



# A Howlin' Good Time

## River Park Off-leash News

AUGUST



2008

### UPCOMING STUFF

**River Park Clean-up and People/Dog Event**  
**Sunday, August 17**  
**Clean-up 9:30am**  
**Event 2:00pm**

Bring your dog to clean up River Park at 9:30am, then head over with your pup to check out Calgary's newest doggie daycare, **Hounds Lounge** at 1336B 9 Ave SW. We'll take in an episode of *Cesar's Way* and enjoy some light refreshments. Hope you and your dog can join us.



**Marda Gras Dog Contest**  
**Sunday, August 10**  
**Entry fee: \$25**

Dress your dog in purple, green and gold for a chance to be awarded ribbons and gifts. Visit [www.mardaloopbrz.ca](http://www.mardaloopbrz.ca) for more details and call 240-3003 to register.

Please feel free to share this newsletter with friends. If at any time you no longer wish to receive communication, just let me know.

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### FRIENDS OF RIVER PARK SOCIETY

#### a leadership team member profile

Meet **Kate Currey**, Altadore resident and long-time volunteer off-leash advocate who also sits on the Friends of River Park leadership team.

Kate has used River Park with her dogs since 1972, gratefully enjoying the open space, river area and the socialization of people and their dogs walking freely. She fully believes a well-socialized dog is a good dog, largely due to off-leash opportunities.

Kate has seen many changes in the park over the years including substantial growth in the number of people and dogs who use River Park. As a responsible pet owner, she worked selflessly in the late 80's and early 90's as part of a team of dedicated people keeping the area clean. In fact, many of the people involved in the initial clean ups still walk in the park today with their next generation of pets.

The City of Calgary awarded Kate for initiating annual clean-ups and providing information about maintenance and care of

the park for public education campaigns. The Parks for Paws, River Park clean-up efforts was the impetus to motivate other groups to care for their parks, and

annual City of Calgary clean-ups are now a highly recognized campaign each spring.

Kate has also played another important role in the pet community as president of the Pet Loss Support Group where she was instrumental in the erection of a pet memorial wall at the Calgary Humane Society. The Grand Opening of the Wall will take place in late-August 2008 after which Kate will step down from her role and the group will disband.

We are fortunate to have Kate's energy, boundless enthusiasm and expertise on the Friends of River Park leadership team. Thanks for your hard work Kate!



Kate and Wolf

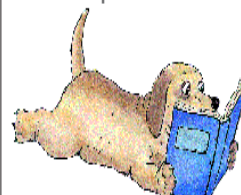
### River Park Update

The City of Calgary Parks website has links to information on the Request for Proposal (RFP) for consultant services to prepare the River Park/Sandy Beach/Britannia Slopes combined Park Management/Design Development. The public is advised to consult the City of Calgary Parks website for project updates and specifics.

This information was sent to the ad hoc River Park working committee as a courtesy and a commitment from an information meeting held in March. Once the Consultants are secured, information on the public engagement process and opportunities for public involvement in general will be posted at the Parks website. It is anticipated that RFP submissions will be reviewed at the beginning of September and no further updates are expected until the middle of September.

### Reader Survey

*A Howlin' Good Time* off-leash newsletter has been in circulation since December 2006. The current distribution is well over 500 readers. As with any publication, it's a good idea to find out who's reading it and why. Distributed along with the August newsletter is a short survey of five questions. It has been attached as a Word document. Please take a moment to provide feedback and return it to me by September 30. It will help me to determine content and frequency of future publications.



Thanks in advance to everyone for helping to make the off-leash newsletter a better communication tool .

## Caring for Your Pet

### *For the Health of It*

Many think that a natural relationship occurs between people and pets. Generally speaking, both are social creatures, but all good relationships require understanding and effort. A proper introduction is the first step toward a good relationship.

#### General tips when interacting with pets:

- be gentle and don't push, prod, poke, or tease animals
- respect a pet's privacy; pets should have an area such as a crate or a specific corner of the house to allow them quiet time and space
- do not to stare directly at a dog as this may be perceived as a threat

#### Special considerations for children:

- teach children that pets are living animals and not toys
- when handling or petting an unfamiliar animal, children should be taught to first ask for permission from a parent and the dog owner
- many people don't realize that quick and sudden movements or loud noises/yelling might startle or frighten animals causing reluctance to be approached or handled, or worse, they may bite
- ensure a child is able to handle and interact with the pet in a responsible and humane manner
- determine a pet is safe in the company of a child
- take extra precaution with children under five years of age
- show children the proper way to stroke a pet; "patting" could prove too rough for some pets

With understanding and effort the relationship between dogs and people can be highly rewarding.

Source: [canadianveterinarians.net/index.aspx](http://canadianveterinarians.net/index.aspx)



## NEUTERING AND SPAYING DOGS

### the benefits are for dogs and people

Do you have an unaltered dog that you bring to the off-leash area? While you may be able to manage your dog's behaviour, surrounding dogs may be adversely affected. Make sure your dog does not cause an unpleasant situation.

It is generally recommended to spay or neuter dogs unless they are used for breeding purposes or in those cases where a veterinarian might advise against it. Here's some information taken from the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association website.

#### Neutering males

- Neutered dogs show reduced sexual interest in females after approximately six to 12 months
- Aggression towards other male dogs and mounting of people is greatly reduced or stops completely
- Roaming reduces by about 90 per cent
- Territorial urine marking in the house is reduced by half
- Incidence of rectal and testicular tumours are reduced or completely eliminated and perineal hernias, prostatic diseases and prostatic cancer is greatly reduced

#### Spaying females

- Removes many of the problems associated with pregnancies
- Reduces or eliminates unwelcome approaches and amorous behaviour
- Reduces risk of contracting life-threatening uterine infections in older female dogs
- Spaying before the first heat greatly reduces the risk of mammary tumours
- Studies show chances of breast cancer in female dogs increases significantly with each successive heat period until the age of two years; after two years of age, spaying has little impact on the incidence of breast cancer

Neutering and spaying does not change a dog's personality, nor does it affect a working dog's ability to perform. It can greatly contribute to a more pleasant experience for dogs and people in the home and in off-leash areas.

As with any decision regarding your pet, do some research on the subject and discuss any questions or concerns with your veterinarian.

## Adapting to Deafness in Dogs

Dogs can hear sound up to 47,000 Hz – an incredible two octaves higher than humans!

Approximately one in 3,000 puppies is born deaf. The highest incidence occurs in breeds such as the Dalmatian, English Setter, Border Collie, Australian Cattle Dog and Bull Terrier. Also dogs with blue eyes are more likely to be deaf. Deafness may be congenital, acquired or inherited. In young dogs, congenital deafness is typically inherited. In older dogs, acquired deafness is most often part of the aging process or a result of chronic ear infections.

A puppy's hearing can be assessed at around two weeks of age, when the ear

canals open. An owner may not initially recognize the condition. A dog that is deaf in both ears does not respond to loud noises, is difficult to arouse from sleep, may be more aggressive, often has a higher-pitched cry and typically follows their littermates closely. Dogs with partial hearing loss have difficulty localizing sound and are often difficult to train.

Dogs that have hearing loss as a result of infections or tumours are often treated successfully with medication or surgery. You can also check out books and various aids such as vibrating collars. And in many cases, dogs are amazingly adaptable creatures and they will simply adjust to their situation.



Source: *Ultimate Dog Care - A Complete Veterinary Guide*