

## University students raise money for dogs

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**Assistance dog trainer Sharon Raugutt and Gunnie, 2, were presented with a check of over \$2,000 from Liz Conmy's public relations class at Minnesota State University Moorhead on Tuesday afternoon. The class of 19 sold over 400 quarts of pickles, right, in a campaign called "Pickles for Paws." The money generated by the campaign will be used for the Great Plains Assistance Dogs Foundation.  
Jay Pickthorn / The Forum**

Assistance dog trainer Sharon Raugutt was tickled Tuesday to find out that pickles were going to help build a roof for her dog shelter.

Raugutt, who works with 20 assistance dogs at the Great Plains Assistance Dogs Foundation in Jud, N.D., received that help from a Minnesota State University Moorhead communications class.

Students sold \$2,267.75 worth of pickles in a campaign they dubbed "Pickles for Paws," donating the money to the foundation.

“Every penny is incredibly valuable,” Raugutt said. “I had no idea the class was going to do this. It touched my heart.”

When the 19 students in Liz Conmy’s public relations class heard about the needs of the foundation – such as a roof replacement, a laptop computer for presentations and dog blankets – they started a marketing campaign that sold nearly 480 jars of pickles.

“Is that not bizarre?” Conmy asked. “They heard I had these pickles sitting in my living room and they said, ‘We could sell them for the dogs.’”

“Pickle money keeps coming in,” Conmy said.

Raugutt visited the class in November seeking help with a public relations campaign.

The nonprofit association helps physically challenged individuals gain greater independence through the help of trained and certified assistance dogs.

The spring semester’s class will pick up the public relations project.

“(The marketing campaign) wasn’t quite what we were supposed to do,” said senior Carrie Hubbard. “But it didn’t really feel like a project after a while. We were doing it for more than that.”

Armed with more than 400 quarts of pickles, the students set out on a labeling and selling adventure. The jars sold for \$5 a piece.

By the time the students presented Raugutt with the fruits of their endeavor – and a sampling of the pickles – only five jars remained.

“They fell in love with the dogs and the program,” Conmy said. “They so took it and ran with it.”

For Hubbard, it was a learning experience she’ll never forget.

“Every little bit counts – even with pickles,” she said.