A recent SUNY Buffalo study shows that living with pets offers certain health benefits - lower blood pressure, reduced cholesterol levels, less anxiety and boosted immunity [source: The National Center for Infectious Diseases].

Chicken Soup for the Soul: *Loving Our Dogs* (Chicken Soup for the Soul, July 2008, \$14.95, paperback), shares stories that illustrate how man's best friend is not only good for the body, but also good for the soul. In addition, it is part of the new "101 Best Stories" series by the new publisher of Chicken Soup for the Soul books. With refreshed cover designs and interior layouts, books in the "101 Best Stories" series offer the Editor's favorite tales and poems submitted in the 15-year history of Chicken Soup for the Soul, reflecting the brand's excitement and energy on this memorable anniversary.

Divided into sections ranging from "Bringing Out the Best in Us" to "Support Dogs," Chicken Soup for the Soul: *Loving Our Dogs* offers real-life accounts of heroic pups who brought their owners back from the brink. The original stories - like George Salpietro's, a husband and father struck with blindness in midlife - inspire readers to experience the unconditional love and trust animal companions can bring into their lives.

In just one of many amazing true-life stories in this collection, Salpietro shares how a canine saved him from the dangers of living in the dark, offering honest and painful moments about his loss of control. "I put my trust in Karl and let him be my eyes...I knew we had a long way to go, but I felt reborn as trust became more important than fear."

Inside *Loving Our Dogs*, readers will also read about:

- The harrowing tale of a decorated dog who aided the Allies in the invasion of Nazi Europe
- Widow Carren Strock's pet who brought her back to life after her husband's unexpected death
- Pets who have pets too: Bullet, the retired racehorse who shared his snacks with Lucy, a malnourished stray
- Bobby, the tender-hearted homeless man who gave his last \$10 so his lab found a good home

Chicken Soup for the Soul: Loving Our Dogs (Jack Canfield, Mark Victor Hansen and Amy Newmark) releases July 2008. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing, LLC, publishes all the latest titles in the famous Chicken Soup for the Soul book series which are distributed through Simon and Schuster, Inc. Since 1993, books in the Chicken Soup for the Soul series have sold over 112 million copies, with titles translated into over 40 languages. Chicken Soup for the Soul Publishing also licenses the right to use its famous trademark to high quality licensees through IMG, the world's premier licensing agent. The company is currently implementing a plan to expand into all media, is working with TV networks on several TV shows and is developing a major Internet presence dedicated to life improvement, emotional support and inspiration. In 2007, *USA Today* named *Chicken Soup for the Soul* one of the five most memorable and impactful books in the last quarter century. For more information visit: www.chickensoup.com.

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To request a review copy or excerpt of *Chicken Soup for the Soul: Loving Our Dogs*, please contact Elizabeth McCurry at (512) 478-2028 ext. 245 or emccurry@phenixpublicity.com.