

RELEASE: Immediate

CONTACTS: Catherine Susa
412-788-2784 / 412-600-4694 (cell)
Roberta Knauf
724-347-5100 / 724-974-9084 (cell)

**HUMANE SOCIETY OF MERCER COUNTY AND HILLCREST-FLYNN PET
FUNERAL HOME AND CREMATORY, AND HILLCREST MEMORIAL PARK
PEOPLE AND PET GARDENS TO HONOR, BURY DECEASED UNWANTED PETS**

Hermitage, Pennsylvania – October 2, 2007 — “This is a beginning. I think we’re setting a precedent for the unwanted and abused pets in the future,” said **Sandi Drabick**, executive director of the **Humane Society of Mercer County**, Pa. She’ll officiate a first and unique ceremony to memorialize the more than 30 abused and neglected pets whose lives could not be saved from October of 2006 to October of 2007. The ceremony, which is open to the public and their pets, will begin with the annual pet blessing at **Hillcrest Memorial Park Chapel**, 2619 East State Street, Hermitage, Pa., on **Thursday, October 4 at 3 p.m.** A procession will follow from the chapel to **Hillcrest Memorial Park People and Pet Gardens**, 215 Dutch Lane, Hermitage, Pa., for a blessing of the cemetery and a committal service.

“Roberta Knauf (Hillcrest-Flynn Pet Funeral Home and Crematory) and I have been friends for years. We’ve really established a good friendship. So, that’s how this all got started. Then, the Flynns jumped on it. There were over 30 cremations this year, mostly dogs,” said Drabick. “We have a firm policy on euthanasia so these pets were either too aggressive or had such severe illnesses or injuries that their lives could not be saved.”

Hillcrest-Flynn donates its services to cremate the deceased pets. It also donated lots in its Pet Garden to provide a dignified, final resting place and a bronze marker inscribed:

Lost or Mistreated in Life. Respected in Death.

Honored by Mercer County Humane Society and Hillcrest-Flynn Pet Funeral Home and Crematory.

October 2006 – October 2007.

Memorializing Deceased Abused Pets - Page 2

“We will hold a memorial service, and a new bronze marker will be dedicated and then the cremains will be buried in the cemetery to honor these pets each year,” said Knauf.

“Even though they didn’t mean something to their owners,” said Drabick of the deceased abused and neglected animals, “we know they meant something to us. Now, we’ll have a place to walk out there and remember that dog, to talk to it and to know where he is.”

Rev. Donald E. Berdis of Our Lady of Fatima Church in Farrell, Pa. will bless pets brought by their owners to the annual pet blessing. Pets must be on a leash or in a carrier. He will also bless the People and Pet Gardens and conduct the committal service in the cemetery. Humane Society executive board members, humane officers, members and volunteers will be in attendance as well as representatives of Hillcrest-Flynn.

Humane Society of Mercer County Inc. strives to make Mercer County, Pa., an animal friendly community. It enforces Pennsylvania’s Animal Cruelty Laws, and provides a safe and comfortable animal shelter for the care of pet animals rescued from abusive, neglectful or cruel situations within the boundaries of Mercer County. For more information, please visit: hsmc-pa.org or call: (724) 981-5445.

Hillcrest-Flynn Pet Funeral Home and Crematory, and Hillcrest Memorial Park People and Pet Gardens provide respectful, compassionate, comprehensive after-life care for pets and their families. It is the first pet funeral home and crematory to be located on the grounds of a human cemetery. Its People and Pet Gardens provides a section where people can be buried with their pets in the same or adjacent lots and a pets only section. **Hillcrest Dog Park and Wellness Center** is the first private off-leash park for dogs in Mercer County and surrounding areas. For more information, please visit: hillcrestflynn.com or call: 724-347-5100.

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**ITINERARY — ANNUAL PET BLESSING
MEMORIAL & COMMITAL SERVICE FOR DECEASED
UNWANTED PETS**

Public and Pets Welcome

3 p.m. Location for Annual Pet Blessing:
Hillcrest Memorial Park Chapel
2619 E. State Street
Hermitage, Pa.

Welcome:
Sandi Drabick, Executive Director
Humane Society of Mercer County
Mercer County, Pa.

Individual Blessing of Pets:
Rev. Donald E. Berdis
Our Lady of Fatima Church
Farrell, Pa.

3:45 p.m. Procession to Cemetery:
Humane Society of Mercer County
Hillcrest-Flynn Pet Funeral Home and Crematory
Public and Their Pets

4 p.m. Location for Cemetery Blessing and Committal Service:
Hillcrest Memorial Park People and Pet Gardens
215 Dutch Lane, Hermitage, Pa.

Blessing of Hillcrest Memorial Park People and Pet Gardens:
Rev. Donald E. Berdis

Committal Service for Deceased Homeless Pets:
Rev. Donald E. Berdis
Humane Society of Mercer County
Hillcrest-Flynn Pet Funeral Home and Crematory

*Lost or Mistreated in Life
Respected in Death
October 2006 – October 2007*

Please have pets on a leash or in a carrier for blessing of pets.