



## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

### **IMPROVING ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE VETERINARY CARE IN SONOMA COUNTY – THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF SONOMA COUNTY RECEIVES \$50,000 GRANT FROM PETSMART CHARITIES®**

**December 22, 2020— SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA**

One of the most common reasons pet owners make the heartbreaking decision to surrender their beloved animals to local shelters is the lack of affordable pet wellness, training and education programs. Due to cost and other barriers, pets in under-resourced communities often do not have access to basic veterinary care such as spay/neuter services, vaccinations, dental care and other essential medical and preventative care.

With a generous \$50,000 grant from [PetSmart Charities](#), the Humane Society of Sonoma County (HSSC) aims to remedy this situation in Sonoma County. These vital funds will help support pets and pet parents in need by providing low- to no-cost veterinary care through their Community Veterinary Clinic (CVC). In addition to their long-standing low-cost spay/neuter clinics, HSSC has been providing critical veterinary care for pet owners who qualify since opening their CVC in February, 2019. Due to economic hardship – exacerbated by years of wildfire displacement and now the pandemic – many Sonoma County pets have not seen a vet in years and often have urgent and advanced conditions as a result. The PetSmart Charities grant will help the CVC provide this long-needed care for an estimated 2,400 owned pets in Sonoma County.

“Since opening our Community Veterinary Clinic last year, we have been overwhelmed by the demand for services,” says Wendy Welling, HSSC’s Executive Director. “And now, as our community continues to face ongoing impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and recent wildfires, the need is greater than ever. We are so honored by PetSmart Charities’ partnership and so grateful for their support, which will enable us to keep more pets healthy and with the families who love them.”

“COVID-19 has deeply affected both people and pets and coupled with one of the most devastating wildfire seasons in history, we know relief efforts are still in need, said Jenny Aho, regional relationship manager at PetSmart Charities. “We are proud to support HSSC’s work to provide critical care during times of uncertainty, when people need their pets the most.” Since 1994, through its partnership with more than 4,000 humane societies, SPCAs and pet rescues across North America, PetSmart Charities has helped more than 9.5 million pets to find loving homes via its in-store adoption program in over 1,650 PetSmart® stores. The leading funder of animal welfare has also donated nearly \$430 million, to positively impact communities, to connect people and pets, to help preserve families and to improve access to veterinary care through initiatives like this with the Humane Society of Sonoma County.

To learn more about HSSC’s Community Veterinary Clinic, please visit <https://humanesocietysoco.org/community-veterinary-clinic>. ###

## About the Humane Society of Sonoma County

The mission of the Humane Society of Sonoma County is to ensure that every animal receives protection, compassion, love and care. Serving Sonoma County since 1931, HSSC is a donor-supported safe haven for animals providing shelter, medical care, behavior support and adoptions services to homeless animals on their journey to happy and healthy lives. Dedicated to bringing people and companion animals together for a lifetime of love, HSSC also functions as an important resource to the community. Their weekly low-cost spay/neuter clinics are available to local low-income pet owners while their Community Veterinary Clinic provides access to veterinary care for low- to no-income pet owners, including seniors and homeless community members. Their Pet Food Pantry provides free pet food to those in need. Their Humane Education programs help children and youth cultivate compassion for all living things. Their Read-to-a-Dog and Animal Assisted Therapy programs bring comfort and companionship to children during library and school visits, and to adults and seniors during visits to hospitals and assisted care facilities. The Humane Society of Sonoma County is a 501(c)3 organization that has been rated a top nonprofit by GreatNonprofits.org and has received a GuideStar Gold Seal of Transparency.

To learn more, please visit [www.humanesocietysoco.org](http://www.humanesocietysoco.org).

Follow the Humane Society of Sonoma County on Facebook: [Facebook.com/SonomaHumane](https://www.facebook.com/SonomaHumane) and on Instagram at: [Instagram.com/humanesocietysoco](https://www.instagram.com/humanesocietysoco)

## About PetSmart Charities®

[PetSmart Charities, Inc.](http://www.petsmartcharities.org) is committed to finding lifelong, loving homes for all pets by supporting programs and thought leadership that bring people and pets together. Through its in-store adoption program in all PetSmart® stores across the U.S. and Puerto Rico, PetSmart Charities helps to find forever homes and families for nearly 600,000 shelter pets each year. PetSmart Charities also provides grant funding to nonprofits aligned with its mission. Each year, millions of generous PetSmart shoppers help pets in need by donating to PetSmart Charities using the PIN pads at checkout registers inside PetSmart stores. In turn, PetSmart Charities efficiently uses more than 90 cents of every dollar donated to fulfill its role as the leading funder of animal welfare in North America, granting nearly \$430 million since its inception in 1994. Independent from PetSmart Inc., PetSmart Charities is a 501(c)(3) organization that has received the Four-Star Rating from Charity Navigator, a third-party organization that reports on the effectiveness, accountability and transparency of nonprofits, for the past 17 years in a row – placing it among the top one percent of charities rated by this organization. To learn more visit [www.petsmartcharities.org](http://www.petsmartcharities.org).

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