Press Releases

Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) Receives $25,000 Donation from Purina® to Support Pets and Vets Program

La Russa Recognized by Purina with 2018 Better with Pets Award

WALNUT CREEK, Calif., Dec. 11, 2018 /PRNewswire/ -- Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) announced today it will build on the support of U.S. military veterans and shelter-to-service animals through its Pets and Vets program thanks to a $25,000 donation from Purina and the actions of thousands of pet owners across the nation.

The contribution was made as a result of Purina's fourth-annual #DogThanking campaign, an initiative that encourages pet owners to share over social media why they are thankful for their pets in celebration of Thanksgiving and the National Dog Show Presented by Purina. This past November, when pet owners posted using the hashtag #DogThanking and tagged @Purina, Purina donated one dollar to ARF for every original post submitted. While the number of posts fell slightly short of 25,000, Purina donated the remaining amount to hit the donation goal of $25,000. All funds donated benefit ARF's Pets and Vets program that matches veterans with rescue dogs and oversees the training and transition into psychiatric service dogs.

"The #DogThanking campaign was an engaging way for pet lovers to thank the pets that make our lives so special while making a difference in the lives of many veterans and shelter dogs," said La Russa, co-founder of Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation and Major League Baseball Hall of Fame manager. "We are grateful to Purina for selecting us as their partner to raise awareness and funds for this unique program. This donation helps us rescue more dogs and serve more veterans living with PTSD, traumatic brain injuries and other challenges - truly saving lives at both ends of the leash."

To recognize the work of La Russa and ARF helping pets across the country find their forever homes, Purina presented him with its *Better with Pets Award* during the National Dog Show Presented by Purina Gala on Nov. 16 in Philadelphia. The award was established four years ago to acknowledge people and organizations who have made a difference in strengthening the bond between pets and people. La Russa and ARF received this honor specifically for the ongoing support for shelter pets and helping them find forever homes in the service of veterans – all at no cost to the veteran.

"At Purina, we are thrilled that pet lovers across the country teamed up with us through #DogThanking to support the great work that ARF does to help improve the lives for pets and our nation's veterans," said Daniel Henke-Cilenti, director of marketing for the Purina brand. "We are passionate about partnering with people like Tony and ARF because of the shared commitment to do more of the things that matter for pets and the people who love them."

As a long-standing partner of ARF's, Purina – through its Dog Chow brand – also conducted a campaign in 2018 to benefit the ARF Pets and Vets program. The Purina Dog Chow Service Dog Salute paid tribute to our armed forces and the loyal dogs that serve them through a four-month-long campaign that highlighted their stories and concluded with a donation of $500,000.

For more information about ARF and the Pets and Vets program, please visit www.arflife.org.

About Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF)

ARF's core mission is the rescue of dogs and cats who have run out of time at public shelters, giving them a chance at life until a new home can be found. ARF couples this focus with innovative programs strengthening the human-animal bond for children, seniors, veterans, and people in disadvantaged circumstances. Through ARF, people experience the unconditional love and acceptance of dogs and cats to fulfill a mission of "People Rescuing Animals...Animals Rescuing People..."®

About Nestlé Purina PetCare

Nestlé Purina PetCare Company is a global leader in the pet care industry. Nestlé Purina PetCare promotes responsible pet care, community involvement and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premiere global manufacturer of pet products, Nestlé Purina PetCare is part of Swiss-based Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health and wellness.

SOURCE Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF)

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