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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Alaqua Animal Refuge SELECTS VOLUNTEER TO COMPETE IN PURINA® CAT CHOW® SHELTER VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR CONTEST; CHANCE TO WIN A \$25,000 MAKEOVER FOR SHELTER**

*Vote for Local Freeport, Florida Area Shelter's Volunteer to Help her Shelter  
Win a \$25,000 Makeover*

**Freeport, Florida (2/23/15)** – Purina Cat Chow has selected **Alaqua Animal Refuge** as one of 50 cat-focused shelters nationwide that it's recognizing during its Purina Cat Chow Shelter Volunteer of the Year Contest. The Purina Cat Chow Shelter Volunteer of the Year Contest is honoring and thanking the volunteers who tirelessly care for cats as they await their forever homes and work to make their temporary shelter homes gentler, less stressful places.

Purina Cat Chow asked 50 cat-focused shelters – one in every state – to help identify and share the stories of the volunteers who clean the visiting rooms, foster cats and kittens, and spend countless hours simply petting the cats to keep them calm and happy. Each of the 50 shelters nominated one volunteer who works tirelessly to create a gentler environment for shelter cats.

From now until Sunday, March 15, **Alaqua Animal Refuge** is asking the Freeport, Florida to vote for our shelter volunteer's story at [www.catchow.com](http://www.catchow.com), and the shelter of the winning volunteer will win a \$25,000 makeover. In addition to the shelter makeover, four runners-up volunteers will each win a \$5,000 donation for their shelter. Every participating shelter will receive a \$1,000 donation, Purina® Cat Chow® Gentle Formula brand food and cat care supplies.

"The Purina Cat Chow Shelter Volunteer of the Year Contest allows us to recognize the hard work and dedication of one of our volunteers," said Laurie Hood, Executive Director/President. "Our shelter is excited and humbled to be the only shelter selected in Florida and now needs the community to vote for our volunteer so we can win the \$25,000 makeover donation from Purina Cat Chow."

**Alaqua Animal Refuge** is the only shelter from Florida participating in the contest. The organization plans to use the cash donation to create a gentler environment for cats.

The Purina Cat Chow Shelter Volunteer of the Year Contest will donate nearly \$100,000 among the 50 participating shelters in cash donations, cat food and cat care supplies to lessen the stress for cats living in shelters while they await their forever home.

"Each year, millions of cats enter animal welfare organizations. The dedication and hard work of shelter volunteers are critical to these cats' care," said Sarah Johnston, Purina Cat



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Chow brand manager. “We want to recognize the volunteers who make sure shelter cats have a comfortable place to live, access to high-quality nutrition, and provide unconditional support while they’re waiting to be adopted.”

This contest is part of the Brand’s “Building Better Lives” program, an ongoing commitment to help improve the lives of cats through rescue, nutrition and adoption support. In three years, the Purina Cat Chow “Building Better Lives” program will donate nearly \$600,000 to more than 100 local cat-focused shelters nationwide and help improve the lives of more than 86,000 cats.

To learn more about the Purina Cat Chow Shelter Volunteer of the Year Contest, visit [www.catchow.com](http://www.catchow.com).

#### **About Nestlé Purina PetCare**

Nestlé Purina PetCare promotes responsible pet care, community involvement and the positive bond between people and their pets. A premiere global manufacturer of pet products, Nestlé Purina PetCare is part of Swiss-based Nestlé S.A., a global leader in nutrition, health and wellness.

#### **About Alaqua Animal Refuge**

Alaqua Animal Refuge is a no-kill animal sanctuary and adoption center located in Northwest Florida. The refuge has placed more than 10,000 animals of all kinds since its inception in 2007. In addition, Alaqua has grown to become a recognized leader in animal welfare and animal cruelty prevention. [www.alaquaanimalrefuge.org](http://www.alaquaanimalrefuge.org)

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