

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**July 16, 2006**

Contacts:

Sue Bell, (202) 486-7077

Cindy Williams Alvey, (703) 785-3949

PetMAC, (703) 908-PETS (7387)

## **PetMAC, a Unique New Store for Socially-Minded Pet Owners, Opens Its Doors**

*Innovative partnership between Arlington's  
Pet Pantry Express and Homeward Trails Animal Rescue offers all-natural pet food and an  
opportunity to support animal rescue and adoption with every purchase*

ARLINGTON, VA – PetMAC – the Pet Marketplace and Adoption Center – officially opened its doors Friday July 14, offering Arlington's socially-minded pet owners a new place to find all-natural pet food and supplies while providing a unique opportunity to support a locally-based animal rescue organization with every purchase.

PetMAC is an innovative partnership between Pet Pantry Express, a for-profit business selling all-natural pet food and supplies since 2004, and Arlington-based Homeward Trails Animal Rescue, a non-profit rescue organization founded in 2002. The new joint venture is located at 822 North Kenmore Street in Arlington.

Primarily a retail boutique selling high-quality, all-natural pet food, treats, baked goods, and pet supplies, PetMAC will also serve as a pet adoption and animal education resource center and will actively promote the rescue and adoption of homeless animals. Pet Pantry Express will operate the retail activities of the operation while Homeward Trails will oversee the adoption and education center. Customers can shop while also visiting with rescued animals available for adoption.

A simple yet compelling social enterprise, PetMAC aims to satisfy pet enthusiasts' growing demand for all-natural pet food while offering its customers the opportunity to support animal rescue and adoption. A percentage of every item purchased at PetMAC will go directly to Homeward Trails' rescue efforts.

“We created PetMAC to bring what we feel are two very important things to pet lovers - all-natural, high quality food and supplies combined with information about the importance and the rewards of adopting a rescued animal,” said Sue Bell, Executive Director of Homeward Trails and co-founder of PetMAC. “Whether you spend \$1 or \$1,000 at PetMAC, you know that you will be directly supporting animal rescue and adoption efforts.”

**-- MORE --**

The impact of the PetMAC customer's dollar will go beyond its support of Homeward Trails. PetMAC specifically seeks out products that are created, sold, and distributed by companies across the United States that support animal rescue and welfare efforts. The purchaser's dollar trickles down many levels to support such efforts well beyond our local community – something that not many businesses can offer. That trickle-down effect does not stop with just animal welfare efforts.

PetMAC also seeks out companies whose products support humanitarian efforts. One example is the handmade African Maasai dog collars for sale at PetMAC. The collars are made by underprivileged Kenyan villagers as a means to support themselves and provide educational opportunities for their children. Bell bought these collars while volunteering last summer in Africa. "It's a fantastic way to give American pet owners a unique, beautiful product that directly supports poor Kenyan children. We hope to be able to sell many products that support such worthwhile causes, whether animal- or human-related." says Bell.

"We absolutely love that we can give our customers the opportunity to purchase top-quality food and supplies while supporting the most worthwhile animal rescue (and humanitarian) efforts in our community and across the country and world" says Cindy Williams Alvey, owner of Pet Pantry Express and PetMAC co-founder.

PetMAC has been designed to create a warm, welcoming atmosphere for both pets and people. The boutique features both indoor and outdoor seating areas where visitors and their pets can shop or just relax while learning more about pet adoption, training, pet care, and more. The atmosphere is cozy and inviting, and the products offered are fun, high-quality, and help active pet owner's address everyday needs. PetMAC will also help its customers connect with trainers, behavior specialists, holistic care vets, pet physical therapists, and more.

With weekly adoption events and ongoing community education and training sessions, PetMAC co-founders Bell and Alvey foresee the operation becoming an active and exciting new member of the Arlington community.

"We envision having animal-friendly events that include dog washes, adoption events, local art showings, birthday parties and more," says Alvey. "We really want to reach out to the local animal-loving community and bring them in."

PetMAC's doors officially opened Friday, July 14 at 11:00am.

### **Information About Pet Pantry Express and Homeward Trails**

**Pet Pantry Express** owner Cindy Alvey established Pet Panty Express, a home-based pet food and supply delivery service, in February of 2004. After years of working in both animal rescue and information technology, Cindy decided to start a business that would allow her to contribute more to the animal rescue community and make it easier for pet owners to provide their pets with an all-natural, healthy diet. Having grown tired of driving 45 minutes each way to pick up her dog's food, Cindy created Pet Pantry Express which delivers all-natural pet foods, free of animal by-products and chemical preservatives, directly to the customer's door. The creation of PetMAC will help Pet Pantry Express expand its products and give customers the opportunity to come into a physical space, purchase their items, browse for more and interact with the staff. Delivery service via Pet Pantry Express will continue.

**Homeward Trails Animal Rescue** was founded in 2002 by Arlington resident Sue Bell. Homeward Trails works primarily with shelters in rural Virginia and West Virginia that have sizable homeless animal populations but lack the resources to sustain an equal number of adoptions, resulting in the needless euthanasia of thousands of animals annually. Homeward Trails and its network of dedicated volunteers help connect these shelter animals with loving, adoptive homes around the Washington metropolitan area. To date, Homeward Trails has placed over 2,000 rescued animals.

###