



THE SCOOP

Citizen Canine Dog Owners' Association Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1 Winter 2007

Walking the Dog—at Matheson Lake



by Linette McElroy

Tired of dodging joggers and road apples at Beaver Lake? Finding going around Thetis Lake not as challenging as it used to be? Have you ever thought about trying out Matheson Lake Regional Park?

Matheson Lake Regional Park is a lesser-known CRD Regional Park gem, and a must-do for avid hikers looking for a new adventure to enjoy with their pooches. Located about 35 minutes outside of Victoria, this 157 hectare park features an hour (or so) long loop trail. The path winds through densely-forested areas, along the lakeshore and across a portion of the Galloping Goose Regional Trail (which runs right next to the park).

The scenery is breath-taking in spots, as are some of the climbs along the way! This walk is best suited to people and dogs in fairly good shape. Running shoes will do, but hiking boots would be better. Some drinking water would be a good idea, too. Actually, there are plenty of picturesque places to stop for a bit, so you might want to consider packing a snack and staying a while.

I've taken my dogs on this walk several times now, and the few other hikers we've seen on this loop have also been with dogs. Portions of this

walk could be difficult to do with a dog on a leash but the relatively few number of dog-dog encounters might make this trail attractive for those who prefer a less congested walk. This hike can be warm-ish in the summer, but there are several lake access points for cooling off. In winter, the trees offer a surprising amount of cover from the rain.

The park is open year-round, sunrise to sunset. There's an ample parking lot, bathrooms, garbage cans and warning signs about not leaving valuables in the car. Doggie bag dispensers are notably absent, so please do bring your own.

To get to Matheson Lake Regional Park, go out the Trans-Canada Highway and take the Colwood exit. Follow the Old Island Highway, which turns into Sooke Road. From Sooke Road, turn left on Happy Valley Road, then right on Rocky Point Road, and right again on Matheson Lake Park Road, which leads to the park entrance.

In this issue...

Helping Hands

Ask a Veterinarian

plus

Victoria Animal Crusaders

January 2007

President's Message

Editor: Joanna Pettit
Production: Jaimee Gadsden

Contributors: Dr. Shelley
Breadner, Diana Gault, Linette
McElroy

Citizen Canine Directors

President: Colin Carson
Vice President: Helen Zeilstra
Secretary: Rita Hutchinson
Treasurer: Joanna Pettit
Director at Large: Mark
Hawkes

The Scoop is published
quarterly by Citizen Canine
Dog Owners Association and is
distributed by e-mail to those
on our contact list.

Opinions expressed in articles
published in this newsletter
are those of the authors and
are not necessarily endorsed by
Citizen Canine.

We welcome submissions and
letters to the editor. Please
send material by e-mail to
newsletter@citizencanine.org
or by mail to the post office
address below. Letters and
submissions must have the
author's name and phone number
and may be edited for style and
length. You can also comment
on any of these articles at
Citizen Canine's on-line forum
at www.citizencanine.org

Citizen Canine Dog Owners
Association is a registered
society in British Columbia.
Our goals are to promote and
protect the interests of dog
owners in the greater Victoria
region through advocacy,
education and community
building.

To join Citizen Canine,
complete a membership form
from the back page of this
publication or join on line at
www.citizencanine.org

Citizen Canine Dog Owners
Association
Cook Street RO,
PO Box 23078,
Victoria, BC. V8V 4Z8



Amazing—it's 2007 and Citizen Canine is in its fifth year of existence; its third as a registered society. We've come a long way from our beginnings as a small advocacy group in James Bay, lobbying for greater off-leash access for dogs.

Citizen Canine now has close to 100 supporting members and a network of over 1,400 people that we communicate with about dog-related issues. Our website at www.citizencanine.org continues to grow, getting about 250,000 hits per month. The number of postings and forum members doubled in the last year. Our annual spring dog walk at Beaver Lake increases in popularity every year, and we've started a fall event as well. In October, Woofles sponsored a Halloween party featuring costume contests and the Canine Good Neighbour Program in Market Square.

This program is a big part of our work promoting responsible dog ownership. Local dog trainers help us offer CGN Fun Tests at different locations around town, where people can practice for the actual CKC test. The importance of teaching our dogs good manners in public places cannot be emphasized enough. Our educational events help dog owners get the information they need to work with their dogs. The most recent one was our symposium on dogs at the University of Victoria in October, where seven local experts shared information on topics ranging from flyball to clicker training.

And we haven't forgotten our lobbying roots. We have a member on the City of Victoria Paws in Parks Committee and we keep working to raise awareness about the legitimacy of off-leash walking as a recreational choice. In the last municipal election we polled candidates about their policies on dogs and posted the results on our website. We continue to monitor the CRD and municipalities with a goal of preserving and expanding off-leash access. This year we'd like to begin discussions with CRD Parks about summer off-leash access to designated sections of beaches at Witty's and Island View.

An on-line map of the off-leash areas is in the works, as well as a directory of dog-related services. And with more help from our members we'd like to begin to advocate against discriminatory policies that limit access by dogs and their owners to rental accommodation and transit.

While we've made great strides, there is a lot more to do. I encourage you to find a way to get involved with Citizen Canine's work. Everyone can contribute in one way or another, whether it's volunteering at one of our events, writing letters to policy makers, or taking out a supporting membership. Check the back page of The Scoop for the supporting member application.

Oh, and don't forget to have fun with your dogs!

Colin Carson

THE SCOOP *Bits*



CITIZEN CANINE'S E-MAIL NETWORK

Would you like to have a copy of The Scoop sent to your e-mail inbox? It's easy. Just join Citizen Canine's e-mail network. Network members also get notices of local issues and events of interest to dog owners. To join for free, just go to our website at www.ctiziencanine.org and click on "get membership details here."

Last year we invited readers to send us photos of their dogs—and we got some great ones. For sure there are more pictures out there, especially now that so many people have digital cameras. If you've got a cute photo of your dog, please share it with us. Send it to newsletter@citizencanine.org. We'll include a selection in the next issue of The Scoop.

COMING SUNDAY MAY 6TH, THE 4TH ANNUAL EVERYBODY AND THEIR DOG WALK

Mark your calendars now for a day of fun and celebration with your dog. We're planning already for the 4th annual Citizen Canine spring dog walk at Beaver Lake Park. Once again there will be booths, demos, socializing, and lots of prizes. Everybody and their dog will be there—so don't miss out!



CRD PLANS A NEW REGIONAL POUND FACILITY

Great news for the animals of the Capital Regional District: CRD Chief Bylaw Enforcement Officer, Don Brown, has announced that a new a new pound and bylaw office facility will be built by October 1, 2011.

Brown says that the regional need is definitely there as human and pet populations continue to grow and the existing facility is small and outdated.

"The advantages for a new facility are many—including the health and safety of our animals and staff, long term savings by owning our own facility, long term ability to plan with a constant location, combining our offices in one location for better control and supervision, much better parking and access for clients," he notes.

The CRD currently offers Animal Control services to Sidney, Central Saanich, North, Saanich, Oak Bay, Esquimalt, Colwood, View Royal, Langford, Metchosin, Highlands, Sooke, Juan de Fuca Electoral Area, Outer Gulf Islands, and Salt Spring Island.

Brown says that they are looking at a suitable site in the Highlands, Millstream Meadows, which is owned by the CRD. The locale is properly zoned and the Highlands Administration supports the plan.

When asked about what dog owners can do to help support this progressive project, Brown suggests encouraging local politicians. Dog owners can also take part in a committee being developed early in the New Year.

"Plans and photos from other facilities would also be a big help," says Brown.

This exciting initiative is in its infancy, so if you would like to be involved with the development of a regional, state-of-the-art facility from the ground up, now's the time.

For more information, please contact Don Brown at (250) 474-3351 or by email at dbrown@crd.bc.ca.

COMING UP IN OUR SPRING ISSUE...

Decoding Dog Language, a fascinating article to help you get inside your dog's head, by Mary Anne Leason of Pet Peeves. Also look for an introduction to scent work with dogs by local trainer, Suzanne Webb.




Need a Helping Hand?


Some down-to-earth advice about choosing a service provider for your dog


by **Diana Gault**

'Brush Bella' has been on your to-do list for ages, and she's way overdue for a bath and a nail trim. She's not getting enough exercise and you're evading her soulful looks by showering her with treats and toys. Each day you resolve to leave work a bit earlier so you can both enjoy some outdoor exercise before darkness descends. But each day your good intentions evaporate in the face of work deadlines and family demands. Some people simply give up and head to the nearest shelter, claiming they have "no time" for the unfortunate dog. Others desperately try to squeeze more dog-time into already-crowded days, succeeding only in increasing their stress levels.


Help is at hand. There is a plethora of canine service providers out there. You are limited only by budget and preference—but how do you choose the "right" service? Here's a checklist to help...


 What type of help do you need? Is it bathing? Grooming? Exercising? Socializing? Training? Or a combination of one or more of those?


 What do you expect? Do you want detailed daily reports? A doggy daycare with a "nanny-cam"? Or basic, no-frills service?







 What can you afford? Canine service providers love dogs, but they also have to make a living. Fees vary according to type of service offered, degree of expertise or training involved and, sometimes, physical location, but it is unrealistic to expect five-star service on a one-star budget.

Once you're clear on all of this, then...

 Shop around. Ask other dog-owners for recommendations. Check the phone book. Surf the web.

 Make a shortlist. Write down your questions, and phone or email each business on your list.

 Check them out. Whichever service you are contemplating, be sure to thoroughly check out the provider (and their premises, if appropriate). Ask to view the kennel, dog-sitter's home, grooming shop or training facility before you make a booking. If a trainer or dog-walker will be coming to you, schedule a preliminary meeting in your home. Service providers should be willing to provide proof of:

-  Pet first aid certification.
-  Appropriate credentials and/or professional qualifications.
-  Insurance, bonding and (for in-home service) security measures.
-  Components of basic service (what is and is not included).
-  Fees/Charges (how and when they are to be paid).
-  Experience with a variety of breeds and temperaments.

Now it's time to consider the range of options within each service type.

Groomers

These can cover a broad spectrum—from low-key home-based businesses to high-end doggy spas. Home-based groomers usually only take one dog at a time, whereas shops and spas mostly employ staff, and process several dogs simultaneously. Whichever option suits, ensure the facility is well equipped, clean, and reasonably calm. Check on continuity of care. Are dogs left wet and trembling while an overly busy groomer takes calls or attends to other clients? Are there steps or a ramp for large dogs to access tubs?

Boarding (24 hour care)

To kennel or not to kennel? Opinions are divided, but much depends on your dog's temperament, age and state of health. Older, timid or ailing dogs may do better in their own home with a live-in sitter. But if you don't want a stranger in your home and your dog is outgoing and healthy, kennels may be ideal. Or, consider an increasingly popular third alternative—boarding your dog in a service provider's home. Always ask for and check references.

Doggy Daycare

Like childcare, doggy daycare can be formal (rented premises, registered business) or informal (home-based, by personal referral). If you select a home-based daycare, ask how many dogs the operator takes at any one time. Commercial daycare enterprises frequently offer a number of services in one location—but don't pay for any service you don't need. Exercise is usually in the form





of large-group leashed walks. Book a single morning or afternoon before committing to a more permanent arrangement. Ensure your dog's vaccinations are current—and expect to pay more for full-time daycare than for other types of help.

Exercise and Socialization

Dog walkers are a hardy breed! Come hail or high water, they're on the job, providing the exercise and companionship your dog needs. Whether they employ staff, or are owner-operated, formal or informal, always ask how many dogs are walked at once, and what types of walks are offered (group, trail, individual, leashed, unleashed). It may be tempting to have a neighbour's nephew walk your dog for pocket money, but a professional service with insurance, experience and credentials might be a better long-term proposition. Be honest about your dog's abilities and your own expectations. Because you probably won't be home, and your dog can't talk, trust is an essential component of any dog-walking contract. If you can't muster up that level of trust, don't hire anyone.

Training

Many trainers specialize in aggressive or difficult dogs, as well as offering basic obedience training. Reward and praise-based training methods are the norm—steer clear of any force-based methods. Even with trainers that promote themselves as using positive methods, make sure you ask what methods and equipment they use. Some trainers also offer advanced classes or individual remediation. Watching a class or demonstration should tell you which trainer would be right for your dog (and for you). Don't expect miracles; you need to learn, as well as your dog! And don't hire a trainer unless you are prepared to consistently apply what you are taught.

Our dogs offer us unconditional love 24/7 and ask so little in return. Hiring some help may cost less than an evening out or a decent haircut, and the right service, carefully chosen, could turn dog care from a chore into the stress-reliever it should be for both of you.

Diana Gault is a frequent contributor to The Scoop. She is the owner of Waggin' Trails, a dog walking service that comes to your door.
www.waggintrails.ca



Citizen Canine's New Service Directory

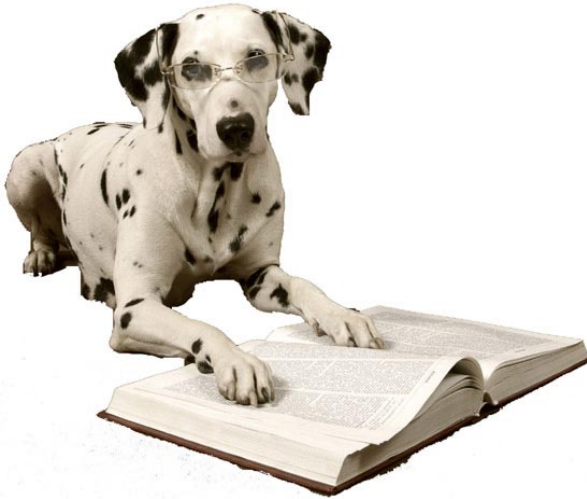
As part of our commitment to providing information and resources, Citizen Canine is developing a web-based directory of dog-related services in the Greater Victoria area. The idea is to create one on-line location where dog owners can find out what services and products are available locally.

We'll be setting up a page on the Citizen Canine website for local companies and individuals to enter their own listings, complete with a paragraph describing the services offered. The directory will list services by category—such as grooming, training, dog-walking, kennels, and rescue associations. Dog-friendly rental and vacation accommodations will also be listed.

All canine service providers are invited to submit their listings for free. The new directory page is now being finalized and should be ready to go in the next few weeks.

To submit a listing, go to www.citizencanine.org and click on the directory link.

Please note: This directory will simply be a listing and description of services and products available in this area. Inclusion in the directory is not guaranteed and does not imply endorsement by Citizen Canine. As always, it is the responsibility of the purchaser to determine the quality and appropriateness of the service or product.



ASK veterinarian

My dog is my closest friend, and I just love to cuddle with him. He's always eager to jump on my lap, but when I go to pat him, he'll growl and sometimes snap at me. If I move while we're watching TV, he'll growl and I can't get up until he moves or he will try to bite me. He'll even growl if he is at the other end of the couch and I move my feet. He started to do this when he turned seven months old. I have had lots of dogs, and this is the first time any of my dogs has acted this way. What can I do?

Veterinarian, Dr. Shelley Breadner responds.

Yes, this is a great concern that your canine friend is showing these behaviours. When dogs act in this manner we often find that their behaviours have a foundation in anxiety—usually with abnormal brain function of a hereditary nature. Most of these dogs are not mean, bad dogs.

Many dogs like yours have a genetic defect that results in their perception of conflict to be high. They are anxious in control situations and perceive challenge where none is intended. They have very poor control over their impulses,

and react with strong aggression to meet this perceived conflict. We call this condition “impulse/control aggression” and recognize it as an anxiety disorder.

These dogs may have more difficulty with one individual or a certain group of individuals in the family. The aggressive response may also depend on the situation and the location. Many times the interactions are not clear to the dog, due to their human's inconsistency or unclear communication.

The most important step is to avoid being bitten. Management of your dog is the best way to prevent this. Avoid any form of forceful correction, punishment or challenge to the dog, as it will only escalate his aggression (either at the time or in the future). Dogs learn by experience, and are always testing for information from your response patterns.

An established canine social group is generally without aggression and fights, because the dogs in the group respect and understand their communication. It's important that you convey clear information to your dog using rituals of interaction that dogs understand in their own social hierarchy. You will likely need some counseling as to how to do this in your home.

Dogs with impulse/control aggression also react very quickly. They can go from neutral to aggressive in less

than one second. Choose a trainer who uses primarily motivational techniques for training and gives guidance to you as to how to interact without triggering aggressive incidents.

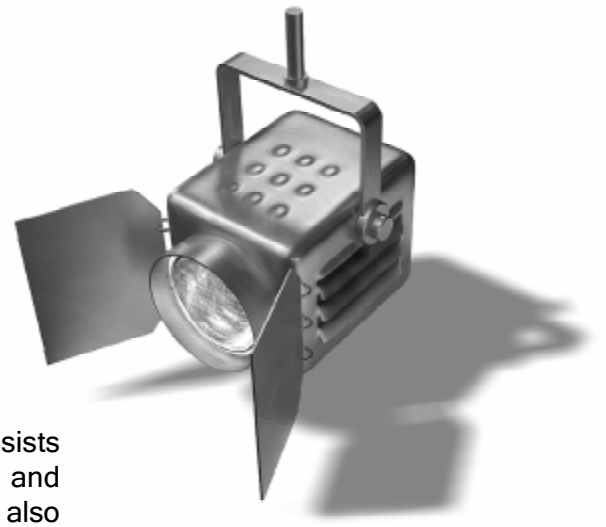
Anti-anxiety medication can help these dogs to manage their reactions. So do consult with your veterinarian. Other conditions such as metabolic diseases, pain and other health issues also need to be assessed to ensure that they are not contributing to the problem. Neutering can help to reduce social conflict, and more importantly prevent the passage of this genetic trait to other dogs and their owners. Keep safe and seek help for your anxious little friend,

*Shelley Breadner is a veterinarian with Breadner Veterinary Services in Saanichton. A main area of interest is behavioural consultations.
www.breadnervet.com*

Citizen Canine is fortunate to have an advisory committee of professionals in dog health and behaviour who offer their expertise from time to time. If you have a question related to dog care, health, behaviour or training just send it to us by e-mail at newsletter@citizencanine.org.

Spotlight On...

Greater Victoria Animal Crusaders



When you see a photograph of an abandoned animal or read in the paper of unwanted pets being destroyed, what do you do? If you're like most of us, you feel sad or upset for a moment and then turn the page. But there are some people in Victoria who make it their life's work to help these animals. One such organization is Greater Victoria Animal Crusaders (GVAC)—and crusaders they really are!

My dictionary defines a crusader as a campaigner, supporter, advocate, champion, or activist—and this group does all of the above on behalf of animals in need. Greater Victoria Animal Crusaders is a nonprofit organization that raises funds for crucial services for stray or abandoned animals—helping more than 1,500 animals every year.

GVAC pays to spay and neuter abandoned and stray cats and dogs in

the Greater Victoria area, and assists low-income families with these and other veterinary costs. The group also helps with the cost of treating injured or abused animals and then places them into loving permanent homes.

Here's just one example: Animal Crusaders helped Jake, a dog found on the Malahat with his leg broken, and dragging on the ground. Jake was turned over to a local veterinarian who contacted GVAC for help. As Jake's leg had been broken for some time, there was no way to save it. Animal Crusaders paid for Jake's amputation, neutering and vaccinations. Jake then went to a foster home for four months where he was able to heal until a permanent home was found. Today Jake is happy and healthy and living with

people who love him dearly. Jake doesn't seem to know he is missing a leg and it sure doesn't slow him down!

Animal Crusaders had its beginnings over thirty years ago as a spay and neuter program for cats and dogs. Pamela Saddler, GVAC's vice president and chief fundraiser says this program is still the major focus of their work. "It's important work and makes a huge difference," says Saddler. "The policy of spaying and neutering prevents thousands of unwanted births and ultimately ends much suffering or euthanasia."

And GVAC is finding more ways to make a difference. Last year they opened a free veterinary clinic for street dogs and cats to provide spay/neuter services, vaccinations and veterinary care.

Of course, all of this work costs money—an average of \$9,000 a month in 2006. Greater Victoria Animal Crusaders is completely run by volunteers and depends solely on donations and fundraising events to fund their work. No financial help is received from any Government Agency, and 100% of all tax-deductible donations go to help the animals.

So the next time you read about an abandoned or injured or abused dog, think of Animal Crusaders, and consider helping them out with their work. Better still, don't wait—take a look at their website www.animalcrusaders.ca to find out how you can help.



Jake found a loving permanent home

JOIN CITIZEN CANINE

Help us become a stronger voice for dog owners in Greater Victoria

Citizen Canine Dog Owners Association incorporated as non-profit society in 2004 with the goals of:

Advocating for inclusive public policy on access and acceptance of dog owners in Greater Victoria.





Developing a strong community of responsible dog owners.

Promoting responsible dog ownership and educating the public about dogs and their behaviour.

Since then we've developed an e-mail network of over 1,400 dog owners and a supporting member base of close to 100 people. We've organized many educational and community events and we continue advocating for inclusive public policies for citizens and their dogs.

As with any organization, the more members we have, the stronger our voice will be. By becoming a supporting member you can help us in our work, both through the membership fee and (if you choose) through active involvement in the organization.

Benefits of supporting membership include:

-  Opportunities to participate in a local organization that actively protects the interests of dogs and their owners in our community
-  Voting privileges at Citizen Canine General Meetings
-  A Citizen Canine membership card entitling you to discounts at many local pet-related businesses. (See our website www.citizencanine.org for details).
-  The option of receiving mailed copies of our quarterly newsletter, The Scoop.

To become a supporting member of Citizen Canine, complete the application below (also available on our website) and mail it to us with the annual fee. If you don't want to be a supporting member, you can join our e-mail network for free by registering at www.citizencanine.org.

CITIZEN CANINE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION — 2007

I hereby apply for membership in CITIZEN CANINE DOG OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Postal Code _____ Municipality _____

Email _____ Phone _____

Dog (s) Name (s) and Breed (s) _____

Date _____ Signature _____

Annual supporting membership fee is \$20.00. Enclose a cheque or money order payable to Citizen Canine:

MAILING ADDRESS: CITIZEN CANINE, COOK STREET RO, PO BOX 23078
VICTORIA, BC V8V 4Z8