



Operation Kindness Seeks Veterans to Pair with Companion Pets North Texas No-Kill Shelter and Pets for Vets Program Are Partnering to Help Transition to Civilian Life

CARROLLTON, TX (February 24, 2015)...[Operation Kindness](#) – the original and largest no-kill animal shelter in North Texas, and North Texas Chapter of Pets for Vets, is currently seeking veterans to assist with the transition into civilian life. The Pets for Vets program is dedicated to supporting veterans and providing a second chance for shelter dogs by rescuing, training and pairing them with veterans who could benefit from a companion animal. As the official Pets for Vets North Texas Chapter, **Operation Kindness** will train, socialize and match companion dogs with veterans in North Texas at no cost to the veteran.

“Many veterans returning home suffer with emotional and physical injuries that make the transition into civilian life difficult,” says Jim Hanophy, **Operation Kindness** CEO. “It is our goal to help ease this process by providing deserving veterans in North Texas with a companion animal. We believe trained companion animals will provide a source of friendship and comfort that many of our service men and women need.”



A professional trainer from **Operation Kindness** will meet with North Texas veterans to discuss what type of companion dog each wants. The trainer will identify one that's appropriate for the veteran's needs, lifestyle and personality. For example, if the veteran is less mobile, the trainer looks for dogs that require less physical exercise. The trainer then works with **Operation Kindness** and its network of rescue and shelter partners to thoroughly evaluate each dog's temperament, breed, age, socialization skills and overall well-being to find the right match for the veteran. Once a dog is selected, the trainer takes it home to socialize and train it before introducing it to the veteran. Veterans interested in pairing with a companion animal can contact Tomi Tucker, the **Operation Kindness** Pets for Vets program coordinator at ttucker@OperationKindness.org or visit, <http://www.operationkindness.org/opk/homepage/pets-for-vets/>.

“We use only positive reinforcement in our training program, and the training process is tailored to the needs of the veteran and the animal, because we want our dogs to fit seamlessly into the veteran's daily life,” explains Tomi Tucker. “This may include desensitization training to wheel chairs or crutches, or even teaching the dog to recognize and assist with panic or anxiety disorder behaviors.”

As part of the program, **Operation Kindness** also provides the veteran with supplies and equipment such as a crate, food and water bowls, and grooming supplies to help the dog and owner start their new life together. Throughout the process, the trainer provides ongoing support to the veteran and continues to make home visits to assist with training techniques. All of this is done at no cost to the veteran.

Pets for Vets is a nonprofit organization founded by animal trainer Clarissa Black. The national organization has 22 chapters in 18 states, two of which are in Texas – in the Houston and North Texas areas. **Operation Kindness**, the North Texas chapter, is the first animal shelter nationwide to be granted chapter status. For more information on Pets for Vets, visit www.pets-for-vets.com.

Founded in 1976, **Operation Kindness** is the original 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 responsible homes and to advocate humane values and behavior. **Operation Kindness** has saved nearly 80,000 animals since its inception. The shelter cares for an average of 300 animals daily, with another 100-150 animals in foster homes, and assists nearly 4,500 dogs and cats each year. Learn more about **Operation Kindness** at <http://www.OperationKindness.org> or on Facebook (www.facebook.com/pages/Operation-Kindness/30251945822).

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Contact:

Katie Hill-Mudd

TrizCom Inc.

Katie@TrizCom.Com

Office: 972-247-1369

Cell: 214-676-4254