



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
August 20, 2021

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## *Hand in Paw's 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Picasso Pets Gala Raises Over \$200,000*

**Birmingham, AL:** At the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Picasso Pets gala Presented by Tito's Handmade Vodka, Hand in Paw supporters raised over \$200,000 to help the nonprofit carry out their mission to improve human health and well-being through Animal-Assisted Therapy. Picasso Pets is Hand in Paw's largest single source of revenue and ensures that their in-person and virtual Animal-Assisted Therapy services can be delivered free of charge.

Picasso Pets took place on August 14<sup>h</sup> at The Grand Bohemian Hotel in Mountain Brook. Every effort was made to present a safe evening, with masks encouraged and an invitation-only audience to keep a smaller crowd. This was a very special night for Hand in Paw as they celebrated both 25 years of service to the community and the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Picasso Pets. The gala included a cocktail reception that featured fun and philanthropic games, a live auction with many unique, can't-get-anywhere-else items, and a performance from the All In One band. Throughout the event, guests enjoyed sipping on signature cocktails, meeting Hand in Paw Teams, and listening to heartfelt testimonials. Dr. Jim and Katie Lasker presented the Tweety Lasker Award to Boys & Girls Club of West Alabama, which is awarded each year to an organization that partners with Hand in Paw to serve the community with excellence.

One of the evening's most anticipated moments was getting to see the completed Picasso Pets paintings which were made by pets belonging to prominent members of the community with help from well-known local artists. This year's presenters included Don & Melanie Lewis, Abbie & Valerie Richenderfer, Dee Kennedy & CeCe Lacey Kennedy, Kristen McGee, Margaret & Conor Davis, and Emmett & Catherine McLean. This year's artists included Lila Graves, Liz Lane, John Lytle Wilson, Sarah Mason, and Thomas Andrew.

"Diamonds are Forever" was the artistic theme for the night. The inspiration for the 2021 Face of Picasso Pets, Bristol Fulton, was in attendance with her family. The Face of Picasso Pets was designed by local artist, Becky Denny, who drew inspiration from the glamour of Holly Golightly in Breakfast at Tiffany's. Guests were encouraged to wear their most sparkly jewelry (and masks!) with their glamorous Hollywood attire to match the theme!

Executive Director, Margaret Stinnett, states "This was an unforgettable year, with COVID seriously trying to spoil our 20<sup>th</sup> annual Picasso Pets. But we made it happen! Hand in Paw is possible because of the dedicated Donors, Sponsors, Volunteers, Therapy Teams, Board Members, Junior Board Members and Staff that work together because we believe people in need deserve the hope, healing and unconditional love only therapy animals and their handlers can provide."

**Emcee:** Guin Robinson • **Sponsorship Chair:** John Harbert • **Event Chairs:** Idie and Chris Hastings • **Auctioneer:** Ken Jackson • **Face of Picasso Pets:** Bristol Fulton • **Title Sponsor:** Tito's Handmade Vodka • **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Sponsor:** Mr. and Mrs. Scott Vowell • **Photo Booth Sponsor:** John 3:16 • **VIP Room Sponsor:** Birmingham Legion F.C. • **Therapy Team Sponsor:** Medical Properties Trust

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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 Animal Advocacy Organization. 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).