



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Contact:

Elena Bicker  
925-296-3116  
ebicker@arf.net

### 9-MONTH-OLD PUPPY FINDS HOPE

*Mauled Collie Left to Die – Rescued by Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation*

**WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA** (August 23, 2006) – Most of the dogs and cats who come to Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) are healthy and happy, just waiting for new homes of their own. Perhaps they might need a little extra care, such as a quiet place to give birth and a foster home until everyone is weaned or perhaps they need something more. For Cleo, a badly injured collie - terrier mix puppy rescued by ARF, the Hope Fund was a lifeline.

Cleo's story is hard to imagine. Attacked by dogs and left abandoned on the streets of Richmond, California, she had little chance of surviving her cruel and terrifying ordeal. But through the kindness of strangers and ARF's Hope Fund, this young dog will eventually recover and look forward to a forever home.

It has been a short and frightening journey for this courageous little dog. After Cleo was rescued by a Good Samaritan and rushed to a veterinary hospital, Cleo's future still looked uncertain. The hospital could not keep her, and though the time had come to turn her over to Animal Services, the busy shelter could not provide her the intensive medical attention Cleo would need. Sue Underwood, a volunteer with Animal Services knew that Cleo might not survive in a shelter environment with the chance of infection to an open chest cavity. Determined to save her, Sue called ARF.

Cleo still has many months of surgeries and procedures ahead of her which will incur substantial costs. "Everyone has fallen in love with Cleo and has done everything they can to treat her," explained Elena Bicker, ARF's executive director. "But we had to evaluate her medical care. Cleo will need a lot of patience and a lot of love, but her spirit remains strong. She is very sweet girl".

ARF's Hope Fund was created to help animals that need immediate medical attention. Helping these abandoned animals is an important part of ARF's mission. Although vital medical care may be cost prohibitive, the transformation in the pets is nothing short of a miracle. With the help of a dedicated community, ARF raises funds so pets may receive the love and treatment needed to recover.

"Sometimes you see this kind of abuse and suffering and you have to wonder, do dogs really feel gratitude? Do dogs forgive?," said Tony La Russa, ARF's founder and chairman, "Animals have an amazing capacity for love. We will do everything we can to make sure Cleo has a long and happy life, and we need the support of donations to ensure she has the best possible care."

ARF saves the lives of loving dogs and cats who have run out of time at public shelters. ARF gives another chance at life to dogs and cats who otherwise would have been killed. ARF provides the care and attention they need, including spay or neuter surgery, until ARF finds them a new home of their own.

ARF's People Connect programs strengthen the human animal bond for the elderly; residents of assisted living centers, teens at juvenile hall, high school students, grade school students and young children through programs that are national models of excellence. ARF programs allow people to experience the unconditional love and acceptance of dogs and cats. People rescuing animals...Animals rescuing people...™.

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P.O. Box 30215 • Walnut Creek, California 94598 • 925-256-1ARF • Fax 925-977-9079 • [www.arf.net](http://www.arf.net)