



MEDIA ALERT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INVITATION TO THE NEWS MEDIA:

Reporters and photographers are invited to the inaugural visit of ARF's Pet Hug Pack at San Ramon Regional Medical Center at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, May 24, 2011. The hospital is located at 6001 Norris Canyon Road in San Ramon. Please call Sandra Ryan, Marketing Manager for San Ramon Regional Medical Center, at 925.275.8365 if you plan to attend. She will attempt to arrange for a photograph of a pet visiting a patient.

PET HUG PACK VISITS HOSPITAL PATIENTS

ARF begins animal-assisted therapy at San Ramon Regional Medical Center

WALNUT CREEK, California – May 20, 2011 – Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) is pleased to announce that Pet Hug Pack, ARF's visiting animal program, will begin bimonthly animal-assisted therapy visits to San Ramon Regional Medical Center, beginning May 24.

There are proven health benefits to animal interaction which recipients enjoy by petting or holding a loving cat or dog. Studies show interaction with companion animals lowers blood pressure, reduces anxiety, and otherwise improves one's physical and mental health. In addition, research demonstrates many people who are emotionally "closed down" or unresponsive will often open up in remarkable ways when they are petting an animal.

More than 105 Pet Hug Pack teams make 125 visits each month to 55 facilities in Contra Costa County, California. The teams also participate in educational and community events at ARF and in the surrounding area.

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

ARF's People Connect programs strengthen the human animal bond for the elderly, residents of assisted living centers, 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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