



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**RESIDENTS INVITED TO LECTURE SERIES ON PET HEALTH AND
TO MEET CANINE CONTESTANTS IN BIG DOG/BIG LOSER COMPETITION**

SARASOTA, Fla., Jan. 3, 2007 – Dog owners who are interested in learning more about how to keep their pooches in peak condition are invited to attend a series of public lectures associated with the Big Dog/Big Loser weight loss competition Jan. 18 through April 13. Anyone who would like to meet the canine contestants and their owners or sponsors is invited to a kick-off walk at Island Park on the harbor in downtown Sarasota at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 18. The walk will begin near O’Leary’s.

The lectures will be held weekly from 7 to 8 p.m. at the Fruitville Library, 100 Coburn Rd., Sarasota, and will cover topics ranging from canine nutrition and risks from obesity to common behavior problems, according to Dr. Anne Chauvet of Veterinary Neuro Services, who is organizing the Big Dog/Big Loser Competition to raise awareness of the importance of good nutrition and weight management not just for pets but also for their owners.

Lecture subjects and dates are available online at www.BigDogBigLoser.com and include:

- Monday, Jan. 22; basic canine nutrition; Lee Allor, Royal Canin,
- Thursday, Feb. 1; obesity nutrition, Allor,
- Thursday, Feb. 8; risks from obesity, Dr. Anne Chauvet, Veterinary Neuro Services,
- Monday, Feb. 12; basic canine behavior, Jim LaClair, Dog Friendly Dog Training,
- Friday, Feb. 23; common behavior problems in dogs, Connie Borwick,
- Thursday, Mar. 1; dietary supplements, Platinum Performance,

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- Friday, Mar. 9; role of laboratory testing in pet health, Kevin Reeves, Idexx Laboratories,
- Friday, Mar. 16; basic at-home emergency care, Chauvet,
- Friday, Mar. 23; human/animal bond: long term expectations and commitments, LaClair,
- Friday, Mar. 30; advanced nutrition—special ailments, Allor, and
- Friday, April 13; announcement of winner and awards.

Ten “markedly overweight” dogs that are 40 percent or more above normal body weight will compete in the 12-week contest. During the course of the competition, dogs will be eliminated monthly with three finalists vying for the top prize of \$2,000 in the final month, Chauvet said. The dog that comes the closest to its goal will win the money and a year of free food from Royal Canin. The runner-up will receive \$500.

Food for the contest is being supplied for free by Royal Canin, a manufacturer of all natural dog and cat food, and Platinum Performance is supplying nutritional supplements. Idexx Laboratories of Clearwater is donating all tests and lab work throughout the contest. Jim LaClair of Dog Friendly Dog Training in Sarasota will conduct obedience training, and Chauvet is donating the use of her underwater treadmill to exercise the dogs three times a week.

Additional information about the contest is available at www.BigDogBigLoser.com

Veterinary Neuro Services:

Dr. Anne Chauvet, one of about 140 veterinary neurologists and neurosurgeons in the United States, has founded two veterinary practices, Veterinary Neuro Services and Pet Rehab & Performance Center in Sarasota, Fla. Veterinary Neuro Services treats brain, spinal cord and neuromuscular conditions in animals and is the only strictly neurology and neurosurgery practice on the Gulf Coast. Pet Rehab & Performance Center treats a wide range of animals, but primarily dogs and cats, for pre- and post-surgical rehabilitation, musculoskeletal conditions, spinal and orthopedic injuries, performance training, weight loss and gait disorders. Both practices are located at 3900 Clark Rd., Building M, Unit 4, Sarasota, Fla. More information is available by calling 941-929-1818 or online at www.petneuro.com.