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SNAKE EYES: ANIMAL PLANET'S DONALD SCHULTZ ROLLS THE DICE IN 10-DAY VEGAS EVENT WITH 100 DEADLY SNAKES

-- Animal Adventurer and Host of WILD RECON to Spend 24/7 in Glass Box with 100 Snakes on the Las Vegas Strip to Raise Awareness for Global Snakebite Victims --

-- January 17-26 Event at O'Sheas Casino to be filmed for Television Special to Air February 9 --

(New York, New York, January 12, 2010) -- Animal adventurer and venom expert Donald Schultz has traveled worldwide to collect venom and DNA from rare animals for his television series WILD RECON (Tuesdays at 9 PM on Animal Planet). Each week, Donald gets his hands on some of the deadliest animals on the planet: black mambas in South Africa, sea snakes in Australia, and even rampaging elephants in Sri Lanka. But in January, he will face his toughest challenge yet: to spend 10 consecutive days with 100 snakes -- many of them deadly -- in full view of tourists and webcam fans on AnimalPlanet.com around the world. The event -- a special edition of WILD RECON -- will be packaged for the two-hour **VENOM IN VEGAS** airing **Tuesday, February 9 at 8 PM ET/PT**.

From **Sunday, January 17 through Tuesday, January 26, 2010**, in front of the crowds outside of world-famous O'Sheas Casino, Donald will eat, sleep and drink alongside snakes such as pythons, rattlesnakes and cobras. Their shared custom-designed 16' x 20' glass enclosure, complete with a bed and tiny bathroom, will be situated on Las Vegas Boulevard (The Strip) in front of O'Sheas Casino and across from Caesars Palace. The jeopardy increases each day for Donald: he'll start with 50 snakes and have five new ones added daily to reach 100. He won't know which species will be introduced until he opens up each double-bagged snake delivery and discovers a potentially deadly new roommate. Animal Planet will air a daily **VENOM IN VEGAS** on-air updates during the event so viewers can watch Donald's exploits from the comfort -- and safety -- of their living rooms.

But Donald will be doing more than simply existing alongside these dangerous snakes. He'll be working with them hands-on every day, extracting venom that will be shipped around the world so research for venom variation and potential pharmaceutical use can continue. And when he's not milking venomous snakes with his bare hands, he'll be conducting cutting-edge tests to measure, for example, the potency of venom, the depth of fang penetration, and the strike range of the world's fastest snakes, through the use of high-speed cameras.

“Usually what happens in Vegas is supposed to stay in Vegas,” said Marjorie Kaplan, president and general manager of Animal Planet Media. “But we’re hoping this event will slither its way into the headlines. Our goal for **VENOM IN VEGAS** is to get the best marketing and press for these maligned and misunderstood reptiles, and to spotlight the kind of groundbreaking event television viewers can expect from the new Animal Planet.”

“Every year, more than 100,000 snake bite victims die because the antivenom that could save them isn’t available or is in short supply,” noted Schultz. “Not only do I want to raise global awareness of the urgent need for anti-venom in developing countries, I want to push myself and test the boundaries of human/serpentine co-habitation. While this might be an average person’s nightmare, this is truly my dream!”

While there’s no guarantee even a venom veteran like Donald won’t be bitten, Animal Planet has readied a team of world-class experts should something go wrong with Donald or any of the snakes. He’ll be working with Dr. Jeremy Sabatini, a veterinarian with extensive reptile experience; Dr. Sean Bush, envenomation expert and professor of emergency medicine at Loma Linda University; and Dr. Bruce Young, associate professor of biology at Washburn University. While living in the box, Schultz might just manage to squeeze in some fun when some famous guests stop by... And he has a specialized “armored” outfit to give to visitors who might want to get in the box and visit with him and the snakes.

Animal Planet is partnering with the University of Arizona’s Venom Immunochemistry, Pharmacology and Emergency Response Institute (VIPER) on the **VENOM IN VEGAS** event. On AnimalPlanet.com consumers will find links to venom information and be able to donate to VIPER’s research initiatives. After the event, certain snakes and venom will be donated to VIPER, whose affiliated scientists will give them good homes while developing new ways to diagnose and treat snakebites and scorpion stings.

VENOM IN VEGAS is a production of Gurney Productions for Animal Planet. Scott and Deirdre Gurney are the executive producers for Gurney Productions, and Lisa Lucas is the executive producer for Animal Planet. Marc Etkind is vice president of development for Animal Planet.

Animal Planet Media (APM), a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. APM consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 96 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; the 24/7 broadband channel, Animal Planet Beyond; Petfinder.com, the #1 pet-related Web property globally that facilitates pet adoption; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service; mobile content; and merchandising extensions.

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