PRESS RELEASE

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Animal Alliance of Camden County Announces Improved Lost/Found Services for Community Pets

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Voorhees, NJ: The Animal Alliance of Camden County is pleased to share a new initiative, which will increase the amount of lost/found pets being reunited with their families. By working together, the Alliance organizations have improved an important aspect of animal welfare in our community.

The Animal Alliance of Camden County is comprised of Animal Welfare Association (AWA), Camden County Animal Shelter (CCAS), Animal Adoption Center (AAC), Voorhees Animal Orphanage (VAO), and Independent Animal Control. These agencies joined forces four years ago to improve community services for animals.

This summer the Alliance has been working on ways to improve how lost/found pets are reunited with their owners. "One in four pets will get lost during his or her lifetime. Being "lost" can mean a dog escaping from his/her yard for a few hours to a cat missing from several weeks, " says Maya Richmond, Executive Director of AWA. "Any time a pet is missing, the pet's owners are overcome with a feeling of panic which only intensifies when they learn that their pet may be in one of more than six area shelters."

In Camden County there are four shelters contracted to take in lost or stray pets. Each town is required to contract with a shelter. CCAS, VAO, Almost Home Animal Shelter and Cumberland County SPCA all house stray or lost animals for various towns. To complicate things, there are two private shelters in Camden County that do not have contracts: AWA and AAC. However many people go to these shelters seeking assistance. Also, pets do not abide by county lines and many pets can be found in neighboring county towns and brought to those county's shelters. Lastly up to this point a pet owner had to file multiple lost/found reports – one with each shelter- because there was no system in place to share that information.

This August the Alliance partners decided to take steps to improve lost/found pet reporting by linking their database systems. Now whenever a lost, found or stray pet is listed in one database, staff members across the five shelters can see the information. "You may search for existing lost/found reports by date, status, location, breed, etc.," shares Vicki Rowland, Executive Director of CCAS. "It allows our staff members to better help a distraught pet owner track their pet down more quickly and reduce the amount of time a pet stays in the shelter."

This change is a huge improvement to the process of reuniting families with lost/found pets, but the Alliance strongly feels it is important to additionally contact each area shelter that is not an Alliance member. The cooperation and sharing of information is only among the Alliance members. Almost Home Animal Shelter and Cumberland County SPCA both hold

stray pet contacts for Camden County towns and surrounding counties' shelters. Gloucester County Animal Shelter and Burlington County Animal Shelter and are not part of the Alliance and their databases are not linked with the Alliance's systems.

About Animal Alliance of Camden County (AACC)
The Animal Alliance of Camden County was formed in 2011 by five local animal welfare organizations and Camden County Shared Services, who decided to coordinate their efforts to better serve the pets and residents of the county. Current members include the Animal Adoption Center, Animal Welfare Association, Camden County Animal Shelter, Voorhees Animal Orphanage, and Independent Animal Control. Member organizations work together to improve the well-being of companion animals and their owners in the community, including joint efforts such as adoption events, spay/neuter partnerships, and transporting animals in need to reduce populations.