

# A personal thank you

After three stories published this past week in The News Herald, emotions running at an all-time high, e-mails and letters flying back and forth on both sides of the spectrum, everyone probably thinks this column will be about those articles and those animals that led to the stories. But it won't.

This column is about a New York born and bred gal who settled down in a small city called Morganton and found out that, yes, there are some mighty good people around, even today in a time of political unrest, when the cost of living is out of control, when unemployment



## Generations

Peg DeMarco

looms in every walk of life, when the sense of family is in a crisis more prevalent than ever in our history and with simple things like buying a loaf of bread at double the price faces all of us daily as we do the best to live our lives.

My father was born in Brooklyn, N.Y., and told me often not to trust anyone. He told me to keep my cards close to my chest as I played my hand in the game of life, never put on paper something that I didn't truly believe and that it was wise to have only one or two good friends but plenty of acquaintances. He lived a tough life as a snow-white, blond little boy in a tough, all-Italian neighborhood, but after a few tussles, little "Whitey" was accepted, albeit not as quickly as he would have liked.

Those beliefs are difficult to pierce after living a life of close to 61 years, but the good people who I've come into contact with during the past few months have done wonders for me. I think that even my father would have to admit that good people are everywhere — you just have to find them.

And I have right here in the city of Morganton, the county of Burke and surrounding counties as well, the state of North Carolina and in other parts of the U.S. as people have contacted me simply because they shared a love of animals. As a result, I think it's time to publicly say something that may have been left unsaid while I and the others who traveled with me to Washington were so busy preparing and getting our trip done: Thank you.

Each one of you who signed your name to one of the endorsement sheets asking our legislators to enact new legislation stopping puppy mills and strengthening laws against dog fighting made a difference. There were names of people from all walks of life — businesses, fire departments, police agencies, humane societies, animal control facilities, veterinarians and many who just simply signed their names. It seemed like a quick motion on your part, but it was so much more — it was action, support and compassion for animals that have no voice. Each one of your names was one pearl stitch in the fabric of humanity. Thank you.

And for the 350 of you who sent e-mails, wow. Such passion. Many of you wrote such heartfelt comments that I couldn't just stick copies of your e-mails into the binders and not mention them. As we met with each legislative staffer I reminded them to please read each e-mail even though the binder is 5 inches

PLEASE SEE THANKS, A10

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## THANKS: Peg DeMarco many thanks to her readers

FROM PAGE A7

thick. I hope they did. I did. And I'm glad there are people like you in the world who share such a love for animals and what they bring to our lives. Thank you.

because they saw an animal suffering, thank you.

And for Marie and Les who traveled with me in 98-degree heat and hiked the 5-mile walk around to each legislative building carrying three heavy binders, thank you.

you. You know who you are and so do I.

And for the one volunteer at the shelter who said to me recently, "I enjoy your column, Peg. Please keep it coming. I shared your pain when you wrote about shoes," thank