



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 4, 2020

Contact: Kim Maialetti  
(267) 258-0076  
kim@wordplayllc.com

Kate Levin  
(818) 321-0405  
kate@wordplayllc.com

**NEW “CAUSE FOR BIG PAWS” PROGRAM AIMS TO SAVE BIG DOGS FROM BEING PUT DOWN**

**(REDWOOD CITY, Calif.)** – Pets In Need, Northern California’s first no-kill animal shelter, today announced the official launch of Cause for Big Paws, a new program aimed at saving big dogs from being put down.

“Big dogs in shelters are more vulnerable to being put down because they are less likely to be adopted quickly and are more expensive to care for than smaller dogs,” said Al Mollica, executive director of Pets In Need. “Thanks to our generous donors and our expanding volunteer and foster network, Pets In Need is in a unique position to rescue these at-risk dogs and provide the care they need until we find them their forever homes.”

Pets In Need has been piloting the Cause for Big Paws program since May 2019 and to date has successfully rescued and adopted out over 270 big dogs as part of the initiative.

In general, Pets in Need considers big dogs those that are over 35 lbs. as adults and puppies that will likely grow to be over 35 lbs.

An estimated 3.3 million dogs are taken into animal shelters across the nation each year, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Of those, approximately 670,000 are put down annually.

Big dogs are slower to get adopted and at greater risk for being put down for a variety of reasons, including breed restrictions that prohibit many apartment residents from having big dogs such as shepherds, huskies and Rottweilers as well as pit bulls and pit bull mixes.

Almost every week, representatives from Pets In Need travel to shelters in the Central Valley and East Bay that may have less capacity to house big dogs because of financial or space constraints. Pets In Need rescues those that are at greatest risk for being put down and either cares for them at their shelter or places them with foster families until they are adopted.

Among the recent rescues are:

- Sherman. Pets In Need pulled Sherman from a shelter in the Central Valley, where he had been housed for months while recovering from wounds to his back and side. When he arrived at Pets In Need, he suffered from a significant limp caused by his injuries, and veterinarians recommended surgery on one of his back legs to improve his mobility and overall quality of life.

Sherman is slated to have surgery soon and is being cared for by his adoptive family who will help him rehabilitate and recover with financial support from Pets In Need.



- Babygirl. When Pets In Need staff rescued Babygirl from a shelter in the Central Valley, she barely knew how to walk on a leash and needed to be carried and lifted into the van. Now, after some training and TLC, she not only loves to walk – even on a leash – but she was also a star in doggie dance class. Babygirl recently danced her way into a forever family.
- Red. Red had been given only a week to live before being rescued by Pets In Need. He was surrendered by his owner to a shelter in the East Bay after the owner had kept him outside 24/7 with no toys or anything to chew on -- aside from the side of the house. At the shelter, Red failed a temperament test and was scheduled to be put down. The staff at Pets In Need, however, felt Red could be trained to overcome his behavioral issues, and they were right. Red was recently adopted and now has a new name – Camper – and all the toys he wants.

The Cause for Big Paws program relies heavily on fosters who volunteer to take in dogs until they find a forever family. Those interested in becoming a foster can apply online at [www.petsinneed.org](http://www.petsinneed.org).

#### **About Pets In Need**

Headquartered in Redwood City, Calif., and founded in 1965, Pets In Need is Northern California's first no-kill animal shelter. The nonprofit organization rescues cats and dogs from public shelters in the Bay Area and beyond when they are in danger of being euthanized due to space or financial limitations. Pets In Need also operates the Palo Alto animal shelter, a no-kill public animal shelter serving Palo Alto, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills. Pets In Need has consistently earned a four-star rating by Charity Navigator and its medical operation is accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association, a distinction given to fewer than 15 percent of veterinary clinics in the United States. To learn more about Pets In Need visit [www.petsinneed.org](http://www.petsinneed.org)

###