

Proclamation



Bob Buckhorn, Mayor

WHEREAS, dogs have been a part of human families since the end of the Ice Age, and they have been domesticated and evolved into diverse and valuable animals with approximately 300 different breeds ranging in various sizes who have distinct traits and personalities, and they are expressive, loyal, and highly valued for the unconditional love they provide; and

WHEREAS, domesticated dogs serve most often as companions to people and, in general are considered a member of the family, and it is well-known that they provide benefits to their humans by making them happier, relieving stress, they encourage exercise with daily walks and play, and provide purpose for many people including the elderly; and

WHEREAS, skilled and trained companion dogs can be of great service to a family member who may have physical and mental disabilities, and those who need assistance with daily chores and challenges including opening doors, retrieving items, and alerting the individual of an upcoming event such as a seizure; and

WHEREAS, founded in 1975 in San Jose, California, **Canine Companions for Independence** is a nonprofit organization that enhances the lives of children, adults, and military veterans with disabilities by providing, at no cost, highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support to ensure quality partnerships, and it currently has six regional centers across the United States including the **Southeast Region of Canine Companions for Independence** serving the states of Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama and Louisiana; and

WHEREAS, Canine Companions for Independence, with the motto **Exceptional Dogs for Exceptional People**, trains assistance dogs with a focus on the categories of *Service Teams* to assist adults with physical disabilities by performing tasks, *Hearing Teams* to alert the deaf and hard of hearing to important sounds, *Skilled Companion Teams* to enhance independence for children and adults with physical, cognitive and developmental disabilities, and *Faculty Teams* to work with a professional in a visitation, education or healthcare setting; and

WHEREAS, Canine Companions for Independence has established its **DogFest Walk 'n Roll**, a family and dog-friendly awareness and fundraising initiative throughout the nation that brings together dog-lovers, pet owners and people with disabilities, and locally, the Southeast Region of Canine Companions for Independence is encouraging the Tampa Bay community to **Grab a Leash and Come Walk** on Sunday, November 8, 2015 at the inaugural DogFest Walk 'n Roll at USF Health at the University of South Florida.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Buckhorn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Mayor of the city of Tampa, Florida, do hereby proclaim Sunday, November 8, 2015 as

“DOGFEST WALK ‘N ROLL DAY”

in the city of Tampa, Florida and urge all citizens to join together in support of this awareness initiative and in thanking the Canine Companions for Independence organization for partnering people and dogs for a beneficial relationship that fosters independence and love.

Dated in Tampa, Florida this 23rd day of October, 2015.



Bob Buckhorn

Mayor