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Leash-Free Mississauga

June
2017

Annual Newsletter 2017

by the volunteer Board, LFM

From the President

Take a minute to read our Spring Newsletter, to hear about all the exciting projects and park updates that your volunteer Leash-free Mississauga Board of Directors are doing to enhance the enjoyment of our dogs.

Our big news is the launch of an updated website, which includes a portal just for members. As we build this section you will have access to all information pertaining to LFM, including minutes of meetings, financial reports and list of members (that used to be posted in the parks). In time we hope to offer special coupons/discounts from local businesses and offer other perks. As volunteers, it is a huge project and will take time to roll out.

Your membership is very important. If you have not renewed please do so today at <http://leashfreemississauga.ca/>.

We ask that you spread the word to others you meet in the park, your

neighbours and friends—our membership numbers show the City that we love our leash-free parks and we want more.

We will carefully protect your email address. Our plan is to selectively email members of important park notices such as park closures, the grass cutting schedule and special events as they come up, to keep you informed.

My dog loves L-F and I bet your dog does too. Let's not take the parks for granted, and work with us to send the message to the city that we want to enhance the current parks, and add more parks closer to our homes.

Gayle Laws,
President

Do you have an eye for photography?

To the shutterbugs: professional and amateur photographers—Dog Photos at LFM parks wanted. You may notice

LEASH-FREE



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that our new website still has lots of "stock" photos which we needed in its development. We now encourage all our members to send photos to be uploaded. (Please note that they cannot be watermarked with the photographer name) When emailing your photos to the webmaster@leashfreemississauga.ca be sure to note which park the photos were taken in. Please limit your photos to images of dogs, not people.

Thanks to Purina

Purina has supported LFM for many years with an annual donation of \$5000. That is why you see their sign at the park entrances. This year, they increased their donation to \$7000, of which \$2000 was to support our new website. Thanks to Marianne Mowbray for coordinating this donation with Purina for LFM

Thanks to our Donors

Our new website has created a donor appreciation page, to acknowledge those special people who not only join as members but also supplement support by donating funds. We ensure each person has given us permission to post their name. We hope to see this list grow as the year unfolds. Thank you!

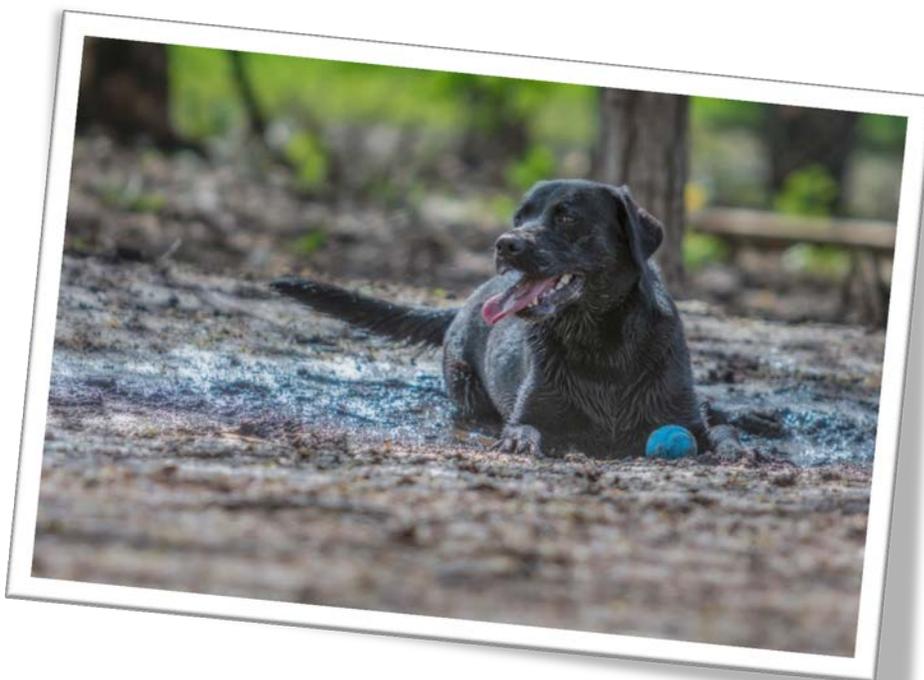
Membership Lists

Over the years LFM posted the list of registered members so members could check and confirm that their membership was processed and also find out when their membership is coming up for renewal. This list will be available on the website, viewable only to members. Renewal will be on the anniversary date that you joined and you will be sent an email to remind you. Note: LFM does not retain any credit card numbers so renewals are not processed automatically. You will need to renew each year and provide payment through PayPal

Business Friends of LFM

The LFM Board chose not to publish a calendar for 2017. The high quality calendars were good fund-raisers for LFM but we found that fewer people use paper calendars, and the demand for them has dropped.

To replace this fund-raiser, and to support local businesses, we have set up a Business Friends of LFM on our website. Revenue from this initiative will be used to identify and support enhancements to the parks and promote the establishment of new parks. By joining, businesses show their support for our leash-free parks and for LFM members can patronise and support these these businesses. For only \$100,



local businesses can place their business card on the LFM website for a year, showing that they support our dogs. In turn we encourage all users to the website to consider patronising them, although we must note that LFM cannot verify all businesses—you must be an informed consumer like you would for any advertisement.

If you have a business (real estate, lawyer, accountant, house or office cleaner, dentist, graphic designer, vets, dog groomer/walker, photographer...you get the picture) please consider supporting LFM and increasing your profile at the same time. The card will remain on the site for one year and you will be reminded should you wish to renew. Simply go to the "donation page" which also works for our payment page, and after you submit the \$100 via PayPal, email your business card to the webmaster@leashfreemississauga.ca We can provide a receipt for your advertisement.

As the number of Business Friends grows, we will eventually organise them into groups so members can easily find and access the service. Please help us spread the word to build this directory of LFM supporters.

Website Sponsorship

We hope that larger businesses will consider sponsoring the website. To show our appreciation their business logo will be on the main page. We have two so far, and room for another four or five. Please contact the president@leashfreemississauga.ca.

Dog Memorial

It's a terribly sad time when our beloved dogs pass on, and grieving is a natural process as a member of the family is no longer here. The Board heard from a heart broken member last year who wanted to honour her dog and asked if LFM could assist.

After discussing various ideas, the Board decided to offer an on-line memorial page on the new LFM website. Members are able to upload a picture of their dog and write a few words. The tribute will be available to everyone to view (members and non-members), and will be there for a year. Memorial donations are accepted on a voluntary basis, with all funds supporting the leash-free parks, places where our dogs find great joy.

Pet Expo Toronto International Convention Centre April 14, 15, 16, 2017:

The 2017 Spring Canadian Pet Expo was held at the Toronto International Centre April 14, 15 and 16, 2017. Leash Free Mississauga was there for all three days. We had a table set up near the front entrance where Leash Free Mississauga volunteers handed out membership forms and applications and a large map display that shows the locations of the Mississauga Leash Free parks. Some of

support your local manufacturers by buying products made within our neighborhood. Several of the dog treat manufacturers at the show said that they would love to join Leash Free Mississauga at our community events and offer free samples and other promotional assistance.

This was a pet friendly event and Cherry, my Great Dane, attended with me. She was tall enough that she had no trouble reaching into the treat samples on the table tops of some of the dog treat exhibitors and choosing which treats

dog parks. Thanks to Irene Hill for organising LFM participation and LFM volunteers who attended: Irene, Karen, Leslie J, Victor, Carol.

Submitted by James Aiken, P.Eng, VP LFM

EVENTS

Below: Eddie, winner of treats at Jack Darling on spring park clean day April 22



Below: Elanor, winner of Pet Valu gift card at Jack Darling on spring park clean day April 22



the people who stopped by were unaware that there are leash free dog parks available. They expressed a keen desire start using the parks and also wanted to volunteer and help out. We had several people from Brampton drop by; they were happy to discover Toto park in the north and perhaps may start patronising that park and join LFM. This was my first time attending the Pet Expo and I was pleasantly surprised and very impressed with the size of it and the number of exhibitors. I am looking forward to going back again next year. There was such a wide range of exhibitors at the Pet Expo, offering goods and services for many different pets, dogs, cats, reptiles and birds and fish too. There was an impressive number of exhibitors offering locally made organic and natural foods and treats, and raw options also locally sourced. I feel that is always nice to

smelled the nicest. I was able to purchase a wide variety of doggie treats and toppers to add to her regular diet at special show pricing. I also purchased a very nice stuffed monkey doggie toy for Cherry. She has a worn out stuffed lamb which at some time soon will fall apart. She is delighted with her monkey but still loves her stuffed lamb.

A member of the Canadian Kennel Club dropped by our booth and was very supportive of Leash Free Mississauga (as it promotes responsible dog ownership) and wanted to initiate further dialogue between our two organisations. Off leash dog parks are a wonderful place for dog owners to allow their dogs to run together, frolic and interact without being restricted by their tethers. They are also a great place to meet like-minded people and develop new friends. Leash Free Mississauga will continue to promote and champion our off-leash

Park Reports

by Leash-Free Mississauga Park Reps

Garnetwood Report

Rep: Kevin Pullis

Garnetwood benefited from a large deposit of wood chips recently. Thanks to the volunteers who assisted in spreading them. The park is definitely in good shape, with less mud than in previous years.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank Mary, who cheerfully cleans up the park on a regular basis. We all benefit from her efforts and commitment to provide a safe clean area for the dogs. Don't hesitate to also clean up along with Mary. When picking up after your dog, and you see other poop, pick it up too.

Looking for a volunteer to take the lead in updating relevant information on the display board, to keep it current and interesting. Great task for a high school student looking for community hours. The only criteria is no advertising. Bring on the creativity to make this board a Must-See when visiting the park.

Etobicoke Valley Report

Rep: Jennifer Reid-Kuess

The Park is looking a whole lot better these days thanks to the efforts of Park Volunteer and LFM member Alex Izzo. Alex was key in organizing the Earth Day clean up event at Etobicoke Valley last month. What a huge success! The amount of garbage that was removed in four hours was tremendous! Many

thanks to all the park users who grabbed a bag and some gloves on their way into the park April 22nd and made a difference.

The park has also benefited from a second round of tree planting this year, combined with the recent grass seed sowing it will contribute to maintaining the pristine natural environment of park, which is what makes EV so special. Please note the signs that were recently installed to clarify when the official leash-free park ends and the general multi-use park begins. Be aware that if your dog is off-leash in the non-designated area, you may be taking a risk of being levied a fine. Be sure to check updates on the newly installed display board. If you wish to help me post notices of interest on the display board (but no advertising), let me know. Please remember to pick up after your dog wherever your dog poops and deposit it in the containers at the entrance. Let's keep our leash-free park clean.

Lakeside Park Report

Rep: Cathy Hunt

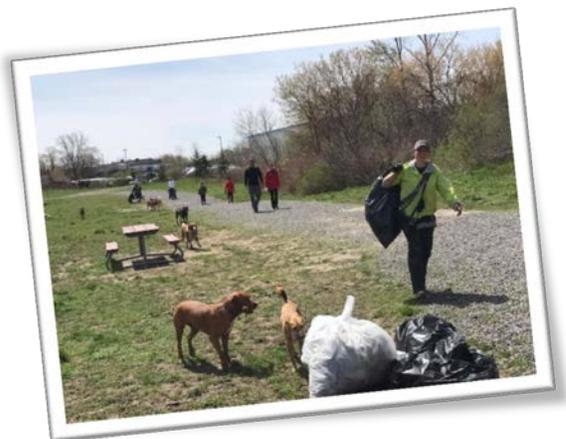
As the weather improves, there is more activity at Lakeside. It is nice to see people staying longer and enjoying the park even more in comparison to the quick visit because it is too cold. I have had many positive comments on the condition of the park.

The delivery of wood-chips by the City has made Lakeside much more enjoyable for all dogs and people. There was a good park spirit with many people helping to spread them. I would like to mention George, Rocky's owner, in particular. His help has been tremendous. Thank you to the City for their deliveries. I would also like to report the success of the "swamp" drainage. Once the ground began to thaw, the rock holes began to do their job. With the tremendous rainfalls we had there were times the



swamp returned however that was completely understandable given how much rainfall we had. Even then, the draining began and I am pleased to inform that even after all the rain earlier in the week, our swamp is not a swamp now. The people who are regular park attendees are very grateful for this and it is so much healthier for all the dogs. As the weather improves the membership looks forward to the water being turned on, as it has been about 3 weeks that the dogs have been looking for water at the tap. They have fur coats and many breeds feel the heat already despite it not being that warm yet. I have not organized a park clean up because there are many members that walk around and every time they see a mess a dog left behind and an owner that was negligent in picking up, they pick it up. Our park is relatively clean. I put up signage frequently reminding people of picking up after their dogs. This should be a given response to the dogs doing their business however sometimes people need a little reminding.

A concern many of us have is as the weather warms up and with so many trees having to be cut there is very little shade for the dogs and their owners. New trees being planted would be wonderful and in time they will be helpful yet we will need a solution for our dogs currently this summer. The City advises that if we want to purchase or obtain donated trees, they may assist

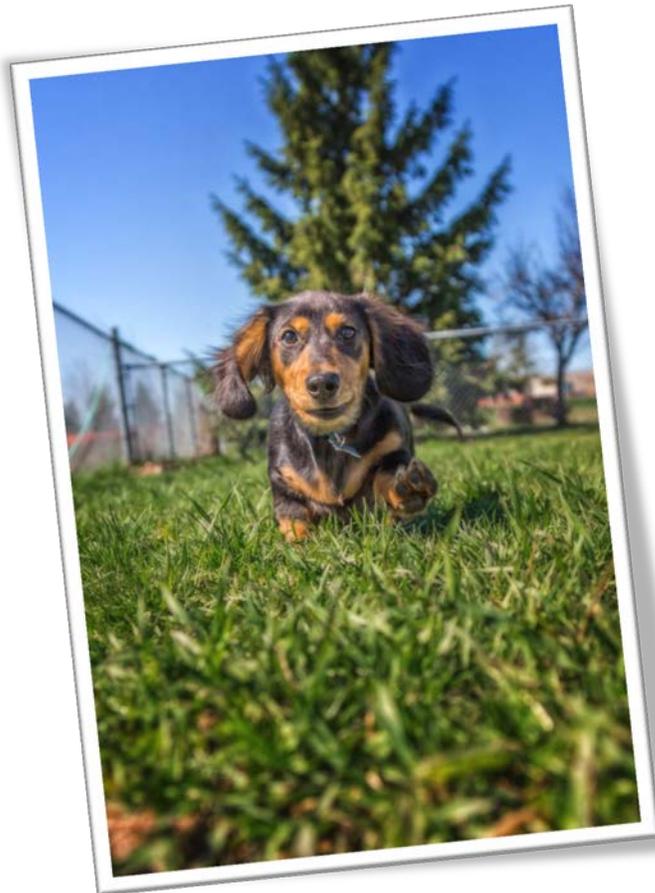


us in planting them. Anyone interested in leading this project can contact me. Lighting is required at Lakeside. Park users wish to use the park before sunrise and after sun set especially in the Spring and Fall, yet it is too dark. Discussions have occurred over the years with the city to install solar lighting. This could be a fund-raising project specific to Lakeside. If a team of volunteers want to pursue this, please contact me so we can make it a reality.

Totoredaca Report

Rep: Kim Miedema

Spring is here and so was the mud, but thanks to one of our park dogs, Khalifa, the mud is all but gone! Khalifa used her enormous paws and impressive digging prowess to help clear the blockages in the park's drainage ditch. We would like to thank park users Josh and Punit for their help as well! Toto Park would like to send a huge thank you to Martin for all the hard work he does around and for the park! Martin has been around since the very beginning when the park was over on Battleford Rd, and he has been an enormous help getting things done during the day when our Rep is



unavailable!

Sadly Toto Park lost two of our dogs over the winter, Data Seven, and Finnegan will be missed by all of us at the park.

Quenippenon (Q-Park) Report

Park rep: Elaine Theriault

I was appointed to the Board pending a formal park election, as the former park rep Al Barnett resigned after serving almost two years. Thank you to Al for all the contributions you made to Q park, which was experiencing neglect. Regular delivery and spreading of wood chips made the park much less muddy.

I am pleased to advise that the City will be replacing the east old wire fencing along the parking lot, which will include a service gate to make future delivery of wood chips much easier to receive and spread.

The poor shape of the fencing was brought to the City's attention last summer, and we are very pleased that they have not only offered to make arrangements to replace the fence but to pay for it as well. The dogs will be safe, and the owners assured that the dogs, especially small dogs, will stay within the park boundary. With this new fence, we may even benefit in having more dogs visit the park.

I am looking for volunteers to assist me in updating messages on the display board

Parkway Belt

Park rep: Carol Mitchell

Another successful park clean up was done on April 22- coinciding with Earth Day. Thanks to everyone who participated. We had terrific weather which definitely helps making the event



a success. We are excited to meet lots of new puppies in the park this Spring and encourage their new parents to purchase a Mississauga Leash Free membership.

LFM is working with the City to have a wind shelter set up at the park. We know how cold it can be with the wind circulating at the top of the hill. Using a refurbished bus stop shelter, this will protect us from the wind and rain while our dogs continue to enjoy the park. It is hoped this will be set up this summer (despite previous delays).

Donations to help cover the cost of this wind shelter and to show your support of this initiative can be made via the donation page on the LFM website, and note Parkway Belt Park. LFM has committed about \$5000 for this shelter and it is hoped some of this cost can be covered by grateful Parkway Belt park users. Thank you in advance for your support.

Jack Darling Main Report

Park rep: Leslie Peres

The annual Easter Egg Hunt was held on Good Friday. With terrific weather that was sunny and warm, the turnout was phenomenal. Over \$300 was raised by

donations and raffles, which goes towards Jack Darling LF park. Kids love looking for the plastic Easter eggs and turning them in for a treat for their dog. Thanks to Karen Forest for organizing and Global Pet Foods in Clarkson who contributed staff to help out and many items to hand out.

A successful park clean up day was held April 22. Big thank you to the many volunteers who came out to clean up the park after the long winter. Pet Valu in Clarkson graciously donated two \$25 gift certificates to offer acknowledgement to those who volunteered. Thank you Tim Alder. Also thanks to Global Pet Foods and Barkfurjoy. For students who want to complete community hours, contact Leslie, as there are many opportunities to volunteer at JD. Stay tuned for a BBQ being held in the parking lot this summer. The one held two years ago was widely successful. Contact Karen Forest via Treasurer@leashfreemississauga.ca if you are able to volunteer or donate items for the BBQ.

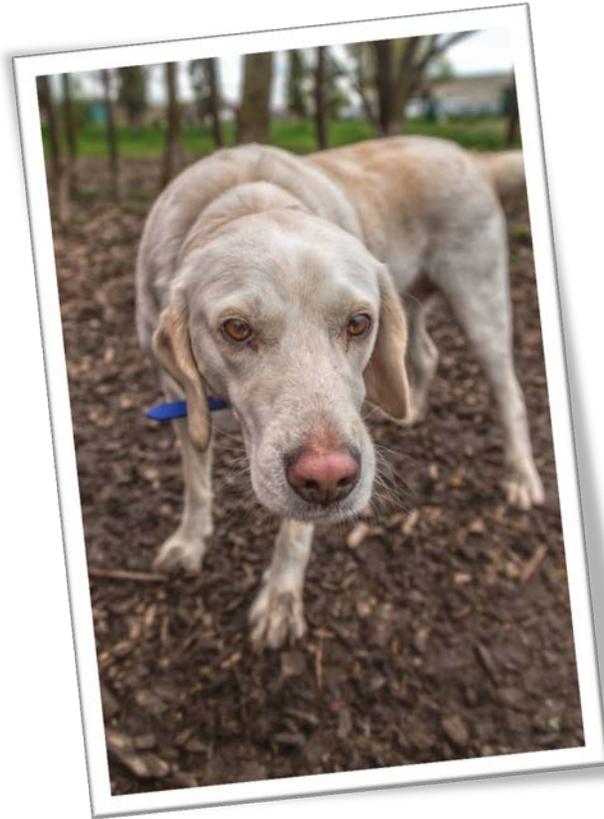
Jack Darling Small Dog Report

Park lead: Judy Midgley

In response to numerous inquiries from small dog owners whose dogs are not comfortable in the larger parks, LFM created a designated area at Jack Darling in June 2016.

Now that the nicer weather is here the park is very busy as many small dogs do not enjoy the snow and winter conditions. I think one of the greatest benefits of the park is the sense of community. People are recognizing one another and calling the dogs by name. Wherever you look the owners are in groups talking or walking around. The dogs are happy and the comments are mostly about how thankful they are to have such a safe, clean and friendly place to take their small dogs.

LFM paid several thousand dollars for the fencing of this park from its general revenue, to benefit the small dogs. It would be appreciated if those who use this small dog area and value it would consider making a donation to LFM via the website and contribute towards the reimbursement of this fencing cost. Go



to the donation page at www.leashfreemississauga.ca and note Jack Darling. Thank you in advance for your support and contributions.

Volunteers needed to make LFM a vibrant community for dogs and dog owners

We have three vacant Board positions: Membership and Communications, Fund-raising and Events and Web-master/IT. Each position is critical to our success and it would be fantastic if we had a group of volunteers (ideally one from each park) to support these roles. Previous incumbents found the tasks too much for one person.



Contact your park rep to see how you can help out. Educational events in the parks would help inform park users of appropriate dog behaviour, dog health care and appropriate behaviour for children in the park.

We need volunteers to assist with our website and in particular communications. We want to build on the website to make it current and informative, but this takes time and energy. If you have a talent for this please contact the president at president@leashfreemississauga.ca.

If everyone who values the parks steps forward to contribute, we can accomplish a lot together.

Most important: If you have not renewed your membership please do so, and encourage those who meet in the parks to do the same.

Board Meetings: Held the first Wednesday of every month (but not July and August). Mississauga Valley Community Centre, 7 to 9 PM, Program Room 2. All welcome.

How can you help?

Can I donate to my park?

Absolutely! Donations are accepted via the website and you can identify which park you wish your donation to be targeted.

How can I volunteer?

The parks are run by volunteers and there are many ways to volunteer to support the parks. You can assist by helping the park representative—managing the communications of the display boards, administrating the Facebook pages to keep the information current and relevant, arranging and coordinating park clean-ups, spreading mulch. Other tasks to assist the Board include fundraising, working with corporate sponsors, writing a newsletter, assisting with the website, and spreading the word to increase membership. There are many possibilities so please contact your park rep via the email address on the website or Board members with your ideas.

Board Meetings

All members are welcome to attend the monthly Board meetings, held the first Wednesday each month (except July and August) at the Mississauga Valley Community Centre, from 7 to 9pm, Program Room 2, main floor (past the reception desk on the way to the gym area).

POOP AND SCOOP!

Please ensure you are always picking up after your dog. We all have to work together to ensure that the parks remain vibrant and clean. Please be a responsible dog owner and pick up after your dog.

