

DRAFT—NOT FOR RELEASE

Contact:

Lisa Dunham, Director of Governmental Communications: 636-949-1890

John Carpenter, Deputy Director—Division of Humane Services: 636-949-7387

NEW PET ADOPTION CENTER OPEN IN ST. CHARLES COUNTY

Facility Offers Increased Services For Pet Adoption and Recovery

COTTLEVILLE, MO, December 2, 1999 — A new choice in pet adoption services is now available in St. Charles County. In November, the Humane Services Division of the St. Charles County Department of Community Health and the Environment opened an 18,000 square foot Pet Adoption Center in Cottleville to meet the animal control needs of the growing county, from pet adoption to lost pet recovery. A ribbon cutting ceremony and open house was held today to commemorate the event.

The Pet Adoption Center's new location on the frequently traveled Mid Rivers Mall Drive allows increased public visibility and citizen response is positive. More than 624 people have visited the Pet Adoption Center since its opening, resulting in 68 pets recovered and 36 animals adopted. Only 305 visitors were recorded at the old facility over the same amount of time. During all of 1998, 238 animals were adopted. According to John Carpenter, Deputy Director of the Humane Services Division, "Employees are encouraged by the notable increase in traffic."

Employees are also excited by the opportunity to provide increased services to animals in the County's care. "The opening of the Pet Adoption Center streamlines the process of lost pet recovery and pet adoption," says Carpenter. "Prior to the opening of this facility, locating a lost pet was more challenging. Pet owners had to check as many as four locations in hopes of finding their dog or cat. As a result,

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many pets were not claimed. We want to make the public aware of the facility in order to increase the number of animals recovered and adopted into good homes.”

The new pet adoption facility can kennel up to 161 animals and offers many new amenities including immunization of adopted animals and visitation rooms for citizens to get acquainted with a pet before taking one home. The Center also houses all rabies vaccination records for animals immunized by veterinarians countywide. Previously, immunization and sterilization of a pet was left up to the new owner after adopting an animal. Beginning in January 2000, St. Charles County will sterilize all animals adopted from the facility in an effort to decrease the stray animal population. The Center contracts with a veterinarian for these services and has a full-time veterinary technician on staff.

St. Charles County’s Humane Services personnel use state-of-the art equipment to care for animals at the facility and strive to educate pet owners on humane care and shelter of their animals. Proper tagging of pets with the rabies registration tag in combination with other identification is stressed. An estimated 2,636 animals were in the care of St. Charles County animal control officers in 1998. Of that number, 215 pets were returned to owners due to proper identification tags.

The St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center is located at 4850 Mid Rivers Mall Drive, three miles south of Highway 70 across from St. Charles County Community College. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. For further information about pet adoption services in St. Charles County, call (636) 949-7387 (PETS).