



Homeless Pets Need More Help Than Ever Before *maurices Launches National Rescues & Runways Campaign to Help*

Duluth, Minn. (August 20, 2009) – The struggling economy is taking its toll on animal shelters across the country. Families who are facing hard financial times are being forced to surrender their dogs, cats and other pets to animal shelters at an alarming rate. In turn, animal shelters are having a hard time keeping up because while demand for their services is skyrocketing, financial donations to these shelters—also due to the economy—are dramatically declining.

In response, **maurices** is launching a nation-wide effort to support local shelters and the animals they help. Rescues & Runways will sweep the country during the month of September. More than 700 **maurices** stores in 44 states will each host pet-themed fashion shows, partner with their local animal shelter, sponsor pet supply drives to support their local shelter, and sell a special charm to benefit the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®).

“Given the crisis that animals and animal shelters are facing, we are confident that they could use our help,” said Vivian Behrens, senior vice president and chief marketing officer. “By shining the spotlight on these animals—and with our customers’ and associates’ passionate support for this worthy cause—we know we can make a difference.”

Each Rescues & Runways fashion show will feature models from each community walking the runway with the latest fall looks from **maurices**, along with a pet, of course, that is available for adoption. “Our hope is to garner attention and support for the shelters. Ultimately, we hope to encourage people to adopt an animal from a shelter so as to provide a loving home to a ‘forever friend,’” explained Behrens.

Throughout September, people within these communities are encouraged to support their local animal shelter by bringing pet supplies to their local **maurices** store. Customers who bring in a donation will receive a coupon for 20 percent off one regular-priced item. The campaign goal is to collect 500,000 pounds of supplies across the nation.

Also recognizing pet lovers’ devotion to their own pets, **maurices** is introducing a limited edition Friends for Life Charm; a celebration of the special bond people share with their furry friends. “It’s a token of unconditional love,” said Behrens. “Women can wear half of the charm, while the other half of the charm is worn by their pet.”

The Friends for Life Charm is just \$5 and will be sold in all **maurices** stores from mid-September through October 31. For every charm purchased, \$2.50 will go to support the ASPCA and its national shelter outreach program. The ASPCA will receive a minimum donation of \$50,000 from **maurices** with an ultimate goal of raising more than \$100,000.

“We are thrilled that **maurices** will be introducing this charm to the pet-loving public,” said Jo Sullivan, ASPCA executive vice president of external affairs. “Customers will feel good knowing their donation helps the ASPCA save the lives of countless animals each day.”

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The Rescues & Runways event will kick off on August 26 with a major fashion show and entertainment at **maurices** in Duluth, Minn., where the corporation's home office is located. The event will include check presentations by Chief Executive Officer David Jaffe to the ASPCA and local partner Animal Allies.

About maurices

[maurices](#) inspires young women to find their style, with adorable, affordable fashions in sizes 1-24. Whether it's jeans or jewelry, **maurices** offers everything a girl needs to fill her closet with the latest trends. From loungewear to office wear, evenings in or out on the town, **maurices** fits the way women live and work. The community-based fashion retailer has grown to more than 700 locations nationwide since its first store opened in 1931. **maurices** is wholly owned by [dressbarn](#) Inc. (NASDAQ: DBRN).

For fashion inspiration, store locations and career information, visit www.maurices.com.

About the ASPCA

Founded in 1866, the ASPCA (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals) was the first humane organization established in the Americas, and today has more than one million supporters throughout North America. A 501 [c] [3] not-for-profit corporation, the ASPCA's mission is to provide effective means for the prevention of cruelty to animals throughout the United States. The ASPCA provides local and national leadership in animal-assisted therapy, animal behavior, animal poison control, anti-cruelty, humane education, legislative services, and shelter outreach. The New York City headquarters houses a full-service, accredited animal hospital, adoption center, and mobile clinic outreach program. The Humane Law Enforcement department enforces New York's animal cruelty laws and is featured on the reality television series "Animal Precinct" on Animal Planet. For more information, please visit www.asPCA.org.

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FOR MEDIA ONLY: Please visit www.rescuesandrunways.com for more information. A video package and B-roll from the Duluth event will be available [on this website](#) on August 27, 2009.