



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hand in Paw's Dog-Friendly 5k and Fun Run Goes Virtual!

Presented by Veterinary Eye Care in Memory of Christopher Nelms

Birmingham, AL: Hand in Paw is excited to announce that the 11th Annual Mutt Strut: Dog-Friendly 5k and 1 Mile Fun Run will take place virtually on April 17th! All dog lovers and running enthusiasts are invited to grab their furry quaranteam mate and join Hand in Paw virtually for a fun and safe day full of exciting race routes, contests and more!

Mutt Strut is hosted by Hand in Paw's Junior Board and supports the Animal-Assisted Therapy nonprofit. Hand in Paw's professionally trained teams of animals and handlers provide comfort and joy to people in need free of charge. To keep their Therapy Teams and clients safe during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hand in Paw put in-person visits "on paws" and began providing meaningful services through virtual visits. Funds raised at Mutt Strut will enable Hand in Paw to continue positively impacting the lives of countless people in North Central Alabama and Tuscaloosa through their virtual programming.

With COVID numbers still on the rise, Hand in Paw decided to adapt Mutt Strut to a virtual race format this year. Registration for the 5k costs \$30, while the fun run is \$25. Included in the race registration is a race t-shirt, swag bag, doggie bandana, and entry into award categories. Hand in Paw will be providing several different dog-friendly race route options across Birmingham and Tuscaloosa, as well as curating music playlist options to make the virtual race experience even more fun for participants. Race packets can be mailed to runners living outside of a 50-mile radius of Birmingham.

Brittany Filby, Hand in Paw's Director of Communications, states, "The awesome thing about Mutt Strut going virtual is that dog lovers everywhere can join in on the fun! Runners can choose from a variety of exciting race routes, or they can get creative and run anywhere they like – even on a treadmill! No matter where they strut their mutts, each participant is making a difference!"

Participants can compete for fastest running times, best costumes and top fundraisers by logging in to Hand in Paw's race day portal and uploading their pictures and information. The Virtual Awards Ceremony will be held on social media on April 21st!

To register and to learn more about Mutt Strut, please visit www.handinpaw.org/muttstrut.

To become a Mutt Strut sponsor or to make a donation, contact Ashley Foster at ashley@handinpaw.org.

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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.