

EMERGENCY COVERED

A top agility handler has designed an emergency dog rescue card to help owners who regularly travel with their pets.

Wendy Clay, of Racingredd Agility, in Lincolnshire, has developed ICE (In case of emergency) cards, which allow owners to fill in contact names and numbers to inform breakdown providers and emergency services of what should happen to their dogs in the event of an emergency.

The idea came to Wendy after she broke down on the M5 for more than three hours while her dogs were in her van.

"After getting myself and my dogs on the embankment to safety, I had plenty of time to really think about the hazards of travelling the country with dogs," said Wendy.

"My van is custom caged for my eight dogs, so when the breakdown truck arrived, although I wasn't

happy about my dogs being in the van on a flatbed recovery vehicle, at least I knew they were safe.

"Imagine how different this scene would be if I had been involved in an accident rather than a breakdown.

"I wondered what would happen to my dogs if I was taken to hospital, and whether the breakdown provider would still be prepared to move my vehicle with my dogs inside without me there, and what would happen to them if they did.

"There were far too many unanswered questions. This made me determined to design something for friends, family, and my agility club members to have in their vehicles."

Wendy has now taken the idea a step further, designing a card that all dog owners can keep in their vehicles for peace of mind.

For further information visit www.racingreddagility.co.uk



CHARITY BEGINS...



Op helps paralysed Staffie to walk again

A paralysed Staffordshire Bull Terrier has regained her mobility following a major operation by Blue Cross.

Eight-year-old Missie suffered a slip disc which became so severe that she could no longer stand.

She needed major surgery but the procedure is rarely carried out — and had never before been performed by Blue Cross — on a dog of her size and type.

The surgery at Blue Cross Animal Hospital in Victoria, London, took three hours. Missie's owner Jane Dixon was warned that even if her dog pulled through, the operation might not be successful.

Following a wait of several weeks post surgery, Missie finally stood by herself for the first time. She had been having intensive physiotherapy and using a sling, harness, and dog boots to help build up her strength. She is now able to walk unaided.

Jane, who believed Missie would never be able to walk again, said: "I have no idea what caused the injury but Missie was getting worse and worse — it was just horrible."

Nigel Smith, Blue Cross vet, said: "It's more commonly performed on smaller dogs, like Dachshunds. Staffies like Missie have broader backs and a lot of muscle before you reach the spinal cord which makes the operation much more challenging."

THE BEST DOG WALK IN THE SOUTH WEST

A walk which encompasses rare coastal grassland, wild flowers, and stunning views has been voted the best for dogs in south-west England.

Bolberry Down in South Devon, which is managed by the National Trust, was chosen by walkers on the South West Coast Path National Trail.

The route has long been a favourite among dog owners for its easily accessible network of paths, rare coastal grassland and flowers, and numerous viewpoints and benches where you can sit and admire the coastal views.

The winning voter was owner Tracy James, from the Wirral. She said: "This

particular coast path walk offers a great opportunity to let my Beagle, Indy, off the lead at Soar Mill Cove to have a good scamper on the sand and go for a splash in the sea.

"The views are just incredible too — on a clear day you can see as far away as Cornwall."