

HOUSTON RESIDENTS FLOCK TO BARC; 174 ANIMALS FIND NEW HOMES

September 20, 2010 -- Houston residents responded in unprecedented numbers this weekend to publicized reports of BARC being beyond capacity. The shelter had recently experienced typical daily intake of 80 animals, with as many as 100 coming in on several occasions. This resulted in 778 animals in-shelter on Thursday, September 16. The facility is budgeted and designed to house 550 animals.

BARC had 174 live releases over the period Friday, September 17 through Sunday, September 19. Live releases are comprised of animals which are either adopted, fostered, transferred to a rescue organization, returned to their owners, or relocated (feral cats returned to a Trap-Neuter-Return colony or wild animals moved to a non-residential area). The live releases include those animals from the BARC facility at 3200 Carr and the five off-site adoption events, four of which occur weekly.

"The reports had a huge impact on driving people to the shelter. I think with the combination of our increased community presence through our four weekly off-site adoption events across the City and this great media coverage, more Houston residents are going to consider BARC first when they're looking for new pets. There are many misperceptions regarding what kind of dogs and cats are available at shelters, so this new traffic means more people are going to tell their friends about their great new dog or cat, and that they got him or her from BARC, which means more of our animals will find loving homes. This is such a huge win for everyone involved. Our whole team is walking on air after this weekend," said Dave Atencio, BARC General Manager.

BARC benefits every day from the selfless help of its volunteers and network of foster and rescue organizations. Friends of BARC hosts the Wags to Whiskers adoption event every weekend at BARC. This essential group of volunteers offers complimentary hot dogs, hamburgers, and drinks to BARC visitors, in addition to other selfless donations to the BARC facility.

BARC has recently made investments in four additional team members to enhance and optimize these great resources. More plans are in the works to build the BARC its "brick-and-mortar" and online communities.

For further information, including maps and directions to off-site events, please visit the BARC website at www.houstonbarc.com. You can find BARC on Facebook at www.facebook.com/BARCHouston. To learn about volunteering at BARC or to register, please visit <http://www.houstontx.gov/volunteer>.