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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**Animals Among Thousands of Victims of Hurricane Katrina; Local Veterinary Specialty Facility Tells How You Can Help**

As rescue groups scour the flood-affected areas of the Gulf Coast to locate and rescue the remaining victims of Hurricane Katrina, animal welfare groups are discovering that thousands of animals have been abandoned and are in need of medical attention. In fact, many of the remaining residents have refused to evacuate for the sole reason that they didn't want to leave their pets behind. As the leading veterinary specialty facility in Arizona, the Arizona Veterinary Specialty Center (AVSC) would like to remind pet owners and animal lovers statewide not to forget about the four-legged friends that have been victimized by this tragedy.

The Humane Society has undertaken massive rescue and shelter efforts for the abandoned animals, and there are number of other organizations in Louisiana and Mississippi that are raising funds for the imperiled dogs and cats. "The human element of the devastation is undeniable and unimaginable, and it is imperative that we band together as a country to support the victims of this tragedy," says Janet Bailey, DVM at AVSC, who recently completed a residency in internal medicine at Louisiana State University. "But we cannot overlook the massive need of the pets and other animals that got left behind in the chaos that followed the disaster. There are many credible organizations providing shelter, medical services and food and water to these animals, and we implore the public to include the animals in their relief-related donations."

The School of Veterinary Medicine at LSU is one of the main shelters and treatment facility for animal victims, but its facilities are strapped as doctors are working exhausting schedules in order to see their standard roster of patients while treating the long line of emergency patients. According to Dr. Mark Neer, head of the emergency response team at LSU's SVM, "The teaching clinic is overwhelmed with sick and injured

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pets, and hundreds of strays are being housed in nearby college buildings. The doctors, technicians and veterinary students are working around the clock to provide care for these animals, and they need help, both in the form of monetary donations as well as muzzles, food and water.”

**Items needed include:** crates and metal cages, collars and leashes, disposable bowls, canned cat and dog food, disposable litter pans, spray bleach, paper towels, sheets, towels, locks, hoses, bottled water, trash cans, trash bags, pooper scoopers, cat litter, extension cords, fans, unused collars and leashes, toys and most of all—bottled water. Please clearly label donation boxes “Disaster Relief” and describe the contents on the exterior of the box.

**Ship all donation boxes to:**

School of Veterinary Medicine-Louisiana State University  
Skip Bertman Drive  
Baton Rouge, LA 70803  
(225) 578-9900

**Send all monetary donations to:**

LVMA Dr. Walter J. Ernst Veterinary Memorial Foundation  
Write “Disaster Relief” on subject line and send to:  
LVMA  
8550 United Plaza Blvd., Ste. 1001  
Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Much like a human hospital, AVS provides treatment for pets with complex medical and surgical problems. AVS is an extension of veterinary practices throughout the valley, working in conjunction with referring veterinarians to provide comprehensive patient care and exceptional client service. AVS treats animals for a vast array of chronic and acute illnesses, ranging from cancer to liver failure to skin conditions to vision and surgical problems. Specialists in the fields of ophthalmology, dentistry, surgery, dermatology, internal medicine, oncology, radiation oncology, anesthesiology, radiology, and emergency and critical care provide a comprehensive array of services to ensure the health of an important part of the family: pets. As leaders in specialty care, the AVS mission is to provide compassionate and comprehensive care to all patients.

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