

Student-Organized Dog Walk Raises Money For SPCA

[By Eliza Hallabeck](#)

This past Saturday, November 5, humans and canines alike walked in an event organized by Middle Gate fourth graders Maddie Stites and Kylie Giroux to raise money for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) on the Fairfield Hills Campus.

"I think it went really well. I was really worried people wouldn't come because of the power outage and people were out of town, but a lot of people came," said Maddie.

Maddie and Kylie also held a bake sale this past summer that raised \$140 for the cause.

Before the event, Maddie said she hoped to raise \$250 through holding the Walk for Dogs in Newtown, and event ended up bringing in more than \$400, according to Maddie's mother, Jennifer Stites.



Kylie Giroux (left) and Maddie Stites at the Walk for Dogs on Saturday, November 5. The Middle Gate fourth graders organized the event to raise money for the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Maddie said she wanted to thank the Newtown Youth Academy for allowing the walk on their property after a last-minute change in the location for the walk.

"People can still donate, even if they couldn't make it to the walk," said Maddie, adding the website, www.wix.com/walkfordogs/walk-for-dogs, created for her and Kylie's Walk for Dogs is still offering information for people interested in donating to the SPCA.

The event raised money for SPCA's no-kill shelter in Connecticut that serves Newtown, Trumbull, and Monroe.

Before the event both Kylie and Maddie said Maddie's dogs were an inspiration for both the walk and for the bake sale over the summer. Merry, a Rottweiler mix and a Hurricane Katrina rescue dog, and Sunny, a full flat coat retriever and also a rescue dog through SPCA, made both girls want to give back to the SPCA.

"We really like the SPCA," said Kylie, "and after [Tropical Storm Irene] we really wanted to help."

The girls asked walkers attending the event to donate \$5 to the organization.

Helpful support for the 1.6-mile walk came from the Newtown Parks and Recreation Department, The Meat House, Canine Advocates of Newtown, Starbucks, Panera Bread, Divine Dogs, the Newtown Youth Academy, Your Healthy Pet, Middle Gate teacher Heidi Beauty and other teachers, Middle Gate Principal Chris Geissler, and more, according to Ms Stites.

Maddie also said her younger sister Abby's Brownie Troop 50591 donated money.