



CONTACT: Jared Albert, 212-548-5390
Jared.Albert@discovery.com
Karin Failla, 310-975-5904
Karin.Failla@discovery.com

ANIMAL PLANET'S PUPPY BOWL XII DELIVERS PAWS FOR A CAUSE AS ADOPTABLE PUPS STORM THE GRIDIRON ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 7

- *84 Puppies from 44 Rescues Across the U.S. Were Drafted to Represent "Team Ruff" and "Team Fluff" -*
- *Viewers Can Now Immerse Themselves in Canine Cuteness with "Puppy Bowl Virtual Reality" -*
- *Animal Planet and the Pro Football Hall of Fame Announce the "Puppy Bowl Hall of Fame" Promoting Adoption of Older Animals -*

(New York, NY – January 7, 2016) – Television’s original adoption extravaganza is back and furrer than ever as the world’s cutest sporting event returns to Animal Planet for **PUPPY BOWL XII** on **Sunday, February 7 from 3-5 PM ET/PT** with two hours of fuzzy faces, sloppy kisses and puppy penalties. This year, die-hard superfans can get closer to the action than ever before with the introduction of **PUPPY BOWL VIRTUAL REALITY**. Launching today, **PUPPY BOWL VIRTUAL REALITY** invites viewers onto the turf for the first time ever to rumble up close and personal with this year’s puppy players for a full 360° experience! This year, Animal Planet worked with 44 different animal shelters and rescue organizations from across the U.S. to fill the rosters of #TeamRuff and #TeamFluff with adoptable players for this epic matchup. The network also is partnering with the **Pro Football Hall of Fame** to introduce the **Puppy Bowl Hall of Fame** to honor legacy players throughout **PUPPY BOWL** and promote the adoption of older “veteran” animals in addition to puppies and kittens.

Last year, **PUPPY BOWL XI** dominated a field of imitators with the number-one cable telecast across the day and dogged all competition in cable with more than 10 million viewers. To turn up the volume on television’s loudest call to adopt, **PUPPY BOWL XII** repeats all day and night for a total of 12 hours on game day.

This year’s PEDIGREE® Starting Lineup boasts 49 puppies competing for the famed title of BISSELL® MVP (Most Valuable Puppy). The tailgate starts at **2:30 PM ET/PT** with the **PUPPY BOWL PRE-GAME SHOW**, which features analysis and commentary from a team of sports correspondents. At **3 PM ET/PT**, **PUPPY BOWL XII** kicks off at GEICO Stadium with a furry group of line barkers and wide retrievers, making adorable tumbles and fumbles in an effort to score winning touchdowns for #TeamFluff and #TeamRuff. If you’re not in the mood for Coldplay, this year’s **KITTY HALF-TIME SHOW** brings a cat-astrophic San Francisco inspired kitten takeover to the Bay Area. These ferocious felines are on a spree of cat-aclismic destruction as they paw across historic landmarks including the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman’s Wharf and infamous “Al-Cat-Raz.”

But precious puppies and kittens aren't the only attraction at this year's big game! With help from a new special assistant ref, Stanley the Skunk, Dan Schachner returns as America's favorite "Rufferee" to call the puppy penalties. Rooting on the sidelines are five big-haired silkie chicken cheerleaders, which will shake their tail feathers and strut for their favorite players. Award-winning animal advocate and television correspondent Jill Rappaport introduces **Pup Close and Personal** segments, presented by Subaru, which highlight adorable animal bonds between puppy players and their best buddies including a kitten and a hedgehog! "Meep the Bird" returns to his perch to tweet live updates sponsored by GEICO throughout the big game. Fans can follow [@MeepTheBird](#) on game day to catch the latest news, puppy drama and locker room moments from inside the stadium.

PUPPY BOWL VIRTUAL REALITY allows viewers to get nose to nose on the field with four puppy practice scrimmages featuring dynamic 360° experiences of this year's players who are not only sniffing for field goals, but more importantly, their forever homes too. Fans can join the action on the 50-yard-line for an interactive tour of GEICO Stadium amongst puppies, chew toys and assistant coaches. **PUPPY BOWL VIRTUAL REALITY** is available at [AnimalPlanet.com/PuppyBowlVR](#), through the Discovery VR iOS and Android apps, Samsung Milk VR and on Animal Planet's [YouTube page](#).

As always, fans will witness **PUPPY BOWL**'s iconic water bowl cam, slow motion playback cam and fan-favorite Dairy Queen kiss cam. Viewers won't miss a minute of excitement with aerial shots of the field and an impressive air show from hamsters piloting the TWIZZLERS biplane.

Fans can point their paws to [AnimalPlanet.com/PuppyBowl](#) to view the roster of starting pups, watch the live **Puppy Bowl Locker Room Cam** and **Kitten Fan Club Cam**, and view behind-the-scenes moments with **Game Day Pups Videos**. Additionally, viewers at home can create a custom team in the third-annual **Puppy Bowl Fantasy Game**. On game day, fantasy leaguers are invited to vote in the Most Valuable Puppy poll at [AnimalPlanet.com/PuppyBowlMVP](#), which goes live at kickoff. Viewer votes determine which heavenly hound gets barking rights and the title of BISSELL® MVP during the first three airings of **PUPPY BOWL XII**! Additionally, viewers can also get in the action by sharing photos of themselves and their pets via Instagram using **#PuppyBowlSubaru** all day long for a chance to see themselves and their best friends on TV in real time. Plus, the **Adoption Tails** digital series returns to follow home a selection of pups that participated in **PUPPY BOWL XII**. Crowds can also flock to the [Animal Planet](#) and [Puppy Bowl Facebook](#) pages while also following the action in real time on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

PUPPY BOWL XII's 44 shelters and rescue groups represent 25 states across the U.S. and Puerto Rico. This year's roster includes players from Nevada SPCA, Arizona Humane Society, Mr. Bones & Company (New York), Green Dogs Unleashed (Virginia), Little Dog Rescue (Florida), Paws Chicago, Citizens for Animal Protection (Texas) and Williamson County Animal Center (Tennessee) among others. Brooklyn Bridge Animal Welfare Coalition, Inc. provided kittens for the **KITTY HALF-TIME SHOW**. Viewers interested in learning more about the organizations that participated in **PUPPY BOWL XII** can visit [AnimalPlanet.com/PuppyBowl](#) for more information.

During the off season, Animal Planet brought the joy and goodwill of **PUPPY BOWL** to rescues in 13 states and the District of Columbia with **ROAD TO THE PUPPY BOWL** events. While promoting the importance of animal adoption in local communities, these events led to more than 3,000 animals finding their "fur-ever" homes. Animal Planet helped cover the cost of these adoptions.

PUPPY BOWL XII official sponsors include BISSELL®, Dairy Queen, Disney's Zootopia, GEICO, Hershey's, Pedigree®, Sheba, Subaru and The Secret Life of Pets.

PUPPY BOWL XII is produced for Animal Planet by Discovery Studios. Simon Morris is the co-executive producer and Josh Wilkins is the vice president of production for Discovery Studios. For Animal Planet,

Melinda Toporoff is the executive producer and Pat Dempsey is the associate producer.

Animal Planet

Animal Planet, a multi-media business unit of Discovery Communications, is the world's only entertainment brand that immerses viewers in the full range of life in the animal kingdom with rich, deep content via multiple platforms and offers animal lovers and pet owners access to a centralized online, television and mobile community for immersive, engaging, high-quality entertainment, information and enrichment. Animal Planet consists of the Animal Planet television network, available in more than 94 million homes in the US; online assets www.animalplanet.com, the ultimate online destination for all things animal; Animal Planet L!VE, the go-to digital destination for round-the-clock, unfiltered access to the animal kingdom; and other media platforms including a robust Video-on-Demand (VOD) service, and merchandising extensions.

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