



**THE GOOD DOG FOUNDATION**  
dogs helping humans heal

Contact: Julie Livingston, Livingston PR  
julie@livingstonpr.com / (347) 239-0249  
Alexander Thompson, Good Dog Foundation  
athompson@thegooddogfoundation.org / (888) 859-9992

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Good Dog Foundation To Hold 5th Annual Fundraising Gala & Live Auction  
May 17th, New York City**

**Unleashed by Petco Is Signature Gala Host and Planet Dog Is Honoree**

**Human & Canine Guests To Dress in Festive Attire & Celebrate their Profound Connection**

**New York, NY – April 21, 2016** – The Good Dog Foundation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) and globally recognized leader in therapy dog training, placement and research, announced that its 5th annual fundraising gala and live auction will be held Tuesday, May 17th at Guastavino's in New York City from 6:30 PM to 10:00 PM. Unleashed by Petco, the evening's Signature Gala Host, will cater to the grooming, dining and socializing of canine guests in attendance. This year's gala will honor the charitable efforts of Planet Dog, which has given more than \$1 million to nonprofits including Good Dog that foster human-canine wellbeing and healing. Award-winning actor Robert Sella, most recently a star in the Broadway comedy, SYLVIA, about a dog that helps heal the lives of its human companions, will serve as the evening's emcee.

"It is an honor to celebrate the generosity of Planet Dog which has given so much to strengthen and further the human-animal bond over the past decade," Rachel McPherson, founder and president of Good Dog, explains. A video highlighting the remarkable progress of patients visited by Good Dog therapy dog teams at the Bendheim Cancer Center in Greenwich, Connecticut – an effort funded by Planet Dog – will be screened.

"We are thrilled to welcome Unleashed by Petco as our Signature Gala Host," says Good Dog's McPherson. An array of dinner delicacies and accessories appealing to both human and canine palates will be in abundance. Unleashed by Petco will set up a "fetching" bar with treats, toys, digital photo booth, and primping station for the more than thirty certified therapy dogs (and their human partners)

-more-

who will be in attendance, groomed to their finest. A live auction to raise money for Good Dog will feature a unique collection of Maurice Sendak's revered drawings of dogs, specially curated for Good Dog by Mr. Sendak's Foundation, among other treasures.

Good Dog augments extensive volunteer field work with scientifically based research to examine and improve the efficacy of animal-assisted therapy (AAT). A recent study with Mount Sinai Beth Israel in New York, supported by Pfizer Foundation and Zoetis, was the first clinical trial to conclusively document improvements in emotional wellbeing and quality of life using animal-assisted therapy in adult cancer patients.<sup>1</sup>

More information on sponsorships and individual and group tickets is available [here](#).

### The Good Dog Foundation

A nationally recognized leader in animal-assisted therapy, The Good Dog Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to ease human suffering and promote healing among children and adults experiencing trauma from disease, disability, disaster, aging and other stressful conditions. To achieve its mission, Good Dog trains and certifies hundreds of volunteer teams (dog and handler) annually. This past year, Good Dog fielded a corps of nearly 1,000 trained and certified volunteers, carefully matching them with some 300-plus partner-facilities (hospitals, schools, nursing homes, etc.) in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut and Massachusetts. The teams work free-of-charge to help hundreds of thousands of people annually. In collaboration with esteemed institutions such as Yale University and Mount Sinai Beth Israel, Good Dog participates in scientific research on the benefits of animal-assisted therapy. For more information visit: <http://thegooddogfoundation.org/>.

### Planet Dog

Since incorporating in 1997, Planet Dog has been known as the pet industry's leading socially responsible, values-based design house, bringing people and dogs together for fun and mutual support. Planet Dog is recognized for making the **best** dog products from the **best** materials for our **best** friends. In addition to award-winning design, innovation, and quality, Planet Dog leads corporate America by donating money to the Planet Dog Foundation (PDF), which provides cash grants to organizations that train, place, and support service dogs helping people in need. Since 2006, PDF has awarded more than \$1 million in cash grants and product donations to service dog programs, therapy dog programs, K-9 search and rescue programs, police, fire and military dogs, and other innovative canine service programs. For a full list of grant recipients, please visit [www.planetdogfoundation.org](http://www.planetdogfoundation.org). To see the entire Planet Dog product line, please visit [www.planetdog.com](http://www.planetdog.com).

Unleashed by Petco

[Unleashed by Petco](#) is a community oriented pet specialty retailer that focuses on natural nutrition and dog and cat supply essentials. The Unleashed by Petco brand offers more than 115 locations nationwide specializing in natural and organic pet food and treats including a large made-in-the-USA assortment. As part of the Petco family of brands, Unleashed works with and supports the [Petco Foundation](#), an independent nonprofit organization, which has invested more than \$157 million since it was created in 1999 to help promote and improve the welfare of companion animals. In conjunction with the Petco Foundation and its partners, Unleashed by Petco locations host regular in-store adoption events to help find homes for thousands of animals every year...a total of 4.9 million adoptions to date.

###

<sup>1</sup> "Beneficial effects of animal-assisted visits on quality of life during multimodal radiation-chemotherapy regimens." Stewart B. Fleishman, MD et al. *The Journal of Community and Supportive Oncology*, Jan. 2015