

**2012 Pedaling4Paws to benefit local SPCAs and animal shelters
in Pennsylvania and New York**
“Ride Locally, Donate Locally, Benefit Locally”

WEST CHESTER, PA – On Tuesday June 19th at 8:00 a.m., cyclists leave West Chester Pennsylvania for a 500-mile trip through 7 counties in Pennsylvania and 5 counties in New York, and arrive at the Canadian border in Ogdensburg, New York on the afternoon of June 23rd. The ride benefits SPCAs and other animal rescue organizations located along the route.

In what started as an idea to ride a bike to the Canadian border, Mike Van Ryn and Viktor Ohnjec, members of the West Chester Cycling Club cycled the same route in late June 2009. They didn't plan to make the ride a charity event but Mike's brother offered to contribute \$1 per mile to the Chester County SPCA. From that point forward the ride took on a life of its own. Word spread to the local community and donations started to come in. By September, the Chester County SPCA was presented with checks totaling over \$2000 from the money collected on behalf of the ride. Pedaling4Paws (P4P) became well documented as local newspapers contacted the riders for articles about the journey. In addition to the articles, riders regularly posted pictures and comments to a blog to share the days' events with followers. During the 2010 event, media coverage had grown to 6 television stations, 6 newspapers and 5 radio interviews and the donation size had grown to over \$5000 raised and 100% donated to the participating SPCAs/shelters.

In 2011, Pedaling4Paws, had a donation goal of \$10,000 – and we are proud to announce we exceeded our goal by raising nearly \$11,000! All proceeds went directly to local SPCAs/shelters on the route. This year our goal is \$15,000. With the help of online donation capabilities from those local SPCA/shelters, promotion of the event by local groups and participation in the ride by members of local bicycle clubs, the 2012 ride expects to draw significantly more riders and donations. The theme “Ride Locally, Donate Locally, Benefit Locally” describes the ride philosophy well.

Says Van Ryn, “In 2011 are plan was to increase awareness and participation through increased community support. Our goal in 2012 is to continue to grow the ride and promote awareness of our cause all the while raising money for the shelters along our route. Our ridership has grown significantly when compared to previous years. We feel this is a direct result of the support we've received from both the cycling community and animal lovers in PA and NY.”

Viktor Ohnjec notes, “We've seen great interest through local sponsors to help us collect locally through their stores and their community outreach. There's no question that Pedaling4Paws is gaining visibility, popularity and support and we thank everyone involved for making that possible!”

Through word of mouth, the Pedaling4Paws organizers have been approached by other cyclists, both in PA and NY, who have expressed interest in riding all or portions of the ride. Says Ohnjec, “We have contacts with local cycling clubs along our route and businesses but recognize that we can always do more.”

For more information about Pedaling4Paws, the SPCAs/shelters the cause supports, the route itself, past media coverage and the past blogs, please visit:

<http://www.pedaling4paws.org>

*or contact:
organizers@pedaling4paws.org*