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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**FIVE-DOLLAR RABIES VACCINATIONS at PAWS (Laurel Hill)**  
**November 15, 2012**

**OKALOOSA COUNTY** – The Okaloosa County Health Department and the Panhandle Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) have partnered to offer low-cost rabies vaccinations this Thursday, November 15, 2012, from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. PAWS is located at 3731 New Ebenezer Rd in Laurel Hill. Microchips will also be available for ten dollars. All animals must be on a leash or in a pet carrier.

“A special thank you to PAWS and their veterinarians for partnering with us,” said Dr. Karen Chapman, Director of the Okaloosa County Health Department. “This is a community effort to bring pet owners into compliance with the law, while providing protection against a deadly disease that continues to cause public health concerns.”

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that can be prevented, but not cured. The virus attacks the brain of warm-blooded animals, including people. Even if you consider your dog, cat, or ferret to be an indoor pet, it is important that your pet receives a rabies vaccination.

In 2011, the Okaloosa County Health Department investigated 657 domestic animal (dogs or cats) bites or scratches to other domestic animals or humans. Of those investigated, only 42% were current on their rabies vaccination. That means 380 animals and their owners were faced with a painful decision: sacrifice their animal for rabies testing, quarantine their animal at a licensed veterinarian facility at their own cost, or the inconvenience of isolating their animal in a home quarantine scenario. The only acceptable proof of vaccination for an animal bite investigation is documentation of the vaccination from a licensed veterinarian.

For more information on this low-cost rabies vaccination event, visit [www.HealthyOkaloosa.com/PAWS](http://www.HealthyOkaloosa.com/PAWS) or call 850-689-7859.

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