



April 22, 2022  
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Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SPCA AND AGNOR-HURT ELEMENTARY STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN  
PETCO LOVE'S NATIONAL 'READ AND SHARE YOUR LOVE' EVENT,  
INSPIRING CHILDREN TO READ TO SHELTER PETS**

*Children to read Tony and Emmy award winning actress and performer Kristin Chenoweth's new book "What Will I Do with My Love Today" to shelter pets during national event on April 23*

**CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA (April 22, 2022)** In advance of *National Kids and Pets Day*, nonprofit Petco Love is rallying kids across the country together to share their love with shelter pets, reading Kristin Chenoweth's inspiring book "*What Will I Do with My Love Today?*". The Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA joins Petco Love, Tony and Emmy award winning actress and performer Chenoweth, and 50 animal welfare organizations across the nation for this "*Read & Share Your Love*" event, hosting little animal lovers in their shelter on April 23rd. The events empower children to practice their reading skills and put their love into action, increasing public awareness of saving pet lives through adoption, kindness and volunteering.

Chenoweth's new tale, perfect for children ages four to eight, celebrates the power of kindness and pet adoption. The inspiring book highlights the 'made for each other' adoption of

Chenoweth's rescue dog, Thunder. A vocal advocate for pet adoption, her message that "*extra love in your heart and your home is waiting for someone who's all alone*" aligns perfectly with Petco Love's goal to harness the power of love to propel pet adoption into the national spotlight. The book advocates, "*adoption means family, and family's forever.*"

"We are proud to participate in this national effort to encourage children to read and share their love with our pets," said Angie Gunter, Chief Executive Officer of the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA. "We have many 'good listeners' here who are ready to be adopted!"

In addition to pet adoption, the theme of Chenoweth's first picture book is helping others in your community. In keeping with that theme, the book from Tommy Nelson, a division of HarperCollins Christian Publishing, was donated to 50 participating animal welfare organizations by Petco Love and the publisher. Studies show that reading books to dogs and cats in the shelter helps calm and socialize pets and increase their chances of adoption. It is also proven to help children gain confidence reading out loud as animals are non-judgmental listeners.

Susanne Kogut, President of Petco Love, offered "Seeing the relationship between a child and a pet is magical, it's pure love. I hope Kristin's message "What Will I Do With My Love Today?" inspires children and families to put their love into action for pets in need nationwide. Bringing pets and children together will make the world a better place as pets are a positive influence on a child's physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. It's a mutually beneficial, unconditional friendship."

A group of Agnor-Hurt Elementary School students, along with their parents, will attend the SPCA's "Read and Share Your Love" event to read to a shelter dog on April 23<sup>rd</sup> at 2 p.m.

**Media is invited to attend.** Please contact SPCA Director of Communications, Emily Swecker, to RSVP.

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*About the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA: The Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA is proud to have maintained the City of Charlottesville and Albemarle County as a No Kill community, providing life-saving care to thousands of animals in the region. The mission of the SPCA is to advance the compassionate treatment of animals by providing sheltering, medical care and*

*behavioral services for dogs and cats; promoting permanent, caring homes; and furthering education and outreach to place healthy animals in caring homes.*

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### **About Petco Love**

Petco Love is a nonprofit changing lives by harnessing the power of love to make communities and pet families closer, stronger, and healthier. Since our founding in 1999 as the Petco Foundation, we've empowered animal welfare organizations by investing \$330 million in adoption and other lifesaving efforts. We've helped find loving homes for more than 6.5 million pets in partnership with Petco and organizations nationwide. Our love for pets drives us to lead with innovation, creating tools animal lovers need to reunite lost pets and lead with passion, inspiring and mobilizing communities and our more than 4,000 animal welfare partners to drive lifesaving change alongside us.