



Operation Kindness Salutes National Dog Bite Prevention Week

Bully Bash to Celebrate Four-Legged Friends, Provide Best Practices for Handling Unfamiliar Dogs

CARROLLTON, TEXAS (May 9, 2013)...In honor of National Dog Bite Prevention Week (May 13-19), **Operation Kindness** is hosting a Bully Bash Yappy Hour to celebrate and educate the public on how to properly approach and handle dogs.

"When dogs are afraid, startled or hurt, they are more likely to bite. This doesn't mean they will bite every time or that you can always prevent a dog bite, but if people are more aware of animals and learn how to approach and handle them, they are more likely to have a positive interaction," says Sandi Laird, animal care director of **Operation Kindness**, the oldest and largest no-kill shelter in North Texas.

The Bully Bash Yappy Hour will be held May 20, 2013, from 6 to 8 p.m. on the patio of Sambuca Restaurant, 2120 McKinney Ave. in Dallas. Humans and dogs are welcome. Admission is \$15 for humans, which includes a drink ticket and snacks. Dogs will be admitted free.

"The event is a dog-friendly Yappy Hour, with some awesome raffle prizes from places like Pet Supplies Plus and Paradise 4 Paws, but we're also going to have signage about topics relating to Bully Breeds and provide tips to anyone who's interested in learning more," says Julie Goff, special events manager of **Operation Kindness**.

Goff says Bully Breeds – generally thought of as "Pit Bulls" – often have the worst reputation for aggression, but that aggression is not because of the breed. It is more likely due to their interaction with humans. She explains that "Pit Bulls" are not an actual breed of dog, but a loose term used to group together three breeds: American Staffordshire Terrier, American Pit Bull Terrier and the Staffordshire Bull Terrier.

"Whether we're talking about Bully Breeds, Rottweilers or even Golden Retrievers, well-adjusted pets begin with responsible owners; we're seeing an incredible amount of irresponsible breeding and ownership with the bully breeds, especially. There is a definite correlation between the surge in Bully Breed popularity, irresponsible owners, and stories about aggressive Pit Bulls reported by the media," notes Goff.

To minimize the risk of being bitten, **Operation Kindness** staff suggests:

- Don't pet a dog, regardless of breed or type, without asking permission from the owner first – this includes service animals
- Keep in mind that a dog's perspective is much lower than a human's; bending over to talk to or pet a dog can seem very threatening to him
- Never put your face near the face of an animal you don't know well

These tips work for cats, too, adds Goff.

"Always ask the owner for permission before petting any dog or cat, regardless of its size, breed or appearance, to ensure the animal likes to receive this kind of attention," says Goff. "For instance, Niles – my 13-yr-old Bichon Frise – is very protective. Because he is small, white and fluffy, people assume that it's OK to pet him. But he absolutely will bite anyone who attempts to pet him. If people would ask first, I could explain that he is protective and avoid the situation."

For more tips, visit www.operationkindness.org.

About Operation Kindness: Founded in 1976, **Operation Kindness** is the oldest and largest no-kill shelter in North Texas. Its mission is to care for homeless cats and dogs in a no-kill environment until each is adopted into a responsible home and to advocate humane values and behavior. On a daily basis, **Operation Kindness** cares for an average of 300 animals at the shelter, with more than 100 animals in foster homes. **Operation Kindness** has saved more than 75,000 animals since its inception, and it assists more than 3,000 dogs and cats each year. Learn more about **Operation Kindness** by calling 972-418-PAWS or by visiting <http://www.operationkindness.org>, <https://twitter.com/OpKindness> or www.facebook.com/pages/Operation-Kindness/30251945822).

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