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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The Animal Care League and Downtown Oak Park Announce the Winners for “Be My Furry Valentine” Contest**

Oak Park, February 16, 2011 - Downtown Oak Park and the Animal Care League are happy to report the results for “Be My Furry Valentine,” a promotion designed to help people celebrate their own beloved pets, as well as remember those pets waiting to be loved by a family. Community members were asked to send a Valentine’s card and donation to the adoptable pets at the Animal Care League, which raised over \$200 for the ACL.

“We are grateful to the Oak Park community for the many ways they support the Animal Care League,” said Tom Van Winkle, Animal Care League executive director. “These donations will help us to replace a dryer destroyed in a recent fire, as well as extend our fire alarm system throughout the entire shelter.”

Pet owners were also invited to enter their pet in the “Be My Furry Valentine” photo/caption contest.

“We selected four winners from 23 great photo entries,” said Downtown Oak Park executive director, Pat Zubak. “It was very hard to pick as all the pets are clearly in loving homes.” \$5 Downtown Oak Park gift certificates will be mailed to the non-winning entries.

- **Karen Mansfield and her bunny Copernicus** won a \$50 Downtown Oak Park gift certificate - “Copernicus is cute and cuddly. He purrs when he gets back rubs and when I brush his fur. He likes to follow me into the kitchen and beg for carrots.”
- **Lisa and Brian Ganz-Lueck and their dog Joe** won a Scratch ‘n Sniff Gift Basket - “Joe was found in an alley where a group of young men were hitting him with sticks. We brought him home and nursed him back to health...Every toy meets its demise in Joe’s paws or in Joe’s mouth (they pop, crack, or explode!), so we’ve invested in the same toys used for circus animals -- like bears and tigers. He brings a smile to our

faces every day (when he's not being nosy and sticking his head through other people's fences!)."

- **Regina Miller and her dog Tia** won a Pastel Portrait by artist Hailan Gong, showing at the Marion Street Gallery - "When I was younger, I was terrified of dogs. Tia helped me learn to love dogs and now I have volunteered at the Animal Care League to help other animals in need!"
- **Stephanie and Brandon Gray and their cat Zizou** won a Pet Portrait by photographer Michelle Lytle - "Zizou is less than a year old, a mixed breed, and one of five cats we have adopted from shelters. We would love to have pet portraits of our 'children.'"

To see all the submission photos or make a donation to ACL, please visit the Animal Care League website at [www.animalcareleague.org](http://www.animalcareleague.org). Also, the ACL will display the donation valentines at their 1011 Garfield Street location until March 14.

**About the Animal Care League:** The Animal Care League is a limited admission shelter located Oak Park. We help homeless cats and dogs by providing them food, shelter, medical attention and love until we can find them a loving home. As a not for profit 501©3 organization, we depend on the generosity of our communities to help us meet our goals of finding new homes for as many animals as possible each year.

**About Downtown Oak Park:** Downtown Oak Park offers an exceptional array of shops and restaurants, a state-of-the-art seven-screen movie theater and an exciting year-round schedule of promotions and special events. The district provides shoppers the convenience of numerous professional and personal service businesses, a central location, a public transportation center and plenty of parking. The district is located right off I-290, or at the Harlem stop on the CTA Green Line, and at the Oak Park stop on the Metra Union Pacific West Line.

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*Downtown Oak Park's mission is to create and support a thriving and vibrant business environment in Downtown Oak Park*