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## NEWS RELEASE

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## **STUDENTS DONATE ANIMAL RESUSCITATION MASKS**

Thanks to elementary school students in Allentown, city EMS Bureau personnel are better equipped to save the life of a household pet.

Lehigh Parkway Elementary School Principal Betty Shankweiler presented EMS Bureau Manager David Van Allen with eight sets of animal oxygen masks in various sizes today to be used to resuscitate dogs and cats at fire scenes. The masks were purchased with funds raised by Lehigh Parkway Elementary students. The presentation was made at an assembly in the school's auditorium.

Van Allen and EMS Bureau Operations Supervisor Joel Calarco appeared at the school last month to teach students about animal safety in fires and how paramedics can assist injured pets. They used a stuffed dog to demonstrate how the oxygen masks are applied.

"We are grateful to all the students who worked to raise the funds for the masks," said Van Allen. "We will now have a set of masks on every ambulance and squad vehicle. Those masks will fit from a small bunny to a large dog," he added.

The students raised more than \$900 by dropping contributions into coin boxes marked "Have a Heart for Animals." The boxes were placed in every classroom and in the main office. The balance of the funds will be donated to Animals in Distress along with other



animal supply needs like food, blankets and litter.

“We lead with our hearts at Lehigh Parkway, we really do,” commented Shankweiler. “We do what we believe is right for our students, and the community, and that includes animals. This whole project started with a series of events kicked off by the Allentown Dog Training Club, and we will end it with a therapy dog demonstrating how the resuscitation masks are used. We will also be holding a stuffed animal drawing that we can select winners from the large pool of donors to this project.”

For over 30 years, Allentown paramedics have provided around-the-clock emergency medical services to city residents and visitors. The city’s 29 fulltime and 15 part time paramedics respond to more than 15,000 emergency 9-1-1 calls each year. They staff up to four Advanced Life Support ambulances during the day responding to calls for heart attacks, traffic accidents and other medical and trauma emergencies.

City paramedics often accept invitations to speak on various safety topics at school and other youth functions.

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