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RESCUE WAGGIN'® PROGRAM 5TH ANNIVERSARY 'SUPER SUMMIT' & CELEBRATION IS MAY 7-8, 2009

Media welcome to attend at the Marriott-St. Louis Airport, 10700 Pear Tree Lane, St. Louis, Mo.

(PHOENIX) – PetSmart Charities® marks the 5th anniversary of its remarkable Rescue Waggin' program in St. Louis, Mo., with a celebration and “Super Summit” training session for program participants. ***News media is encouraged to attend to learn how the Rescue Waggin' program has saved more than 25,000 dogs and puppies facing euthanasia at overcrowded animal shelters across the nation.***

The 5th Anniversary celebration and Super Summit will provide a one-time opportunity for media to see all of the Rescue Waggin' vehicles in one location, interview program participants from the 53 participating shelters in 24 states, and meet some ‘doggone’ important guests such as Dipper, one of the first dogs transported when the program began in 2004, and Ernie, the 25,000th dog to take the ‘ride of his life’ aboard a Rescue Waggin' vehicle.

“We are delighted to celebrate such a milestone for this innovative program,” said Susana Della Maddalena, executive director of nonprofit PetSmart Charities. “There is no greater reward than knowing we have helped save the lives of more than 25,000 dogs and puppies in the last five years, and have also provided significant grant funding so that shelters involved in the program can improve their shelter facilities and expand their services.”

ABOUT THE RESCUE WAGGIN' PROGRAM

Rescue Waggin' vehicles have logged more than 1,150,000 miles since the first one hit the road on February 9, 2004. The program was borne from the desire to save the lives of dogs and puppies who, despite being friendly and healthy, were euthanized by the thousands every year because the shelters they were housed in had run out of space. While waiting for their forever families to adopt them, these dogs had simply run out of time.

“The real tragedy was knowing that there were other shelters within a day’s drive that not only had open kennel space, but also very successful adoption programs,” Della Maddalena said. “Now, we can ensure that thousands of dogs and puppies are safely, quickly and comfortably transported from shelters that have reached capacity to shelters in communities where they will get their second chance at a lifelong, loving home.”



Rescue Waggin' vehicles like this one have transported more than 25,000 dogs and puppies since the program began in 2004.

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The program started in the Midwest with the transport of dogs and puppies from 13 shelters in Indiana, Kentucky and Tennessee to the Wisconsin Humane Society in Milwaukee. Today, more than 53 shelters in 24 states participate in the East Coast, Midwest, Great Plains and newly added South Central regions. Annually, thousands of dogs and puppies who otherwise would be euthanized at overcrowded shelters are selected to ride the Rescue Waggin' vehicles. This year alone, Rescue Waggin' vehicles will transport about 8,000 to 10,000 dogs and puppies to shelters in communities where prospective adopters are waiting.

In addition to transport, PetSmart Charities'® Rescue Waggin' program provides capacity-building grants in the communities struggling with homeless-pet overpopulation and euthanasia. The funds help expand local spay and neuter services for dogs and cats and improve shelter facilities, operations and adoptions for agencies that send dogs and puppies on the transport vehicles. To date, PetSmart Charities has awarded more than \$527,000 in grant funding to participating shelters.

“Our Rescue Waggin' vehicles save lives right away,” Della Maddalena said. “Our Rescue Waggin' program grants to enhance shelter facilities and operations, and expand spay and neuter services where they are desperately needed, help us save lives for years to come.”

NOTE: The Rescue Waggin'® Program 5th Anniversary 'Super Summit' & Celebration is open only to Rescue Waggin' program partners and media.

About PetSmart Charities, Inc.

PetSmart Charities, Inc. is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that creates and supports programs that save the lives of homeless pets, raise awareness of companion animal welfare issues, and promote healthy relationships between people and pets. Since 1994, PetSmart Charities has funded more than \$87 million in grants and programs benefiting animal welfare organizations and, through its in-store adoption program, has helped save the lives of more than 3.5 million pets in the United States. To learn more about how PetSmart Charities is working to help find a lifelong, loving home for every pet, visit www.petsmartcharities.org or call 1-800-423-PETS.

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