



For more information:
Jacqi Moore Richardson
GolinHarris for PetSmart Charities
972.341.2514 / jmoore@golinharris.com

People Saving Pets™ Social Movement to End Pet Homelessness Launches in Oklahoma City

*PetSmart Charities® and Local Animal Welfare Agencies Empower
Pet Lovers to Save the Lives of Millions of Homeless Pets*

OKLAHOMA CITY (March 23, 2011) – Residents of Oklahoma City are the first to participate in a unique social movement designed to save the lives of the 4 million homeless pets in the United States that are euthanized every year.

A consumer research study conducted by [PetSmart Charities](#) found that the public underestimates the enormity of the pet homeless problem. Of the 3,000 U.S. consumers surveyed, only 29 percent were familiar with the issue of pet homelessness and 75 percent estimated the number of homeless pets at fewer than one million when the true number is upwards of 8 million. A second survey of Oklahoma City residents in 2010 revealed that 40 percent believe the number of homeless pets euthanized annually in the U.S. is one million when the true number is closer to four million. Out of this research, PetSmart Charities created the [People Saving Pets](#) movement to complement the local efforts of [animal welfare organizations](#) and provide a platform that drives awareness and action around the cause of saving homeless pets.

“The message of People Saving Pets is that it doesn’t take a miracle to end pet homelessness in our communities,” said Susana Della Maddalena, executive director of [PetSmart Charities, Inc.](#) “This year in America, 8 million pets will end up in shelters – and 4 million adoptable pets will be euthanized – simply because they do not have homes. People Saving Pets is designed to fundamentally change how people think about – and act – on the issue of pet homelessness. This movement is about inspiring people who love pets to [take action](#), now.”

People Saving Pets engages pet lovers with information and online tools – including a volunteer match, adoptable pet locator and spay/neuter service locator - to get involved in their community and be part of the solution to end pet homelessness. After joining the movement at www.PeopleSavingPets.org, people are empowered to make a difference through simple yet powerful actions, including:

- [Spreading the word](#) with friends and family using the People Saving Pets online community
- [Volunteering](#) at local organizations or shelters
- [Adopting](#) a homeless pet
- Committing to [spay and neuter](#) pets
- [Donating](#) money to local animal welfare agencies.

Oklahoma City and Phoenix were the cities chosen nationally to launch the People Saving Pets movement and will benefit through increased awareness about homeless pets and support for local shelters and animal welfare agencies. To generate awareness for the movement, PetSmart Charities also

launched a [print and television advertising campaign](#) featuring the stories of real adopted pets with their people.

“Both communities have strong animal-welfare organizations that are in a position to capitalize on the People Saving Pets movement and resources to build on their efforts and benefit from increased public interest in saving the lives of homeless pets,” Della Maddalena said. “These groups have already laid the groundwork through years of collaborative work and programs, and PetSmart Charities has worked with many of them and provided grants to fund some of their programs.”

More than 115 local and national animal-welfare organizations already have signed on to support the movement, including 22 in the Oklahoma City area.

“We are proud to support the People Saving Pets movement and to join forces with PetSmart Charities and other animal welfare organizations to end pet homelessness for good,” said Catherine English, manager of the [Oklahoma City Animal Welfare Division](#). “Shelters like ours are full of healthy, happy dogs and cats who will give unconditional love, companionship and joy to enrich our lives, and we look forward to helping engage pet lovers in our mission to find them homes and increase spaying and neutering of all pets.”

Please visit <http://www.petsmartcharities.org/people-saving-pets/learn/partner-animal-welfare-orgs.html> for the most current list of People Saving Pets community partners.

The People Saving Pets movement will expand to other cities in the U.S. later this year. Learn more and join the movement:

- www.PeopleSavingPets.org
- “Like” the movement on [Facebook](#)

Local Animal-Welfare Partners involved in the People Saving Pets™ movement include:

- [Best Friends of Pets](#) Oklahoma City
- [Central Oklahoma Humane Society](#) Oklahoma City
- [Forever Friends Humane Society](#) Oklahoma City
- [Friends with Four Paws](#) Yukon, Oklahoma
- [Great Plains Mastiff Rescue](#) Edmond, Oklahoma
- [Hands Helping Paws, Inc.](#) Norman, Oklahoma
- [Homeward Bound Pugs](#) Norman, Oklahoma
- [LowRider Dachshund Rescue, Inc.](#) Moore, Oklahoma
- [Ms. Kitty's Cat Rescue, Inc.](#) Oklahoma City
- [OK Save A Dog Society](#) Prague, Oklahoma
- [OK Yorkie Rescue](#) Oklahoma City
- [Oklahoma City Animal Welfare Division](#), Oklahoma City
- [Pet Adoption and Welfare Services of OK](#) Oklahoma City
- [Pet Angels Rescue, Inc.](#) Edmond, Oklahoma
- [Pets & People Humane Society, Inc](#) Yukon, Oklahoma
- [Red Dirt Boxer Rescue](#) Harrah, Oklahoma
- [RockySpot Rescue, Inc](#) Newcastle, Oklahoma
- [Second Chance Animal Sanctuary](#) Norman, Oklahoma
- [Sooner Golden Retriever Rescue](#) Oklahoma City
- [The Bella Foundation](#) Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
- [Volunteers for Animal Welfare - SPOT](#) Oklahoma City

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About PetSmart Charities®

Established in 1994, PetSmart Charities, Inc. is an independent, nonprofit 501(c)(3) 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. The largest funder of animal welfare efforts in North America, PetSmart Charities has provided \$110 million in grants and programs benefiting animal welfare organizations and, through its in-store adoption program, helped save the lives of more than 4 million pets. To learn more about how PetSmart Charities is working toward its Vision of a lifelong, loving home for every pet, visit petsmartcharities.org or call 1-800-423-PETS.