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PRESS RELEASE

For immediate use

SPOKANIMAL SECURES PETFINDER FOUNDATION'S DOGS PLAYING FOR LIFE® GRANT
New Enrichment Program Set to Launch May 1 for Shelter Dogs

Spokane, Wash., – April 25, 2023 – SpokAnimal secured a Dogs Playing For Life® tuition grant from the Petfinder Foundation, which has provided the foundational knowledge necessary for the shelter to launch the canine enrichment program at its play yard. Preparations to officially launch the program May 1 are already underway, with the goal of providing daily playgroups for shelter dogs.

“Dogs Playing For Life is a creative program that provides socialization and enrichment for shelter dogs in the form of structured playgroups and is aimed at improving the live of shelter dogs. It also enables shelter staff to better understand each dog’s personality and share that information with potential adopters, increasing the likelihood that participating dogs find safe and loving homes,” explained Dori Peck, executive director for SpokAnimal.

The Petfinder Foundation’s grant allowed the SpokAnimal’s Certified Dog Trainer, Jen Trouble, to attend Dogs Playing for Life training at Canine Center Florida. This 13-acre, fully-fenced venue is the organization’s first advanced and comprehensive training facility serving un-owned dogs that are struggling behaviorally. During the intensive, 5-day, hands-on training, Trouble learned each step of the program, why it was important, and what’s needed to develop the program further in the future.

To safely implement playgroups requires a team of participants and SpokAnimal had expected to initiate a volunteer recruitment effort after Trouble completed training. Thanks to an unexpected influx of local volunteers experienced with the Dogs Playing For Life program, dogs at SpokAnimal will benefit from the program sooner than originally anticipated. Peck added that new volunteers are still welcome and training is provided.

The remaining need to optimize the program’s impact is an upgrade to SpokAnimal’s play yard fencing. “We really need a 6-foot fence around our yard, but that just isn’t in our budget. While we’d love to find a dog-loving fencing company or two out there that might be will help us out, we’re currently exploring retrofits such as a ‘lean-in’ fence. This would add height to what we have, be a jump deterrent to dogs, and hopefully be more budget-friendly,” Peck stated.

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Attached Photo Caption: Jen Trouble at Canine Center Florida for Dogs Playing for Life training funded by Petfinder Foundation. (Courtesy of Jen Trouble)

About SpokAnimal

SpokAnimal was founded in 1983 and has become Eastern Washington's largest and most cost-effectively operated humane society for pet adoptions. Last year, it found homes for 4,031 animals and, according to its 2021 tax filing, 78% of the organization's income went directly towards programs that benefit shelter and public pets. Over 60 percent of the shelter's intake was from owner-surrendered animals and transfers from the local municipal shelter, SCRAPS. The other portion of animals arrives through its vibrant transport program, which allows it to save pets from areas where overcrowding and euthanizing for space are still unfortunate realities. SpokAnimal's foster program helps it care for fragile and vulnerable animals. Its vet clinic supports both shelter and public pets with spay/neuter services, microchips, vaccines and dentals. Ad hoc care for pets, such wound care, pregnancy complications, and digestive issues, is provided for public pets as staffing and finances allow. The Guardian Angel emergency boarding service and Pet Food Bank are other programs that support the local community. To further enhance animal welfare in the community, partnerships with organizations such as Catholic Charities of Eastern Washington, Sullivan Park Care Center, Spokane Meals on Wheels, Blessings Under the Bridge, Red Cross, Family Promise and Best Friends are core to SpokAnimal's outreach. Those interested in supporting our nonprofit's work can contribute online at www.spokanimal.org.

About Petfinder Foundation

Since 2003, Petfinder Foundation has awarded over \$25 million in cash and product grants to animal shelters and rescue groups. Its team of just three administrators award more than 5,000 grants annually. Its grant recipients include more than 10,000 adoption groups, caring for more than 250,000 homeless pets throughout North America. More details about the group's grants and impact can be found at www.petfinderfoudation.com.