

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Frankie L. Trull
Foundation for Biomedical Research
(202) 457-0654

MEDICAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION IS SILENCED WHILE TRYING TO GIVE ANIMALS A VOICE.

WASHINGTON: Fearing protests, shopping centers in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania and California have refused to accept paid, "Mallscape" advertising from the Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR). The ads, part of an innovative, new public education campaign, entitled *Survivors*, have been designed to promote recent veterinary advances made possible through biomedical research.

The *Survivors* ads feature portrait photography of two cats and two dogs - Pookie, Lucy, Maggie and Bailey - who represent the millions of pets in America that have benefited from biomedical research involving animals. But when FBR recently attempted to purchase space for the ad, the non-profit, educational organization was told by the Mallscape advertising broker that four shopping malls were afraid it would draw protests and had therefore rejected it.

"We are deeply disappointed," said FBR President **Frankie L. Trull**. "Twenty-seven other shopping centers in nine other states accepted the *Survivors* posters without hesitation – and they are being erected today, in some of the finest malls in America. We believe its message has great significance for the almost 60 per cent of American households that have pets and want them to have long, happy and healthy lives."

Pacemakers, CAT scans, MRIs, cardiac, orthopedic, cataract and transplant surgery, new techniques for minimally invasive surgery, linear accelerator radiation therapy and specially designed fertility drugs are just a few of the ingenious innovations for companion animal health that were developed as a direct result of biomedical research conducted with animals in the laboratory.

FBR represents a community whose members have devoted their lives to medical research and discovery. The goal of the *Survivors* campaign, launched on February 20th, is to promote public respect and appreciation for the little known fact that biomedical research involving laboratory animals plays a key role in advancing veterinary medicine as well as human medicine.

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Added Ms. Trull: “It is our hope that *Survivors* will inspire public understanding and support for America’s biomedical research community by giving animals a voice in this debate, even though this vital research is typically vilified by animal activists.

“All across America, threats of harassment by animal extremists are increasing – and sadly, these threats are working. I would encourage any organization targeted by these hooligans to stand up for their convictions and refuse to be intimidated.”

Dr. Theresa Fossum, professor of small animal medicine and surgery at the Texas A&M University’s College of Veterinary Medicine, is the official spokesperson for *Survivors*. Sixteen months ago, she performed an historic cardiac bypass on a young Golden Retriever, using a surgical technique that was originally developed to correct congenital heart defects in children but had never been successfully performed on a companion animal.

Dr. Fossum serves on FBR’s Board of Governors, which also includes seven Nobel Laureates, 12 members of the American Academies of Arts and Sciences, 13 fellows of the National Academy of Sciences and a former surgeon general. Its chairman is **Dr. Michael DeBakey**, internationally recognized heart surgeon, scholar and distinguished medical statesman. He is our country’s most honored physician and has received 57 honorary degrees from colleges and universities around the world. Dr. DeBakey is a recipient of the prestigious Lasker Award for Research, the Presidential Medal of Freedom with Distinction, the National Medal of Science and the United Nations Lifetime Achievement Award, among many others. In 2000, he was named a “Living Legend” by the Library of Congress.

Survivors was created by the Chicago ad agency **& Wojdyla**.

The malls that rejected the ads are: Jefferson Valley, Yorktown Heights, NY; Santa Rosa Plaza, Santa Rosa, CA; Bowie Town Center, Bowie, MD and Granite Run Mall, Media, PA.

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