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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Donor Beware: Scam Artist Attempts to Swindle Local Animal Lovers

Thousand Palms, CA – July 17, 2009: A telephone solicitor claiming to be collecting funds for Animal Samaritans SPCA is trying to part unsuspecting donors with their money. On Thursday, July 16, Animal Samaritans Director of Development Sandra Viden-Martins received an email from a concerned citizen. The concerned citizen informed her about a man calling himself Matthew who claimed he was collecting donations to feed the animals at Animal Samaritans' shelter. The con man then asked the woman for her credit card information over the phone. When she declined, he requested a donation by check.

On Friday, July 17, Viden-Martins received a second email from a different citizen with a similar warning. This time the man called himself "Brad." Each time the caller instructed his potential victims to send their check donations to a PO Box in Desert Hot Springs.

Animals Samaritans is located in Thousand Palms, not Desert Hot Springs, and there is no one on its staff or board of directors by the name of Matthew or Brad.

As they continue construction on their new state-of-the-art vet clinic for the Coachella Valley (scheduled to open in December 2009), Animal Samaritans would like to remind supporters that there are several safe and secure ways to donate to their cause:

1. By mail to Animal Samaritans at: PO Box 513, Thousand Palms, CA 92276
2. Over the phone by credit card with an Animal Samaritans staff member. Contact Sandra Viden-Martin's at 760-343-3216 or Angie Crist at 343-0837.
3. From their website by credit card at www.animalsamaritans.org. They use PayPal, which is a secure payment system used by tens of thousands of organizations.

Of course, supporters can also stop by their administration offices at 72-715 La Cañada Way, Thousand Palms, or visit our Animal Clinic & Shelter at 72-307 Ramon Rd, also in Thousand Palms.

Animal Samaritans SPCA, a 501 (c) non-profit organization founded in 1978, is committed to improving the lives of animals and people. As the Coachella Valley's most comprehensive animal welfare organization, they strive to one day eliminate the needless suffering and abuse of homeless and unwanted animals. Programs and services in place to save the lives of healthy and treatable animals include prevention through humane education, low-cost and no-cost spay and neuter, low-cost vaccinations, low-cost dental care and pet wellness exams, microchipping, animal sheltering and pet adoptions. In addition, more than one hundred volunteers from their Animal Assisted Therapy programs visit disabled children in special needs classrooms, nursing homes, and hospitals, while their Animal Assisted Activities teams see residents at Juvenile Hall. More information is available by visiting www.animalsamaritans.org

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