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### CHICAGO INNOVATION AWARDS

## CITY OF BIG IDEAS

Whose bright idea was that?

That's a question that gets asked a lot in the Chicago area, one of the world's hottest incubators for new ideas, new products and new services.

We asked that question ourselves this summer as we sifted through innovative products and services from 130 companies that submitted their new ideas in the second annual Chicago Innovation Awards program, produced by the Chicago Sun-Times and Kuczumski & Associates, the Chicago-based product-innovation consultancy.

With sponsorship from Wm. Wrigley Jr. Co., staffers from the Sun-Times and Kuczumski evaluated product and service successes throughout all sectors of Chicago business.

The key was innovation. We sought out successfully developed and marketed ideas that in the last two years:

- Created a whole new category of business.
- Triggered a "me-too" competitive response.
- Solved unmet customer and consumer needs.
- Generated revenues, although not necessarily profits.

Honorees were selected by Kuczumski consultants and Chicago Sun-Times business staffers, and teams from the 10 honorees will be feted at a reception Wednesday at Bank One, with Bob Galvin, chairman emeritus of Motorola Inc. giving the keynote address.

#### THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2003 CHICAGO INNOVATION AWARDS ARE:

- Abbott Laboratories, for Humira, a drug that offers new success in treating rheumatoid arthritis.
- Archipelago Exchange, the first totally open, all-electronic stock exchange that deals in all listed and over-the-counter stocks.
- Argonne National Laboratory and the University of Chicago for the Globus Toolkit, a breakthrough in grid computing.
- Authentify Inc. for its authentication tools for Internet transactions that help prevent identity theft.
- CoolSavings Inc. for its pioneering online couponing technology.

- Motorola Inc. for Canopy, its wireless broadband technology.
- PAWS (Pets Are Worth Saving) for its Chicago Lurie Spay/Neuter Clinic, which is helping reduce the population of unwanted pets in poor areas.
- Shure Inc. for its E series earphones, which started out as an audio aid for professional musicians and have become a mass-market item.
- SmartSignal for its software that predicts when equipment will start to fail.
- Wilson Sporting Good for its Youth Batting Helmet, an innovation in design and construction that overnight created a new product category.

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### PETS ARE WORTH SAVING • VOLUNTEERS LOOK TO END EUTHANIZING OF ANIMALS IN CHICAGO

## PAWS' pet lovers help save lives of animals

The Chicago Sun-Times front page article entitled "Disposable Pets/40,000 dogs and cats put to death here in a year" in May 1997 shocked Paula Fasseas, vice chairman of the Metropolitan Bank Group.

The paper reported that the animals had been euthanized in 1996 in a "cage and kill" approach to the problems of strays and pet over population.

The article backed up what Fasseas' daughter Alexis, a volunteer in a local animal shelter, had told her. "Animals were being killed all the time. Adoptable animals were being managed by being killed."

Then came the kicker. "My daughter said, 'If you don't get involved, who will?'"

Fasseas got involved. She mobilized a small group of friends concerned about the killing of the animals, and they studied the problem and began doing something about it.

"I thought the best thing to do would be to raise awareness to the



Pets Are Worth Saving's clinic on West 26th Street works with the help of many volunteers, including Dr. Michael Flaharty (from left), chief surgeon; Delia Spears, program director; Ric Porrez; Paula Fasseas, founder; Peter Fasseas, co-founder; Suzie Glickman, president of the PAWS Development Board; Vida Jimenez, Community Outreach, and Jennifer Whorf, director of operations. —JOHN J. KIMSUN-TIMES

public. If they knew what was going on, they would be compelled to get involved and solve the problem," she said.

The end result is PAWS (Pets Are Worth Saving), a non-profit organization that attacked the problems head on through an in-

novative organizing technique.

PAWS began increasing public awareness with its Angels With Tails program that brought animals from shelters and the city pound into 17 upscale stores along Michigan Avenue and Oak Street, including Marshall Fields, Ralph

Lauren, St. John and Nieman-Marcus. Customers adopted more than 100 animals, but more needed to be done.

The group in 1998 opened the PAWS Lincoln Park Cat Adoption Center. Animals placed there are never destroyed. But Fasseas, 48,

said: "Adoption is like emptying a stream with a bucket. One female cat and her offspring can produce 420,715 cats in seven years. The real solution was a very aggressive targeted spay/neuter program."

She said the group's research showed the pet overpopulation problem was concentrated in poorer neighborhoods, where families did not have the means - \$80 to \$250 - to neuter their animals.

PAWS opened the Chicago Lurie Family Spay/Neuter Clinic at 3516 W. 26th St. in December 2000 with backing from philanthropist Ann Lurie and others. PAWS has attracted more than 2,000 volunteers, who clean cages, handle adoptions, assist in surgery and drive vans to provide transportation to low-income families.

Sterilization is available by appointment at no charge for pets whose owners are on public assistance, and \$40 to the working poor or anyone else. The number of sterilized animals has grown to about 7,000 last year from 4,300 in the clinic's first year.

Meanwhile, with increased public awareness of the problem, Fasseas said the euthanasia rate has dropped almost 30 percent over the past five years. The number of animals euthanized dropped from 42,561 in 1997, the year PAWS started, to 28,985 in 2002.

"This is a very solvable problem," said Fasseas.

Howard Wolinsky