



For Immediate Release

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Celebrate National Therapy Animal Day and The Human-Animal Bond, April 30th

Bellevue, WA, (April 18, 2017) – Pet Partners, the nation’s leading organization registering therapy animals for animal assisted interventions, announces April 30th as National Therapy Animal Day and invites others to celebrate the important work of therapy animals across the country. Pet Partners has declared **April 30th each year as National Therapy Animal Day** to celebrate the amazing pets that have wonderful qualities that make them suitable to visit vulnerable populations as a therapy animal. National Therapy Animal Day is a day to thank these animals for the positive impact they have on human health and healing and reward their good work.

“The health benefits of animals have been scientifically proven again and again- from child health and development, to healthy aging, mental health and wellness and more, there are many benefits from interacting with animals even for a brief period of time,” said Annie Peters, President and CEO of Pet Partners. “Emotionally speaking, being in the presence of pets, helps us release those ‘feel good’ hormones, helping us cope with depression and certain stress-related disorders, and just making us overall happier people.”

Many animals can be registered as a therapy animal, not just dogs and cats, including: horses, rabbits, pigs, llamas, guinea pigs, and even rats. Certain characteristics suitable for therapy animal work include:

- Not easily distracted
- Can handle being touched
- Is well-trained to follow simple commands
- Loves attention

Pet Partners registered therapy animal teams assist in their communities on a wide range of circumstances making regular visits at hospitals, schools, businesses and more. Here are some of the work they do:

- At-risk or delinquent youth visits
- Reading programs
- Speech therapy
- Psychotherapy and social work
- Nursing home and hospital visits
- University visits during exams
- Employee wellness work

Visit petpartners.org to view therapy animal team stories and more.

Pet Partners is the national leader in demonstrating and promoting animal-assisted therapy, activities and education. Nearly forty years since the organization’s inception, the science that proves these benefits has become indisputable. Today, Pet Partners is the nation’s largest and most prestigious nonprofit registering handlers of multiple species as volunteer teams providing animal-assisted interventions. For more information about Pet Partners, visit www.petpartners.org