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MEDIA CONTACT:
Lauren Frost
Development Coordinator
678-325-0253
HYPERLINK
"mailto:lfrost@pethoodga.org"
lfrost@pethoodga.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Animals in Rural Georgia have Longer, Happier Lives, Thanks to Maddie!

Innovation Grant of \$5,000 will launch a new Remote Spay/Neuter Transport Program

Duluth, GA (6/4/19) – Planned PETHood of Georgia is proud to announce that it has been awarded a \$5,000 Innovation Grant from Maddie’s Fund to launch a life-saving Rural Spay/Neuter Transport Program, beginning with 75 animals from Newton County.

This innovative program will provide 75 animals at Newton County Animal Control (NCAC) with a free spay/neuter surgery and rabies vaccination at Planned PETHood’s Duluth clinic.

NCAC’s staff face many obstacles to keeping the animals in their shelter safe. The shelter is very small, with only 18 dog runs and 26 cat cages. With such limited space, and needing to make room for new animals arriving daily, animals are not held for more than a few days. There is also no option for sterilizing animals prior to being adopted from the shelter, which creates a two-fold problem: visitors may choose not to adopt animals for fear of unknown veterinary costs, and the few lucky animals that are adopted can go on to produce litters - adding to the cycle of overpopulation. The sad result is that in 2018 only 52% of dogs and 33% of cats that entered NCAC left the facility alive.

This new Remote Spay/Neuter Transport program, created by Planned PETHood and with startup funding from Maddie’s Fund, will ensure that more animals leave the shelter sterilized, vaccinated, and - most of all - alive. Planned PETHood’s staff and volunteers will utilize the non-profit’s van to bring animals from Newton County Animal Control to their Duluth clinic for surgery every week, recover them for 24 hours, and then return them to the shelter for adoption.

In addition to animals transported for surgery prior to adoption, Planned PETHood is networking with local rescue organizations to encourage them to pull from NCAC, adding those pets to the transport and moving more out of the shelter.

“Many of us living in metro Atlanta don’t realize that just 45 minutes outside of the city there are counties that have no access to affordable spay/neuter for their pets, and limited rescue resources.” says Elizabeth Burgner, Planned Pethood’s Executive Director and Co-Founder. “Unfortunately, the ones who suffer the ultimate price are the animals that enter the county Animal Control facilities. This grant will create a ripple effect, getting pets out of these shelters alive and stopping the cycle of overpopulation at its source, which is unwanted litters.”

The program has been active since mid-May, and the county has already seen an increase in adoptions and a reduction in their euthanasia rate. “During May 2019, 83% of the animals that entered our facility were adopted or placed with a rescue group,” says Cynthia Wiemann, Newton County’s Animal Control Director. “That is a record high for our shelter. We know offering spay/neuter services to our county will reduce unwanted births and increase the chance of adoption for the animals we care for at our shelter.”

Planned PETHood of Georgia, Inc. | 2860 Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30096 | 678.561.3491

“Helping Pets and the People who care for them by providing Innovative Programs and Affordable Services that Save Lives”



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Newton County is the pilot county for this program. After the first 75 animals are sterilized from NCAC thanks to this grant from Maddie's Fund, Planned PETHood's goal is to broaden the scope of this service to include other rural counties and remote locations across the state. With access to affordable spay/neuter services, Planned PETHood aims to further reduce Georgia's pet overpopulation problem, which causes the deaths of at least 40,000 cats and dogs in Georgia shelters each year.

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About Planned PETHood of Georgia: Planned PETHood of Georgia operates a high quality, low cost spay/neuter clinic. They offer affordable vaccination clinics, rescue/adoption of dogs and cats, and assistance with community cats through TNR (Trap/Neuter/Return) outreach. Founded in 2010, Planned PETHood has sterilized more than 49,500 cats and dogs in Georgia, saved hundreds of "unadoptable" cats with their barn cat program, found homes for more than 4,000 homeless animals, and served thousands of people and pets at monthly low-cost vaccination clinics. Learn more about their services at www.PETHoodGA.org

About Maddie's Fund:

Maddie's Fund® is a family foundation created in 1994 by Workday® co-founder Dave Duffield and his wife, Cheryl, who have endowed the Foundation with more than \$300 million. Since then, the Foundation has awarded more than \$225.7 million in grants toward increased community lifesaving, shelter management leadership, shelter medicine education, and foster care across the U.S. The Duffields named Maddie's Fund after their Miniature Schnauzer Maddie, who always made them laugh and gave them much joy. Maddie was with Dave and Cheryl for ten years and continues to inspire them today. Maddie's Fund is the fulfillment of a promise to an inspirational dog, investing its resources to create a no-kill nation where every dog and cat is guaranteed a healthy home or habitat. #ThanksToMaddie.