



Contact: Tom Snyder
760.343.4908
tsnyder@animalsamaritans.org
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Animal Samaritans Welcomes New Board Members and President

Thousand Palms, CA – June 15, 2010: Animal Samaritans is pleased to announce the confirmation of their newly elected Board President Al Vasquez. Along with his wife Ana Rascón Vasquez, Al joined Animal Samaritans' board of directors in October 2009.

A past economic developer for the Department of Commerce in Washington D.C., Al Vasquez established the first self-help housing program in the Coachella Valley back in 1970. He has consulted in Hispanic affairs for over 30 years, specializing in education and job training throughout the U.S. In addition, he is a former National Executive Director of the League of United Latin American Citizens, or LULAC, and once served as National Deputy Director of SER, a national job training program.

Al is the founder and CEO of Hispanic Image Marketing Network, Inc. (HIMN), which is associated with multiple California newspapers that have a combined circulation to over a million readers on any given week. Al works in partnership with his wife Ana to produce La Prensa Hispana, the publication she founded in 1989. Today, La Prensa Hispana is the Desert's largest Hispanic newspaper, and enjoys a web edition that receives over 9,000 viewers daily. In addition to writing and editing for La Prensa, Al frequently writes a column for the Coachella Valley Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

As founder of HIMN, Al was one of 65 persons selected to be an integral part of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's 2003-2004 Transition Team into office. He is also the recognized founder of the International Hispanic Film Festival and the Maya Art Institute. In addition, both Al and Ana are recipients of the Inland Empire's Hispanic Image Awards. Al and Ana reside in Indio, where they are the proud parents to several rescued Chihuahuas.

Animal Samaritans welcomes new board members Ron Wohlers and Claudia Suarez. While serving on the Board of Directors for the Warren County Humane Society in Ohio, Ron was instrumental in opening a new Animal Shelter, considered the one of the most modern facilities of its kind.

In East Tennessee, he worked with the county shelter to help reduce animal euthanasia rates by promoting animal adoptions. He also established the first certification program for animals used in the region's Pet Therapy Program. For several years Ron worked with the University of Tennessee's College of Veterinarian Science, where he was key to acquiring and updating the program's medical equipment. Now retired and living in the desert, the avid golfer is pleased to once again serve the animals who need our help, and the people who love them.

Claudia Suarez graduated from California State University San Bernardino with a Bachelor's degree in communications with a concentration in public relations. Soon after, she went on to complete an internship program with Magnet Communications, an international marketing/public relations company, where she assisted in several national bilingual campaigns for Lactaid, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Marshall's Department Store.

From 2003 to 2006 Claudia served on the City of Coachella's Planning Commission. After serving as the Director of Public Relations for Kiner Communications, she launched her own public relations company, Threadbox Communications. Additionally, Claudia belongs to PRSA, the Public Relations Society of America, and sits on the executive board of CVMACC, the Coachella Valley Mexican-American Chamber of Commerce.

Animal Samaritans SPCA, a 501 (c) (3) 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, 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 calling 760-343-4908 and by visiting www.animalsamaritans.org

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