



News Release

Russell M. Pry – Summit County Executive

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: July 2, 2009

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Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry
Welcomes the Arrival of the PetSmart Charities® Rescue Waggin'® Vehicle



On Thursday, July 2, 2009, a PetSmart Charities® Rescue Waggin'® vehicle made an early morning visit to Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry's Division of Animal Control, located at 460 E. North Street in downtown Akron.

The purpose of the stopover was to board 10 abandoned canines onto a custom-designed vehicle for their safe transport to Erie County, New York: a community where adoptable animals are known to find homes more quickly.

The PetSmart Charities® Rescue Waggin'® program is the nation's largest pet transportation initiative, moving dogs and puppies from areas of high pet population to shelters in regions where adoptable dogs are more in demand.

"Before being boarded onto the Rescue Waggin'® vehicle, our dogs are given a health exam and a thorough behavior evaluation," says Christine Fatheree, animal control manager at the Summit County Division of Animal Control. "Only healthy, well-tempered canines are selected for this program."

Once boarded, the dogs ride in temperature-controlled comfort; while, lullabies resonate from a sound system to ease travel. A video monitor allows drivers, trained in pet care and animal first aid, to monitor dogs along the way.

Upon arrival at their destination facility, the dogs are given 12-24 hours of down time to de-stress before receiving a medical exam and spay-and-neuter surgery. Once on the adoption floor, dogs from the Rescue Waggin'® vehicle are commonly adopted within three days.



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"Our initial two transports successfully secured new homes for 19 of our animals," added Fatheree. "All throughout the Buffalo, New York area."

The County of Summit Division of Animal Control is now one of four Rescue Waggin'® program source facilities in the State of Ohio. Three of the four are county funded animal control operations.



"By serving as a program participant, the County of Summit will also be eligible to apply for grants that will enhance our facility, as well as expand upon the spay-and-neuter services being offered throughout the community," stated Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry. "Since 2004, PetSmart Charities, Inc. has awarded more than \$527,000 to Rescue Waggin'® program source facilities."

Prior to becoming an official source facility, the Division of Animal Control underwent an extensive evaluation process, which included: a site visit, an educational seminar and complying with employee training requirements. In March 2009, their evaluation found the County of Summit to be a worthy program participant.

Under Pry's leadership, the County of Summit has made noteworthy community outreach efforts in an effort to boost animal adoptions. The agency is presently serving as a prime sponsor of *Barkitecture*, a special exhibit of whimsical doghouses on the grounds of Stan Hywet Hall & Gardens, located at 714 North Portage Path in Akron, Ohio. Coordinating community adopt-a-thons, low cost spay-and-neuter clinics and events that promote responsible pet ownership are also among the agency's top priorities.

"We are hoping our outreach endeavors result in more citizens becoming aware of the affordable, comprehensive and unique adoption services we have to offer," added Pry.

The cost to adopt a dog fully treated by the Division of Animal Control is \$90; while, the cost to adopt a cat is \$60. Full treatment includes: a license (if necessary), shots, spay-and-neuter operations and de-flea & de-worm services.

For more information about PetSmart Charities® Rescue Waggin'® program, or the services being offered through Summit County Executive Russell M. Pry's Division of Animal Control, call 330-643-2845 or click on www.co.summit.oh.us .

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