

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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spcaLA and VCA West Los Angeles Animal Hospital Partner To Correct Congenital Heart Defect

Los Angeles, CA – “Pacer”, a 6 month old male Sheltie mix, underwent a lifesaving surgery to correct a congenital heart defect thanks to a joint program between Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA) and VCA West Los Angeles Animal Hospital (WLA). For several years, the doctors at WLA have been performing routine spays and neuters on adoptable and newly adopted animals from spcaLA shelters. “Pacer” was anything but routine. When evaluating “Pacer” prior to the neuter, he was found to have a heart murmur consistent with a patent ductus arteriosus (PDA). PDAs are the most common congenital heart defect in dogs. They occur as the result of failure of a blood vessel that is normally present in utero, to close shortly after birth. Such defects can lead to heart failure and death at an early age if not surgically corrected.

When “Pacer” was evaluated at WLA, chest radiographs were performed which showed an enlarged heart. Dr. Lynn Tsugawa, DACVIM (C), a board certified veterinary cardiologist, then performed an echocardiogram to evaluate the heart and the great vessels confirming the presence of the PDA.

Drs. Kurtis Tubby and Kristen McDonald, staff doctors at WLA, performed the surgery to correct the heart defect under the supervision of Dr. Maureen Mueller, DACVS, a board certified veterinary surgeon. During the surgery, “Pacer” was also under the care of Dr. Nathan Peterson, DACVECC, a board certified veterinary criticalist. Both the surgery and recovery were uneventful and “Pacer” was discharged to spcaLA. He will be recovering with his foster family until he is available for adoption. His prognosis is excellent and VCA WLA looks forward to seeing “Pacer” and his new family for many years to come.

For more information about VCA West Los Angeles Animal Hospital, please contact David Bruyette, DVM, DACVIM Medical Director, 310-473-2951, David.Bruyette@vcahospitals.com.

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

About VCA West Los Angeles Animal Hospital

Established in 1984, VCA West Los Angeles Animal Hospital is one of the largest veterinary hospitals in the country in addition to being the first specialty and referral hospital in Los Angeles. Serving Los Angeles, San Fernando Valley, Orange and Ventura counties and the surrounding communities, the facility provides 24/7/365 emergency and critical care services and offers a full complement of specialty services in virtually all areas of veterinary medical specialties. Recently relocated to a 42,000 sq. ft. facility, the hospital is equipped with the most advanced technology to ensure optimal care for its patients. The hospital is actively engaged in veterinary medical research through participation in clinical trials and in education and outreach within the veterinary community through its intern and continuing education programs.

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PAGE 2-2-2-2

About spcaLA

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.