

**ESSEX COUNTY EXECUTIVE DIVINCENZO ANNOUNCES WINNERS
OF ANNUAL ESSEX COUNTY CANINE HALLOWEEN CONSTUME CONTESTS**
Strut Your Mutt Events Held at Brookdale Dog Park and South Mountain Dog Park

Essex County, NJ – Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. welcomed dog owners and their pets to the Annual Essex County Strut Your Mutt Canine Costume Parades and Contests at the Essex County Brookdale Dog Park Bloomfield/Montclair and the Essex County South Mountain Dog Park in Maplewood/Millburn on Sunday, October 23rd.

“Our Dog Parks have become popular places for dog owners to bring their pets, and our Canine Halloween Costume Parades are another opportunity for the public to enjoy our historic Park System,” DiVincenzo said. “I am always amazed and impressed with the creativity of the costumes. Congratulations to the winners,” he added.

Strut Your Mutt is the County’s annual Canine Halloween Costume Parade and Contest. Dog owners were invited to display their creativity and dress their canine pets in costumes. The parade was free and prizes were awarded to the winners in each category.

Award winners at the **Essex County Brookdale Dog Park Contest** are as follows:

Best in Show: Cindy Briney from Bloomfield along with Aiden, Eleanor, Meyvi and Nathan Gorey and their dogs Savannah and Molly, who were dressed as characters from Alice in Wonderland.

Cutest Costume: First place: Bethany and Dan Chachkey from Fairlawn and their dog Penny who were dressed as a Monkey and Banana. Second place: Lauren and Christopher Kowalski from Bloomfield and their dogs Ernie and Gino who were dressed as a chef and lobsters. Third place: Hailey Root from West Caldwell and her dog Casey who was dressed as a triceratops.

Most Creative Costume: First place: Lauren Zodel from Montclair and her dog Frankie who was dressed as a rooster. Second place: Vanessa Montesano from Clifton and her dog Lunchbox, who was dressed as Miss America. Third place: Regina Mahon from Bayonne and her dog Gizmo, who was dressed as a Steampunk Yorkie.

Group Costume: First place: Paula Greco and Joe DiVincenzo from West Caldwell and their dogs Bernie and Brutus, who were dressed as characters from Willie Wonka and the Chocolate Factory. Second place: Pat, Irma and Eleanor Brainard from West Orange and their dog Zoey who were dressed as characters from Ghostbusters. Third place: Jean Dabrowski from Montclair and her dog Jimmy, who were dressed as a pirate and parrot.

Award winners at the **Essex County South Mountain Dog Park Contest** are as follows:

Best in Show: Regina Mahon from Bayonne and her dog Gizmo, who was dressed as a Steampunk Yorkie.

Cutest Costume: First place: Hakima Melton from Belleville and her dog Zoe who was dressed as a Ballerina Sweet 16 Birthday Girl. Second place: Carolina Hume from Newark and her dog Fiona who was dressed as a bumble bee. Third place: Gianna Cosgrove from Morristown and her dog Bruce who was dressed as a frog.

Most Creative Costume: First place: Joy Scally from Essex Fells and her dog William who was dressed as Paul Bunyan. Second place: Esha and Leonidas Packer from Maplewood and their dog Thalia who was dressed as Toothless from “How to Train Your Dragon.” Third place: Leslie Anglin from Newark and her dog Damien who was dressed as a Zombie Dog.

Group Costume: First place: Joyce Alilio from East Orange and her dog Chip who was dressed as a loofah. Second place: Amy and Anne Frechette from West Orange, Mary Lynch and their dogs Maggie, Danny and Buddy who were dressed as cops and robbers. Third place: Chris Lane from Millburn and his dogs Sasha and Malia who were dressed as superheroes.