FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Don’t Forget to Include Your Pets in Your Family Disaster Plan!

As we look to the weather reports and follow the progress of Hurricane Matthew, Suncoast Humane Society would like to remind the community to include their pets in their disaster planning. With a little preparation and forethought, you can ensure that you are ready when, and if, the time comes to execute your plan.

Suncoast Humane Society and other humane societies and animal control shelters are not an option for boarding your pet during a disaster but you can confirm pet-friendly shelter locations and hotels beforehand. For our most recent listing of local shelter, download our “Preparing for Disaster” brochure at www.humane.org/index.php/disasterrelief. You can also find pet-friendly hotels at www.floridapetfriendly.com.

In advance, prepare a disaster kit for each of your pets. Keep the kit(s) with your family’s disaster kit, for quick and easy retrieval in the case of an emergency. Each pet is unique but here is a list of the basic items that you should include in each pet’s disaster kit.

- Collar with tag(s) and a sturdy leash
- ID tags, rabies tag, microchip ID and company contact information
- Extra collars, harnesses and leashes
- Any pet medications
- Medical records and current vaccinations
- Current (less than a year old) photograph of each pet (with owner)
• Secure carrier or collapsible cage for large dogs for each pet and bedding.
• Food (at least a 2-week supply), stored in watertight containers in a cool, dry place
• Water (at least a 2-week supply)
• Manual can opener
• Cat litter, liners and a pan
• Plastic trash bags to handle waste
• Newspaper, paper towels and disinfectant for clean-up
• Toys and any special comfort items that can fit in the crate with the animal
• Muzzle, if necessary (use extra precaution handling your pet, in a disaster, animals may not act normally)
• Out of area contact name and phone number

**Suncoast Humane Society has been serving animals and people since 1971.** Founded as Englewood Animal Aid Society, the organization’s services and programs were soon challenged to meet the demands placed on them by the pet over-population crises. Expansions to their facility in Englewood during the 1980s and 1990s helped the Society to more effectively provide for a growing service area. To reflect the changes, the organization became Suncoast Humane Society. **Today their service area includes Charlotte County, most of Sarasota County, and the Boca Grande portion of Lee County, a total of over 450 square miles.**

Visit their adoptable pets and learn more about Suncoast Humane Society online at www.humane.org, in person at 6781 San Casa Drive, Englewood, FL 34224 or at one of our many community events!

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