

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 29, 2013

Rage and the family cat
spcaLA arrests an alleged animal abuser

Los Angeles, CA – Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA) Humane Officers arrested Northridge resident, Aldo Rivera, at the Glendale Galleria on Friday afternoon on felony animal cruelty charges, for violations of penal code 597a. Rivera is alleged to have violently beaten his girlfriend's cat, Umechan, in December 2012.

Umechan, whose name means "little plum," suffered from a traumatic brain injury, missing teeth and several other abnormalities consistent with blunt force trauma. Rivera purportedly attempted to remove Umechan from a closet by force, at which point Rivera claims she bit him, triggering his alleged attack at his girlfriend's residence in Northridge.

Rivera's girlfriend was not at home when the attack happened, and only learned of it hours later when she returned home from work to a bloodied cat, for whom she sought medical treatment.

"Regardless of the object of abuse – animal or human – violence cannot be tolerated," said spcaLA President, Madeline Bernstein. "Today, the family cat is treated as a punching bag, who is the target tomorrow? The link between animal abuse, domestic violence and child abuse is real, proven by endless studies, and must be broken."

spcaLA offers services aimed at breaking the cycle of violence. spcaLA's internationally renowned program, Teaching Love and Compassion (TLC)™, helps instill empathy in at-risk youth. spcaLA's Animal Safety Net (ASN)™ offers free boarding for the pets of domestic violence survivors, at no cost, so they may leave a dangerous situation without fear for their pets' safety.

Umechan survived her injuries. If convicted of felony animal cruelty charges, Rivera could face up to three years in California state prison and a \$20,000 fine, among other penalties.

spcaLA thanks the LAPD Devonshire Division, and the Glendale PD, assigned to the Glendale Galleria station, for their assistance in searching for and processing Rivera.

For more information or to schedule an interview, please contact Ana Bustilloz at 323-730-5300 x252, cell 323-707-1271 or abustilloz@spcaLA.com.

Since 1877, spcaLA has been the premiere independent, nonprofit animal welfare organization serving Southern California. There is no national SPCA, parent organization, or umbrella group that provides financial support to spcaLA. Donations run programs and services including Cruelty Investigation, Disaster Animal Response Team, Humane Education, and a variety of shelter services.