

PAWS Fur Ball: Tail-wagging good time for rescue animals

By Candace Jordan



David Goodman of Auction Results conducting the live auction in the Gold Coast Room.

The 15th annual PAWS Chicago Fur Ball was held Nov. 18 at the Drake Hotel. More than 700 guests, many with four-legged friends in tow, enjoyed a night of fundraising for the Midwest's largest no-kill shelter. Longtime supporters and board members Judy and Howard Tullman were the honorary co-chairs for the evening that also featured adoptable PAWS rescue dogs and cats, a lavish buffet, live and silent auctions, entertainment, dancing and a doggy spa.

The sold-out, black-tie event took place in both the Grand Ballroom and the Gold Coast Room. In the Gold Coast Room, emcee Sean Lewis (WGN) introduced PAWS founder Paula Fasseas to a crowd of over 400.

Fasseas introduced the Tullmans calling them "change-makers" for PAWS. They own three rescue dogs, Tramp, Gertie and Molly Pecan. Judy Tullman has been a constant at the adoption center, volunteering every Sunday with fellow board member Bonnie Spurlock. They explain the adoption process to visitors. She also volunteers at Angels With Tails events, Adopt-A-Thons and at the PAWS Medical Center.

Entrepreneur Howard Tullman is CEO of 1871, an incubator for digital startup companies, as well as managing partner of venture funds G2T3V. He and wife Judy have been involved with PAWS since its inception. He said, "We love PAWS for the animals, of course, but mostly for the people who make up the organization. Nothing is better than the opportunity to work hard and be surrounded by passionate, enthusiastic people who are committed to making the city a better and more animal-friendly place one dog or cat at a time."

A live auction conducted by David Goodman featured "A Day With Two Sharks," a package that included a meet-and-greet, tour and lunch with Daymond John, co-star of ABC's reality television series "Shark Tank," and Tullman. It sold for \$10,000. A "Live From New York" package included a weekend stay for two and tickets to "Saturday Night Live" and "LIVE With Kelly" that sold for \$28,000. An opportunity to have your pet featured on the cover of the 2018 PAWS Chicago desktop calendar sold for \$17,000.

Throughout the evening, volunteers strolled through the venue introducing the 10 rescue dogs and nine cats that were brought to the event with the hope of finding them forever homes. They included Peppo, a 3-month-old kitten; Mimi, a 6-year-old dachshund who was rescued from a Tennessee puppy mill; and Monty, a 6-year-old mixed breed who was rescued by police from an abusive situation.

The event was co-chaired by Victoria Magnus, and Corey and J.P. Marchetti, and netted approximately \$1.3 million, which will account for almost 14 percent of the annual funds required to operate PAWS Chicago's adoption and subsidized spay/neuter programs. Since its founding in 1997, PAWS has helped to reduce the number of pets killed in the city by 80 percent.