Greenwich Sentinel

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Tails at Full-Wag for Frank Gaudio at Adopt-A-Dog Celebration

By Tom McDermott

Frank Gaudio was supposed to have his day in the spotlight at Adopt-A-Dog's Puttin' On The Dog festival in September. Then rain canceled the event. When the honor finally came on October 25, Gaudio was unable to attend.

Accepting the award on behalf of the president and CEO of The First Bank of Greenwich and longtime Adopt-a-Dog supporter was Jessica Fitzpatrick, Gaudio's "right hand" at the bank, who explained that Gaudio was recovering from hip surgery.

"I briefly considered bringing him here with a cone on his head," she joked, but "I didn't think that'd be very good marketing for the bank."

Presented by Pet Pantry Warehouse, the event at Roger Sherman Baldwin Park enjoyed sunny skies and mild temperatures, bringing together dogs, their owners and rescue organizations for an afternoon of Halloween costumes, contests, music and opportunities to meet animals awaiting adoption.

Gaudio's recognition reflected a relationship with Adopt-A-Dog that extends well beyond financial sponsorship.

At The First Bank of Greenwich's Cos Cob branch, four-legged visitors are welcomed with treats. Under Gaudio's leadership, the bank introduced a special pet savings account to help families plan for veterinary expenses — or even help children save toward a dog of their own.

The bank also features adoptable animals on its website, including cats through its partnership with Friends of Felines, and makes quarterly donations to Adopt-A-Dog through its charitable checking program.

Gaudio joined the bank in 2011 and became president and CEO in 2015. His approach to community banking, the award presenter explained, grew from lessons learned working in his family's retail business: taking care of people comes first.



Jessica Fitzpatrick, center, accepts the award for Frank Gaudio, President & CEO of The First Bank of Greenwich. Photo by Bob Romeo Capazzo.

Fitzpatrick told the gathering that supporting animal rescue means more than writing checks.

"It's about community, compassion and giving animals who may have been frightened, abandoned, or simply unlucky the second chances they deserve."

Before leaving the stage, Fitzpatrick offered a reminder to anyone considering bringing home a new companion.

"You may think you're changing one animal's life, but anyone who's ever had an animal knows they have a remarkable way of changing ours as well."