



The catalyst for Tony La Russa's Animal Rescue Foundation (ARF) came in May of 1990 during a baseball game between the Oakland Athletics and the New York Yankees when a stray cat wandered onto the playing field. Terrified by the roar of the crowd, the frightened feline dashed about, eluding umpires and players. Tony, then the manager of the Oakland A's, coaxed the cat into the dugout, secured its safety for the remainder of the game, then took responsibility for placing it with a local shelter. To his dismay, Tony discovered there was not a single no-kill facility in the East Bay region of the San Francisco Bay Area. When Tony learned the cat would be euthanized, he and his wife, Elaine, named her "Evie" and found a home for her. His experience with this cat was the genesis for the founding of ARF, a no-kill organization dedicated to bringing people and animals together to enrich each other's lives.

As life-long animal advocates with a deep concern for the thousands of animals abandoned to shelters each year, Tony and Elaine were inspired to create ARF in 1991. Their goal was to find caring homes for these animals and educate the public about the importance of controlling pet over-population through spay and neuter programs. Since then, ARF's mission has been expanded to include many community outreach programs. It is only through a comprehensive approach that includes public education, early spay/neuter, and community involvement that ARF will achieve Tony and Elaine's ultimate vision of no more homeless, unwanted pets.

On a national level, ARF will continue to provide community members nationwide with the tools they need to make a difference in their own community. Through ARF's website, 800 phone number, events and model programs, ARF is developing new ways to reach out to children, parents, educators and animal activists to have the widest possible impact. As ARF's national impact grows, ARF is developing strong partnerships with a number of local and national corporations that have identified mutually beneficial ways to promote ARF's message as they fulfill their own corporate marketing objectives.

ARF's 37,700-square-foot, state-of-the-art Adoption and Education Center which opened in August 2003, including Maddie's Animal Care Center and People Connect Center, is the realization of a long-held dream. In addition to expanding its local life-saving services, ARF has developed innovative ways to bring the healing touch of animals to people in need. ARF's home serves as a destination center for the community, as well as a national model, providing a resource for people of all ages to enjoy positive interaction with animals.

### **Organization Information:**

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