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5th Annual *New Leash on Life* 5K Run/3K Fun Walk on Saturday

Rochester, Minn. – Spend your Saturday morning with some furry friends and help raise awareness of mental illness and the positive role that pets can play. The Fifth Annual *New Leash on Life* is set for Saturday, September 27, at Silver Lake Park. This event is held to help raise funds to support programs provided by Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center and Paws & Claws Humane Society.

Event features include:

- 5K dog run and 3K dog walk
- “Bow-wow Blast” activities for dogs
- Awards for top pledge collectors
- MN Disc Dog Club demonstration
- T-shirts for all participants
- Sponsor booths with give-aways
- Music and entertainment

"This event brings out dogs that range from the pint-sized to the really big breeds," said Dave Cook, chief executive officer for Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center. "It's really satisfying to see so many people having fun by exercising with their pets."

Cook said that exercise and pet ownership have a positive impact on people diagnosed with a mental illness or coping with stress. He added that Zumbro Valley's clinicians emphasize regular exercise as part of any treatment plan, and that pets are great for this.

The event recently was included in *The Runner's Bucket List*, a book identifying 200 races for runners to explore.

The walk will feature booths for sponsors, who will be offering free give-aways and offers for participants. Registration is \$25 and can be completed online at www.zumbromhc.org/news-events/new-leash-on-life.php. People also can register at the event beginning at 8:30 a.m., with activities starting at 9:30 a.m. And bring along man's best friend for an easy jog or enter your pet to be timed to see if your dog is the Fastest Dog in Rochester.

About Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center

Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center enhances the quality of life for residents in southeastern Minnesota by serving as a community resource for the integrated treatment of mental health issues, addiction disorders and medical conditions. The organization collaborates with government agencies, schools, non-profit groups and others to provide programs dedicated to improving the mental health of adults, adolescents and children. Zumbro Valley Mental Health Center is a private, non-profit organization serving Olmsted and Fillmore counties. For more information, visit our Web site at www.zumbromhc.org or call 507-289-2089.