



WALNUT CREEK DOG OWNERS GROUP NEWSLETTER

Volume 3, No. 3 September 2008

“WCDOG – Fostering community spirit through people, pets and parks”

There is a lot of news of interest to Walnut Creek dog owners this month – fun opportunities, community news, and WCDOG news. We hope you find it useful!

Coming Attractions

- **Sunday, September 28 (9 a.m.) – Shell Ridge open space poop scoop**
- **Wednesday, October 15 (6:30 p.m.) – Dog Obstacle Course at Sports Basement**
- **Saturday, October 18 (9:30 a.m.) – “Dogs at Play” Seminar at Heather Farm**
- **Saturday, November 1 (5:30 a.m.) – Rock and Roll Halloween Howl at Sports Basement**

Help with a fall doggie-do clean-up at Shell Ridge open space on Sunday, September 28

There is talk of closing the Shell Ridge open space to dogs due to the poop problem. If you walk your dog out there, be vigilant about taking a poop bag with you and using it. Others obviously have not been careful, and the entrances are especially disgusting. WCDOG and other volunteers will meet at 9 a.m., on Sunday, September 28 at the Marshall entrance, and perhaps other entrances, to pick up poop. Wear gloves and bring a shovel and bucket or bags. Further details will be posted on www.wcdog.org and at the dog parks. Please help if you can.

Challenge your dog with an Obstacle Course at Sports Basement on Wednesday, October 15

Bonnie Brown-Cali (see below) and Michelle at Sports Basement are offering a Dog Obstacle Course on October 15 at 6:30 at the store (in Ygnacio Plaza). They are setting up a fun course throughout the store: wicket walks, weave polls, tent tunnels, ladders, jump poles, boardwalks, etc. The event will be free, but Bonnie is requesting a donation for Working Dogs For Conservation Foundation. Sports Basement is providing the refreshments.

Come to the “Dogs at Play” Seminar on October 18 to become a better dog owner and dog park visitor

Be sure to sign up for the second **Dog Park Seminar**, co-organized by WCDOG and the city even if you attended in June. The upcoming seminar will be on **Saturday, October 18, 9:30 – 11:30** at Heather Farm Lakeside Room. Using videos of dog interactions, local master dog trainer Bonnie Brown-Cali [left], owner of [Dog Dynamics](http://www.dogdynamics.org) (www.dogdynamics.org) will give a lively presentation on interpreting and responding properly to dog body language. These skills are mandatory for safe social activities, whether out at the dog park or on a stroll through downtown Walnut Creek. You’ll also learn how to prepare your dog for dog park interactions, proper dog and human etiquette, fun ways to motivate your dog to want to come to you, and how to handle dog-to-dog clashes before, during, and after a confrontation. Rounding out the fun and informative morning, you’ll learn how to assemble a homemade first aid kit for you dog. And there will also be a raffle for one free dog training consultation with Bonnie.

The class number is 11534, and the class fee is \$20. Register online at <http://ezreg.walnutcreekrec.org> or by phone at 925-943-5858. Ages 18 and older. No dogs please.

Everyone who attended last fall raved over this low-cost, enjoyable way to get to know and care for your dog better. Hope to see you there!

Big fun for you and your dog! Celebrate a Rock 'n Roll Halloween Howl on November 1 at the Sports Basement

Don't put away your Halloween costumes. . . . WCDOG invites you to join us for a Rock 'n Roll Halloween Howl at the **Sports Basement** (opposite Heather Farm Park at 1881 Ygnacio Valley Road) on **Saturday, November 1 from 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

- Come sing along and dance to live performers
- Win PRIZES for best ADULT'S, CHILDREN'S AND YOUR WELL BEHAVED DOG'S HALLOWEEN COSTUME
- Enter our raffle to help towards a future shade structure at the Heather Farm Dog Park.

R.S.V.P. by e-mail to wcdogevents@gmail.com (important!) to let us know how many adults, children and dogs will be attending. This will entitle you to receive a **15% discount coupon** if you make a purchase by bringing a copy of your e-mail! Yes, you can shop as you bop!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

EVEYONE is welcome. Invite your friends and neighbors – and their well-behaved dogs!

Alert! Big Dog Food Recall

Pet owners are advised to discontinue use of affected products immediately. On September 13, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals advised pet owners to discontinue using certain dog and cat foods manufactured by Mars Petcare US, which has voluntarily issued a nationwide recall because of potential contamination with Salmonella serotype Schwarzengrund. This voluntary recall affects **several brands of dry pet foods** in the United States including Pedigree, Special Kitty, Paws & Claws, Natural Dog Food, Red Flannel, Country Acres, Buju & Ziggye, Member's Mark, Natural Cat Food, Retriever, Bruiser, Doggy Bag, PMI Nutrition, and Pet Pride. For a complete list of affected brands and more information on the recall, please visit <http://www.petcare.mars.com>.

Dog Park News We offer the following reminders and requests based on park usage and issues that have arisen recently.

Wag World Dog Park at Heather Farm

- Each time you visit, be sure to **check the information board** to the left of the entry gate for the latest news of interest to Wag World Users.
- Out of respect for neighbors, **it is critical that park users control all dog barking.** We ask park users to politely remind others if their dogs are noisy (and if they don't notice that they need to clean up after their dogs.)
- Because cases of **kennel cough** have been reported at the park, we suggest that park users bring their own water and containers to limit multiple dogs sharing water.
- **Incident Reports Forms** are available at the Wag World entry next to the information board. If you are involved in or witness a serious violation of park rules, especially if an injury is involved, please complete the form and return it to the address on the back of the form.

San Miguel Park

- Please be sure to **vacate the park or leash your dog by 9 a.m. sharp.**
- Everyone is asked to help with the **group poop scoop the first Saturday of the month at 8:30.**

The city is aware of issues with the turf and over-watering at the parks. We will keep you abreast of developments.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY: "Saying you're building a dog park for dogs is like saying you're building a golf course for golf balls."

Meet your new WCDOG Officers and Board



Front row: President – Joan McClure (President), Linda Herman (Treasurer), Allen Goodman and Marianne Daniel (Board members)
Middle row: Nancy Carlin and Jessica Siegal (Board members), Monica Daigle-Kleisath (VP)
Back row: Judy Hirabayashi (Newsletter editor), Pam Cartago (Secretary), Bob Diskowski (Board)

The new Officers and Board are happy to report that past WCDOG Presidents Sandra Nakamura-Bush and Pamela Kan are serving as Advisors to the Board:

The WCDOG newsletter is going online – this is the last printed issue

To reach as many WCDOG members as possible and to keep costs down, starting with the next issue, the newsletter will be distributed as a quarterly email. We will also continue to post the newsletter at Wag World, and it will be available at our website. We will print a very small number of paper copies for members who don't have email. Call Judy Hirabayashi (256-7828) if you need a paper copy. If you don't yet belong to WCDOG, this is another reason to join!

We have a new newsletter feature, Dear Lassie. (If you have a question for Lassie, send it to jhirabayashi@inverness-research.org, who will make sure she gets it.)

Dear Lassie,

I am still a little shaken by something that happened at San Miguel Park a few weeks ago. I was hanging out near the upper gate with my pals Fido and Spot. Our owners were chatting, and didn't pay much attention when we noticed a new dog get out of a car, OFF leash. We didn't see his owner – maybe she was finding his water or toy. So we were all excited to get to smell each other's butts and figure out who was dominant. The new dog, Buddy, felt the same way and was running back and forth along the fence, signaling clearly, "C'mon ON, Mom, hurry up!!" I hung off to the side a little -- good girl that I am -- but Fido and Spot were glued to the gate from the inside, and they got more and more excited as Buddy kept running back and forth to his mom trying to hurry her. Finally, Buddy's owner let him in the gate, and he, Fido and Spot ran off a little way together. Almost immediately, Spot and Buddy disagreed about something and started fighting. Spot came away bleeding from the mouth; his lip had been bitten, either by himself or Spot. Spot's mom exchanged information with Buddy's owner and then took Spot out of the park. What went wrong?????

Missy

Dear Missy, You and your friends got a little over-excited by all the smells and activities at the gate; that made everyone a little insecure. Your owners should help protect you by bringing you into the gate on leash, and once you are in, keeping you away from entryways when other dogs are entering and exiting. These are actually pretty easy ways to help you all stay safe and happy. Thanks for asking!

Holiday safety tips for your dog

On **Halloween**, dogs and cats, especially black ones, should be kept indoors to protect them from the tricks and treats of the ghosts and goblins. Walk the dog early on Halloween night and hold the leash firmly. Masks may startle dogs and dogs can be overwhelmed by shrieking children. When opening the door for trick or treaters, be very careful your cat or dog does not dart outside. Because pets may escape and get lost, make sure your pet is wearing proper identification. Some treats, especially chocolate, grapes and raisins, are poison to dogs. Candy wrappers, if swallowed, can block or injure intestines.

On **Thanksgiving**, feed your dog a regular meal before guests arrive. Dogs and cats do better with routine and this will reduce the chances of begging or stealing. Reward your dog with a small portion of plain turkey (minus the bones) along with his regular food. Cooked bones can splinter and cause choking or get lodged in the stomach or intestines. Rich, fatty foods such as turkey skin, ham, mashed potatoes, butter and gravy can upset the stomach and bread may cause gas or bloat (a potentially fatal condition).

For help with pet poisonings, contact the National Animal Poison Control Center at 1-800-548-2423. There is a charge for this service.

Did you know?

- Your membership contribution will help fund shade structures and other amenities at Wag World and enable WCDOG to share information of interest to local dog owners via the newsletter, flyers, etc. (we printed 700 copies of our last newsletter!)
- WCDOG wants you! Coordinate or just help with the Sunday evening clean ups at the dog park at Heather Farm. Help man the WCDOG booth at Animals on Broadway and other community events. Help out at pet emergency training events. Take photos for the newsletter. Help make our motto a reality. Contact Joan McClure (joan1979@astound.net) or Judy Hirabayashi (jhirabayashi@inverness-research.org) if interested.
- **Our own WCDOG website www.wcdog.org is a great source of information and of links to other websites for dog lovers.** Check out (and save for emergencies) the recently added list of local pet friendly hotels.

ThankYouThankYouThankYou

** Sports Basement (Ygnacio Plaza) ** Peets (Ygnacio Plaza) Hi Tech Burrito (Ygnacio Plaza) Your Safety Place (Dublin) UPS (iEncina Grande)	The Container Store Florali Florist Postal Annex (Ygnacio Plaza) FedEx Kinko (Mt Diablo Blvd.) The Balloon Man	Annabelle's Encore Theatrical Bill Grant (for video) AND the city's maintenance crew
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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.

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP IN WCDOG! Annual dues of \$20 are good through June 2009. Use the Membership Form below or download the form from www.wcdog.org.

Fill out this form and return it with a check for \$20 made out to *WCDOG* to:
 2008 Annual Dues (Voting Member), WCDOG, 1839B Ygnacio Valley Rd., Box 120, Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Name _____

Dog(s) Names _____ Dog(s) breed _____

Email (important!) _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

(Be assured that contact info will be used only for WCDOG communications.)

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 _____