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Leash-Free Mississauga

October
2017

Fall Newsletter 2017

by the volunteer Board, LFM

NOTICE: ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday November 8, 2017

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Mississauga Valley Community Centre
Program Room 2

All dog owners are welcome to attend the AGM—only members can vote however. Come hear about dog poop being turned into energy, after the LFM Annual General Meeting.

You know your dog has ample energy: Well, so does its poop!!

You may recall reading in April 2017 that the City of Waterloo announced a pilot program that will turn dog waste into energy, using a process called anaerobic digestion. This happens when organic waste breaks down in an environment without oxygen.

In simple language, the bags of **dog poop** are stored in an underground container for 10 to 14 days, vacuumed out and sent to a

processing plant, where it is combined with other organic waste. Through anaerobic digestion, it will create a biogas, which can then be burned for heat and energy. This energy can be directed to the electrical grid and provide power to homes and businesses. An exciting venture for sure.

The LFM Board was pleased to welcome Christopher Pyke - Supervisor of Corporate Waste Diversion Planning at the City of Mississauga at the September Board meeting. He advised that currently all dog poop (and you can imagine there is a lot of it with approximately 100,000 dogs in Mississauga) goes into landfill and cannot be recycled.

As part of the City's goal to divert 75% of waste from landfill sites, the city is launching the Dog Waste Capture Initiative, with possibly using one or two leash-free parks as a site for the pilot project. Providing the right equipment is only one part of a much-needed solution. The success of capturing dog poop and turning it into energy requires community leadership and your support.

Learn more about this state of the art technology and recycling our dogs' poop by attending the LFM Annual General Meeting on Wednesday November 8, 2017. Chris

LEASH-FREE



MISSISSAUGA

Pyke will provide a presentation about this initiative and is looking forward to hearing ideas from the leash-free dog community.

New webmaster

The LFM Board is pleased to announce that Krista Yeo has volunteered to be the Webmaster. In July 2016, LFM embarked on an ambitious project to upgrade the WordPress website to offer increased functionality. Like many IT projects, it encountered unforeseen challenges which we are still working on. We look forward to benefiting from Krista's expertise. Many thanks to Anna Farrugia Pace who was a

champion of the new site and spent countless hours to get it launched in November 2016 and to work out many of the bugs.

This site offers the feature of automatic notices for membership renewal, which saves countless volunteer hours. It has a new pet memorial section which still needs to be fleshed out and an opportunity for local businesses to promote their business to the supportive LFM community. The vision is to provide special services to members—such as information and coupons to dog services.

The Importance of Membership

LFM counts on membership and donations to maintain the seven leash-free parks and to plan for enhancements. Recent enhancements were the small dog park area at Jack Darling and the much-anticipated wind shelter at Parkway Belt. LFM paid for 100% of those enhancements and has a wish list for other leash-free parks.

One of the big benefits of the new website is automatic notices to remind members to renew. Your support of Leash-free Mississauga is very much appreciated by the park representatives who spend countless hours to make the experience for your dog enjoyable and safe.

When the new website was launched, there were issues in signing up for membership on line and some of you were quite frustrated. Those problems have been fixed so if you have not registered on line, please try again. By providing your email we can communicate important information to you. We do not in any circumstance share your email with third parties.

If you are not comfortable in using PayPal for payment (even though it is secure), we still accept paper memberships, which are available in the parks and also on the website. Our postal mail box is checked regularly.

What do the membership numbers say to the City of Mississauga?

The city estimates there are 100,000 dogs. There are 7 leash free parks but with the increased population (people and dogs) the need for more parks is critical. Many of us should not have to drive 15 to 20 minutes to attend a dog park. With strong membership numbers, we collectively are telling the city that we value these parks, and that we want more of them. Hence your membership is critically important to not only support LFM

but to send a message that our dogs value the leash-free parks.

Calling for photos for the website

Be sure to submit your photos to the LFM webmaster to post on the website. Please try not to include people in your photos—just the dogs having fun at the leash-free parks.

Board Members Needed

Each leash-free park is fortunate to have a dedicated volunteer to represent the concerns and issues to the Board and the City of Mississauga.

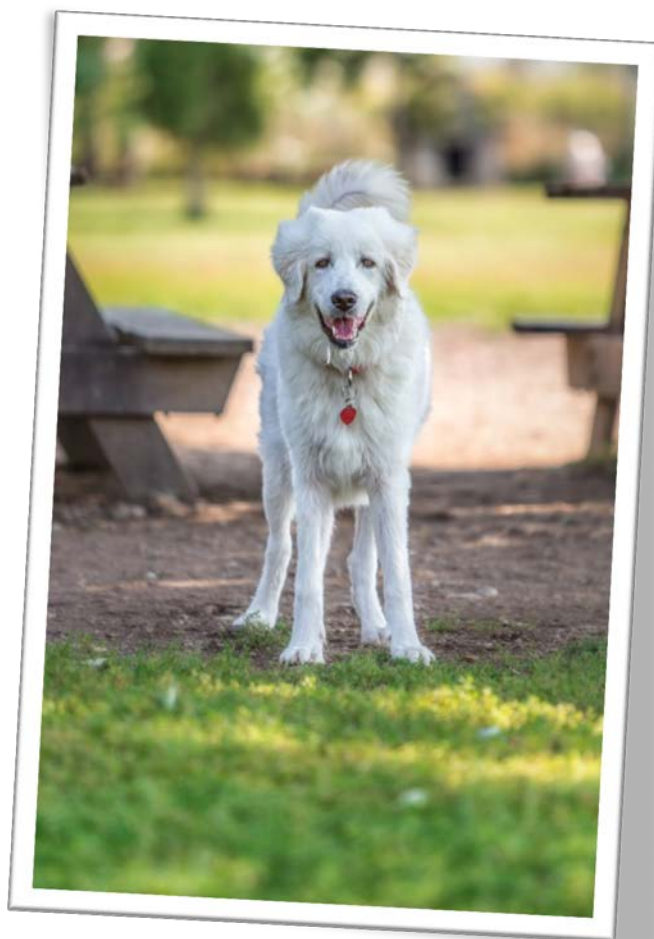
However, seven vacancies are available for the 2018 Board:

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer (although the incumbent is interested in running again)
Director of Membership/Communication
Director Fundraising/Events
Director IT and Website

NOTE: The future of LFM's viability will be in question without the emergence of dedicated volunteers to take on these roles. LFM now has a Policy and Procedure Manual to assist new volunteers in knowing what is needed for each position. To be successful, each Board member and Park Rep benefits from local volunteers. We are a non-profit corporation providing safe and enjoyable parks for our dogs. Your dog loves the park, please consider volunteering.

USE CAUTION WHEN USING PARKS IN THE WINTER

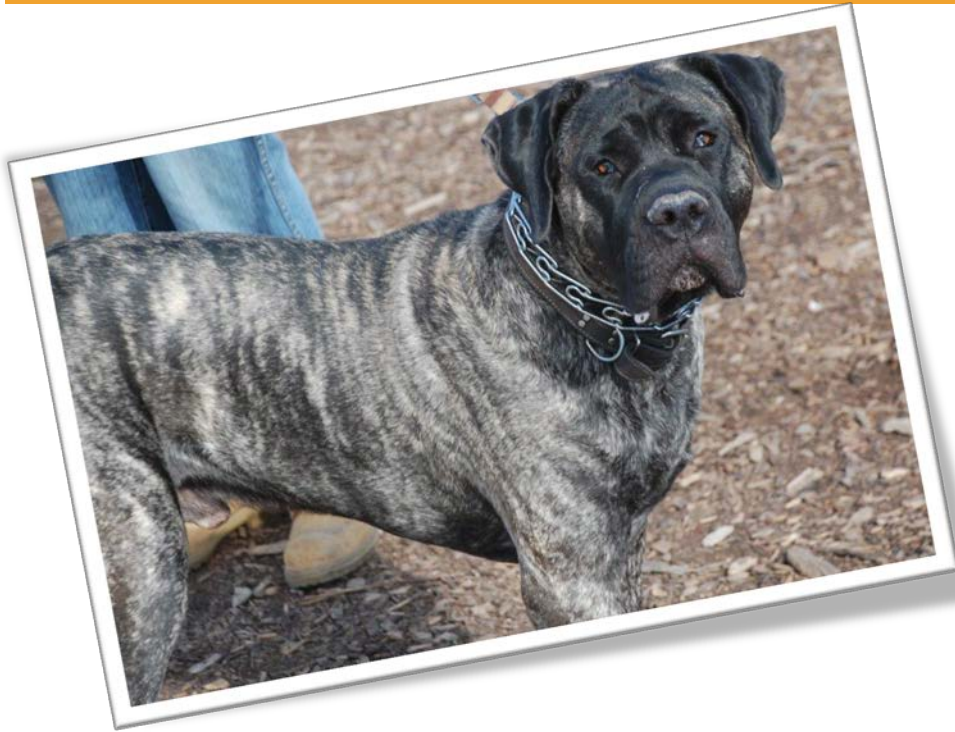
Winter weather brings ice and slippery conditions. Use caution when entering the parks over the winter months. If in doubt, use your good judgment and do not enter. And while you are in the park, be sure to be 100% alert, especially with playful dogs running around. Remember: you enter these parks at your own risk.



New Lakeside Park Representation: Alex

Hello fellow dog lovers! My name is Alex, I am new to this area of Mississauga and have recently become the new LFM rep for Lakeside Park. I am thrilled to be a part of a group that helps ensure our four legged friends have access to areas where they can run and play leash free! I am excited to spend more time at Lakeside with all of you and welcome you to reach out to me with any comments, questions or concerns about the park.

The first project I would like to take on is to get us some lighting throughout the park for safer after-dark play. With the advance of solar technology, and hearing from many park users about the desire to visit the park before sunrise and after sunset, I hope to pursue this project with the City, with your support. I will put forward efforts towards park improvements with the help of Cathy, former park rep and our entire LFM Board.



Park Reports

by Leash-Free Mississauga Park Reps

Garnetwood Report

It has certainly been an exciting year at Garnetwood Park. We have had at least six UFO sightings, we had a visitation from the ghosts of Elvis and his poodle named "Champagne". She was a lot of fun and got into a good wrestle with Olly and Besla. Harry Potter brought Hagrid's 3 headed dog fluffy to the park. Rory, Layla, and Cricket became good friends with him. They were scared at first, but found themselves rolling in the enchanted Forrest that we added in the spring at Garnetwood.

In all seriousness though, 2017 really was the year of the puppy! There were many new additions brought to the park. We regulars have really been enjoying all the new puppies at the park. The park remains in good repair. We have not added any new woodchips since the spring. We are looking forward to a mild winter we hope but reserve the snow pants, thermal boots and gloves and Canadian down filled jacket on hand in case we don't get the mild winter.

Etobicoke Valley Report

With its natural setting, this is still a gem in the big city. We have noted that the entrance would benefit with a better

fencing—to allow for a separate entrance and exit, like it is at other leash-free parks. We have noted this and will work with the city to improve the entrance. Continue to be diligent that there are areas of this park which are not fenced in so you need to keep an eye on your dog.

Homage to Bryan: Bryan was a very lovely park member who unfortunately passed away well before his prime. Bryan was always at the park to greet visitors with a big warm smile and friendly hellos. He was so happy to see and greet people and chat. He loved to watch the dogs play. His presence is missed although every time we look at that tree beside where he sat, we will think of Bryan and Bandit. Many EV park users hosted a celebration of his life, and his love of the EV

leash-free park. May his memory live on in the hearts of those who knew him.

Lakeside Park Report

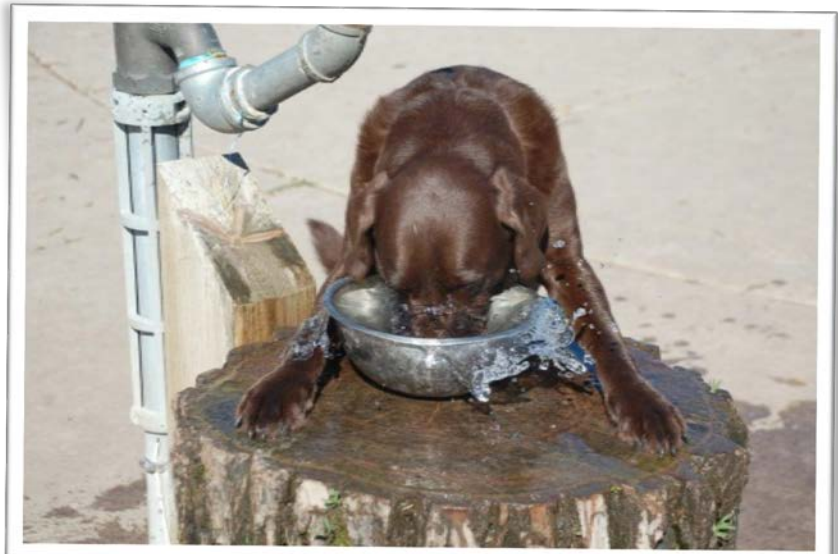
Coordinated by Leash-free Park rep Cathy Hunt, volunteers came together to plant 100 trees in 2 1/4 hours on Saturday September 16. The group was small but mighty, with able assistance from the city. The trees were donated by the One Million Trees Initiative. The trees were planted outside the Lakeside Leash-free Park but in time, will provide shade to the perimeter. In appreciation for this project, the City has presented Lakeside with a certificate thanking the volunteers for planting the trees.

Unfortunately, many of the trees within the park were cut down last year due to the Ash Tree disease. It would be a huge benefit to the park to have trees planted in the park to provide shade from the sun and some protection from the wind off the lake. There are concerns that the trees (which would have to be donated) may not survive the dogs unless they are well protected with fencing. If Lakeside park users really want trees, this can be a project in Spring 2018.

Totoredaca Report

The City of Mississauga received a request for a memorial bench to be placed in the woodlot area of Totoredaca Leash-Free. The bench is in memory of the former property owner. The bench will be installed sometime in the fall of 2017. The site of the bench is marked with XB in pink fluorescent paint, which is where the homestead once stood.

Kim, the Toto representative, supported this idea of the bench. It is always important to



acknowledge our local history.

An election for a Park Representative will be held on Saturday November 4, 2017. Only members from Toto park can vote. Please see display boards and monitor Toto FB page for more information.

Quenippenon (Q-Park) Report

Park users are enjoying the new improved fencing. The park rep Elaine is arranging to have more wood chips delivered to prepare the park for the winter freeze/thaw/mud cycle. Volunteers are always welcome—to post materials on the display board and to spread the wood chips when they arrive. Be sure to connect with Elaine if you have ideas so enhance this park.

Parkway Belt

Parkway Belt Leash-Free is a great place for your dogs to run and play. The park has lots of regular members who care about the dogs and the condition of the well-kept park. Being on top of a hill with few trees for protection from the sun, rain and strong winds, LFM identified that a wind shelter would be a huge benefit to the park users. Working with the City of Mississauga over the past two years, we are pleased to say the cement pad was laid Oct 4 and the actual plexi-glass shelter will be installed by the end of October. The cost of over \$6000 is being paid by Leash-free Mississauga. This is deemed to be a pilot project and if it is successful, it can be used as a model for other parks. Check it out! The directions to this park are on the LFM website.

Jack Darling Report

The Small Dog Park, located adjacent to the North Parking lot, is wildly popular with small dogs. Although no formal definition of what constitute a small dog, park users are requested to honor the spirit of the park and use common sense. Puppies are welcome but once they start to grow, introducing them to other dogs in the main park is encouraged.

Big thanks to the many volunteers who have spread wood chips and re-arranged some stones, to minimize the occurrence of mud. Picnic tables have been requested and hopefully will be available in the near future.

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.



VISIT A PARK NEAR YOU TODAY

