

Shelter for Abused Women & Children DORIS DAY ANIMAL FOUNDATION RECOGNIZES IMPORTANCE OF PROTECT YOUR PET PROGRAM AT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CENTER

Naples, FL, June 20, 2008 – The **Shelter for Abused Women & Children** is pleased to announce that the nonprofit domestic violence center was designated by the *Doris Day Animal Foundation* to receive a grant because of the Shelter's innovative program that makes it possible for victims of domestic violence and their pets to receive shelter at the organization's residential Beau Venturi Home.

The non-profit Doris Day Animal Foundation learned that the Shelter for Abused Women & Children's Beau Venturi Home includes a shelter for pets, so that abandoning a pet would not be an obstacle to women taking refuge at the residential shelter.

"By providing an on-site kennel, we're actually able to increase a woman's chance of coming to and staying at the shelter where she and other victims in the family can access life-transforming programs and services. Funding from the Doris Day Animal Foundation helps us continue this vital program," explains Shelter Director of Operations Marci Sanders.

According to Sanders, funds from the Doris Day Animal Foundation will be used to support the Shelter's Protect Your Pet program, providing pet supplies, food, enrichment and medical care for resident animals.

"We salute the Shelter for its innovative and thoughtful program that benefits the community on so many levels," says Doris Day, founder of the Doris Day Animal Foundation. *"We are delighted to be able to help care for the residents' pets, so that the women and children can get the help and services they need without having to worry about their animals' welfare."*

The Shelter for Abused Women & Children was one of the first domestic violence centers in the world to have an on-site kennel, recognizing the link between domestic violence and animal abuse/cruelty currently being backed by research: around 70% of domestic violence victims with pets report that their pets are abused and a minimum of 20% of those victims delay leaving the abusive relationship due to fear for the safety of their pets.¹

"Tragically, batterers often torture, abuse and kill pets to threaten and control their victims. For these women, leaving pets behind with an abuser is not an option because they view their pets as family/unconditional love." Concludes Sanders, "Having resources to continue our kennel program means we can continue to offer safety and healing for all domestic violence victims in a family."

The **Doris Day Animal Foundation**, www.ddaf.org, is a national, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization founded by legendary performer Doris Day in 1978. The organization is dedicated to creating caring communities by acknowledging the significant interrelationship between animal welfare and human development.

The **Shelter for Abused Women & Children**, a state certified domestic violence center, provides programs and services crafted to prevent domestic violence before it begins; advocates for societal changes to end domestic violence; and meets the immediate and long-term needs of victims and survivors of intimate partner abuse.

¹ Ascione, F.R. 1997. *The Abuse of Animals and Domestic Violence: A National Survey of Shelters for Women who are Battered*.

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The Shelter for Abused Women & Children helps adult and child victims and survivors of domestic violence through safety, intervention and support; educates the public about domestic violence; and advocates for social change against domestic violence. For more information, please contact us at 239-775-3862, or visit us online at: www.naplesshelter.org

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