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Run and Fun Walk to Raise Awareness of Pets for Mental Health

Rochester, Minn. – Zumbro Valley Health Center and Paws & Claws Humane Society are collaborating to host the *6th Annual New Leash on Life*, a 5K run and 3K fun walk to help raise awareness of mental illness and the positive role that pets can play. The fundraising event is being held Saturday, September 26, 2015, at Silver Lake Park.

Event features include:

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

“Our *New Leash on Life* event is focused on informing people about the benefits that pets have on people’s mental health,” said Dave Cook, chief executive officer for Zumbro Valley Health Center. “Research shows that owning a dog, cat or other pet can have a positive impact on fighting depression and coping with stress by reducing loneliness.”

Cook added that pet owners also benefit from exercising more, resulting in fewer headaches, lower blood pressure and a reduced risk for heart disease. He said Zumbro Valley Health Center clinicians emphasize regular exercise as part of any treatment plan, and that pets are great for this.

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 <http://www.zvhc.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.

About Zumbro Valley Health Center

Restoring hope...one life at a time. Zumbro Valley 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 integrated services to under- and un-served populations. Zumbro Valley Health Center is a private, non-profit organization serving Olmsted and Fillmore counties. For more information, visit our Web site at www.zvhc.org or call 507-289-2089.

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