



NewsGram

April 2008



A BIG "THANK YOU" TO OUR NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS

Thank you for your continued support of the efforts of PDOA to make Pensacola one of the most dog-friendly and dog-caring cities in the south. There is still so much to do and without the help and support of our members our mission would go unaccomplished. Even if you can't attend events and meetings, your monetary contribution helps get the job done. Our canine friends and family thank you.

If you haven't yet renewed and would like to, contact our Membership Chair, Connie Fleming, 850-471-2262, conniefleming@cox.net



MARK YOUR CALENDAR (upcoming Dog-friendly Events)

Saturday, May 10th – "**Gulf Breeze Pet Fest**" - 10:00 AM Until 4:00 PM. Outdoor celebration with vendors, contest, pet parade, prizes & activities for the whole family and their pets, held at the **Shoreline Bark Park**. Located on the road to the boat launch/park that is directly across Shoreline Drive from the South Santa Recreation Center, 800 Shoreline Drive, Gulf Breeze. <http://www.gulfbreezechamber.com>

Saturday, June 21st – "**Canine Care Fair**" previously called "Doggie Health Expo" at **Bayview Park**. – watch for a lot more info on this upcoming event. Mark your calendar.



PDOA NEWS DESK

April 3, 2008 - at the *Escambia County Board of Commissioners* meeting, the PDOA presented a petition for the establishment of a Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter. The petition was accepted by the commissioners and feedback from county staff leads us to believe that somebody listened. Look for a news article on Channel 3 soon related to this project.

April 17, 2008 – President Buddy Garret attended a DART meeting at the Animal Shelter where they discussed the Pet Friendly Evacuation Shelter and a proposed volunteer program to provide needed assistance during shelter activation. For future reference, if you think you might be interested in participating in such a Volunteer Program or are just interested in learning more about it, please contact Buddy at budster6@gmail.com

April 18, 2008 – In response to the Escambia County Animal Shelter's request for dry dog food to help feed 50 dogs confiscated during a series of drug raids in Escambia County, PDOA purchased and delivered food donations to the Agencies that helped with the influx of dogs at the shelter. ECAS got 600 lb, SRAC, Jr Humane Society, and the Pensacola Humane Society received donations also as they helped take many of the displaced dogs from the ECAS. Special thanks go to PDOA President Buddy Garrett and Board Member Joseph Rhodes and his son who made the deliveries.



MEMBER BRAG OF THE MONTH by Nikki Bloodworth

I am Nikki Bloodworth and I am bragging on my 1 ½ year old Basenji/Jack Russell Terrier boy, Coco. Coco was rescued from a high kill shelter last summer where he was dumped because his first family couldn't handle such an energetic little boy. Coco is extremely bright and he has a wonderful personality, but since he was not properly housebroken as a puppy, Coco really had a hard time learning potty etiquette. In fact, he had become known among my friends as "The Urinator!" However, with loving patience and lots of Nature's Miracle, Coco has finally started to catch on. He has had only four accidents this year, and has learned to "ask" when he needs to go potty. Good boy Coco--I KNEW you could do it!





DOG PARK ETIQUETTE by Joseph D. Rhodes, Sr.

Recently, PDOA has fielded some complaints about a few dogs and owners that are not following proper Dog Park Etiquette. Although PDOA does not have direct control of the parks, we certainly can submit individual complaints to the city for review.

If you witness aggressive or bully behavior on the part of a dog, the following options can be utilized. These recommendations are a result of a consultation with the City Parks and Recreation Department.

1. If aggressive activity results in physical harm to an animal or human, it is recommended to notify the police immediately. If the owner of the aggressive animal leaves without concern to the victim, try to get a tag number as they leave. This information can be used by the police to identify the responsible party when filing a complaint.
2. In situations of behavior that does not result in physical harm, but is a nuisance, you can ask the individual to remove the animal from the park. If this does not work, you can call the police to make a public nuisance complaint. If you are uncomfortable with approaching an individual about their animal's behavior, or wish to remain anonymous, again, wait for the individual to leave and get their tag number. Then call the police to file a complaint.
3. Witnesses are very helpful when filing a complaint. This will help substantiate action taken by the City in curbing irresponsible dog owners.

The City Parks and Recreation, along with PDOA, wish to see all park patrons and their dogs enjoy the facilities provided. Unfortunately, there are some owners that do not recognize the fact that their dog may not be suited for a social environment, and may need additional training before participating in the dog parks. The PDOA does not assume the role of being a "security force" when dealing with park activities, but to offer advise and educate park patrons in Dog Park Etiquette.

If there is an occurrence, and a complaint is filed with the police, please forward the information you provided and the complaint number to the PDOA so we may follow up. If a formal complaint is not filed with the police, we would still like information on the incident and the individual. We can compile a history on problem dogs and individuals for corrective action at a later time.

If you have any questions and concerns, you may contact a PDOA Board member through the website.



MUSINGS ON DIVERSITY a commentary by Nikki Bloodworth

One of the primary objectives in the PDOA mission is to promote responsible dog ownership. This broad objective brings us in contact with myriad groups whose missions are very different from ours, yet overlap in some area. When working with these diverse groups, many of us will find that we do not agree 100% with their objectives and philosophies. This can be awkward.

For instance, while many fellow animal activists are vegetarian, I am not. I personally do not think it is morally wrong or inherently unhealthy to eat animals. However, I do think it is wrong to treat animals inhumanely in the process of harvesting them for food—especially in the name of greed. So, I choose to support cruelty free food sources. This works for me. However, just because it's right for me, does not make it "right" for someone else. The fact is, I could be wrong!

That said, some folks insist on trying to force their beliefs on everyone else, no matter what. I've probably done this myself and may even be doing it right now. I have encountered people involved in various rescue efforts whose agendas appear to be more about their disillusionment with people than their love of animals, and that too has been me from time to time. Some people will take up a cause simply because they are addicted to conflict rather than really passionate about that cause; however, even those people can make a difference. Everyone is capable of growth and change.



("Musings..." continued)

Twelve Step Recovery programs suggest to their members "take what works for you and leave the rest." I think this is a good rule to apply here as well. I try to remember that it is OK to agree to disagree, and that I don't always have to be right. I've learned to choose my "battles" carefully. Besides, when I am really resisting something, it usually means that I am about to learn something new if I can just make myself shut up and listen. That's easier said than done but I'm still trying!

We are all on our own paths but we in the PODA come together because of our love for dogs and our common desire to make Pensacola a better place for them to thrive. Our power is in our unity and we can have that only when we are open & willing to respect each other's right to be individuals. If we remember to stay focused on common goals and remain tolerant and accepting of our differences, we will succeed in anything we choose to do.

Nikki Bloodworth, PDOA Events Coordinator



CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEWSGRAM ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

...got a brag you would like to share? ...know about an upcoming event that would interest the group? ...have thoughts and/or ideas you would like to share? Just send your items to conniefleming@cox.net & we'll do our best to get them in the NewsGram.

Pensacola Dog Owners Association

<http://www.pensacoladogowners.org/>

Questions, comments and inputs to the NewsGram may be directed to conniefleming@cox.net