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Animal Medical Center

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For Immediate Release

NYC's Animal Medical Center Honors Broadway Legend Bernadette Peters at the 2018 Top Dog Gala

Canine Honorees Include U.S. Coast Guard Canine Teams and Fred, a Stray Dog from Afghanistan and his Marine

Gala Raises \$1.75 Million

(New York – December 12, 2018) The Animal Medical Center (AMC), the largest non-profit animal hospital in the country, honored Bernadette Peters, a devoted advocate for animal welfare and Broadway legend, at its annual Top Dog Gala. Additional honorees include the U.S. Coast Guard Canine Teams and Fred, a Stray Dog from Afghanistan and Craig, the Marine who rescued him. The Top Dog Gala raised \$1.75 million to benefit the Animal Medical Center's non-profit mission of research, education and charitable giving to animals in need.

The benefit, co-chaired by Robert Couturier, Nancy Kissinger, Elaine Langone, Elizabeth Monaco McCarthy and Annette de la Renta, was held on Tuesday, December 11th at Cipriani 42nd Street. Guest included: Mandy Patinkin, Elaine and Kenneth Langone, Dr. Henry and Nancy Kissinger, Katharine Rayner, Lisa and David Schiff, Donna and Bill Acquavella, Barbara and Robert Liberman, and Emilia Krimendahl. In the spirit of the evening, acclaimed actor Mandy Patinkin surprised the crowd with a rendition of the Dog Song from "*Sunday in the Park with George*." Famed designer David Monn created a wonderfully festive décor, enhanced by his bespoke dog and cat centerpieces produced in South Africa using a traditional pattern of dyed preserved cotton fabric.

"We are honored to present the Brooke Astor Award to Bernadette Peters because she truly represents the enormous impact that one individual can have on the lives of animals in need," said Kathryn Coyne, Chief Executive Officer at AMC. "Throughout her life, Bernadette has committed time, energy, and her own voice to support the cause of animal welfare. Her amazing Broadway Barks event, now in its 20th year, benefits shelter animals throughout the NYC area, and has resulted in over 2,000 adoptions since its founding. AMC is also proud to honor several canines and celebrate the unique bond that exists between all these special canines and their handlers."

"I've devoted much of my life to animal welfare, and I am a champion of the Animal Medical Center. When an animal walks through the doors of the AMC, they receive the gold standard of care, which is what I believe all animals deserve. As an animal lover, this honor is deeply moving, and I am so thrilled to stand here tonight as an ardent supporter of this one-of-a-kind institution," said honoree Bernadette Peters.

"The Brooke Astor Award was created to recognize an individual who, in word and deed, emulates Mrs. Astor's ideals and values to preserve and protect the human-animal bond, and Bernadette Peters is a true inheritor of Brooke's legacy. Bernadette's passion for and steadfast commitment to helping animals is second only to her generous spirit," said Robert Liberman, Chairman, AMC's Board of Trustees.

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About Our Honorees

Bernadette Peters

Ms. Peters' "pet project," Broadway Barks, co-founded with Mary Tyler Moore, is an annual, star-studded dog and cat adoption event that benefits shelter animals throughout the New York City area. This year marks the 20th anniversary of Broadway Barks, which has resulted in over 2,000 adoptions since its founding. Ms. Peters is also a *New York Times* bestselling author who has penned three children's books: *Broadway Barks*, *Stella is a Star*, and *Stella and Charlie: Friends Forever*. All proceeds from the sale of these books benefit Broadway Barks. Ms. Peters resides in New York with her rescue dogs, Charlie and Rosalia. In addition to Broadway Barks, Ms. Peters devotes her time and talents to numerous events that benefit Broadway Cares/Equity Fights AIDS. Throughout her illustrious career, Bernadette Peters has dazzled audiences and critics with her performances on stage and television, in concert, and on recordings. She has won numerous accolades, including three Tony Awards, a Golden Globe, two Grammy Awards, three Emmy nominations, and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

The U.S. Coast Guard Canine Teams

AMC also honored the U.S. Coast Guard Canine Teams, including K9 Ryder, a Belgian Malinois and his handler, Nick Antis and K9 Ruthie, a Malinois, and her handler, Richard Barone from the Coast Guard Maritime Safety and Security Team in New York. The Coast Guard canine teams regularly deploy throughout the country in a maritime capacity. Both K9 Ryder and K9 Ruthie are some of the busiest canines in the Coast Guard. Some notable deployments where Ryder and Ruthie have excelled are Super Bowls L and LII, major recent marathons in New York City, Boston, and Chicago, the 2016 Presidential Inauguration, annual United Nations General Assemblies, and even international training trips to Panama. Ryder and Ruthie work tirelessly to ensure the safety of millions of citizens both at home in New York, and throughout the United States.

Fred

U.S. Marine Craig Grossi met Fred on a battlefield in the Sangin District of Helmand Province, Afghanistan in October of 2010. The Marines weren't supposed to approach stray dogs and up until he saw Fred, Craig hadn't had a problem following that rule. They developed a true bond. Fred's journey to the US began when he was placed inside a duffle bag and taken out of Afghanistan by helicopter. It ended when Fred passed through customs at JFK Airport, where Craig's sister and father were waiting. Four months later, Craig returned home, and it was Fred's turn to rescue the Marine. Craig and Fred's story has become their mission. It is a story of resilience, love, and a philosophy of "stubborn positivity." Their unforgettable story is captured in Craig Grossi's first book, *Craig & Fred: A Marine, A Stray Dog, and How They Rescued Each Other*. Today, Fred and Craig travel the country spreading that message.

About Animal Medical Center

The Animal Medical Center is the world's largest non-profit animal hospital with 100+ veterinarians providing the highest quality medical care across 17 specialties. AMC's pioneering clinical research advances veterinary knowledge, and our education programs train the next generation of veterinary leaders and provide pet owners with quality pet health information. AMC is proud to offer our services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. To learn more, visit: www.amcny.org.

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