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MEDIA RELEASE **Iowa State Penitentiary**

March 28th 2017 – Fort Madison, IA. Iowa State Penitentiary recently adopted two dogs from PAWS – the no-kill animal shelter in Fort Madison.

There are other prisons in Iowa that have dog programs, each allows for pet-friendly interactions with offenders. Although, each prison has slightly different anticipated outcomes from the programs, all agree the contact has a positive effect on the population.

The two dogs, that are now calling ISP home, are aptly named Thelma and Louise. Thelma, a 6 year old America Eskimo, and Louise, an 8 year old Jack Russell, both reside in Housing Unit 4. Housing Unit 4 is a medical/assisted living unit that houses 21 offenders who require some level of day-to-day care or assistance.

The offenders have taken an immediate interest in Thelma and Louise. You can find the dogs sitting contently with the offenders while watching TV or during a game of cards.

Designated offenders are responsible for walking the dogs outside and ensuring there is proper food and water for the duo. Funds generated by the offenders themselves are being used to pay for food and other pet related expenses, no state funds are used.

“We are really excited that shelter dogs were chosen to be companions for the offenders.” Said Sandy Brown, PAWS Director.

The mission of the Iowa Department of Corrections is:
To advance successful offender reentry to protect the public, staff and offenders from victimization.

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