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Green Acres to Host Screening of the Documentary *Tough Love: A Meditation on Dominance and Dogs* on February 9th

For Immediate Release

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[***Bangor***]— Green Acres Kennel Shop will be hosting the first Maine screening of the new documentary *Tough Love: A Meditation on Dominance and Dogs* on Saturday, February 9th at 2PM. Seating is limited so please pre-register by calling us at 945-6841.

It's a commonly accepted idea that dogs are "man's best friend." We give them a special place in our lives and they are, in turn, loyal companions. At the same time, many modern dog owners also believe that they are meant to establish themselves as the "alpha dog" in relation to their pets. This is a status supposedly achieved through attitudes and acts of domination, varying by emphasis on physical restraint and disciplinary "correction."

Yet the notion that cherished "best friends" should strictly obey our will is something of a paradox. How can we reconcile feelings of respect and even love with expectations of submission and compliance? Is there a valid and compelling justification for establishing dominance over our dogs? Does our claim to that power follow from fixed biological facts? Is it warranted by the nature of dogs and what we are to them through a shared evolutionary history? Is dominance a "tough love," something dogs actually want and need?

Since its advent in the 1940s, wildlife biologists have significantly revised the original "alpha wolf" theory and related ideas about wolf pack structure, including the claim that pack hierarchy rests on frequent aggressive displays. Likewise, they have dismissed the idea that dogs are merely domesticated wolves, so that to understand the one is to understand the other. This scientific shake-up seems to leave us on somewhat tenuous grounds for dealing with our dogs as if we were their alpha, gaining their obedience through domination. Still, millions of people continue using the "alpha dog" concept to order their relationships with their pets.

Tough Love confronts the current disconnect between science and popular practice by putting "alpha dog" in historical perspective. It begins with a look at the early wolf studies and the appropriation of that science by dog trainers and the general public. It ends with an assessment of contemporary dog training and rehabilitation, focusing particularly on disagreement between advocates of physical correction and proponents of exclusive reliance on food rewards and other "positive reinforcement."

Director, Cinematographer, and Co-Editor: Chad Montrie
Editor: Nathan Hendrie
Music: Matthew Sowersby and Michael Coelho

For more information contact Chad Montrie (cmontrie@gmail.com)

In business since 1965, Green Acres Kennel Shop at 1653 Union Street is a Pet Care Services Association (PCSA) accredited facility offering boarding, daycare and grooming for dogs and cats, as well as pet behavior consultations and training classes. Voted Best Kennel every year since 2002, Best Pet Store every year since 2007, and Best Dog Trainer every year since 2011, the Green Acres retail store offers a wide variety of wholesome pet foods, treats and quality supplies. For more information, please call 945-6841 or visit www.greenacreskennel.com.