
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



**FRIENDS FOR ANIMALS OF METRO DETROIT CHANGES NAME OF JUNE 13
MUSIC FESTIVAL TO PAW FESTIVAL FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT
'PAWCHELLA' BRANDING**

Dearborn event helps organization care for more than 2,500 animals each year

Dearborn, MI. May 13, 2026 – Friends for Animals of Metro Detroit is changing the name of its June 13 third annual animal, arts and community festival, formerly called “Pawchella.”

Last week, the animal welfare organization was contacted by legal counsel representing Coachella regarding the use of the name “Pawchella.” Members of the non-profit were unaware there was a trademark associated with the term “chella” when the event was created more than three years ago and would like the public to know they never intended on intentionally violating a trademark.

After thoughtful consideration, the decision was made to comply, keeping their focus on what matters most: helping animals and serving the community. As a result, the public will now see the June 13 event promoted on social media leading up to the event as the “PAWFEST.” However, collateral already printed, including raffle tickets, and other materials, will remain the same. While the name may change, the heart of this event never will. The event’s purpose has always been to bring people, community, and animals together for a meaningful cause.

“We had no idea of the trademark and never had any intention of infringing on it,” said Cory Keller, president and CEO of Friends for Animals of Metro Detroit. “As soon as we became aware of the issue, we made the decision to change the event name immediately, even with only a month left before the event. Our goal has always been simple: to create a fun, community-centered event that brings people and their pets together while helping raise awareness and critical



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16121 Reckinger Rd., Dearborn, MI 48126

metrodetroitanimals.org

support for the more than 2,500 homeless animals we care for each year. Events like this are truly a lifeline for our shelter, allowing us to provide the vital care, medical treatment, and services these animals deserve. We hope the community will continue to come out, have fun, and support our mission to help all these homeless animals in need.”

Local residents can support the festival by:

- Attending the event Saturday, June 13, 2026, noon – 8 p.m. at the Mary Ann Wright Animal Adoption & Education Center, 16121 Reckinger Road, Dearborn
- Purchasing \$5 raffle tickets at one of the 14 Premier Pet Supply locations or at Friends for Animals
- Purchasing a limited-edition t-shirt for \$35 at metrodetroitanimals.org - \$10 donation for shipping
- Spreading the word

Friends for Animals is also excited to share that they will be involving the community in helping to rebrand the event for 2027; more details coming soon.

The festival celebrates the joy of animals, community, and second chances. Hosted at the newly expanded MaryAnn Wright Animal Adoption & Education Center, the annual event raises critical funds to help Friends for Animals care for the nearly 2,500 animals that come through the Dearborn shelter’s doors each year.

Supporters can still expect everything they have come to love about the event, including live entertainment from 12:30-8 p.m., family activities, pet focused fun, vendors, food, community engagement, and opportunities to support the lifesaving work of Friends for Animals of Metro Detroit. Most importantly, the mission behind the event remains unchanged: bringing the community together to help provide care, shelter, medical treatment, and loving homes for thousands of animals



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each year. Friends for Animals of Metro Detroit is deeply grateful to its supporters, volunteers, sponsors, and attendees for continuing to embrace the event as it evolves.

For a complete PAWFEST schedule, visit: metrodetroitanimals.org.

Proceeds from this event will go toward Friends for Animals' General Operations Fund, dedicated to providing our animals with the best medical care, food and love possible until their time of adoption.

Friends for Animals is a 501c3 organization and is located at 16121 Reckinger in Dearborn. Friends for Animals is dedicated to the rescue, protection, and adoption of companion animals in need, while inspiring the human-animal bond. Friends for Animals was founded in 1996 by volunteers who believed that homeless animals in our region deserve a second chance at life. Building on our strong sense of animal welfare, Friends for Animals has grown in the past 30 years to an organization of great impact in the companion animal welfare community. The organization helps find homes for approximately 2,500 dogs and cats each year.

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