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**COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT AT SUNNYSIDE PARK
ON APRIL 12TH TARGETS ANIMAL OVERPOPULATION
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**



Houston, TX, April 9, 2014 – Local groups are coming together to address Houston's animal overpopulation crisis at a community awareness event at Sunnyside Park, 3502 Belfort, on Saturday, April 12, 2014, from 10:00 AM until 1:00 PM. Pet Rescue Team and South Side Street Dogs will be educating residents in their community and signing up pets in 77051 and 77021 zip codes for free spay and neuter. In exchange, the pet owners will be asked to help spread the word that spay, neuter and education are the only solutions to Houston's homeless animal crisis.

The effort is part of the Unity 1000 Challenge and is sponsored by Unity for a Solution, which plans to fix at least 1,000 pets belonging to low income residents in 2014 after fixing 843 in 2013. Often owned animals or family pets that are not fixed are allowed to roam and produce unwanted litters of puppies and kittens, some of which end up on the streets. Fixing these animals is a first step in reducing overpopulation. This year's challenge targets Houston's East End, Fifth Ward, Sunnyside, South Union, Third Ward, Denver Harbor, and along the "Corridor of Cruelty" (U.S. 59 North). There are estimated to be over one million homeless animals in Houston.¹

"We think this is the first time ever for an event like this in Sunnyside," said Gloria Medina Zenteno, president of Barrio Dogs and one of the founders of Unity for a Solution. "We tried working with the city of Houston and encouraging our elected officials to do more about the many homeless, suffering animals that some of us see daily in our communities. The city has been slow in responding so we took the initiative to do something ourselves by fixing 1,000 pets from low income areas. While the number we fix is negligible when you consider the magnitude of the problem, we are also asking residents to help us educate others about the importance and necessity of fixing their pets."

Barrio Dogs, Corridor Rescue and Forgotten Dogs of the Fifth Ward formed Unity for a Solution in January 2013 to try to improve conditions for Houston's homeless and unwanted animals by educating the public and finding ways to provide more free and low cost spay neuter services. Since forming, Unity has brought in additional partners including Barrio Dogs, Inc., Corridor Rescue Inc., Forgotten Dogs of the Fifth Ward Project, Clipped Ear Cat Sanctuary, AARF Houston, Twyla's Friends, Jurassic Bark Rescue, Lucky Dog Rescue, Scout's Honor Rescue, Inc., Texas Litter Control, One Hundred Thousand Hearts, 4 Paws Farm, Star Pizza, South Side Street Dogs, Shaggy Dog Rescue, FMW/FabLab, The Buck Foundation, Christi's Pet Sitting, Winston's on Washington, Paws Pet Resort, Olivine, Martini Hardware, Gratifi Kitchen + Bar, S.A.V.E. Rescue Coalition, Pet Rescue Team, ADORE Houston and Mrs. Wooferton's Dog Walking & Pet Sitting. To learn more about Unity, go to www.unityforasolution.org. To donate or learn more about the Unity 1000 Challenge, go to www.firstgiving.com/unity1000/2014.

¹BARC statistic reported KHOU 11 News, ww.khou.com/news/local/Residents-complain-about-citys-response-to-roaming-stray-dogs-216842061.html, 7/13/13