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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Increasing Number of Chagas Disease Cases in San Antonio

SAN ANTONIO, TX (September 20, 2013) – Chagas Disease is more common in South America, but is making its way north. A parasite known as Trypanosoma Cruzi can be carried by the Triatomine Bug or “Kissing Bug” can cause heart failure in dogs. While the “Kissing Bug” can infect dogs (and people) by biting them and then defecating in the bite, most instances in the area are caused by eating the bug.

The San Antonio Humane Society has seen three presumed cases of Chagas Disease in the past nine months. The shelter is taking action to reduce the exposure of “Kissing Bugs” to the dogs.

Below are some symptoms people can look for. If any of these symptoms are observed, it is recommended that the pet’s owner contact their veterinarian immediately:

- The dog is not eating
- The dog is lethargic
- The dog has a swollen abdomen
- The dog appears weak
- The dog appears confused
- The dog lacks coordination

The disease is difficult to treat, and is often fatal. Below are some tips to help prevent exposure:

- “Kissing Bugs” are nocturnal, so allow your pets to sleep indoors at night
- If your pet is sleeping outside, make sure the dog house is elevated (off the ground)
- Eliminate excess brush and shrubbery
- If you see a “Kissing Bug” contact your local pesticide expert to spray

To learn more about the bug and disease, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/chagas/>

About The San Antonio Humane Society

The San Antonio Humane Society is a non-profit, no-kill organization that has served Bexar County and its surrounding areas since 1952. We are not affiliated with the Humane Society of the United States or the ASPCA. Every year, the San Antonio Humane Society shelters, medically treats, and rehabilitates more than 5,000 animals that have been injured, abused, or abandoned until they are ready for adoption. Through our adoption, volunteer, foster care, and educational programs we educate the public on the importance of responsible pet ownership, micro-chipping and spaying/neutering. Visit SAhumane.org for more info.

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