Do Dah Day, Birmingham's Oldest…and Best….Outdoor Festival We're 32 This Year!

Do Dah Day, Birmingham's oldest outdoor festival celebrates its 32th anniversary in 2011 Do Dah is a free, annual parade and music festival supporting homeless and neglected animals. This year's event, Saturday, May 21, 2011, will be in Rhodes and Caldwell Parks, in Birmingham's historic Southside. The Do Dah Parade starts things off at 11:01 a.m. near the entrance to the Highland Golf and Racquet Club and winds down Highland Ave. to its conclusion at Caldwell Park.

Do Dah Day has grown from a small gathering of some 200 people who raised $400 for charity, to an event boasting attendance of more than 20,000 - 45,000 people and thousands of dogs (and a few other of the braver types of critters) each year. Since 1992, Do Dah Day has raised more than $800,000 for organizations that care and support homeless animals. Last year's beneficiaries, the Greater Birmingham Humane Society and Friends of Cats and Dogs, received more than $45,000 from Do Dah Day.

Do Dah Day actually begins the night before, on Do Dah Eve. Held at the Lakeshore district's Nana Funks, the doors open at 7:01 p.m. on Friday, May 20. Music, games, and fun set the stage for the main event on Saturday. The Kings and Queens of Do Dah are announced at Eve each year.

The Do Dah Parade kicks off the Saturday festivities. Along with floats, hundreds of dogs, cats, ferrets, parrots, snakes and other assorted species and their humans will make the stroll. Each parade entrant has given a monetary donation and will be dressed to the nines to strut their stuff in front of their neighbors and celebrity judges. Fabulous prizes are awarded to winners in various categories, but, as in all things Do Dah, the real winners are the homeless animals.

Caldwell and Rhodes Parks will feature a daylong free concert after the parade. Each park features a variety of music; blues to bop, folk to fusion, country to rock.

Fantastic foods as well as different beverages are available for people to ward off starvation and thirst, which invariably happens during a fun filled, packed day. Pets are not just permitted in the parks, they are encouraged! We have watering stations, volunteer vets and animal-friendly vendors to see to their needs.

Do Dah Day is an all-volunteer organization and enlists the support of more than 200 animal-loving volunteers to run the event each year. All profits raised support Jefferson County animal shelters and benefactor programs. Do Dah Day, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization. Its Board of Directors is a group of Birmingham-area residents whose sole purpose is to raise funds to assist the hundreds of homeless dogs and cats in the Greater Birmingham area. Go to www.dodahday.org for more information.