

BOZRAH

# Fire department gets pet respirators

## Ryan's Fund donation can help dogs, cats, calves

By **EMILY GROVES**  
egroves@norwichbulletin.com  
(860) 774-5569

Bozrah Volunteer Fire Department Chief Tom Main and Rescue Lt. Sandy Nordgren remember the efforts to save pets injured in a March 2007 fire on Fitchville Road.

Main said firemen tried to provide oxygen to the injured cats and dogs using the firefighters' oxygen pack, but it was a struggle because

the machines aren't designed for animals. Four cats and a dog died in the fire, but at least three were saved.

So when Nordgren heard of an effort to donate pet respirators to first responders he checked it out. Ryan's Fund, a memorial for Ryan Ramirez, who died in a December 2002 car crash in Hebron, is providing the funding for the respirators.

"Pets are almost like family members to people," Main

said. "So this gives us an added piece of equipment to help the community."

Sherry Chapman, Ramirez's mother and leader of the donation effort, presented the department with two pet respirators Saturday.

The respirators include several masks of different sizes, which Chapman said can fit birds, cats, dogs and even small calves.

Main said Lisbon Veteri-

nary Clinic donated a pet respirator to the department after the 2007 fire, so now it has three. He said they will be stored on the ambulance, rescue truck and service truck.

Chapman, of Hartford, said she decided to start the effort after a friend lost some pets in a fire several years ago. She said the donated respirators were funded largely by Coventry-based MarkITelligence.

"Fires are so tragic and when you lose a pet in a fire, it compounds the tragedy,"



EMILY GROVES/NORWICH BULLETIN

**Sandy Nordgren and Sherry Chapman hold newly donated pet respirators in front of Ann Chambers' dogs, Zeke and Ruger. Also pictured are, from left, Carolyn Pryor, Mike Gordon and Michael Chapman.**

Chapman said.

She said she would like to donate more pet respirators to other first responders and will try to meet any need in Connecticut.

### Who to call

**First responders** interested in obtaining pet respirators can call Michael and Sherry Chapman at **(860) 742-8933**.