



For Immediate Release

Information: Jamie Berger
631-537-0400 x215

**JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR ORDERED
ARF ANIMALS HELP TO LIFT SPIRITS
AT NURSING HOME**

Wainscott, NY April 15, 2010 --- The Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons, Inc. (ARF) announced today its partnership with the Hamptons Center for Rehabilitation and Nursing (HCRN) in Southampton for **Pet Therapy**. Research has shown that animals have a calming effect on people, most noticeably on the elderly. Each Thursday afternoon two ARF volunteers take a shelter dog and cat to the Southampton facility. When ARF arrives you can see faces light up instantly.

Pets bring joy to the residents and can help with pain, fear and loneliness, if only for a few minutes. “Our residents look forward to Thursday afternoons for pet therapy with ARF” says Matty Hanse, the Center’s Director of Recreation, “Some of them are depressed having had to give up their pets to come to the facility and pet therapy fills a void. We see such a positive difference.”

Pet therapy is beneficial to both the Hamptons Center and the Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons by helping to rehabilitate both the patients and the pets. The program helps residents of the Center feel less isolated and lifts their spirits, while the ARF animals gain experience with the outside world. ARF volunteer Bucky Benzenberg leads this effort each week and reflects on the thanks she gets from the residents stating “No, we should be thanking you.” This interaction is crucial to the on-going socialization of ARF animals, while the Hampton Care Center residents receive unconditional love.

(more)

The Pet Therapy Program has been such a success that the facility is considering adopting an ARF animal to become a permanent resident.

The Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons provides for the health and welfare of dogs and cats on the South Fork of Long Island and Shelter Island through shelter and adoption services, medical care, spaying and neutering programs, community outreach and humane education. Founded in 1974, ARF is the leading animal adoption center on the East End.

HCRN is the South Fork's only rehabilitation and nursing center.

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Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons, Inc.
PO Box 901
Wainscott, NY 11975 631-537-0400
www.arfhamptons.org