















March 23, 2020

Open Letter to Federal, State & Local Government Officials Regarding Pets and COVID-19 Precautions

We in the responsible pet care community are extremely concerned by the threat to human health posed by the rapidly evolving coronavirus pandemic, and commend the swift actions you and your peers across the country are taking to safeguard the population. As you take defensive steps by directing event cancellations and facility closures in order to create social distances that will help control the spread of disease, we urge you to also consider the well-being of the pets and other animals loved by the citizens in your communities.

According to the 2019-2020 APPA National Pet Owners Survey, 67% of American households (84.9 million) own at least one pet. 95% of pet owners consider their pets to be part of the family. It is vital that businesses that provide products or services for the care of pets, and those that house animals, are included among the critical infrastructure that is allowed to remain open throughout the crisis. Just as grocery stores and hospitals provide necessary sustenance and medical care to humans, pet stores that sell food, products and supplies and businesses that offer veterinary and boarding services must remain operational to ensure the continued humane care of animals.

Pet stores supply nearly one-third of all dog and cat food needed by the pet-owning population; that number is much higher for food required by other pets like small mammals, reptiles and fish. Grocery stores that may be allowed to remain open generally only offer limited pet food options and they don't always have the specialized food, supplements and even medication that are required to maintain the health of millions of beloved pets and animals nationwide—nor are they set up logistically to serve ALL pets in this country. Grocery stores alone cannot fulfill the demand and animals would needlessly suffer.

Additionally, many national and local retail pet supply stores also offer veterinary care and pet boarding services on site. Forcing these stores to close in many cases will also shut down access to veterinary care, veterinary pet diets, and a dependable facility to temporarily house pets in that community.

It should be noted that pet stores which house and care for animals, such as puppies, kittens, small animals, birds, reptiles and fish, must remain operational to at least a limited degree so that staff can take appropriate care of the animals housed there. Since staff will need to be on site regardless of whether or not the store is open, it makes sense to allow them to provide pet owners with necessary food and care items.

You are already taking important measures necessary to protect the most vulnerable members of our society, including the elderly and the immunocompromised. We ask you to also ensure that your community has the ability to provide appropriate care for the pets and animals that depend on them, and list pet stores as essential retailers that are exempt from any mandatory closures.

If you have any questions or need additional information, we in the responsible pet care community stand ready to help you safeguard both human and animal health and well-being.

Sincerely,

Mike Bober, President and CEO, Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council

Dana Brooks, President and CEO, Pet Food Institute

Steve Feldman, Executive Director, Human Animal Bond Research Institute

Steve King, CEO, American Pet Products Association

Vic Mason, President, World Pet Association

Celeste Powers, President, Pet Industry Distributors Association

Al Puntillo, Steering Committee Chair, Independent & Neighborhood Pet Retail Association

Dennis Sprung, President/CEO, American Kennel Club

National Retailer Community:

Ron Coughlin, CEO, Petco

J.K. Symancyk, President & CEO, PetSmart

Chris McCurdy, Interim President, PetSmart Charities

Joe Watson, President and CEO, Petland

Chris Rowland, CEO, Pet Supplies Plus

Michael Levy, Founder and President, and Mark Witriol, Co-Owner, Pet Food Express

Lars & Marisa Wulff, Co-CEO's, Mud Bay

Richard Maltsbarger, President & CEO, Pet Valu & Pet Supermarket

Lindsay Mutschler, CFO, Concord Pet Foods and Supplies

Mike and Trish Elkind, Founders, and Carrie McDermott, CEO, PetPeople

Jeff David, CEO, Independent Pet Partners

Paul Allen, Founder and CEO, Woof Gang Bakery

Joe Dent, President, and Monica Pitzner, Chief Marketing Officer, Three Dog Bakery

Michael Seitz, CEO & Chairman, Earthwise Pet

Laura Leah English, CEO & Co-Founder, Pet Planet USA

Sam Bugarsky, President & CEO, Wilco Stores

Buzz Wheeler, CEO/Owner, Coastal Farm & Home Supply

Rob Flanagan, CEO/President, and Dan Remus, Co-Founder, Wag N' Wash Natural Pet Food & Grooming

Local Retailers and Supporters:

Bill & Mary Trufant, President & Operations Manager, B & B Pet Stop, Inc., Mobile, AL

Carra Smith, Owner, Dog Days Bakery, Mobile, AL

Seth Cosby, Owner, Ed's Pet World, Birmingham, AL

Kinsey Hall, Owner, Innovative Emporium, Phenix City, AL

Daughtry Perritt, Owner, Pet Depot LLC, Florence, AL

Keith Evans, Owner, Petland Montgomery, Montgomery, AL

Bullet Brown, CEO, The National Association of Professional Creative Groomers, Childersburg, AL

Samantha Boyle, Owner, Petland Rogers, Rogers, AR

Frank Mineo, Owner, Animal Kingdom, Phoenix and Tucson, and The Ocean Floor, Phoenix, AZ

Cindy Edwards, Owner, Bark Avenue Dogwash, LLC, Tucson, AZ

Becci Scott, Owner, Fetching Dog, Scottsdale, AZ

Johnny Cunningham, Owner, Johnny's Doghouse, Gilbert, AZ

Karen Almand, Owner groomer, Mobile pet styling by karen, Mesa, AZ

Alison Chandler, Co-Owner, Noble Beast LLC, Phoenix, AZ

Pam Munici, President, North American Pet Pig Association, Gilbert, AZ

Denise Strong, Owner, Pawz On Main, Cottonwood, AZ

Kimberly Holloway, Owner, Pretty Faces by Kym, Laveen, AZ

Vicki Mineo, Owner, Puppies n' Love, Phoenix, Gilbert and, Glendale, AZ

Tyler Schmidt, Vice President, Shoppers Supply, Chandler, AZ

James Largo, Owner, The Cichlid Shack, TEMPE, AZ

Wendy Sacra, International Sales Manager, VIP Products, LLC, Phoenix, AZ

Vanessa Hurtado, Groomer, A Yuppy Puppy, Modesto, CA

carol morgan, Dog & Cat Bather, A Yuppy Puppy, Modesto, CA

Kathy Longwell, Owner, All Gods Creatures Pet and House Sitting Srvcs, Modesto, CA

Kaitlyn Lopes, Veterinary technician, Animal dental clinic, Modesto, CA

Karson Yuen, CEO, Aquatic Collection, Hayward, CA

Steve Clark, Owner, Bakersfield Aquatic Pets, Bakersfield, CA

Albert Huang, President, BAWH Trading Inc, Diamond Bar, CA

Victoria Gabay, Owner, Beauty For The Beasts Pet Spa Inc, Fontana, CA

Michael London, CEO, Bow Wow Labs, Novato, CA

Linda London, COO, Bow Wow Labs, Novato, CA

Amber Mayo, Ms, Broke Bitch Kitchen, Oakdale, CA

Chad Smith, Owner, Camp Run A Mutt, Chula Vista, CA

Molly Krumweide, Owner, Camp Run a Mutt East County, El Cajon, CA

Paul Cook, Owner, Camp Run-A-Mutt, Chula Vista, CA

Meghan Gilliatt, General Manager, Camp Run-A-Mutt, San Diego, CA

Analiese Hurd, HR Manager, Camp Run-A-Mutt, San Diego, CA

Mikel Ross, Director of Operations/Co-Founder, Camp Run-A-Mutt Entrepreneurial Resources, Inc, San Diego, CA

Sidney Long, Owner, Camp Run-A-Mutt LAX, Los Angeles, CA

Kim Granche, Dog Daycare Owner, Camp Run-a-Mutt Point Loma, San Diego, CA

Kristine Santos, General Manager, Camp Run-A-Mutt, Sorrento Valley, San Diego, CA

Kristine Santos, General Manager, Camp Run-A-Mutt, Sorrento Valley, San Diego, CA

Julie Campbell, Inside Sales and Customer Service Manager, Canine Caviar Pet Foods, Riverside, CA

Sanchia Hendricks, Business owner, Canine showcase, Sunnyvale, CA

Dave Kaak, Buyer/Category Mgr, Central Pet, Santa Fe Springs, CA

Shannon McKendry, Ms., Consumer/multiple dog owner, San Jose, CA

Leigh Sterten, Owner, Dog Beach Dog Wash, San Diego, CA

George Richter, Owner, Dog Dog Cat, South Lake Tahoe, CA

Denise Dudek, Owner, Dog In Suds, Encinitas, CA

Carla Ng, Western Territory Sales Manager, earthbath, San Francisco, CA

Arianna Wasserburger, VP -CFO, Earthbath, San Francisco, CA

Daniel West, Shipping clerk, Earthbath, San Francisco, CA

Paul Armstrong, President/CEO, earthwhile endeavors, inc., San Francisco, CA

Jose Espinoza, Manager, Fallbrook Fertilizer, Feed & Farm Supply, Fallbrook, CA

Kathy Miles, Owner, Groom 'n' Zoom, Livermore, CA

Tami Baloy, Groomer, Happy Tails pet resort an grooming, Hanford, CA

Andrew T. Kim, Founder & CEO, healthyspot, Culver City, CA

Chris Clevers, President, Hikari Sales USA, Inc., Hayward, CA

Kyle Johnson, Tool tech, Home Depot, Escalon, CA

Desiree Pruellage, Caregiver, IHSS, Modesto, CA

Jack Love, Co-CEO, Incredible Pets, Auburn, CA

Kristin Dutton, Director of Merchandising, Kahoots Feed and Pet, Ramona, CA

Anthony Quintero, Owner, Koi Enterprise, West Sacramento, CA

Mike Lemos, Owner, Lemos Feed and Pet Supply, San Luis Obispo, CA

Laure Baeza, Groomer, Messy Furr, Brea, CA

Lily Mesa, DVM, Mobile Emergency and Small Animal Medicine Clinic, Sun city, CA

Angela Palmer, Owner, Natural Instinct Healthy Pet center, Alpine, CA

Corrie Warren, Marketing Director, Pet Depot, La Verne, CA

Roman D. Versch, President, Pet Depot Veterinary Group, La Verne, CA

Corinne Foote, Pet Groomer/Reiki Practitioner, Pet Image, San leandro, CA

Roger Ma, CEO, Pet Zone SD Inc., San Diego, CA

Lauren Goodwin, Salon Manager, Purrfectly Pampered Paws, Lancaster, CA

Christopher Buerner, President, Quality Marine, Los Angeles, CA

Rachel Coronado, Grooming Salon Owner, Rachel's Dog Grooming, Milpitas, CA

Krystal Ragan, Owner/manager, Reliant Aquarium Design, San Diego, CA

Katryn Robinson, President, Renaissance Pet Resort & Spa, Banning, CA

Justine Kayne, Director of Operations, S&S Pet Supplies Inc., Benicia, CA

Marnie Bond, Owner, Sailor & Friends Pet Supply, Ventura, CA

David Sidhu, Owner, Self Serve Pet Spa (Pet Food), Bakersfield, CA

Madeline Bernstein, President, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA),

Los Angeles, CA

Todd Warner, Owner, Tailwaggers Pet Food and Supplies, Los Angeles, CA

Tiffany Latino, Owner, The Bird Shop, Roseville, CA

Linda Hudson, Owner, The Dog Zone, Monrovia, CA

Sherrie Ammirato, Owner, The Doggie Bag, Roseville, CA

Donna Kennedy Clark, Owner, The Paw Spa, Corona, CA

Kim Everett, Owner, The Perfect Parrot, North Hollywood, CA

Zackery Grey, CEO/Owner, The Urban Pet, Los Angeles, CA

Justin & Susanna Furlone, Owners, The Wishbone Pet Company, Freedom, CA

Jeff Kirby, Owner, Theresa's Country Feed and Pet, Simi Valley, CA

Garrett Cunneen, owner, VillagePet Supply Inc., Valley Village, CA

Cyndi Tumminia, Owner, Wagsrp, Rohnert Park, CA

Trevor Frampton, Owner/Business Manager, Western Farm Center, Santa Rosa, CA

Wendy Caporale, Owner, Wine Country Pet Boutique & Spa, Middletown, CA

David Dieter, Sr. Director, Zoo Med Labs, Inc., Pismo Beach, CA

Daniel F. Drew, CPA, Walnut Creek, CA

Bonnie Price, pet owner, Jurupa Valley, CA

Tim Wagler, COO, Leis Pet Distributing Inc., Wellesley, Ontario, Canada

Marylie Toth, Manager, Pookeys Pet Food & Supplies, Sherwood Park, Alberta, Canada

Karen Kinnes, Manager, A Best Friend/Pet City, Fort Collins, CO

Shana Jackson, Owner, Allstarpets, Cañon City, CO

Aaron Blake, Owner, Animal Attraction LLC, Greeley, CO

Orlando Salazar, CEO, Aqua Medic USA/Aquarium Supply Distribution, Loveland, CO

Tracy Tyler, Area Manager, Bentleys PetStuff, Arvada, CO

Janet Deason, Big Bones Canine Rescue, Severance, CO

Adam Carroll, COO, Big R Holdings, Inc, Pueblo, CO

Kayla MacPherson, BoneJour Pet Care, LLC, Evergreen, CO

Dale Clark, Territory Manager, Central Pet, Denver, CO

Georgia Cameron, Patrol Officer, Denver Police Department, Denver, CO

Heather Thoutt, owner, Elite Reef LLC, Denver, CO

Priscilla Kuemmerlin, Store manager, Exotic aquatics boulder, Fort Collins, CO

Dana Duffy, Furry Friends Grooming, Morrison, CO

Jeanette Allen, Owner, Gigi's Groom & Board LLC, Franktown, CO

Earl Koster, Owner, Happy Tail Mobile Dog Grooming, LLC, Longmont, CO

Marvin Schaffer, Owner/General Manager, J & M Aquatics & Pet Center, Grand Junction, CO

Kimberly Roberts, Sales Manager, Jerry Wilson & Associates, Lakewood, CO

Michael Morgan, Owner, Just Pets, Lone Tree, CO

Michael Morgan, Owner, Just Pets, Centennial, CO

Jill Nazimek, President, Katie's Pet Products, Inc., Golden, CO

Marina Meyers, Owner, Pawsitively Purrfect Inc DBA A Paw Spa, Littleton, CO

Dustin Haworth, Owner, Pet City, Colorado Springs, CO

Eric Berry, Owner, R.J. Paddywacks Pet Outfitter, Carbondale, CO

Felicia Donaldson, Owner, TajmaPawz Grooming, Colorado Springs, CO

Garrett Grossmann, Owner, Underwater Wonders, Fort Collins, CO

Jennifer Day, VP of Finance, Wag N Wash, Littleton, CO

Abe Dunaway, Director of Franchise Support, Wag N' Wash, Colorado Springs, CO

Garth Moore, Vice President, Operations, Wag N' Wash, Littleton, CO

Kristen Wellen, VP of Marketing, Wag N' Wash, Castle Rock, CO

Karolyn McAfee, Owner, Wag n Wash Natural Food & Grooming, Aurora, CO

JEFFERY STRAUSS, co-owner, Wag N' Wash Natural Food and Grooming, Denver, CO

Rob Flanagan, CEO/President, Wag n' Wash Natural Pet Food & Grooming, Denver, CO

Dan Remus, Co-founder, Wag N' Wash Natural Pet Food & Grooming, Centennial, CO

Julie Carros, Owner, WagNWash, Monument, CO

David Hatch, Owner, Western Slope Aquatics and Pets, Grand Junction, CO

Amy Ford, Pet owner, Denver, CO

Gerald Pleban, President, All Pets Club, Branford, CT

Butch Foucault, Owner, All Pets Club, Southington and Wallingford, CT

Tara Fleming, Owner, AtoZ Pet Shop, Orange, CT

Jared Pinsker, Chief Executive Officer and President, Best Friends Pet Hotel, Norwalk, CT

Lawrence Bocchiere, Director of Operations, Choice Pet, Danbury, CT

Kristin Brigandi, Owner, DirtyTails, LLC, Plainville, CT

Stewart Shanley, CEO, Earth Amimal, Stamford, CT

Stephanie Volo, Chief Marketing Officer, Earth Animal, Southport, CT

Catherine Frost, Creative Director, Earth Animal, Southport, CT

Michael Cody, Marketing Director, Earth Animal, Southport, CT

Sarah Ciccia, Production Artist Specialist, Earth Animal, Southport, CT

Laura Reid, President, FishMart, West Haven, CT

Peter Noel, President, Gentle Jungle Pet Store Inc, Meriden, CT

Mark Povermo, Owner, Labmates LLC dba Thomaston Feed, Thomaston, CT

Amy Kenkel, Owner, Leaps & Bones, South Windsor, CT

Nancy Stokes, Owner, Litchfield Pet Supply, Bantam, CT

Dianne Bromley, owner, Oliver & Company, Middlebury, CT

Stephanie Pellegrino, Owner, Petpourri, Inc., Lakeville, CT

Julie Hughes, Self, Newtown, CT

Christopher Carty, President, The Dog House I, Inc, Glastonbury, CT

Jennifer Scott, Owner, The Pawprint Market, Darien, CT

Jill Lawton, Owner, Thomaston Feed Of Brookfield, Brookfield, CT

Jasmin Cruz, Owner, Unleashed Doggy Daycare and Boarding, New Milford, CT

Angela Pantalone, Chief Tail Wagger/ Owner, Wag Central, Stratford, CT

John & Jacqueline Kasabucki, Owner & Manager, Woodbury Pet Commons, Woodbury, CT

Dianne Bromley, Owner, Your Healthy Pet, Newtown, CT

Robin Kershner, Founder, Huxley & Kent, Washington, DC

Tara Costa, Owner, A Gentle Touch Grooming, Ruskin, FL

Amanda Meckley, VP/CFO, ACI Aquaculture, Plant City, FL

Heidi & Sean Potter, Owners, American Dog Outfitters, Key West, FL

Emily Soft, Manager, Animal House Naturals, St. Petersburg, FL

Rob & Kellie Miller, Owners, AquaZoo Extreme Pets, Orange PArk, FL

Audree Berg, President, Augie's Pet Supplies, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Sydney McColley, Business owner/ groomer, Aunt B's Pet Grooming, Orlando, FL

Debra C. Lange, Owner, Benson's Canine Cookies, Lakeland, FL

Zanna C. Woods, COO, Bow Wow Meow Beach Inc., Port Saint Joe, FL

Brandi Ormerod, Owner/Operator, Camp Run-A-Mutt Gainesville, Gainesville, FL

Ann Harcsa, Owner, Canine Connection USA, LLC, Naples, FL

Lauren Scott, Cat Owner, Saint Petersburg, FL

Nancy Okun, Owner, Cats n Dogs, Port Charlotte, FL

Jennifer Brown, Help, Charlie's Place Pet Spa and Boutique, Gainesville, FL

Douglas Moore, Owner, Cindis Pet & Aquarium Center, Vero Beach, FL

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Dr. James B. Wood, Coral Sea Aquarium, West Palm Beach, FL

Scott Hughes, Owner, Deep Blue Seas, LLC, Vero Beach, FL

Robert Benscoter, Owner, Dog Gone Holistic, Lithia, FL

Darrel Day, Owner, Dog Gone Holistic, Lithia, FL

Rene Neff, Managing Member, Downtown Dogs, LLC, Tampa, FL

Samantha Somers, Earth Animal, Palmetto, FL

Brian Sharp, Owner, Earth Pets Natural Pet Market, Gainesville, FL

Patricia Berger, Owner, Earthwise Pet Supply Naples, Naples, FL

Norman Coffman, President & Owner, Earthwise Pet Supply Naples, Naples, FL

Alexandra Randolph, Kennel Tech, Eastman's Escape for Healthy Pets, LLC, Orlando, FL

Chester Lusk, Owner, Eco Reef Corals, Venice, FL

Gary & Rosemarie Walker, President & Vice President, Fish-Heads Aquatics Inc., Ocala, FL

Richard & Tamela Biro, Owner & President, Florida Exotic Fish Sales, Homested, FL

David Boozer, Executive Director, Florida Tropical Fish Farms Assoiation, Winter Haven, FL

Emma Franks, Owner, Fritz n Eli's pet food market, Bonita Springs, FL

Michael Selk, VP of Operations and Engineering, Geo Global Partners (OASE Aquatics and biOrb brands), West Palm Beach, FL

Douglas Ward, President, Geo Global Partners (OASE Aquatics and biOrb brands), West Palm Beach, FL

Tricia Bolds, President/CEO, Gulf Coast Pet Supplies, Inc., Sarasota, FL

Magdalena Delvalle, Owner, Hands To Paws, Beverly Hills, FL

Lori Robert, Owner, Happy Paws by Lori, DeBary, FL

Christina Leone, Owner / Operator, Head to Toe Mobile Grooming, West Palm Beach, FL

Kendra Conze, Owner, Health Mutt, LLC, Tampa, FL

Jennifer Guevin, VP, Holistic for Pets, Sarasota, FL

Howard Ratner, Executive Vice President, Holistic Pet Cuisine, Boca Raton, FL

Alexandre Karfunkelstein Lima, Owner, Hollywood Houndz Boutique, Spa & Hotel, Lake Mary, FL

Pete Bandre, President, Incredible Pets Inc., Melbourne, FL

Lisa Zomaro, Owner, Kitschy Cat Shack, Hollywood, FL

Andrea Passuello de Freitas, Owner/Manager, Le Pup Pet Supplies and Grooming, Clermont, FL

Wayne and Jean Chandler, President, and Vice President, Leesburg Pet Center, leesburg, FL

Patrick McGinnis, CEO, Leo & Lucky's, Parrish, FL

William & Cindy Rein, Owners, Luke's Natural Pet Market, Coral Springs, FL

Morton Wright, Owner, Morton wright reptiled, Miami, FL

Pam Bilbruck, Owner, Mr Mochas Pet Supplies, Belleview, FL

Katie Velie, Manager, Nahacky's Aquarium, Melbourne, FL

Monika Maksymowicz, President, Nika's Pet Spaw and Retreat, Largo, FL

Jason D'Arpe, Owner, Orange Park Aquatics, Orange Park, FL

Alan Garson, Owner, Palm Beach Puppies, Boca Raton, FL

Mel Young, Owner, Pampered Pup, Matlacha, FL

Derek Evans, Owner, Panhandle Exotics, Pensacola, FL

Caroline Clore, President, Paws on the Avenue, Lake Worth Beach, FL

Catherine Bartron, Owner, Paws Required, Fort Pierce, FL

Tuba Genc, Manager, Pawtology Grooming&Spa, Tampa, FL

Joanne Olsen, Owner, Pawty Express, Cape Coral, FL

Holly Elassaad, Owner, Pet Nation, Navarre, FL

David Schuler, Owner, Pet Safari, Clearwater, FL

Patricia Castaneda, Owner, Pet's Life Naturally, Palmetto, FL

Stephen Benecke, Owner, Petland Bradenton, Bradenton, FL

Luis Marquez, President/Owner, Petland Davie, Petland Largo, Petland Miami, Petland Naples, Petland

Pembroke Pines and Petland Plantation, Davie, FL

Mike and Peggy Davis, Owners, Petland Ft Walton and Petland Pensacola, Pensacola, FL

Geoff & Kelli Daniels, Owner, Petland Jacksonville, Jacksonville, FL

Brad Parker, Owner, Petland Sarasota, Sarasota, FL

Adrian Archie, Owner, petNmind, Coconut Creek, FL

Matthew Pitel, President, Posh Paws, Naples, FL

Marsha Kello, Owner, Puppies Galore & More Inc., Jacksonville, FL

RHONDA OLSON, president, Rhonda's Aviary, Milton, FL

Robin Myers, Dog Trainer & boarding, Robin's LifeStyle dog training & boarding, Gainesville, FL

Bridgette Utermohle, Office Manager, Ronald L Book, PA, Tallahassee, FL

Tracy Schulze, Owner, Ruff2Ritz Grooming, Tampa, FL

Danielle Gaudreau, Pet Store Owner, Salon Bark, Ft Lauderdale, FL

Marcella Sweeney, President, Sea in the City, Orlando, FL

Jennifer Rivera, HR Manager, Segrest Farms, Gibsonton, FL

Tim Evans, Director of Operations, Segrest Farms Inc., Gibsonton, FL

Patricia Brink, Self, Sarasota, FL

Dorien Armentrout, President, Shear Magic Pet Grooming, Sanford, FL

Maura Zuniga, Sales Representative, Southeast Pet, Boca Raton, FL

Fay Bott, Owner/Manager, The Barking Ark Unleashed, LLC, Saint Cloud, FL

Paul Lewis, Owner, The Green K9, Mount Dora, FL

Sarah Harrison, Business Owner, The Hound's Meow, Lutz, FL

Ben & Lisa Prakobkit, Owners, The Modern Paws, Tampa, FL

Heidi McAllister, The New York Groomer, Sarasota, FL

Brandy Velazquez, Salon owner, Touch of Class Pet Grooming, Cape Coral, FL

Katherine Grant, Bookkeeper Emeritus, Valley Fisheries, Balm, FL

Allison Townsend, Vice President, Valley Fisheries, Balm, FL

Callum Townsend, Manager, Valley Fisheries, Inc., Balm, FL

Thomas Townsend, President, Valley Fisheries, Inc., Riverview, FL

Abigail Paz, Veterinary Technician, Veterinary Emergency Group, Homestead, FL

Jennifer Fadal, Founder/Owner, Wag the Dog Incorporated, Tampa, FL

Tammy MacDonald, President/Owner, Wags and Purrs Specialty Pantry, Melbourne, FL

Barry Wander, Veterinarian, Wander Animal Clinics of Florida, Boca Raton, FL

Dottie DeCarlo, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery - Lakewood Ranch, Lakewood Ranch, FL

Ashley Sayers, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Carrollwood, Tampa, FL

Courtney Rooney, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Jupiter Farms, Jupiter, FL

Tiffany Schaefer, Owner/Groomer, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Palm Beach, Palm Beach, FL

Toni Hauck, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming Dr. Phillips, Orlando, FL

Pam Lusczakoski, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming Dr. Phillips, Orlando, FL

Mary Hardin, Woof Gang Bakery Fleming Island, Fleming Island, FL

Galen Gritzer, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery SoDo, Orlando, FL

Elizabeth Oberdick, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery SoDo, Orlando, FL

Dina Johnson, Franchise Partner, Woof Gang Bakery, Grooming and Vet Clinic, Boca Raton, FL

Andy Biro, Co-Owner, Xtreme Aquatic Foods, Inc, Melbourne, FL

Debi Hilley, Owner, A Cut Above, Albany, GA

Peggy Williams, Owner, Backyard Pet Boutique, Rome, GA

Joann Schwartz, Owner, Bark & Lounge Doggy Day Care & Boarding, Atlanta, GA

Darla Spinnato, Owner, Camp Bow Wow Alpharetta, Alpharetta, GA

Gwen Sparling, Owner, Camp Kitty, Decatur, GA

Dawn Sperry, Owner, Camp Run A Mutt/ Dunwoody, Dunwoody, GA

Peter Grossman, Managing Member/Owner, Camp Woof Companies, Norcross, GA

Renee Palmer, Founder, CEO, CityDog Market, Atlanta, GA

Terri Nichols, Managing Partner, CityDog Market, Avondale Estates, GA

Mecca Fox, Owner, Diggin' It, Rome, GA

Tebias Brookins, Owner, Fin-Alley, Athens, GA

Ian Awbrey, Highland Pet Supply, Atlanta, GA

Toni Barry, Highland Pet Supply, Atlanta, GA

Mahlia Billingsley, Dog Groomer, Mandy's Pet Spa, Dawsonville, GA

Michelle Ingram, Dog groomer, Mandy's Pet Spa, Dawsonville, GA

Alyssa Wittig, Dog Groomer, Mandy's Pet Spa, Dawsonville, GA

Shawna Fraser-McConnell, Owner, Off The Hook, Peachtree City, GA

Casey Winn, COO, Off The Hook, Peachtree City, GA

Donna Mcconnell, Owner, Off The Hook Marine Fish, Peachtree City, GA

Krystin Holske, Dog groomer, Oh La La Pet Grooming, Toomsboro, GA

Richard & Edgardo Lott, Owners, Pause 4 Paws Pet Grooming and Hotel, Douglasville, GA

Rebecca Wagoner, CEO, Paw Perfect Pet Salon, Inc, Cumming, GA

Alicia Williams, Petstore Store Manager, Pet Retail Brands, Byron, GA

Brad Parker, Owner, Petland Kennesaw, Kennesaw, GA

Kristen Parker, Owner, Petland Mall of Georgia, Buford, GA

Monte Brokate, Owner/Franchisee, Petland of Dalton and Petland of Rome, Dalton, GA

Cyndi Moore, Reptile Shop Owner, Reigning Reptiles, Buford, GA

Tim Green, Owner, Sandy Pawz, Brunswick, GA

Jean Yacobellis, Partner, South Paw Natural Pets LLC, Ellijay, GA

Ryan Judge, President, Southeast Pet, Austell, GA

Donna Avers, Sun Pet LLC, Atlanta, GA

Kelly Hudson, Mr, Sun Pet Ltd, Atlanta, GA

Angela Smutny, Swanky Paws Pet Spa, Lawrenceville, GA

Barbara Horrobin, Owner, Swanky Paws Pet Spa, Lawrenceville, GA

S. Maria Hannah, Owner, The Clean Dog, Inc., Atlanta, GA

David and Marilyn Crabb, Owners, The Stock Market, Conyers, GA

Jean Finney, Owner, The Whole Dog Market, Atlanta, GA

Eileen Kelly, Owner, The Whole Dog Market, Atlanta, GA

Kelley Wharton, Owner, Three Dog Bakery Grayson, Grayson, GA

Suzette Grier, Owner, Top Dogs Pet Boutique, Roswell and, Kennesaw, GA

Judy Erlichman, Owner, Wags to Whiskers, LLC, Peachtree City, GA

Carol Young, Owner, Wags to Whiskers, LLC, Peachtree City, GA

Celeste Ganeku, Retail Online Store, 808 Pup Pawducts Inc., Aiea, HI

Wendy Trinh, Owner, Furever Friends, Honolulu, HI

Torrey Wingert, CEO, Bomgaars Pet Supply, Inc., Sioux City, IA

April Lawrence, Owner, Boneapatreat, Des Moines, IA

Anna Woodcock, Owner, Brown Dog Bakery, Ankeny, IA

Connie Adams, Co owner, Pawsitive Paws Academy, Cedar Rapids, IA

Ron Solsrud, Owner, Petland Iowa City, Iowa City, IA

Cynthia Snyder, Owner, The Animal House Pet Shop, Keokuk, IA

Christopher Theisen, CEO, Theisen's Home-Farm-Auto, Dubuque, IA

Michael & Barbara Morris, President and Co-Owner, Treats on a Leash LLC, Ames, IA

Mark Schmitt, CEO, D&B Supply, Caldwell, ID

John M. Hatcher, President, EzyDog, LLC, Sandpoint, ID

Veronica Bonagofski, Professional dog groomer, Pawsitive Dog Grooming, Ponderay, ID

Kayla Kerr, Owner, Puppyland, Meridian, ID

Leslie Corral, 4 Legs Pet, Chicago, IL

Samantha Palya, Owner, Absolutely Pawfect Pet Styling, Palos Hills, IL

Joe Shilkus, Purchasing Director, Apet Inc, East Dundee, IL

Mark Kasper, Distribution Manager, Bentley's Petstuff, Wood Dale, IL

Milt Wetherell, C.E.O., Big R Springfield IL, Springfield, IL

Tammi Janel, Owner, Blackbird's Bowl Natural Pet Foods & More, Morris, IL

Jeff DiRe, Owner, Bruce & Willy's Natural Pet Source, Geneva, IL

Krysta Fox, Owner, Bruce & Willy's Natural Pet Source, Geneva, IL

Brian Potter, President, Chicago Reptile House, Orland Park, IL

Mark and Caroline Janczak, President and Secretary, Critters Pet Shop Inc., South Elgin, IL

Kathryn Kostopoulos, Pet Stylist, Doggie styles, Huntley, IL

Akash Punjabi, Owner, Doggy, Chicago, IL

Kenneth Hild, General Manager/Owner, Farm & Home Supply Co., Quincy, IL

Frank Ligori, Owner, Frank's Pet Shop, Streator, IL

Carrie Trolinger, Owner, Furry Babies, rockford, IL

Ana Soskic, President, Furry Babies Joliet, Inc., Joliet, IL

Ana Soskic, President, Furry Babies Stratford Square, Inc., Bloomingdale, IL

Beth Staley, Owner, Happy Dog Barkery, Downers Grove, IL

Cynthia Marden, Owner, I'll be Doggone, Mokena, IL

James Horne, Co-Owner, Jameson Loves Danger, Chicago, IL

Gracie Whalen, Co-Owner, Jameson Loves Danger, Chicago, IL

Charlie Soto, Owner, Jules Pet Shop, Chicago Ridge, IL

Liz Varela, Owner, Liz's Pet Shop, Chicago, IL

Bill Jenkins, Co-owner, Love Fur Dogs, Glencoe, IL

Warren Crabtree, Owner, Midwest Tropical Fish, Jerseyville, IL

Gayland Bourland, owner, Noah's Ark Pet Shoppe, Effingham, IL

Angie DeMars, Owner, Noah's Ark Pet Supply, Winnetka, IL

Anthony Mistretta, Owner, Ocean Design Aquarium Inc, Chicago, IL

Douglas E. Gronowski, Owner, Orland Park Boarding Kennel & Natural Pet Food Center, Orland Park, IL

Michael Du Bois, Pampered Pet Dog Hotel, Danville, IL

Jim Sparks, Owner, Park Pet Shop Inc., Chicago, IL

Jody Meerdink, Owner/President, Paw Lickin' Good Treats, Sycamore, IL

Randi Shoshara, Salon owner, Pawfect Styles, Lombard, IL

Candace D'Agnolo, Founder & CEO, Pet Boss Nation, Chicago, IL

Lucille McNichols, Pet grooming by Teena, Elgin, IL

Carl Swanson, Owner, Petland Chicago Ridge, Petland Naperville and Petland Rockford, Chicago Ridge, IL

Adam Berger, Owner, Petland Round Lake Beach, Round Lake Beach, IL

Jay Webb, Owner, Pure Pet, LLC, Carbondale, IL

Jodi Etienne, owner, Razzle Dazzle Doggie Bow-tique, Bradley, IL

Kathy Lichtenstein, Owner, Rex's Place, Evanston, IL

John Cwaygel, President, Sailfin Pet Shop Inc., Champaign, IL

Kathy Michaelson, self, Rockton, IL

Claudia Johnson, Owner, Shear paradise pet salon, Mundelein, IL

Kelsey Bright, Channel Development Manager, SPINS, Chicago, IL

Dane Diermeier, Account Executive, SPINS, Chicago, IL

Devika Gireesh, VP Retail Partnerships, SPINS, Chicago, IL

Amy Kerr, Director, Business Development, SPINS, Chicago, IL

Jay Lovelace, Chief Commercial Officer, SPINS, Chicago, IL

Tony Olson, Owner and CEO, SPINS, Chciago, IL

Sophie Phillips, Owner, Sprocket & Stone, Chicago, IL

Phillip Emigh, Owner, Tails in the City, Chicago, IL

Bruce Haas, Owner, Tails in the City, Chicago, IL

Madeline Rannin, Owner, The Groom Wizard, Yorkville, IL

Taylor Gonzalez, Owner, Three Tails Parlor and Pantry, Columbia, IL

Renee Gonzalez, Owner, Three Tails Parlor and Pantry Waterloo, Waterloo, IL

AdreAnne & Andy Tesene, Owners, Two Bostons Wheaton, Burr Ridge, Geneva and, Naperville, IL

Matt Smallheer, President, Tye-Dyed Iguana, Fairview Heights, IL

Brandi Calvert, Physical Therapist Assistant and Certified Dog Trainer, Wags to Whiskers, Plainfield, IL

Janelle Pitula, Owner, Wags to Whiskers, Plainfield, IL

Joe and Sheila Spitza, Owners, Wet Nose, Oak Brook and, Geneva, IL

Sherri Crawford, Pet owner, Evanston, IL

Jackie Miles, CoOwner, Aguarium Concepts, Evansville, IN

Josh Cook, President/Owner, Aquarium World of Lafayette INC, Lafayette, IN

Josh Cook, Owner/President, Aquarium World of Lafayette INC, Lafayette, IN

Shelley Becker, President, Hungry Hound, St John, IN

Jennifer Hooper, Owner, Just Paws Pet Services, Sullivan, IN

Misty Stephan, President, Paw's-n-Claw's Pet Care Palace, Fort Wayne, IN

Alicen Ingle, Owner Operator, Pet-Agree Professional Pet Services, Jasper, IN

Scott & Stacey Petcu, owners, Three Dog Bakery, Indianapolis and, Noblesville, IN

Kathleen Schonsheck, Business Owner, Uptown Pup LLC, Indianapolis, IN

Brad Cantwell, President, MidWest Homes for Pets, Muncie, IN

Cindy Dunston Quirk, Founder and Chief Dog Lover, Scout & Zoe's, Anderson, IN

Samantha Youngblood, Owner, Youngblood's Natural Animal Care Center & Massage Therapy,

Greenfield, IN

Debra Manfield, Owner, Four Paws Pantry & Spa, Olathe, KS

Jason Crumb, Owner, L and L Pets, Emporia, KS

Jennifer Thomas, Owner, Lucky Dog Outfitters and Pet Supply, Lawrence, KS

Staci Williams, Owner, Petland Topeka, Topeka, KS

Rebecca Hertel, Owner, Petland West Wichita, West Wichita, KS

Katherine St. John, Licensed Therapist, Self-Employed, Shawnee, KS

Jeannette Remington, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming - Iron Horse, Leawood, KS

Kelly Robbins, Owner and Daily Operator, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Overland Park, Overland Park, KS

Amanda Pokorny, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming Wichita, Wichita, KS

Jim Wente, Owner, Bert's Pet Center, Ashland, KY

Denise Caudill, Customer, Viper, KY

Brannon Dixon, CEO, Feeders Supply/ Chow Hound Pet Supplies, Louisville, KY

Karen Haynes, Home, Blackey, KY

Melissa Whitton, President, Most Valuable Pets, Inc, Lexington, KY

Khris Berry, Groomer, See spot grooming, Goshen, KY

Melissa Cox, Self, Shelbyville, KY

Debbie Hoblitzell, Self, Louisville, KY

Leslie Stewart, Owner, Southern Barker, Lexington, KY

Leslie Stewart, Owner, Southern Barker, Louisville, KY

Jenna Gordon, Owner, Special Care for Special Pets, Danville, KY

Keith Durham, Owner, The Fish Room, Liberty, KY

Tymory Stanton, Business Officer, University of Kentucky, Wilmore, KY

Rachael & Stephen Creech, Co-Owners, Adventure Pets, Inc., Mandeville, LA

Beverly Byron, Owner/operator, Phat Dawgz All Breed Pet Grooming, Monroe, LA

Amber Cook, Owner/groomer, Pippy's Puppy Parlor LLC, Ponchatoula, LA

Robert Schenk, Owner, Animal Instincts Aquarium & Pet Center, Fall River, MA

Steven Raposo, Owner, Awesome Pets II Inc dba Mellisa's Pet Depot, Fairhaven, MA

Mellisa Raposo, Owner, Awesome Pets Inc DBA Mellisa's Pet Depot, North Dartmouth, MA

Honor Blume, Owner of pet related business, BowMeow Regency®, Sheffield, MA

Ali Connor, Owner, Camp K-9 Dog Day Camp and Slepovers, Camp K-9, Westfield, MA

Taylor Kring, Teacher, Cindy's childcare, Westfield, MA

David Ratner, Owner, Dave's Pet City, Agawam, MA

Brian Chumsae, Owner, Dinky Reptiles and Aquatics, Auburn, MA

Jill Federman, Owner, doggone it, Newton, MA

ReBecca Savard, President, Fish Works Gallery Inc., Ashland, MA

Nicoll Vincent, Owner, For K-9s & Felines, LLC, Westfield, MA

Jeff San Souci, Director of Marketing, Hagen Group, Mansfield, MA

Weronika Wiktor -Lund, Pet groomer, Happy puppy grooming, Weymouth, MA

Rob Mellace, Owner, Healthy Pet, Peabody, MA

Linda Hlinka, Pet owner, Individual, Middleboro, MA

Michelle Wang, Owner/LLC Member, It's a Pet's World, Weymouth, MA

Daniel Kennedy, Mr, Kennedy k9 Camp, Plympton, MA

Haley Godden, Store Manager, Loyal Companion, Canton, MA

Stephen Varner, Owner, Maggie's Foods for Pets, West Boylston, MA

Andrew Gaouette, Owner, Mutt Waggin' Pet Supplies, Medfield, MA

Robyn Bright, Program Manager, NexPet Group, Pepperell, MA

Paul Steinberg, General Manager, Noah's Ark Pet Shops, Sturbridge, MA

Lisa Bombardier, Let kwner, None, Chicopee, MA

Michael & Nancy Maida, Owners, Pawsh Dog Boutique, Boston, MA

John Mellace, Owner, Pet Express, Saugus, MA

Lucia Mellace-Castle, Owner, Pet Express, Danvers, MA

Rob Mellace, Owner, Pet Express Braintree and, Lynn, MA

Alyssa Bica, Groomer, Pet Supplies Plus, Lunenburg, MA

Stephen Scaffidi, president, Pet Supply Outlet, Belmont, MA

Robert Pickett, Regional Account Manager, Phillips Pet Food & Supply, E Taunton, MA

Cheryl Purcell, Owner, Pooch Paws, Hanover, MA

Nina Rogosin, Manager, PT Pet Supply, Dudley, MA

Yolanda DeGaetano, Owner, PT Pet Supply Inc., Webster, MA

Leah Franzen, Regional Manager, Redbarn, Sandwich, MA

Gail New, Self, Marblehead, MA

Rebecca Torgrimson, Self, North Dighton, MA

Tom Griglun, Owner, Starwood Pet Resort, Oxford, MA

Jo-Ann Keith, Owner, Stinky's Kittens & Doggies Too, Somerville, MA

Ed Buckner, The Dog Retreat and Spa, Waltham, MA

Diane Dewberry, owner, The Healthy Animal, Pembroke, MA

Carlos Munoz, President, The Perfect Puppy, Plainville, MA

Tiffany Lynn Higgins, Owner, The Spa at Tiffany's Pet Grooming & Boutique, Hinsdale, MA

Sarah Schermerhorn, Owner, Wagalicious Walks, LLC, Framingham, MA

Gregory Riley, Wagging Tails at Heritage Farm, Easthampton, MA

Christine Pratt, Wagging Tails Pet Resort, Inc., Hadley, MA

Brett DeChaine, owner, WOOF! WOOF! Pet Boutique & Biscuit Bar, New Bedford, MA

Debra Ball, Pet owner and shopper, Worldly Pets, Marblehead, MA

Beth Petrecca, Owee, Animal Images, Essex, MD

Megan Purtell, Owner, Beagle Bed & Breakfast, Emmitsburg, MD

Michelle Selby, Director of Customer Experience, Best Friends Fur Ever, Joppa, MD

Cindy Kutlik, Pet owner, Homeowner, Elkton, MD

michael Hresko, co owner, House of tropicals inc, glen burnie, MD

Mitch Thomson, Owner, Just Puppies, Inc., Rockville, MD

Jeanea Thomson, Owner, Just Puppies, Inc., Towson, MD

Kris Hoffman, Ceo, Peace of Mind pet boarding n grooming, Ilc, East new market, MD

Mike Dagne, President, Pet Palette Distribution, Sykesville, MD

Heather Hinkle, Manager, Pinkies play place, Clarksville, MD

Susanna Brennan, Owner, Scratch and Sniff Pet Supplies, Phoenix, MD

Mary Jane Nagel, Owner, St Michaels Pet Supplies, St Michaels, MD

Kevin Knippenberg, Pet Groomer and owner, Strut Your Mutt Pet Grooming, Cumberland, MD

Helen Bennett, Owner, The Grooming Place Pet Shop, Chester, MD

Joseph W. Wagner, Jr., Owner, Today's Pet, Inc., Elkridge, MD

Steven Maletzky, Owner, Tropical Lagoon Aquarium, Silver Spring, MD

Sarah Minderlein, Mrs, UHG, Baldwin, MD

Anne Forrest, Owner, Wag N Wash Natural Food & Grooming, Cllalifornia, MD

Kirk Forrest, Franchise owner, WagNWash, California, MD

Hollis McGraw, Dog Mom, Cumberland, MD

Ann Peterson, Owner, Ann-imals Pet Supply Store, York, ME

Gavin Hardy, Owner, GGs Pet Salon LLC, Laveen, ME

Heidi V. Neal, Owner, Loyal Biscuit Company, Rockland, ME

Gay Farnum, Owner, Mrs., OXFORD, ME

Bill Backus, President, A&M Aquatics, Lansing, MI

Joe Mejia, Vice President and general manager, Airmax, inc., Armada, MI

Ann Randall, Owner/Groomer, Ann's Pet Parlor, Battle Creek, MI

Michelle Nikiforuk, Owner, Bark-A-Bout, Shelby township, MI

Michelle Farris, President, Critter Country Inc, Grand Junction, MI

Nicole Gianino, Dog Groomer, From Rags to Riches, Warren, MI

Josh Strangway, Supply Chain Manager, Frontier Distributing Inc, Oxford, MI

Mark Smith, President, Frontier Distributing, Inc., Oxford, MI

Mark P. Marquardt, Owner, Joey's Pet Outfitters, Williamston, MI

Joel DeBruin, CEO, John A VanDenBosch Co., Holland, MI

Joshua Willard, Owner, Josh's Frogs, Owosso, MI

Julia VandenAkker, Julia's Gentle Dog Grooming, Grand Rapids, MI

David Kee, Owner, Kee's Aquarium & Pets, Shelby Township, MI

Jennifer Schilling, Owner, Meeow Chicago, Chicago, MI

Steve Vernon, Owner, MVPets, Portage, MI

Jesi Dray, Owner, Pampered Pooch Groom Room, Bessemer,, MI

Debbie Fazica, Owner, Pet X Supply & Tack inc, Howell, MI

Selena Moore, Vice President, Puppy Love, Inc./IncrediPets Market, Waterford Township, MI

Gary Albert, Owner, Ruff Life Pet Outfitters, Petosky, MI

Tara Denean, Owner/Master Groomer, Star Gazers Pet Salon, Marysville, MI

Janae Schwab, President, Sudzy Puppy, Kawkawlin, MI

Michelle Odonnell, Owner, The Dapper Dog Pet Parlor and Day Spa, Swartz Creek, MI

John Stottele, LLC Member/Owner, The Family Puppy, Troy, Flint and Novi, MI

James Carden, CEO, The Parchment Poodle LLC, Parchment, MI

Jill Tack, Owner, The Pet Beastro, Madison Heights, MI

Jason Blake, President, The Pond Guy, Inc., Armada, MI

Mark DiMatteo, Owner, The Urban Dog, Rochester Hills, MI

Laurie Scutt, Owner, UNLEASHED and lovin' it! LLC, Jackson, MI

Deb Nitz, Pet care provider, Uptown poochie parlor, Canton, MI

Dr. Hillary McCulloh, Angel of Hope Animal Rescue, Ogilvie, MN

Lisa Rojas, Owner, Dreadlocks for Dingoes/LJR Enterprise LLC, St Paul, MN

Joyce Murphy, Owner, Faribault Animal Center, Faribault, MN

Kristin Smith, Owner, Four Paws and a Tail, Blaine, MN

Julie Hanson, Groomer, Grooming by Julie LLC, Hibbing, MN

Johnnie Brashear, Mr, KRRAS, Viper, MN

Del Matteson, Co-CEO, L&M Fleet Supply, Grand Rapids, MN

Mike Osborn, Owner, Pet Evolution, Woodbury, MN

Jourdyn Ruesch, Kennel attendant, Puppys Playpen, Overland Park kansas, MN

Erin Boo, Owner, Riley Rue Pet Spaw, Duluth, MN

Dan Herrmann, COO, Runnings, Marshall, MN

Amy Hoffmann, Owner / Operator, That Dapper Pet grooming Spa & Boutique, Bloomington, MN

Nicole Johnson, Owner, The Dog House Minnesota, Farmington, MN

Michelle Lynn Nelson, Owner, The Pet Authority, Albert Lea and Austin, MN

Patrick Baker, Owner, Unleashed Animal Care, Shakopee, MN

Ashley Corbin, Owner, Unleashed Animal Care, Shakopee, MN

Dan Hutchison, Owner, Wag N Wash Eagan, Eagan, MN

Jon Wagner, Owner, Wag N' Wash Natural Pet Food & Grooming, Lakeville, MN

Tony and Sheri Phipps, Manager/Owner, Airedale Antics, Maplewood, MO

Jan Guin, General Manager, All Pet Supplies, Springfield, MO

Amanda Derby, Manager, All Pet Supplies & Equine Center, Springfield, MO

Shelly Gonzalez, Owner, Arch city dog boarding, St. Louis, MO

Jill Allen, Owner/Operator, Bark 2 Basics LLC, O'Fallon, MO

Christine Mason, Owner/Operator, Bark 2 Basics LLC, O'Fallon, MO

Stacy Busch-Heisserer, Owner, Busch Pet Products, Cape Girardeau, MO

Stephanie Mayer, Owner, Cuddle Up Pup, Lee's summit, MO

William Mills, President, Family Center Farm & Home, Harrisonville, MO

Jeffrey Jensen, Co-Owner, Four Muddy Paws - The Healthy Pet Market, St. Louis, MO

Daffanee Vogt, Owner, Grooming In Style LLc, Marthasville, MO

Tasha Kothenbeutel, Owner, Groomingdales Pet Salon, Ozark, MO

Summer Patterson, Hydro dog, Kansas City, MO

Carol Will, CEO, Lola & Penelope's, Inc., Clayton, MO

Abigail Wright, Manager, Medlin Pet Company, Sullivan, MO

Barb York, President, Missouri Animal Husbandry Association, Mansfield, MO

Desiree Drake, Dog trainer, No Leash Needed, St. Peters, MO

Tara Hunte, Owner, Petland Independence, Independence, MO

Ryan Boyle, Owner, Petland Joplin, Joplin, MO

Doug Pasternack, Franchisee, Petland North Kansas City and Petland Blue Springs, Blue Springs, MO

Thomas Killmade, Owner, Petland St. Louis, Saint Louis, MO

Chris Fleming, Owner, Pinnacle Pet, Neosho, MO

Kelli and Jeff Starkweather, Member/Owners, Posh Dogs Boutique, Joplin, MO

Joseph Faszl, Owner, Seascape Studio, Sunset Hills, MO

Gia Trapani, Co-owner, Simply Grooming by Gia, Kansas City, MO

Jennifer Orton, Co-owner, Simply Grooming by Gia, Kansas City, MO

Joe Dent, President - Franchising & Corporate Bakeries, Three Dog Bakery, Kansas City, MO

Monica Pitzner, Chief Marketing Officer, Three Dog Bakery, Kansas City, MO

Kathleen Duncan, Owner/Groomer, Time For A Trim Mobile Grooming, Union, MO

Natta Netikosol, Manager, Tong's tropical fish, Fountain valley, MO

Rebecca Phillips, Owner, Trendy Paws, St. Peters, MO

Darell Bandy, General Manager, West Plains Vet. Supply of Springfield,, Springfield, MO

Tricia Liptrap, Owner/ Operator, Just B Paws Mobile Pet Spa, Phoenix, MS

Osana Gonzalez, Owner, Osana's pet salon, Olive branch, MS

Ashlynn Reeder, Single, Photographer, Modesto, MS

Josh & Holly Allen, Founders, Dee-O-Gee, Bozeman, MT

Rick Ungersma, President and CEO, Murdoch's Ranch & Home Supply, Bozeman, MT

Elizabeth Mcneilly, Owner, Paws and Pamper, L,LC, Missoula, MT

Chase Pierce, Owner, Tailwaggers Montana, Whitefish, MT

Heather Persinger, Owner/General Manager, Aristopets Pet Food & Supplies, Lewisville, NC

Phil Ray, Owner/President, Best 4K9, Greensboro, Oak Ridge and Winston Salem, NC

Tim Clifton, General Manager, Big Blue Stores, Clinton, Elizabethtown and Kinston, NC

Tammy S. Pehler-Johnson, Co-Owner, Cared for Canine and Cat, Southern Pines, NC

Kris Cline, Owner, Carolina Aquatics, Kernersville, NC

Laura Johnson, Owner, Club Pups Lake Norman, Mooresville, NC

Megan Vooris, Cobble Hill Bed and Biscuit, Wake Forest, NC

Cassie Stingle, Dapper Dog Mobile Grooming, Whispering Pines, NC

Vanessa Davis, Founder/CEO, Dirty Dogs Spa, Raleigh, NC

Heather McClain-Howell, Owner/Operator, Fit for a Pit, Kinston, NC

Kimberly Aspenleiter, Moore Equine Feed & Supply, Southern Pines, NC

Sheena Deese, Dog groomer, Mooresville animal hospital, Mooresville, NC

Wendy Megyese, CEO, Muttigans, Emerald Isle, NC

Erika Siegel, Owner, My Best Friend's Barkery, Banner Elk, NC

Annette Jones, Owner, Paws & Purrs Barkery & Boutique, Rutherfordton, NC

Scott Wildman, Vice President, Pawsitively Pampered Pets, Huntersville, NC

Todd Shelton, CEO, Phillips Pet Food & Supplies, Charlotte, NC

Laura Backus, Owner, Purrrfect Bark, Columbus, NC

Cheryl Wyman, Manager, The Pet Warehouse, Jacksonville, NC

Christina Horrell, Groomer, Von Barkees Pet Spa, Wilmington, NC

Ann Marie Sindt, Franchise Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming - Biltmore Park Town Square, Asheville, NC

Joseph Colucci, Co-Founder/Vice President, ZoomyDogs Incorporated, Durham, NC

Dana Fiedler, Owner, Wag N Train, Grand Forks, ND

Dr. Bradford Taylor, Urban Dogg, LLC, Denver, NE

Bill Girard, Owner, Canine Cupboard LLC, Portsmouth, NH

Benjamin Mayes, General Manager, Claremont Pet & Aquarium Center, Claremont, NH

Benjamin Mayes, General Manager, Lebanon Pet & Aquarium Center, West Lebanon, NH

Alexandra Belakhov, PawsAbout Pty Ltd, Coogee, NH

Joy Roberts, Pet groomer, Great Yarmouth, NH

Benjamin Mayes, General Manager, Steve's Pet Shoppe, Lebanon, NH

Curt Jacques, President, West Lebanon Feed & Supply, West Lebanon, NH

Adam Zweig, Owner, Adam's Pet Safari, Chester, NJ

Hope Valenti, Owner, Amwell Pet Supply, Hillsborough, NJ

Amy Fiumarelli, Owner, Amy's Animals Inc., Wantage, NJ

Albert Migliori, Owner, Animal Kingdom, East Orange, NJ

Howard Berkowitz, President, Aquaridise, East Brunswick, NJ

Lacie Hyde, Owner, Bark Avenue Puppies, Red Bank, NJ

William Chappell, President, Bill's Wonderland of Pets, Magnolia, NJ

Nicole Reker, Dog groomer, Callin All Dogs, Maple Shade, NJ

Claudia and Roy Loomis, Owners, Cherrybrook Premium Pet Supplies, Phillipsburg, NJ

Teresa & George Davenport, Owner, Earthwise Pet Supply & Grooming, Turnersville, NJ

Yoly Parra, Owner, Fashionable Pets, Paramus, NJ

Stephanie Earl, Co-Owner, Furrylicious, Whitehouse Station, NJ

Cindy Knowles, Co-Owner, Furrylicious, Whitehouse Station, NJ

Kelly Dow, CEO, Grooming Gallery, Montclair, NJ

Cait Lauria, CEO, Groomington Coat Factory, Midland Park, NJ

Erin Johnson, Dog groomer/owner, Leash N Lather, Saddle Brook, NJ

Jan Hopper, Owner, Living Pawsitively, Lafayette, NJ

Damon Yoon, General Manager, Ny Puppy Club, Edgewater, NJ

Luz Torres, Owner of Clips N Snips, Clifton, NJ

Barbara Grobert, Pet Store Owner, Pet Supplies Plus, Madison, NJ

Brian Kresge, Owner, Pet Supplies Plus Oakland, Oakland, NJ

Brian Dunleavy, Owner, Reefco Aquariums, Green Brook, NJ

Amie Tolomeo, Salon owner, Rockin Pups, Edgewater park, NJ

Jonathan Dubreuil, Owner, Shake a Paw, Green Brook, NJ

Jeff Morton, Owner, Shake a Paw, Union, NJ

Mark Hunsbedt, Independent pet store owner, T and T Pet Supply, Skillman, NJ

Dana West, The Pet Shoppe, Middletown, NJ

Sue Fitzgerald, Owner, The Scottish Dog Pet Supplies, Metuchen, NJ

Gregori Lukas, Owner, THEO Pet Grocery, Montclair, NJ

Karl McQuilken, Owner, Wholistic Paws, Ramsey, NJ

Lindsey Daniels, Owner, Cross City Exotics, Las Cruces, NM

Patti Welch, Groomer and boarding kennel manager, Hound Haven, Tijeras, NM

Carmen Rustenbeck, CEO, International Boarding & Pet Services Association, Las Cruces, NM

Susana Vasquez, Owner, Pet Food Gone Wild Inc., Rio Rancho, NM

Laura Moore, President, The Critters & Me, Inc., Santa Fe, NM

Patricia Duran-Quezada, Educator, Cal Poly Pomona, Ontario, NV

Alyson Arnold, Groomer / owner, Dapper dogs salon llc, Las Vegas, NV

Doreen Smith, Travel manager, Livingston, Phoenix, NV

Paul Tomas, Puppy Boutique Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

Natalie Banks, Owner, Scruffy to Fluffy, N Las Vegas, NV

Elaina Stanley, Owner, Three Happy Hounds, Fernley, NV

Christie McLean, Local Owner, Wag n' Wash, Las Vegas, NV

Carrie Little, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Henderson, Las Vegas, NV

Chin Li Kuok and Richard Hansen, Owners, Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV

Anthony Eccleston, Owner, All in 1 Petshop Inc, BROOKLYN, NY

Chad Fleming Conway, Owner, American Kennels of New York, New York, NY

Richard Bonifazio, President, Aquarium Village, Westbury, NY

Cynthia Daluise, Owner, Arcadia Pets, Staten Island, NY

Anita and Alan Dungey, President and Vice President, Auburn Leathercrafters, Auburn, NY

Jasmine Ward, Owner, Bark & Purr Yonkers, Yonkers, NY

Paul Lewis, Owner, Birds Unlimited, Webster, NY

Roberta Gray, Owner, Bobbis Grooming, Chula Vista, NY

Marc Silverstein, Manager, Bow Wow Babies, Huntington, NY

Maria Kalonarou, Owner, Bubbles and Biscuits, Inc., Astoria, NY

Karen Zablan, Store manager, Canine Styles, New York City, NY

Julio Rojas, Store Manager, Canine Styles, New York, NY

Jeremy Zelkowitz, Manager, Canine Styles Inc., New York, NY

David Jacoby, Owner, Citipups Chelsea, New York, NY

Holly Hemingway, Owner, Citipups Village, New York, NY

Gary Kalish, Owner, Country Gardens Agway, Bridgehampton, NY

Josephine Nuccio, Secretary/Treasurer, Cozy Corner's Village Pet and Feed, Mastic Beach, NY

Susan H Carmody, Business Owner, Cozy Pet, North Babylon, NY

Vincent Russo, President, Cutting Edge Herpetological Inc., Kings Park, NY

Lisa Devlin, Dog groomer, Dog spaw, Williamson, NY

Heather Nicolson, Pet groomer, DogTown Daycare, Calverton, NY

Gloria Roberts, Chef, Elizabeth's, Greenlawn, NY

Catherine Smith, Sales Manager, Fauna Foods, Queens, NY

Jeff David, CEO, Independent Pet Partners, New York, NY

Christopher Downs, Owner, Island Fish & Reef, Bohemia, NY

Lorri Dring, DVM, Just Cats Health Care, East Setauket, NY

Holly Donohue, Owner, LaDeDa Pet Spa, Orchard Park, NY

Amy Schie, Owner, Lucky Dogs Canine Services, Skaneateles, NY

Carla & Dave DellaContrada, Owners, Mother Nature Pet Supply, Manlius, NY

Christine Phillips, Mountain Rottie Rescue, Schenectady, NY

Margo Tortorelis, Owner, My Natural Pet, Brooklyn, NY

Barry Berman, President, NexPet/Grandma Mae's Country Naturals, New York, NY

Kelly Newton, Owner, Nickel City Pet Pantry, Getzville, NY

Howard Lee, General Manager, NY Puppy Club, Flushing, NY

Billy Shinn, CEO/Owner, NY Puppy Club, Flushing, NY

Gary Nudelman, President, NYC Breeders, Brooklyn, NY

Jessica Roth, Business Owner, Paw Printz WNY LLC, North Tonawanda, NY

Judy Wong, Owner/President, Paws in Paradise NYC, Brooklyn, NY

Andrew Tsartsalis, President, Pet Central, New York, NY

Bruce Swiss, Owner, Pet Connection, Wading River, NY

Tim Meca, Territory Manager, Pet Food Experts, Mayfield, NY

Douglas Staley, Owner, Pet Palace of New City, New City, NY

Adam Jacobson, Executive Vice President, Pet Pantry Warehouse, Rye, NY

Jim Seidewand, President, Pet World & Aqua Shoppe, Rochester, NY

Boris Zekster, Puppy City, Brooklyn, NY

Samantha Green, Owner, Puppy Love Grooming LLC, Hamburg, NY

Boris Zekster, Puppy Paws, Ozone Park, NY

Diana Rodriguez, Assistant Manager, Releash NYC, New York, NY

Steve Roussis, President, Roussis Reptiles, Westbury, NY

Jeff Gebhart, Sales Director, Royal Aquatic LLC, Buffalo, NY

Christine Hendee, Dog Groomer, Self-Employed, Canandaigua, NY

Marc Jacobs, Shake a Paw, Lynbrook, NY

Gerard O'Sullivan, Owner, Shake A Paw, Hicksville, NY

Sondra Whalen, Owner, Sondra's City Zoo, Elmira, NY

Susan DAmodio, Owner, Splash and Dash for Dogs, St James, NY

Sophia Alexopolous, Owner, The Part Market 72, The Pet Market 57 and The Pet Market Broadway, New York, NY

Stacy Matejovic, Dog groomer, The soapy dog, Huntington Station, NY

Jennifer Talcott, President, The Soapy Dog, Huntington Station, NY

Joseph Manzi, President, Total Pet Care, Holbrook, NY

Eileen Devinei, Customer, Treat Your Pet, Island Park, NY, Long Beach, NY

Ann McClain, President, Treats Unleashed, Amherst, NY

Jessica MacDonald and Allen Alagna Manello, Owners, USA Dog Shop, Tuxedo Park, NY

Judith Lonergan, Owner, Wagging It in the ADK, Old Forge, NY

Marie DeBrocky, Business owner, Wet Nose, inc., Schenectady, NY

Randy Klein, Owner, Whiskers Holistic Petcare, New York, NY

Brandi Opial, Owner, A-1 Pet Grooming, Toledo, OH

Daryl Meyerrenke, Owner, Anderson Township Family Pet Center, Cincinnati, OH

Ron Keller, Owner, Captivating Canines, Westerville, OH

Susan Peterie, Owner, CeasarsCreek Boarding Kennel, LLC, Wilmington, OH

Mike Gonidakis, President, Citizens for Responsible Pet Ownership (CRPO), Dublin, OH

Susan Hall, Owner, Cornerstone Critters, Bryan, OH

Scarlett Daniel, Pet owner, Daniel family pets, Russia, OH

Tammy Lewis, Owner, Dog grooming Salon, Wapakoneta, OH

Evan Nieto, Owner, Dot's Pet Center, Lima, OH

Daniel S. Woods, Owner/President, EarthWise Pet Supply, Cincinnati, OH

Doris Lynch, Owner, Edgewood Pet Center, Ashtabula, OH

Donald MacLeod, Owner, Fins & Things LLC, Woodville, OH

Cynthia White, President, For Pets Sake, LLC, North Ridgeville, OH

Lisa Hilliard, Owner, Gypsy Spaw Mobile Dog Grooming LLC, Dublin, OH

Julia Myer, Receptionist, Kennel Club USA, Johnstown, OH

Ulrich Wuebker, President, PAW Pet Advenrues World Wide Inc., West Chester, OH

Jolene Siebeneck, Owner, Paw Prints, Leipsic, OH

Aron Cremeans, National Sales Manager, Pet Adventures Worldwide, West Chester, OH

Joe Sanfillipo III, Owner, Pet Wants - Cincy West, Cincinnati, OH

Scott Hoots, President, Pet Wants Franchise System, LLC, Cincinnati, OH

Christopher Miller, Owner, Pet Wants Hamilton, Hamilton, OH

Rachel Steinman, Owner, Pet Wants Hamilton, Hamilton, OH

Jennifer Bonness, Grooming salon leader, Petco, Munroe falls, OH

Christina Wood, General Manager, Petland Pickerington, Pickerington, OH

Keith and Emily Ellsworth, Owners, Pure Pet LLC, Salem, OH

Christy Newlin, Owner, Red Barn Kennels, Mason, OH

Jon Donaldson, Veiled Chameleon Team Lead, Reptiles by Mack, Dayton, OH

John Mack, President/CEO, Reptiles by Mack, Xenia, OH

Amy Mack, C.O.O, Reptiles by Mavk, Xenia, OH

crystal phoenix, Owner, ROAR/Mutt Motel and Makeovers, Columbia Station, OH

Anya Herbert, Self-Employed, Columbus, OH

Emily Groves, Business owner, Shear Magic Pet Grooming, Springboro, OH

Erin Steidel, Owner, Three Dog Bakery Cleveland, Cleveland, OH

Joseph Fitzgerald, Manager, Whiskers wings & wild things, Canton, OH

Brent Clark, Owner/President, A1 Pet Emporium, Oklahoma City, OK

Nadya Leslie, Owner, All Breeds Dog Grooming, Casa Grande, OK

Brian Atwood, President, Atwoods Ranch & Home Stores, Enid, OK

Cassie Pomeroy, Owner, Pawtopia, Yukon, OK

Charles Pomeroy, Owner, Pawtopia, Norman, OK

Vicky Simpson, Owner, Ruby's K9 Corral, Blanchard, OK

Rachan Orr, Albany paradise pet grooming, Albany, OR

Natalie Bosch, Owner, Albany Pet Hotel, LLC, Albany, OR

Christie Jones, Dog Groomer, Alfie's Grooming, Gresham, OR

Richie Powell, Owner/Partner, All American Pet, Springfield, OR

Kate Lindburg, Owner, Animal Crackers Pet Supply, Corvallis, OR

Rene' Warren, Owner, Happy Tails Pet Center LLC, Milwaukie, OR

Jennifer Flanagan, Owner, Hearthstone Pets Inc., Sherwood, OR

Shannon Barnard, owner, K9 Bytes, Roseburg, OR

Jennifer Flanagan, Owner/President, Nature's Pet Market Sherwood, Sherwood, OR

Matthew Flanagan, Owner/Secretary, Nature's Pet Market Wilsonville, Wilsonville, OR

Traci Schulte, Groomer, The Groomery, Medford, OR

Jody Maddox, President, Wags! Dog Emporium, Eugene, OR

Sharon Shimmel, CEO, A Yuppy Puppy, Modesto, PA

Rod Vahle, President, Accent on Animals, Philadelphia, PA

Katherine Wade, BarkPark Philly LLC, Philadelphia, PA

Joe Doto, President, Bradley Caldwell Inc., Hazleton, PA

Dana Wilson, Owner/ groomer, Dirty Dawgs Mobile Pet Salon, Imperial, PA

Tami Haines, Owner, Doglicious Spa & Wellness Center, Hummelstown, PA

Brian Batten, President, Fins and Feathers Inc., Honesdale, PA

Angela Sutton, Furry Friends Oasis, York, PA

Barb Emmett, President/Owner, Godfrey's - Welcome to Dogdom LLC, Mohnton, PA

Linda Goldner, owner, Goldner's Top Dog, Denver, PA

Yvonne Wilson, Pet Stylist, Happy Tails Grooming, Levittown, PA

Jennifer O'Brien, Owner, Jennies Groomin Shoppe, Newport, PA

Ilya Ahtaridis, Owner, Litterpaw Pet Supply, Philadelphia, PA

Gloria Sullivan, Vice President, Make A Difference Animal Rescue, Stroudsburg, PA

Susan Lewerth, Senior Sales Director, Mary Kay Cosmetics, Wexford, PA

Oreste Mercado, Owner, Mercado Pet Supplies, Philadelphia, PA

Tim and Stephanie Raubenstine, Owners, Nature's Pet Place, Hanover, PA

Shana Crouch, Pet owner, Pittsburgh, PA

Heather Blum, Owner, Petagogy, Pittsburgh, PA

Ben Huber, Owner, Petagogy, Pittsburgh, PA

Elsie Lampl, Owner, Petagogy, Pittsburgh, PA

Allison Stetz, Owner, Petagogy, Pittsburgh, PA

Cole Wolfson, Owner, Petagogy, Pittsburgh, PA

William Davis, Owner, Petland Robinson and Petland Monroeville, Monroeville, PA

Mark Arabia, Owner, Pets Plus Natural, Lansdale, PA

Dana Antoine, Picture Purrfect Grooming, Phoenixville, PA

Hannah Babcock, Operations Manager, Queenie's Pets, Philadelphia, PA

Lisa Kirschner, President/Owner, Sit, Stay N' Play, Stroudsburg, PA

Rick Amour, President, That Fish Place - That Pet Place, Lancaster, PA

Siegfried Gutekunst, Owner, The Hidden Reef, Inc, Levittown, PA

Susan Easton, Dog groomer, The Paw Spa of Knox, LLC, Knox, PA

Shaina Willens, President & CEO, The Pooch Pitt, LLC, McMurray, PA

Jerry Fleming, Owner, Yuppy Puppy, Stroudsburg, PA

Brian Zeigler, Vice President, Zeigler's Distributor Inc., Lebanon, PA

Denise Rachiele, Owner, All About Pets, Warwick, RI

Jeff Champlin, Owner, Critter Hut, Wakefield, RI

Johnna Devereaux, Owner, Fetch RI, Richmond, RI

Deedra Mullins, N/A, Lexington, RI

Rhonda Durham, None, Louisville, RI

Christopher Swanson, Owner, Ooh La La Mobile Pet Spa, Warwick, RI

Sean Kent, Vice President of Vendor Development, Pet Food Experts, Pawtucket, RI

Kelly Pye, Inside Sales Manager, Pet Food Experts, Pawtucket, RI

Kelsey Whitman, Design Coordinator, Pet Food Experts, Woonsocket, RI

Michael Baker, President & CEO, Pet Food Experts and Rumford Pet Express, Pawtucket, RI

Carlos Munoz, President, The Perfect Puppy, North Scituate and West Warwick, RI

Sherri DeChaine, Owner, WOOF! WOOF! Pet Boutique & Biscuit Bar, Bristol, RI

Amber Hall, Owner, Amber's Pet Spaw LLC, Spartanburg, SC

Marybeth Hawkins, Owner, Bubbles N Bows Doggie Salon, Fort Mill, SC

Jordan Garrett, Owner, Dogma & Fetch, York, SC

Timothy N. Tuck, Owner, Earthwise Pet Supply Greenville/Simpsonville, Simpsonville, SC

Jessica Crespo-prabawa, Dog groomer, Happy pets mobile pawlor, John island, SC

Kaye Massie, Owner, Irmo Pet Retreat, Columbia, SC

Cheryl Pedersen, Co-Founder, Only an Ocean, Charleston, SC

Robin Snelgrove, Owner, Paisley Paw Pet Boutique, Spartanburg, SC

Kristine Luke, Khaleesi, Park Pets LLC, North Charleston, SC

Lanny Walker, DVM, Paws & Purrs Animal Clinic, Chesnee, SC

Lamar Parker, Owner, Petland Summerville, Summerville, SC

AnnMarie Saunier, National Certified Master Groomer, Shiann Poodles, Myrtle Beach, SC

Christine Rokey, Owner, Treat Your Pet SC, LLC, Myrtle Beach, SC

Marcus & Angela Castro, Owners, Woof Gang Bakery Charleston, Charleston, SC

Bobbi Kruse, Grooming manager, Woofgang, Cottageville, SC

Nicole Olesen, Owner, Woofs & Waves, Sioux Falls, SD

Melissa Muehlbauer, Associate, Woofs and Waves, Sioux Falls, SD

Melissa Sturm, Owner, Agri Feed Pet Supply Company, Knoxville, TN

Druanne Martin-nutzell, Owner, Asgard Mobile Dog Grooming, Lenoir City, TN

Brandy Mayes, Owner, K9 Cruzin Mobile Pet Grooming, Thompsons Station, TN

Robert & Courtney Poore, Owners, Nooga Paws, Chattanooga, TN

Lana K. Melton, Owner, Oak Ridge Feed and The Grooming Room, Oak Ridge, TN

Elaina A. Pate, Manager, Oak Ridge Feed and The Grooming Room, Oak Ridge, TN

Kayla Rogers, Owner, Paw-Fections Dog Salon and Boarding, Oneida, TN

Elizabeth Moore, Self, Knoxville, TN

Christopher Beggin, Owner, The Aquatic Critter, Nashville, TN

Linda Burnsed, Owner, The Farm at Natchez Trace, Franklin, TN

Cogie Smeeton, General Manager, The Farm at Natchez Trace, Franklin, TN

Glee Thacker, Owner, Very Important Pets, Adamsville, TN

Rebecca Cantrell, Manager, Wagg N Purr, Athens, TN

Krystal Combs, Kennel Attendant, Wagg n Purr, Athens, TN

Kenneth Axley, Co-Owner, Wagg n Purr, Athens, TN

Ivy Sturdevant, Assistant Manager, Wagg 'N' Purr Retreat, athens, TN

Alexis Keith, Groomer Assistant, Wagg N Purr Retreat LLC, Athens, TN

Heidi Hannah, Owner, Waggin' Tails Pet Salon, White Bluff, TN

Ginger Axley, Owner/Manager, Wagg-n-Purr Retreat, Athens, TN

Destiny Hicks, Kennel Attendant, Wagg-N-Purr Retreat, Athens, TN

Jamie Whittaker, Owner, ABC Birds, Humble, TX

Ryan Woolard, Owner, Aguastudios Aguariums, The Colony, TX

Gary Coffman, Owner, Austin Aqua-Dome, Austin, TX

Barbara Muzny, President, Barbara's canine clips n bows, San Antonio, TX

Mike Cohn, Owner, Bird Dog & Cat Fish, Spring Branch, TX

Susan Dorsey, Co-owner (small business), Camp Run-A-Mutt Houston Energy Corridor, Houston, TX

Debra Poel, Territory Manager - Houston, Central Pet Distribution., Dallas, TX

John Heath, Owner Diggidy Dog, Coleena's Diggidy Dog, Fort worth, TX

Jasmine Hook, Marketing Manager, D&L Farm and Home, Pilot Point, TX

Courtney Emken, Owner, DogBoy's Dog Ranch, Pflugerville, TX

Maria Quinones, Owner of business groomer, Dogdayout, El Paso, TX

Cindy Wilson, Senior Director Logistics, Doskocil dba Petmate, Lancaster, TX

Sherrol Kolar, VP & Corporate Controller, Doskocil Manufacturing Company, Inc. d/b/a Petmate,

Arlington, TX

Joanna Schumacher, Executive Business Administrator & Analyst, Doskocil mfg dab Petmate, Arlington, TX

Diana Farrar, Owner, Fifi & Fidos Pet Boutique & Holistic Nutrition Center, San Antonio, TX

Trace Menchaca, Owner, Flying M Feed & Pet Grocery, Houston, TX

Amanda Cronin, Owner, Groomology Pet Salon and Spa, El Paso, TX

Jessica Cadle, Groomer/salon owner, Jessica Cadle Pet Grooming, Friendswood, TX

Michael Thompson, Owner, Kai Aquatics, North Richland Hills, TX

Tom Mahlke, President and CEO, Mid-States Distributing LLC, Fort Worth, TX

Kristin Louis, Dog groomer, Pampered pooch parlor, Floresville, TX

Patricia Carter, Owner, Patti's Pet Depot, Houston, TX

Kimberly Holzmann, Owner, Paw Basics, San Antonio, TX

Robin Rodriguez, Owner, Paw Basics, San Antonio, TX

Erik Rickard, Operations Manager, Paws & Play Pet Resort, Midland, TX

Joshua Nie, General Manager, Petland Frisco, Frisco, TX

Jake Patel, Owner, Petland Frisco, Frisco, TX

Jay and Grace Suk, Petland of Dallas, Dallas, TX

Luis Marquez, President/Owner, Petland Tyler, Tyler, TX

Alice Tillett, CEO, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Pedro Caceres, EVP Operations, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Juan Martinez Jr, VP of Finance, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Patricia McCune, Senior Product Manager, Petmate, Dallas, TX

Richard BenBassett, Vice President, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Debra Cook, Director of Engineering, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Harnath Kanukolanu, CTO, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Iris Ho-Palma, CFO, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Brad Kane, EVP Global Sourcing, Petmate, Arlington, TX

Kari Humphrey, VP of Human Resources, Petmate, Columbia, TX

Steve Clark, EVP - Sales, Petmate Pet Products, Arlington, TX

Richard Evans, Owner, Pets Plus, Lubbock, TX

Steven Housley, Owner, Polly's Pets, Universal City, TX

Melissa Mitchell, Owner, Prancing Paws Doggie Daycare, Texarkana, TX

Erica Goode, Senior Brand Manager, Prtmate, Arlington, TX

Jose Avila, Owner/Operator, Reef Valley, Mcallen, TX

Dane Myers, Owner, Rift 2 Reef Aquatics, LLC, Highland Village, TX

Duana Bullins, President, The Tail Wags, Dallas, TX

Kathleen & Brian Evett, Owners, The Upper Paw, Dallas, TX

Christy Howard, Owner, Three Dog Bakery Texas, Fort Worth, TX

Scott Click, President, Tomlinson's Feed & Pets, Austin, TX

Rene Agredano, Founder, Tripawds.com, Livingston, TX

Sharon Taor, Operator, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming Richmond, Richmond, TX

Jackie Oliverius, Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming SA, San Antonio, TX

Kelly Ross, Franchise Owner, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming The Woodlands, Tomball, TX

Erin & Markos Hernandez, Owners, Woof Gang Bakery & Grooming, Sugarland, and West U, Houston, TX

Bruce and Meridith Wehrle, Owners, Woof Gang Bakery and Grooming, Katy, TX

MJ Hall, Managing Partner, WOOF...Cool Stuff for Dogs, Plano, TX

Brandis Touhuni, Owner, Aunt Ernies Pet Parlor, Magna, UT

Derek & Julie Johnson, Owners, Idlewire Pet Care, Ogden, UT

Patrick Braswell, CEO, NextPaw, Salt Lake City, UT

Brandon Swenson, COO, NextPaw.com, Salt Lake City, UT

Angela Warner, None, None, Logan, UT

Riley Warner, None, None, Tremonton, UT

Tucker Moss, Owner, Pet Spawt, Holladay, UT

Debi East, Owner, Rockin E Country Store, Woods Cross, UT

Tawni Herron, Owner, The paw spa Kaysville, Kaysville, UT

Linda Theuerkauf, Owner, Bark and Sparkle, Midlothian, VA

Edmond Blausten, Regional Director - Virginia, BlackNose Pet Resorts, Glen Allen, VA

Julia Sullivan, Dermatology and Allergy Services for Animals, Annandale, VA

Nancy Guinn, Owner, Dog Crazy, Fredericksburg, Leesburg, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, VA

Sheila Raebel, Owner, Dogma Dog Bakery, Arlington, VA

Matthew O'Leary, Owner, Felix & Oscar, Springfield, VA

Barbara Hernandez, Owner, Legendary Aquatics, LLC, Chesapeake, VA

Dawn Savering, Operations / Office Manager, MuttyPawz FXBG, Fredericksburg, VA

Joseph Severts, Owner, Pet Paradise, Virginia Beach, VA

David Foley, President, Pet World, Newport News and Hampton, VA

Ashley Holder, Owner, Scruff to Fluff, Mechanicsville, VA

Jeff Severts, Owner, Simpl Pets, Chesapeake, VA

Annabell Bivens, Retail Manager, The Dog Store by Your Dog's Best Friends, Alexandria, VA

Amanda Wilbourne, Owner, The Nautical Dog, Williamsburg, VA

Mary Kenkel, Owner, Whole Dogz, Alexandria, VA

Chris Avery, CEO, WholesalePet.com, Richmond, VA

Jeff Nethers, Owner, Winchester Aquarium and Pet Center, Winchester, VA

Karen Congero, Owner, Style A Dog LLC, St Thomas, VI

Joyce Chin, CanineElegance, Doncaster east, VT

Kevin Eddy, Owner/President, Pet Food Warehouse / Vermont Pet Food & Supply, So. Burlington, VT

Lloyd Campbell, Vice President, AFCO Distribution, Spokane Valley, WA

Deb Wilson, Director of Business Development, All the Best Pet Care, Seattle, WA

Heather Campbell, Owner, Bow Wow & Woofs, Blaine, WA

Thomas Boland, President & CEO, Country Store, Burlington, WA

Shannon Randall, General Manager, Farmland Pets, Silverdale, WA

Deborah Goodell, Pet Shop Sales and Nutrition, Firehouse Pet Shop, Wenatchee, WA

Harald Fisker, President/Owner, Grizzly Pet Products LLC, Woodinville, WA

Karesa Prestage, Owner, Health Mutt, Seattle, WA

Brian Knoll, Owner, Island Pet Center, Oak Harbor, WA

Tim Hall, Founding Owner, Naturally 4 Paws, Silverdale, WA

Elli Barrie, Manager, Nature's Pet Shoreline, Shoreline, WA

Cheryl Pruett, Owner, Pandora's Box Quality Pet Products, Vason Island, WA

CL Wilson, Trainer, Pawsabilities Total Dog Center, Seattle, WA

Bill Greene, General Manager, Pet Central Grooming & Supplies, Reber Ranch Pet Supply and Reber

Ranch Veterinary Hospital, Kent, WA

Melanie Wells, Owner, Pet Elements, Seattle, WA

James Durbin, Operations supervisor, Pet Food Experts, Spanaway, WA

Cynthia Meschke, Receiving Coordinator, Pet Food Experts, Puyallup, WA

Jasmin Harton, Recieving coordinator, Pet Food Experts, Lakewood, WA

Georgann McConn, General Manager, Pet Pros, Woodinvillle, WA

Lisa Perez, Owner, Poochie Do's, Quincy, WA

Justin Kerr, Owner, Puppyworld, Olympia, and Puppyland, Puyallup, WA

Jennifer Durbin, Self, Spanaway, WA

Julie M. Sterling, CEO, Sterling Pet Products, Marysville, WA

Bill Wolfe, Owner, Wag N' Wash Natural Pet Food & Grooming, Seattle, WA

Lynette Borcherding, Owner, Woofers Grooming & Goodies, Spanaway, WA

Rebecca Newby, Owner/groomer, A Personal Touch Pet Salon LLC, Scandinavia, WI

Jenny Adams, Owner, Animal World Adventures Pet Store, Oconomowoc, WI

Denise Craig, Owner/groomer, Bark of the Town LLC, Lake Mills, WI

Mary Christel, Owner, Christels Pet Supplies, Plymouth, WI

Patience Renning, Owner/operator, Doggie Zen & Den LLC, Onalaska, WI

Susie and Joe Rodriguez, Owners, End of the Leash, Mukwonago and Pewaukee, WI

Mike Sardina, Janesville Petland, Janesville, WI

Tracy Heiser, Business Owner, JoJo's & GiGi's Grooming Spaw, LLC, Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Kelly Caudill, Volunteer, K9 Lifeline Rescue, Pell Lake, WI

Jamie Almquist, Owner, Laughing Dogs, Lake Mills, WI

Keri Torgerson, Owner, Mac's Pet Depot Barkery, Milwaukee, WI

Michelle Smithey, Owner, Michelles pet center, Roscoe, WI

Joy Wadas, Manager, Northern Lakes Feed Mill, Hayward, WI

Tari Nestrud, Owner, Paws and Claws Pet Resort, Hudson, WI

Angela Ng, Owner, Paws for a Moment Spa, LLC, Waukesha, WI

Adam Berger, Owner, Petland Racine, Racine, WI

Chad Sharp, Owner, Sharp's Aquatic, Green Bay, WI

Karen Conell, Owner/Operator, The Bark Market LLC, Delavan, WI

Elise Paschen, Dog Groomer/Daycare owner, The Pet Parlor of Racine, Racine, WI

Marie Rohrer, Owner Operator, The Wild Perch & Paw, Neenah, WI

Robin Unwin, Owner, Windy City Pet Store, Laramie, WY