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**PRESS RELEASE**

For immediate use

**THE GREY MUZZLE ORGANIZATION INVESTS IN SPOKANIMAL'S HEARTS AND PAWS PROGRAM**  
*Grant to benefit senior dogs fostered by seniors in skilled nursing at Sullivan Park Care Center*

**Spokane, Wash., July 25, 2023** – SpokAnimal has received an \$11,000 grant from The Grey Muzzle Organization to help more senior dogs get adopted through the shelter's Hearts and Paws program. That program involves seniors living at Sullivan Park Care Center, a Prestige Care Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, fostering and finding a home for, one senior dog at a time.

"When the Hearts and Paws program launched in March of last year, we had no idea that the seniors at Sullivan Park would be so successful at finding homes for senior dogs. When they shared their goal to place 24 senior dogs within a calendar year, we knew we had to find a way to make that happen. We're thrilled that The Grey Muzzle Organization has chosen to help," stated SpokAnimal Executive Director, Dori Peck.

Grey Muzzle's Executive Director Lisa Lunghofer shared, "The mission of our nonprofit is to improve the lives of at-risk senior dogs by providing funding and resources to animal welfare groups. This year, we received 370 applications for funding, and ultimately, we awarded \$848,000 to 90 organizations. We're delighted that SpokAnimal is among those receiving grants. This is the third year in a row they have earned our support for innovative programming such as Hearts and Paws."

"The primary goal of this program is to give Sullivan Park's senior a sense of purpose, placing senior dogs in loving homes is a very close second though." Peck stated. "Shelters can be overwhelming for senior dogs, so it's great to have the Sullivan Park seniors ready and waiting to slather a dog with love until it's adopted. Everyone wins – the seniors, the dogs, and our shelter."

Hearts and Paws dogs must be seven years or older and meet other criteria for size, strength, and disposition. Peck explained that sometimes a dog that looks like it will be a good fit for the program will turn out have too much energy for wheelchair-bound handlers. So, while the goal is to place 24 dogs, as many as 30 dogs may be considered for the program.

Grey Muzzle's support will help cover vet costs associated with getting these dogs ready for adoptions, even if dogs intended for the program turn out not to be a good fit for the Hearts and Paws team. Funding will also help defray SpokAnimal's labor costs for the staff shuttling animals to the care center in Spokane Valley.

The senior foster dogs at Sullivan Park are posted on the center's Facebook page, as well as SpokAnimal's website. Randal, aka Randy, is Sullivan Park's current pooch in search of a place to call home. He's a 12-year old Shepherd mix that residents describe as, "A very good boy. He's very active, yet likes a good nap and is very gentle taking treats." Those interested in learning more about adopting Randal are invited to contact Patty, Sullivan Park's resident adoption counselor, on the adoption hotline at 509-846-3237.

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**Photo caption (Hearts&Paws-July.png):** The Hearts & Paws team at Sullivan Park Skilled Nursing Center celebrate Grey Muzzle grant award with Randal, their current foster dog who's looking for a home. (Residents by name left to right: Kathy, Kathleen, Richard, David, Verl, LaVon, Paulette and Patty.)

### **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, Meals on Wheels Spokane, The Salvation Army (TRAC shelter), The 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](http://www.spokanimal.org).

### **About The Grey Muzzle Organization**

Over the past 15 years, The Grey Muzzle Organization has provided more than \$4.6 million in grants to support its vision of "a world where no old dog dies alone and afraid." The national nonprofit is not a privately endowed foundation; rather, it raises money that is distributed annually via grants. Grey Muzzle supports only programs run by nonprofit animal welfare organizations, rigorously evaluates each organization it supports, and requires accountability. For details, please visit [www.greymuzzle.org](http://www.greymuzzle.org).