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## **HAND IN PAW HONORS BETH FRANKLIN WITH FOUNDER'S DAY CELEBRATION.**

**Birmingham, AL:** On Tuesday, July 16, 2019, Hand in Paw staff and friends celebrated the birthday of the organization's Founder, Beth Franklin. To honor Franklin and her life's work, it was announced that July 16<sup>th</sup> would officially be declared as Founder's Day.

Beth Franklin founded Hand in Paw in 1996 with a mission to design and build an organization that would improve people's lives through Animal-Assisted Therapy. Today, more than 140 professionally-trained volunteers carry out that mission in over 75 facilities. From Hand in Paw's earliest days as a 501(c)(3) organization, Franklin shared a vision of excellence and great attention was paid to the training and evaluation of all volunteers and their animal partners. This attention to quality continues to be a mainstay in Hand in Paw because of Franklin's vision.

In attendance to dedicate the first annual Founder's Day celebration were many of Franklin's close friends including Ken Jackson, Galatea Berger, Libby Rich, Idie Hastings and volunteers who have been in service for many years. They each shared a few words to congratulate and honor her. "Everyone who is touched by a visit is because of you," said Mary Phillips, longtime supporter.

Hand in Paw plans to celebrate Founder's Day every year and to make the celebration a unique fundraising opportunity. The funds raised will help carry out Hand in Paw's mission and further Beth Franklin's legacy of providing comfort and joy to people in need through Animal-Assisted Therapy.

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### **ABOUT HAND IN PAW**

With a mission to improve human health & well-being, Hand in Paw is Alabama's premier Animal-Assisted Therapy provider and a national leader in this growing field. Hand in Paw's professionally-trained volunteer handler and animal Therapy Teams help improve people's day to day lives in several medical centers, schools, and human service organizations throughout North Central Alabama and Tuscaloosa. Our volunteer teams make thousands of beneficial visits through community events and participating facilities each year, helping countless children with special needs, at-risk youth, struggling students, and people with chronic and terminal illnesses. At no time has Hand in Paw charged for its services. For more information, visit [www.handinpaw.org](http://www.handinpaw.org).