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INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST

ANIMAL SANCTUARY PARTNERS WITH SCHOCHET TO HELP ELDERLY MASS. PET OWNERS

Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary builds upon Connecticut program enabling senior pet owners in affordable housing to keep and care for their pets.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (May 8, 2024) – At Seabury Heights (a Retirement Housing Foundation property offering affordable housing for the elderly and disabled managed by Schochet in Worcester, MA) resident senior pet owners are lucky enough to spend their golden years with their beloved dogs or cats. It's a bond that brings joy to a senior pet owner and safety and contentment to a deserving animal.

Now, thanks to the expansion into Massachusetts of the SENIOR PAW PROJECT -- an innovative Connecticut-based project by Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary to support seniors in affordable housing communities in successfully aging in place with their pet -- older adult residents on fixed incomes will no longer be forced to choose between their own health and nutritional needs and those of their pets.

Last year, the Social Security cost-of-living adjustment of 3.2% was outpaced by an 11% rise in pet care costs, leaving many seniors to choose between forgoing quality pet food and veterinary care or relinquishing their pet to a shelter. According to a 2023 pet food industry survey, 72% of pet owners reported they would go hungry if it meant they could provide for their pets.

As an example, Margaret, a 72-year-old Seabury Heights resident, ends the month with less than $100 in her bank account and her normal dinner becomes a $0.35 package of ramen noodles so that she can afford her dog Sprinkle's regular pet food. It's a choice made of love and necessity as Margaret knows that changing Sprinkle's diet could pose a significant health risk to her faithful companion.

Five years ago, the Sanctuary, based in Newtown, CT, launched the SENIOR PAW PROJECT – a pioneering approach to help seniors successfully age in place with their pet, by providing veterinary assistance, preventative well care, pet food and respite support for financially insecure senior pet owners living in affordable housing communities. Working with 47 communities in Connecticut -- including RHF's Shepherd Park and Capitol Towers, both managed by Schochet in Hartford, CT -- the project has helped more than 450 animals and provided 480,000 pet food meals resulting in improvement not only to the health of the pets but also to that of the participating seniors and benefiting the communities in which they live.

In collaboration with Schochet., a real estate management company specializing in affordable housing, Senior Paw Project is expanding its program to Massachusetts, beginning with Seabury Heights, which it hopes will serve as a model and launching point for additional programs in senior housing communities throughout Massachusetts and New England. In addition, the Senior Paw Project is working with Second Chance Animal Hospitals to provide direct in-home veterinary care to the pets of Seabury Heights.

Jennifer Hubbard, president of the CVH Animal Sanctuary, is excited to see the program expanding into Massachusetts and looks forward to discovering how to share this most special project in other states. "We're humbled to be working with Schochet and their residents to ensure pets get the care they deserve. From day one, we've been so impressed with Schochet's thoughtfulness and concern for the residents they serve. It's a privilege to be a small part of the work their team is doing."

Richard Henken, president and CEO of Schochet, said, "Over the years, we have seen tremendous benefits from senior pet ownership at our properties including reduction in isolation, anxiety and feelings of loneliness; increased exercise and time spent outdoors; greater socialization and interaction with other humans; and less cognitive decline. Studies have also shown links to health benefits such as decreased blood pressure, cholesterol levels, and triglyceride levels. We were delighted to begin partnering with the Senior Paw Project at two of our Connecticut properties last year and have been very impressed at the gamut of services they offer to help seniors keep their pets. It is our pleasure to join them in introducing this program to the senior citizens of Massachusetts and we are very proud that Seabury Heights will be the launch site."

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About the Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary

The Catherine Violet Hubbard Foundation is a Connecticut-based nonprofit organization working to promote compassion and healing through human-animal connection. The foundation was started in 2013 to commemorate and honor the life of Catherine Violet Hubbard, a six-year-old victim of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy and passionate animal lover. In 2014, the Catherine Violet Hubbard Foundation was awarded more than 34 acres of Connecticut state farmland by a unanimous legislative decision, which would become home to the Catherine Violet Hubbard Sanctuary. Since its inception, the organization has raised more than $8 million in funding, supporting its breadth of programming that by honoring the human-animal connection, is providing tools and skills that translate into compassionate and accepting human-human interactions. Specifically, the sanctuary focuses on environmental stewardship, provides no cost humane education curriculum and community workshops, aid for seniors to keep and care for their pets, and property revitalization efforts. By caring for animals, the Catherine Violet Hubbard Animal Sanctuary is helping the world become a kinder and gentler place for all.

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About Schochet:

Headquartered in Braintree, MA, the company employs close to 200 professionals and has developed, owned, and/or managed in excess of 7,000 apartments and 600,000 square feet of retail and commercial space throughout New England and on the West Coast over the 50 years. Schochet also has a long history of charitable and civic leadership stemming back to the philanthropy of its founder. The company's concern for those less fortunate is not only reflected in its business commitment to affordable housing and supporting seniors in remaining vibrant parts of their communities, but also in its involvement in and recognition numerous educational and humanitarian organizations. For more information, visit, www.Schochet.com