

Lansing Unleashed eNews: September 12, 2006

Hello, Friends of Greater Lansing Dog Parks:

Welcome to our September 2006 eNewsletter issue. In this eNewsletter:

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1. Reminder: Dog Paddle Friday, Sept. 15 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Hawk Island County Park:

Remember our annual fall swim fling is this Friday on the beach at Hawk Island County Park, 1601 Cavanaugh, Lansing. Hawk Island is between Aurelius Road and Pennsylvania Avenue and just south of the future site of our dog park. Admission cost is \$5 per dog for members and \$10 per dog for nonmembers. All owners get in free. If you are not a member now, you can join at the event and your admission price will be included in the membership fee. Individual membership is \$15 and Pack (Household) is \$25 annually. We just put our Waiver Form online at www.lansingunleashed.com. You can download and fill out the form prior to the event; then just bring your completed form with you on Friday. Can it be any easier than that?!

As with any wet and wild swim party, there are a few rules: a. Two dogs allowed per adult handler; b. Dogs must wear their current licenses and be leashed when out of the water; c. An adult must accompany dogs and kids; d. Dogs are allowed on the beach area only; and e. Owners must be prepared to enter the water to assist their dogs.

If you have any questions regarding the Dog Paddle please contact us at info@lansingdogparks.com or call Cindy Ballard at 517-974-3103. We again thank the Lansing Parks and Recreation Department for cosponsoring this event.

2. Recognition of Soldan Family Planned for 7 p.m. Monday, Sept. 18 at Lansing City Council Meeting:

Many of you know that Howard Soldan II of Soldan's Feeds and Pet Supplies is our major naming rights sponsor for the dog park. Plans are underway to name the Howard & Erna Soldan Dog Park in honor of Mr. Soldan's parents. Because of Mr. Soldan's very generous \$50,000 pledge toward creation of the park, the City is able to move ahead with seeking bids for construction this fall. A ceremonial presentation of the pledge amount in a giant check will be held at the beginning of the meeting, and we would like to have as many members and supporters at the meeting as possible.

We are very grateful to the Soldan family and are glad that the Mayor and City Council will show their own appreciation in this way. Please note that Special Ceremonies such as this one are early on the agenda, preceding public comment and most other agenda items. Join us in the City Council Chambers, 10th Floor, Lansing City Hall, 124 West Michigan Avenue, Lansing at 7 p.m. to show your appreciation for the Soldan family generosity. With their help Lansing will have the first public dog park in the greater Lansing area. Thank you, Soldan Family!

3. Play Session on Wednesday, Sept. 6 at Elm Park Was A Great Success! We held our first off-leash run, walk & play session last Wednesday at Elm Park. We had over 40 dogs racing, sniffing, peeing, playing, and just really enjoying themselves off-leash. Everyone who attended the event had a wonderful time! A big doggie thanks to Bea VanKampen, BS, LVT, Animal Manners Plus, and Erin Horan, MSU vet student and trainer, for their supervision and support of our first Play Session.

Elm Park has a fenced ball field that is a good place for off-leash play and will be the site of several future Play Sessions (dates to be announced later) that will be held prior to the dog park opening. (The site of our future dog park is the east side of Scott Woods, adjacent to the north end of Hawk Island County Park. At 17.5 acres it will be much larger than Elm Park, with lots more room to spread out.) Our Play Sessions are members-only events; so please join online now if you would like to attend a future session.

4. Obedience Training Club of Greater Lansing (OTCGL) Open House on Sunday, Oct. 8 from 1-4 p.m. The OTCGL will be holding an Open House at their new location on 3940 1/2 N. Grand River (behind Johnson Speed Warehouse, 2 miles east of airport entrance). There will be prizes, giveaways, class discount offers, and a chance to win a photo or drawing of your pet. It promises to be fun for the whole family. For further information please contact Paula Clegg at 517-668-0073 or paulaclegg@comcast.net.

The Obedience Training Club is a major supporter of our off-leash dog park and they represent the backbone of the Pooch Precision Team; our doggie marching team. We congratulate them on their new training location.

5. Bark and Build Extravaganza on Oct. 15 from noon to 5 p.m. at the Ingham County Fair Grounds Main Arena. Habitat for Humanity in partnership with the Capital Area Humane Society and Ingham County Animal Control is hosting a first-ever Bark and Build Extravaganza on October 15. You can participate in 10 exciting contests for your family dog. Your pooch could take top prize in contests like Best Tail Wag, Best Bark, Best Trick and much more. The Capital Area Humane Society and Ingham County Animal Control will be hosting on-site pet adoptions and offering low-cost micro-chipping for your pets. Habitat for Humanity is also holding a Pet Story Contest open to all children living and going to school in the Greater Lansing area. Stories are to be about your pet dog or cat and focus on one of the following categories: Pet Adoption Story; Pet Hero Story; or Loyal Companion Story. For more information about the Extravaganza and Pet Story Contest, check out the Habitat website at www.habitatlansing.org or call them at 517-374-1313.

6. Welcome to Our New and Renewing Members: Welcome to our new and renewing members including: Linda VanBuskirk, Marcia Hooper, Shawn & Tom Gennara, Megan Schaible, Mj Wickens, Jessica Diaz, Ron & Carolyn Paige, Crystal Van Antwerp, Bonney Reihmer, Katrina Jeffreys, Jane West and Amy Clubb.

7. Getting Ready for the Dog Park: A Continuing Series. One of our Silver Bone members, Alex Chodakowski of Busy Paws Dog Training, referred us to an excellent article in the September 2006 issue of The Whole Dog Journal. The article is called "A Bark in the Park: Rules of Dog Park Etiquette and Department for Dogs and Their Handlers" by Pat Miller. (See www.whole-dog-journal.com for info.) It contains a lot of valuable information, especially for those who are new to dog parks, touching on creating a park culture, appropriate dog behavior and human behavior, common dog park rules and dealing with inappropriate behaviors at the park. It also addresses two issues about which we get a lot of questions: small children and puppies.

The author recommends not bringing small children inside the dog park. Since dogs that are running fast can sometimes even knock down an adult, imagine what could happen to a toddler. Another source we have read points out that many small children are directly at face level with a dog, a sometimes frightening position for little children. This is why in our Lansing dog park one of the proposed rules is that children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. We further recommend: A) Never leave young children alone with any dog in any situation, even if it is your dog. B) Keep your children away from unfamiliar dogs. C) Never allow children to play or sit on the ground when dogs are present. D) Keep children close and quiet when visiting the dog park. Actions and movements by children can trigger a dog's instinct to chase and bite. E) Remember that you are visiting a dog park with your children; it is not a playground.

In our next issue we will write about why very young puppies are not good dog park candidates.

That is all for now. Woof! Stay in touch through our web site at: www.lansingunleashed.com

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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