



Friends of Greater Lansing Dog Parks
2007 Accomplishments

Howard & Erna Soldan Dog Park Opened Sept. 17th

Lansing's first public off-leash dog park owned by the City of Lansing and operated by Ingham County Parks Dept. opened to serve the greater Lansing area

Small Dog Area funded by Ingham County Parks

Through a generous grant by Ingham County, the Soldan Dog Park includes a fenced-in area exclusively for small dogs

FGLDP Membership Grew to More Than 360 Members

That is a 150% increase over 2006 membership levels

FGLDP and Partners Raised Over \$19,600 in 2007

Funds go toward ongoing maintenance and enhancements to the Soldan Dog Park

Total Funds Raised/Pledged To Date = \$111,600

2007 Year in Review:

January: At our January 22nd General Membership Meeting, we heard from Murdock Jemerson, Lansing Parks & Recreation Director, and Mike Bristor, Landscape Architects and Planners, about the Soldan Dog Park construction process and timelines. We also elected the following officers for 2007: Ellen Sullivan, President; Cindy Ballard, Vice President; Rebecca Vanvelzor, Treasurer; and Morgan Haeger, Secretary.

February: On February 24th we held our 4th Annual Strategic Planning Session to develop a detailed PR plan for announcing and opening the park; finalized site planning; completed park management details (including rules, park access, and parking policies); developed fundraising goals for 2007; and completed an Education plan (Dog Park Ambassadors and Practice & Play Sessions). We also developed a month-by-month plan to achieve our organizational goals. On February 25th we held our fourth Practice & Play Session at the future site of the Soldan Dog Park in Scott Woods, where members and their dogs simulated off-leash dog park play under the watchful eyes of experienced dog trainers.

March/April: On March 10th, we held our fifth Practice & Play Session at the future site of the Soldan Dog Park in Scott Woods. We again submitted our application to the 2007 Capital Area United Way to receive donations. Our hard work paid off by being accepted once again by the 2007 State Employees Combined Campaign for the United Way. April 14th was the date for our final Practice & Play Session at Scott Woods. On April 19th with much fanfare, media attention and a phalanx of digging dogs in hard hats, we held our public Ground Breaking for the Howard & Erna Soldan Dog Park.

May: On May 4th we held the first of our two successful Dog Paddles on the beach at Hawk Island County Park – fundraisers for the benefit of the Soldan Dog Park. Lansing’s Parks and Recreation Dept., with leadership from Letts Community Center staff, held a profitable Happy Tails Dog Walk and Fundraiser for our organization on May 12th. May also was the month when bids were due from fencing companies seeking to be awarded the contract for fencing the Soldan Dog Park.

June/July: The fencing contract was awarded to the lowest bidder, Dewitt Fencing, by the City of Lansing and construction began on the dog park fencing. Meanwhile, Ingham County Parks staff was extremely busy clearing the trails and park perimeter to allow access by the fencing company. Ingham County Parks also installed a pet/human drinking fountain and constructed a wooden bridge at the main entrance of the dog park. Ingham County parks staff put up park rules signage; installed numerous poop bag dispensers around the park and constructed a shelter for the park’s Port-a-Jon. FGLDP members and their dogs once again marched in the City’s July 4th Parade in downtown Lansing.

August: As final Park details were being completed, FGLDP members-only were allowed to “test drive” the dog park. Members were the first to use the Soldan Dog Park and offered glowing testimony to the park’s beauty and design. FGLDP Viewpoint on the many, many benefits of a public dog park was published on the Lansing State Journal Editorial page on August 26th. Finishing touches were made to a brand new FGLDP and Soldan Dog Park brochure designed by member, Dyana Males. Member Alex Morese was also working hard to update and revise our FGLDP Website in readiness for the dog park grand opening.

September: The second Dog Paddle was held on September 14th at Hawk Island County Park on a cool evening that did not deter the fun or wet fur. September 19th was the day we had all been waiting for - the Grand Opening of the Howard & Erna Soldan Dog Park! The Grand Opening event was skillfully orchestrated by Ingham County Parks and well-attended by city and county elected officials, the Soldan family and FGLDP members. FGLDP also saw many members and friends while participating in the Capital Area Humane Society’s annual Walk for the Animals on September 22nd.

October: With warm fall weather, the Soldan Dog Park became almost too popular, necessitating rules clarifications and additions to ensure the safety of park users. Ingham County Parks staff created a Dog Park Taskforce with participation from the City of Lansing Parks & Recreation Dept., Ingham County Animal Control and FGLDP to address the many management issues arising from the large numbers of dog park users. Lee Kiesel and the Spotted Dog Café once again held a wonderful Trick or Treat with Your Dog in Downtown Lansing fundraiser on October 26th to benefit the Soldan Dog Park and Ingham County Animal Shelter. On the evening of October 29th, we held our first Sponsors Night to honor the many private and public sponsors of the Soldan Dog Park.

November: FGLDP *Dog Park Ambassadors* instituted the Good Neighbor Program at the Soldan Dog Park to assist park users in understanding and following dog park rules and etiquette. On November 19th an Informal Question and Answer Session was well attended by members interested in FGLDP elected and leadership positions for 2008. Many, many volunteer members turn out for the Dog Park Ambassadors Orientation Session on November 29th

December: We end the year by sending out the witty (We think so!) “Letter from the Dog” - our annual fundraising appeal. Preparations are underway for the 2008 Annual Meeting on January 28, 2008, a time of transition to new leadership for the organization—and new successes ahead.