



THE WATERS

New Program Brings Rescued Dogs and Seniors Together at The Waters of Plymouth

Soon there will be smiles, laughter, and a little tail wagging thrown in for good measure at The Waters of Plymouth. On Sat., Aug. 20, beginning at 1 p.m., three dogs and their handlers from Second Hand Hounds will be visiting the community.

“We will be doing a walk through the community living areas where anyone can visit with the dogs, and then there will be some 1-on-1 time with select residents as well,” said Becky Willett, Director of Community Operations at The Waters of Plymouth, a senior living community located at 11305 Highway 55.

The visit is part of a new program called Second Hand Hope, which pairs companion animals with people who enjoy spending time with them on a regular basis. Over the years, numerous studies have suggested that companion animals can improve a person’s physical and mental health. The program was started up this Spring, and is run by Katie Jo Olson of Second Hand Hounds, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit animal rescue based in Eden Prairie.

“The program itself is an offshoot of our hospice program. The original idea was for some of our hospice animals to come into senior living communities to visit with residents, but we quickly realized that wasn’t going to work because there was too much demand, so we decided to turn instead to our foster families to find the right dogs for the program,” said Olson.

Today, nearly 40 dogs, including breeds ranging from a tiny Maltese to a big 150 pound Great Pyrenees, participate. “We’re not a therapy animal program. Our animals don’t have special training. They are companion animals who are naturally friendly, well behaved and like attention. In fact, the animals enjoy the visits just as much as the people do,” said Olson.

The Waters of Plymouth is one of nine senior living communities in the Twin Cities where the Second Hand Hope program is being offered. Others include The Waters of Edina, The Waters of Highland Park and The Waters of Oakdale.

About The Waters

Minneapolis, MN-based The Waters Senior Living LLC is an owner, operator, and developer of distinctive senior communities in Minnesota and nationally. The company mission is to create communities that thrive – for residents, families and team members. Their communities offer an innovative suite of personal services and amenities, developed in partnership with the nation’s thought leaders, including the University of Minnesota Center for Spirituality & Healing. The Waters has eight communities, encompassing more than 1,000 apartments, in operation in Minnesota. They are in Edina, Minneapolis, Plymouth, Rochester, Oakdale, Highland Park, Eden Prairie and White Bear Lake. The Waters of Excelsior, opening in Spring 2018, will be The Waters’ 9th community.

About Second Hand Hounds

Secondhand Hounds is a 501(c)(3) non-profit animal rescue that rescues both dogs and cats. Founded in July of 2009, the organization provides safe shelter, proper veterinary care and daily necessities for animals at risk, while working hard to find each a permanent, loving home.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The news media is invited to attend the event at The Waters of Plymouth, located at 11305 Highway 55, Plymouth, MN 55441, on Sat., Aug. 20, beginning at 1 p.m. Interviews will be available Becky Willett, Director of Community Operations at The Waters of Plymouth and Katie Jo Olson, the Second Hand Hope coordinator. For more information, contact Rachel M. Anderson, Publicist, at 952-240-2513.

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