

## Terrier Mix Receives National Hero Dog Award

**Los Angeles SPCA presents 27th annual award to dog who saved family.**

Posted: May 21, 2009, 5 a.m. EDT

A terrier mix named Miley who was taken in by a family who found her on the railroad tracks in Van Buren, Ark., has been honored as a hero dog for saving her owners from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Stacie Pitts and her dog are a prime example of the human-animal bond, said Madeline Bernstein, president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles. The spcaLA presented Miley with the 27th Annual National Hero Dog Award at a ceremony Tuesday, May 19, at Staples Center's Star Plaza in Los Angeles, Calif. Giving this award each year, Bernstein said, offers a pleasant change from working on cases of cruelty to animals.

Miley with owner Stacie Pitts and Madeline Bernstein, president of spcaLAMiley was this year's award winner for her achievements as a companion animal who is not formally trained for rescues or law enforcement. On Dec. 7, 2008, the 19-pound dog woke Pitts in the middle of the night, and kept insisting for her to get up. When she finally listened to her dog, Pitts said she felt sick.

Pitts woke the rest of her family and they had the same symptoms: nausea and a severe headache. They called 911 and the family was rushed to the hospital, where doctors said that each had high levels of carbon monoxide.

The dog did not show any ill effects from carbon monoxide poisoning. As for the family, doctors said they could have died or suffered brain damage had they stayed in the house for five minutes longer.

"Treating your pet with love and respect can be returned by amazing heroic acts by companion animals," Bernstein said. "Carbon monoxide is odorless and colorless, yet Miley either knew she didn't feel well, or sensed that her owner, Stacie wasn't well."

At Tuesday's ceremony, Miley was given a plaque recognizing her deed, as well as a gift basket full of treats and dog food courtesy of Natura Pet Products. The company also will donate a year's supply of dog food for Miley, something her owner said will come as a big help.