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World Animal Day Honors Pets and Other Animals Around the Globe

Pet industry supports 83rd year acknowledging the value of pets and other animals

Washington, DC – All over the world, in cities and towns everywhere, pets and animals of every species are acknowledged with a special ‘blessing’ on World Animal Day. Celebrated annually on October 4th, World Animal Day is a long-standing tradition recognizing the importance of animals to humankind. Founded in 1931 at a convention of Ecologists in Italy, the Catholic Church’s Feast Day of St. Francis of Assisi, the Patron Saint of Animals, set aside a day to honor a variety of animal species. This holiday has since grown to include family pets and other animals, with worldwide acknowledgement from New Zealand to Argentina, and everywhere in between.

“PIJAC acknowledges not only the importance of pets in our daily lives, but the profound importance of animals to the larger ecological picture and survival of the world,” says Ed Sayres, president and CEO of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC). “Whether finned, feathered or furry, World Animal Day highlights the meaningful contribution animals make to all of us.”

In Washington, D.C. on Saturday, October 4th, the National Cathedral at 3101 Wisconsin Ave., NW at 12 Noon on the steps of the Cathedral will offer a blessing to animals and their caretakers. In addition, there is an animal blessing at the Franciscan Monastery at 2:30 PM at 1400 Quincy Street, NE for pets and their owners. The annual animal blessings are not limited to Christian churches. Over the years, synagogues and parks have become places where members, residents and visitors have been welcome to bring their pets for a special blessing.

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The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) provides its members a voice in state and national legislative issues through advocacy and timely information regarding upcoming policy issues that affect the pet industry, pet owners, and the animals they care for. PIJAC has supported pro-pet legislation and regulations for forty years. With over \$183 million donated in the form of food and general supplies, as well as direct monetary aid, the

pet industry and has helped more than 7.5 million homeless and shelter pets in the last two decades. More information can be found at www.pijac.org.