



## WALNUT CREEK DOG OWNERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, No. 1 April 2008

*"WCDOG – Fostering community spirit through people, pets and parks"*

### NEWS FROM THE DOG PARK AT HEATHER FARM



### First annual closure coming soon – April 21 to June 13

From the moment it opened, the dog park has been the best and most used spot in Walnut Creek. However, every year the dog park will have to be closed for a period of time for turf renovation. This year, some drainage issues have surfaced and the park will need to be closed for a slightly extended period of time — from Monday, April 21 through Friday, June 13.

Park improvements are on the way. There will be a separate entrance and exit to the dog park. We will be getting biodegradable Mutt Mitts (such as provided on the trails), and will supply the dog park with two long handled pooper scoopers. We will also be looking at installing more benches. We are continuing to fundraise for shade structures and other amenities. We are looking forward to the construction of a recognition wall for corporate and private donations. Your membership to WCDOG helps fund these amenities

### Important reminders to park users

- We have received complaints about excessive barking. In order to get the dog park, we committed to do our utmost to be good neighbors to the people who live near Heather Farm. We recognize that all dogs might bark occasionally, but **if your dog barks repeatedly, you need to either control the barking or leave the park immediately.** This and other dog park rules must be followed. Soon you will see the posting of municipal codes and police patrols to ensure compliance. Help us keep barking to a minimum in whatever way you can, but always with a friendly approach.
- The city crew says that the dog park is cleaner now than it was the first month or two, since more people are complying with posted rules that owners must pick up after their dogs. We want to make the park as pleasant and sanitary as possible. Watch your dog at all times. **If your dog poops – on the grass, on the asphalt walkway, in the dirt area, or in the parking lot -- you MUST pick it up.** Bring bags in case the dispensers are empty. Find the owner if you see another dog pooping and offer them a bag.

- **Park users help ready the park for its weekly Monday morning maintenance.** If you are at the park late Sunday afternoon, we ask you to assist in picking up all balls and toys and putting them in the baskets and in helping with a “poop scoop” to make sure the grass is ready for the grounds crew.
- **The small dog park is for dogs 30 pounds and under or frail, elderly dogs.** If you enter the park because your dog is elderly or frail, the dog needs to be lying down and calm, not interacting with the smaller dogs. This rule will be enforced for the protection of smaller dogs and people – we don’t want any tragic accidents as happened at Hap McGee. **If you are in doubt of where you and your dog should be, look at the other dogs in the small dog park, and err on the side of moving to the big dog park.** Spaniels, for example, generally belong in the big dog park.
- **Help your active dog be a good canine citizen in the dog park.** If your dog tends to be boisterous, try walking him or her around the lake or along the trail for 10-15 minutes before entering.
- The **park is closed during and immediately following inclement weather.** The status of the park is available on the city’s turf hotline (256-3574).
- You should not come to the dog park with your newspaper or other reading matter. **You are required to watch your dog at all times.**

## June 7th Seminar on Dog Park Citizenship

Join us from 9 to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at the Heather Farm Community Center for a fun and informative seminar on dog park citizenship. Highly regarded local master dog trainer Bonnie Brown-Cali, owner of Dog Dynamics ([www.dogdynamics.org](http://www.dogdynamics.org)), will be the featured speaker at the seminar.

### Some of the topics that will be covered:

- Is your dog ready for a dog park? (socialization, calming an over excited dog before you enter the park etc.)
- Dog language (what’s play what is not)
- Dog park basic obedience for dogs
- How to handle a dog fight
- Dog first aid and CPR
- Pet emergency planning

### Course #11158

Saturday, June 7

Lakeside Room, Heather Farm CC

9:00-11:30 a.m.

\$12 per person

**Pre-registration IS REQUIRED** (no payments accepted at the class), you can register over the phone by calling 925-943-5858 during normal business hours, in person by visiting the Heather Farm Community Center during normal business hours, or over the internet anytime via our website, [www.WalnutCreekRec.org](http://www.WalnutCreekRec.org).

[We will have a 10 person minimum to run the class.](#)

## Walnut Creek’s Action for Beauty Award given to the Dog Park at Heather Farm



On behalf of WCDOG, Sandra Nakamura Bush accepted Walnut Creek’s Chrysanthemum Award – the highest honor – at the annual Action for Beauty award luncheon on February 15 for the design of the dog park, which is accessible to all. Sandra said that, “Once the city got on board with the dog park, we had a lot of wonderful cooperation. Special thanks go to Steve Waymire (Senior Civil Engineer), Dan Cather (Public Service Manager), Todd Trimble (Senior Recreation Supervisor), Heather Ballenger (Public Service Director), Joe Sadri (Associate City Engineer), Ross Fletcher (Park Maintenance Worker), and Arthur Yamashita (Park Maintenance Supervisor).”



Check out the notice boards at the park to see the awards

## Emergency preparedness planning for yourself and your pets

We've heard so much about planning for the "big one" many of us have closed our minds to thinking about a potential earthquake devastating our area. Some interesting statistics, however, tell us how important it is to be able to care for ourselves and our pets. In Contra Costa County, there are over a million people and 500,000 domesticated animals. The number of firefighters, police officers, and paramedics on duty in the entire county at one time totals in the low 100s for each group. Officers from Animal Services won't be available to help with animals because they'll be filling in as police officers. The infrastructure in much of the area will be damaged: no clean water coming into homes, no gas, and no electricity. Markets and gas stations won't be open for business, ATMs and phones will be down. We will be on our own for a time, possibly days. Plan on seven to ten days of major disruption.

If you haven't started preparing for the big event, begin today. To make the process easier, "chunk" it. One week put together food and water supplies. Another week take care of your home: secure large furniture and pictures, learn how and when to turn off utilities. One week put together supplies for your pets. For ideas on how to do that go to [www.wcdog.org](http://www.wcdog.org) and click on emergency preparedness. Planning includes putting together a kit and arranging with some neighbors to care for the animals. WCDOG board member Joan McClure recommends "**The First Aid Companion for Dogs & Cats**." (\$13.57 on Amazon, given five stars by reviewers) It is comprehensive, covering everything including basic first aid, suggestions for equipment, lists of symptoms (and pages to turn to), and common injuries and conditions. Your loved pet depends on you for care.

## Room for rescues?

Do you have room in your life for a dog available from one of these fine tax-exempt organizations?

**Nor-Cal Poodle Rescue, Inc.** ([www.norcalpoodlerescue.net](http://www.norcalpoodlerescue.net)) is a group of unpaid volunteers dedicated to finding homes for poodles and poodle mixes in need of a second chance throughout Northern California and Southern Oregon. They rescued 160 dogs in northern California last year – 85 referral placements and 75 direct adoptions. They re-home all three varieties of Poodles ---- toys, miniatures, and standards -- and provide veterinary support when needed. WCDOG member Sue Cooper runs NorCal Poodle Rescue in Walnut Creek. Her cell phone is 457-8580 her email is [sscooper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sscooper@sbcglobal.net).

**Muttville** is dedicated to improving the lives of senior dogs. On a local level, Muttville rescues senior dogs and finds them foster homes or gives them hospice. On a global level, Muttville provides information about caring for older dogs and support for people who do. Through associations with shelters and other animal organizations, Muttville finds senior dogs that have been given up and are not likely to find adopted homes. Through outreach and networking, Muttville finds suitable foster homes for these dogs. Learn more about Muttville, which is located in San Francisco, from their website ([www.muttville.org](http://www.muttville.org)) or contact founder Sherri Franklin at [sherri@muttville.org](mailto:sherri@muttville.org).

Leonora Brun, who runs **Biff and Bark (Bethel Island for Furry Friends)**, has been inundated with animals from people who have been evicted from their homes and don't want to surrender their pets to the pound. Recently a very tearful family dropped off a beautiful silver/sable German Shepherd (with papers). She is two years old, spayed with all her shots. Another evicted woman begged her to take in a 12-year-old female lab who is sweet and gentle, as well as a four-year-old female lab mix who is about 40 lbs, and who is a little shy of men but warms up eventually. The owners of the lab mixes would be thrilled if their dogs were fostered until they get on their feet again, but if they can be adopted to a good home that is okay with them. She also has a Bassett Hound/Dachshund mix who is currently being treated for flea allergies. Leonora would welcome anyone who would foster or adopt any of these dogs as she has other requests to take in dogs, cats etc. from people evicted from their homes. Biff and Bark will even deliver these dogs! Leonora's phone number is (925) 684-2345. Her address is P.O. Box 1916 Bethel Island CA. 94511. Anyone who would like to donate money would be greatly appreciated by Leonora, who does her best to make ends meet.

## Look out for us at Animals on Broadway, May 18th

Join hundreds of other dog lovers at Animals on Broadway on May 18. Be sure to come visit WCDOG's booth.

## ThankYouThankYouThankYou !!!

- Very special thanks go to the **city's maintenance crew** who keep our park looking as pristine as possible. If you see them at the park, be sure to thank them.
- Thanks also to the following **WC businesses that support WCDOG and the new park**:

**SPORTS BASEMENT**  
UPS in Encina Grande  
The Container Store

Floral Florist  
Postal Annex, Ygnacio Plaza  
FedEx Kinko, Mt Diablo Blvd.

The Balloon Man  
Bill Grant (for video)  
Annabelle's

Encore Theatrical

**We welcome other sponsors.** Any business that supports WCDOG will be featured in our newsletters throughout 2008. We are planning for a **recognition wall** to recognize our corporate, business and private sponsors. Please check our website for details.

- To **Sandy Scott-Jones** for the photos on the first page.



## WCDOG board elections are scheduled for July 1

WCDOG will hold its election on July 1. All WCDOG members will receive a description of openings and are invited to run for the board. This is an exciting time to be involved in helping bring our vision to reality: "WCDOG – *Fostering community spirit through people, pets and parks.* If you are interested, or would like to know more about what is involved, contact Monica Daigle-Kleisath at [Mdaig@aol.com](mailto:Mdaig@aol.com).

## Did you know?

- **The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center at 888-426-4435 provides consultations 24 hours a day. Because it receives no funding, the fee for a consultation is \$60. The regular Poison Control Center of California (800-222-1222) cannot advise on animal cases.** As the nice woman we spoke with noted, "If you tell me that your dog Max ate silica gel, I will tell you not to worry. If you tell me that he ate Granny's heart medicine, I will refer you to the Animal Poison Control Center because dogs and humans are so different." She stressed that you should not lie and say that Max is a toddler, because dogs and humans are so different.
- The free local monthlies targeted to local dog owners that are available at vets and pet stores are a good source of useful and thought-provoking information. The March Issue of **Bay Woof** featured an article on "The ALPHA Myth" by Jean Donaldson, as well as advice on managing canine pain. **Fetch the Paper** maintains a list of dogparks, beaches, trails, and other "dog scenes" in the region at [www.fetchthepaper.com/dogscene.aspx](http://www.fetchthepaper.com/dogscene.aspx)
- **Our own WCDOG website [www.wcdog.org](http://www.wcdog.org) is a great source of information and of links to other websites for dog lovers.** Jerry Carlin updates it frequently. Check it out.
- Dogs are no longer welcome downstairs at Barnes and Noble.
- We are always looking for leads to resources that help make us all better dog owners. WCDOG Vice President Pamela Kan highly recommends "**Animals in Translation**" by Temple Grandin and Catherine Johnson. Ms. Grandin, who holds a PhD., and is autistic. "This book discusses research and her observations on how animals think. It is extremely interesting. She focuses on cattle, horses, dogs and humans. I found it just fascinating and I will never relate to my dogs in the same manner. Anyone who trains dogs should read this book. I also recommend this book if you know of anyone with an autistic child. It really opens up your mind to see how people with autism see the world in such a different manner." If you have a resource to recommend, contact newsletter editor Judy Hirabayashi ([jhirabayashi@inverness-research.org](mailto:jhirabayashi@inverness-research.org)).

**JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN WCDOG!** If you would like a voice in how the dog park is run, join WCDOG. **Annual dues of \$20 are good through June 2009.** Use the Membership Form below or download the form from our web site [www.wcdog.org](http://www.wcdog.org)

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 Fill out this form and return it with a check for \$20 made out to *WCDOG* to:  
 2008 Annual Dues (Voting Member), WCDOG, 1867 Ygnacio Valley Rd., Box 120, Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Dog(s) Names \_\_\_\_\_ Dog(s) breed \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

(Be assured that contact info will be used only for WCDOG communications. All group emails are sent out using bcc)

I don't wish to be a member but add me to your mailing list

I wish to donate an additional \$\_\_\_\_\_ towards dog park expenses

This donation is in memory of/in honor of my pet(s) named \_\_\_\_\_