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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Do you have a special pet with a big heart to help others?

Enter Pet Partners' 2023 Pet of the Year competition and raise money for a great cause!

(Bellevue, Wash. – January 4, 2023) Pet Partners, the leading therapy animal registry program in the United States, is proud to announce the national search for its 2023 [Pet of the Year](#). The event is a six-week fundraising competition that will take place February 1 through March 15. If you think your pet can dazzle and motivate your friends, family, and community to give to a good cause, it's time to nominate them!

How does it work?

You don't need to have a registered therapy animal to compete. Whether furry, feathered, or scaled, all pets are welcome! You can nominate your own pet or someone else's. Last year, half of the candidates were therapy animals, and the other half were not. Some families chose to remember and celebrate the lives of their much-loved pets who had recently passed away by competing in their memory.

While being cute is a definite plus for candidates, the 2023 title will go to **the pet whose team raises the most funds during the competition.**

The winner will be announced and crowned on Pet Partners' Facebook page on March 16 in a live virtual celebration. There are also some amazing prizes for the effort, including a professional photo shoot, media interviews, and lots of pet-focused products worth thousands of dollars.

The fundraiser couldn't come at a more critical time. "The need for therapy animals in our nation's hospitals, schools, and other public places has never been higher. With hospitals full and many people feeling stress due to life's challenges, people need pets to help ease mental health issues," said C. Annie Peters, President and CEO of Pet Partners.

This is the second year of this exciting event. Last year's winner was **Happy Happy Hazel**, a French bulldog from Texas who is a Pet Partners registered therapy dog. Hazel, with support from her human,

Sara, raised more than \$30,000 for Pet Partners. (Photos are available of the adorable Frenchie.) However, more than 55 pet candidates took part in last year's competition, with the average amount raised being around \$900. Every dollar raised is important!

Pet Partners Pet of the Year helps fund the education and registration of thousands of therapy animal teams that make millions of visits every year. The nonprofit's Therapy Animal Program is made up of visiting therapy animal teams who bring comfort and joy to members of the public, in facility settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, schools, libraries, airports, and at workplace well-being events.

For more information on Pet Partners Pet of the Year, visit petpartners.org/petoftheyear.

About Pet Partners

Pet Partners is the leader in the therapy animal field for registering volunteer teams. Since 1977, we have supported thousands of teams in making millions of safe, effective visits across the country and around the world. Through the human-animal bond, we can improve the physical, social, and emotional lives of both the people and animals involved. Pet Partners supports volunteer teams by offering the highest quality preparation, an unmatched approach to evaluation and registration for nine different types of animals, and a focus on connections. We elevate the importance of therapy animal visits, and our teams help build a healthier and happier world for us all. Whether or not you have a pet, learn more about sharing the human-animal bond by visiting petpartners.org.

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