

## Lansing Unleashed E-News for June 14, 2007: Soldan Dog Park Almost Ready

Hello Friends of Greater Lansing Dog Parks:

Welcome to our June 2007 E-newsletter issue. In this E-newsletter:

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1. **Update on Opening the Soldan Dog Park:** Dewitt Fencing has finished construction of the perimeter fencing at the park! Clearing of the site continues along with creation of the signs to be used at the park, installation of the pet/human drinking fountain, placement of the Porta-Jon, poop bag dispensers, etc. The Dog Park **is NOT open yet** since there is trash and construction debris that must be removed as well as placement of items needed for a successful public dog park - think rules, poop bags, etc. We know that everyone is anxiously awaiting the park opening but please do not try to use the park - the gates are closed for now. Our members will get the very first notification of the park when it is ready to be used, which is anticipated in a couple of weeks. Members, stay tuned for an email coming soon to your inbox. Not currently a member? Consider joining now so you will be the first on your block to know!

2. **Donations Still Needed for Small Dog Area:** As you know, we have been investigating the possibility of enclosing an area within the park **just for small dogs**. This is a standard feature in dog parks of any size and protects the very small and miniature dogs from their bigger brethren. We have located what we think is the best spot for a small dog area; it is the SE corner of the park right by the main entrance and would be an area approximately 85 feet by 110 feet. (This is the largest area possible to still be in the front of the park).

We have a unique opportunity right now to get the small dog area enclosed but to do this we continue to need your financial help. The anticipated additional cost of fencing the small dog area is approximately \$5000. We have received a few donations and the FGLDP Board has committed to raising \$250 for the small dog area. But we still need all of our members and supporters, who own or love small dogs, to make a donation towards creation of the small dog enclosure. Please consider making a donation at the \$250 level or at any amount that you can afford. Go to our secure website at [www.lansingunleashed.com](http://www.lansingunleashed.com) and click on membership to make your contribution or send a check to P.O. Box 27164, Lansing, MI, 48909. Make sure you note on the online donation or on the check that it is for the small dog area. If we can raise the money now the small dog area could still be ready in time for the gala grand opening of the Soldan Dog Park.

3. **July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade in Downtown Lansing:** Join us to celebrate July 4<sup>th</sup> in downtown Lansing at the City of Lansing Independence Day Parade. Bring your dog (on leash, of course) and join our marching unit of people and dogs; the parade begins at 11 a.m. We will meet by 10:30 a.m. at the staging area; detailed information will be available from the city at the end of June.

We are again keeping it simple this year and just walking with our dogs. However, entries in the parade must be decorated so we ask you to find a patriotic-themed bandana (think red, white and blue) for your dog. Walkers are invited to wear their red dog park T-shirt or just a red shirt. The parade route in downtown Lansing is being finalized as of this writing. The TENTATIVE ROUTE is to start on Allegan just west of Pine St. and to march west on Allegan to Capitol. The final route, along with our placement and entry number to help you locate us, will be sent to those who contact us to let us know you will participate.

We need to know how many dogs and people to plan for so, if you can make it, send an email (with July 4<sup>th</sup> Parade in the subject line) to [info@lansingdogparks.com](mailto:info@lansingdogparks.com) with your name(s), number of dogs and a contact phone number. If you do not have email you may call Deb Lintemuth, our parade coordinator, at 517-393-4925 evenings or weekends. We also need two volunteers to carry our banner. We ask that you bring only one dog per adult handler, please. Deb will let you know the final details as soon as possible.

**4. Policy Change: Dog Park E-newsletter Will Go to Members ONLY:** As we move toward the long-awaited opening of the park, the board of our all-volunteer organization has discussed how we can best use our limited resources of time and money. Right now we need to direct our energies as much as possible toward developing the small dog area, raising funds for ongoing maintenance needs, and planning for future development. There are costs involved in sending emails and maintaining email lists—yes, even email has a cost in volunteer time as well as cost of maintaining the system. We have decided that those who support the park through their membership and donations should be our priority. Therefore, the Dog Park E-News will become a members-only publication as of July 2007.

As we make this transition, we plan to send an email to non-members with an offer to join and stay on the list. Individual memberships are \$15 and household memberships are \$25. Our membership year is January 1 through December 31. Online membership is easy with credit card payment and you receive an immediate e-mail acknowledgment. Our volunteer Membership Coordinator also acknowledges all email and snail mail memberships. As a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization we also acknowledge all contributions in proper format for IRS contribution purposes.

Dog park information will continue to be available on the web site. We plan to update our web site and are seeking a volunteer web designer to help us. If you know someone with web design skills and a willingness to help us, drop us an email or call Ellen Sullivan, President, at 517-484-7417.

**5. Save the Date: Dog Paddle on Friday, September 14 from 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. at Hawk Island County Park & We Need A Lifeguard for the Event:** Mark your calendars for our next dog swim on Friday, September 14 on the beach at Hawk Island County Park, 1601 Cavanaugh, Lansing. Linda VanBuskirk, a long-standing member, has been our lifeguard for the past three years but she has moved out of town and will no longer be able to help us during the event. We are seeking someone with current lifeguard certification to volunteer to be our lifeguard on the beach for the evening. Contact us at [info@lansingdogparks.com](mailto:info@lansingdogparks.com) or call 517-974-3103 if you can volunteer or know of someone who might help us out.

**6. Welcome to Our New and Renewing Members:** Our membership continues to grow and we welcome the following new and renewing members: Rachel Wawro, Michele Lorenz, Mindy Sue Jones, Emily Dworkin, Pam Cruz, Chantal Marie Hiram, Shannon Rodgers, Gary Tuma, Melanie Taylor,

Lisa Bates, Amy L. Jones, Sarah Jane Gilmour, Ruth Grant, Karen Pounds, Katie Clark, Jo Batchner, Beth & Ken Bowen, Sandy Dykins & Lily Werbin, Becky Winburn, Brad & Eric Vauter, Michael Murphy, Lisa Niemiec & Andrew Straight, Liz La Macchia, Amanda Hall, Dein Haus, Elise Harmon, Donna J. Hobart, Jan Bronson, Rae Blackledge, Colleen P. Cashman, Melissa Crips, Dean Dodge, Libby Dunbar, Maureen Gargan, Melissa Hulburt, Travis Kamm, Clyde Keep, Raini Majeske, Eric Manchester, Kelly Adams, Ruth Ann Pugh, Joe Rizer, Linda Rossman, Kristine Tuckek, Randi Veneman, Richard West, Crystal White, Ann Williams, Nicole Wilson, Judy Neiberg, Christine & Jack York, Holly Welker, Bruce & Leslie Farris, Andrea Firman & Tim Stay, Julie Johnston, AnnaBelle's Pawsh Place for Pets (Ann L. Andrews), and Barbara Thelen.

If you have not gotten round to updating your membership, visit our website to join or renew online at <http://www.lansingdogparks.com/donations.html> or mail your membership renewal to the address on this newsletter.

**7. Getting Ready for the Dog Park: Dog Park Ambassadors Needed:** This month we want to talk to you about the development of our proposed Dog Park Ambassadors. The Play Sessions have reinforced for us why we will have basic rules for our public dog park. When the dog park is open we plan to have a volunteer group of members who will assist park users in observing the rules. We are looking for members who will volunteer to help with this project.

Though park security and law enforcement help will be on call for problems that may come up at the park, we are encouraging peer support to maintain our park at the highest level of performance and behavior. The Ambassadors will discuss rule compliance, check licenses, and make gentle suggestions to users if it appears that they need help in attending to and intervening in the behavior of their dogs. They will also follow up on reporting any unusual or difficult situations they observe in the park. It is a high priority for users to know what behaviors are expected at the park. We have learned from experienced dog park personnel around the country that paying close attention to the behavior of your dog and moving away from potential problem encounters is the best way to prevent incidents at the park.

We are putting together a plan for implementation of the Dog Park Ambassador program. You do not need to be an experienced dog trainer; we will include a training component for all volunteers. Time commitments will be flexible and based on volunteer availability. If you are a member and would be willing to volunteer for this project, please send an email to [info@lansingdogparks.com](mailto:info@lansingdogparks.com) with your name, address and daytime and evening phone numbers. (If you do not have email access, you can call Ellen Sullivan at 484-7417 to volunteer.) We will contact you with additional information as it becomes available.

That is all for now. Woof! Stay in touch through our web site at: [www.lansingunleashed.com](http://www.lansingunleashed.com)

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Our organization does most of its direct mail communication via email to save on postage costs. Email addresses are used for information on dog parks and dog related events and are not shared with third parties. Paid members without email access will receive mailings through the U.S. Postal Service.

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