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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Animal Samaritans Opens New Veterinary Clinic: Ribbon Cutting Ceremony Slated for April 5**

**Thousand Palms, CA – March 16, 2010:** Last year on National Spay Day USA, Animal Samaritans broke ground on a new, state-of-the-art veterinary clinic for the Coachella Valley. On Monday, April 5, they will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new facility to celebrate the clinic's grand opening. The new clinic is located at 72-120 Pet Land Place, at the Animal Campus in Thousand Palms, directly adjacent to the City/County Animal Shelter operated by Riverside County Department of Animal Services.

Prior to the ceremony, Animal Samaritans will give a private on-site reception for donors and supporters who have helped make this building possible. Starting at 1:30pm, the public ceremony will include a site blessing, comments from local dignitaries, and an open house. Pet owners in attendance are welcome to bring their dogs on a leash.

With financing from The H.N. and Frances C. Berger Foundation, Animal Samaritans has built a 3,760 square foot veterinary clinic, with state-of-the-art equipment that includes a digital x-ray machine, self-contained isolation units for diseased animals, a pet dental suite, and tele-radiology capabilities. The building also features solar tubing that draws natural sunlight into the building and lowers electricity costs. Animal Samaritans continues to seek donor contributions to retire this loan, and naming opportunities are still available.

Animal Samaritans will close its Ramon Road clinic on Friday, April 2, to begin moving into their new facility. They will reopen their veterinary practices at the Animal Campus on Tuesday, April 6; however, their no-kill animal shelter will remain at the building on Ramon Road.

Over the last two years, Animal Samaritans spayed and neutered more than 16,000 cats and dogs, and gave back more than \$200,000 dollars in subsidized vet care to low-income pet owners and free services performed on feral cats. Once inside their new facility, the organization expects to more than double the number of animals they see; spay and neuter services are projected to jump from 8,000 per year to 20,000 annually. For pet vaccinations, they anticipate an increase from 24,000 to 40,000 per year.

In addition to providing affordable spaying and neutering and pet vaccinations, veterinarians at Animal Samaritans will perform more pet dental and pet wellness services. In the clinic's specialty suite, experts in animal oncology, dermatology, ophthalmology, and orthopedics will have space to examine animals and operate if necessary. Currently, Animal Samaritans has two full-time veterinarians, Dr. Robert Mills, DVM, and Dr. J.R. Sheltraw, DVM. Combined, the doctors have more than 87 years of experience working in animal medicine.

To staff the new clinic, the organization is currently hiring a third full-time veterinarian, one part-time veterinarian, one Registered Vet Technician, two entry level Animal Technicians, two front desk staff members, and two appointment schedulers.

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, 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](http://www.animalsamaritans.org)

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