

THE WEIRS TIMES



"How kind'st thou might the King's heart
Obtain, as the Lake, the laughing stream,
How sweet as ever the lover's kiss
Please when the gods were still as fountains"
—Lady of the Lake

AND TOURISTS GAZETTE

"These newspapers that abounded for the U.S.A.
Have fled away like summer fumes
Before the Autumn gales
But the ones we found on your hills
Were happy as the stars" —the poetess

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COMPLIMENTARY



Members of the Happy Tails Dog Park of the Lakes Region on the land they hope to turn into the Lakes Region's first dog park. (L to R) Lisa Clutters, President of Happy Tails; Tom Marks; Marissa Thureson, Vice-President; Debbie Villani; Annie Boissoneau and Michelle Dupont. Dogs (L to R) Collyn, Henry, Keegan, Montana and Diamond.

BRENDAN SMITH PHOTO

“Making Wine In The Lakes Region”

Saturday, Sept. 18th at The Lake Winnepesaukee Museum

On Saturday, September 18th, the Lake Winnepesaukee Historical Society will present a program on wine making in the Lakes Region.

Peter and Jane Ellis of Stone Gate Vineyards in Gilford will be speaking about their experiences and challenges growing grapes in the area. Their discussion will include wine-making from cold climate varieties of grapes and they will also tell of new wineries in the making that will be making their debuts in the next year and some to follow soon after.

A question and answer period will follow and refreshments will be served. This program will start at 11am and be held at the Historical Society's Museum on Rte 3 in the Weirs next to Funspot.

For more information call 366-5950 or visit www.lakewinnepesaukeemuseum.org.

AFTER TWO YEARS DOG PARK CLOSE TO BECOMING REALITY

by **Brendan Smith**
Weirs Times Editor

It's been a little over two years since Lisa Clutter and William Stanley of Belmont, started Happy Tails Dog Park of Belmont. Their purpose - to have an off-leash recreational area for dogs in the town. Since then they have

been tireless in their efforts to bring this dream to fruition.

Their first attempts at getting the town to allocate a one-acre parcel of land, to be cleared and maintained by the organization which was now a registered non-profit, met with some expected resistance. The town was

reluctant to set a precedent as far as land use, and they were concerned with some liability issues as well.

The Happy Tails Group was persistent and continued to present their point to the Board of Selectmen in the town with in-depth PowerPoint presentations until they were told that if

they could find a suitable piece of land, which they wouldn't mind taking off the tax rolls, they would put it before a town vote. A parcel of land was designated but rejected by the selectmen.

Clutter and Stanley then approached the state about using land in the See **PARK** on 10



PARK from 1

Sanborn State Forest in Gilmanton and were once again refused.

"I never take 'no' for an answer," Lisa Clutter was quoted after another in a long line of rejections for her dream.

Today, it seems that Lisa's dream as well as the dream of others who have become involved in the

cause of the group, now known as "Happy Tails Dog Park of The Lakes Region," may soon become a reality as a parcel of private land on Rte 106 in Belmont has been offered as the spot for the dog park. They will go before the Belmont selectman once again on September 22nd to apply for a special exception approval on land

use. If all goes well, Belmont will have a dog park that will be unique in this area of the state.

"I'd like to see this be a functional park that every other park in the state aspires to be," said Lisa. "What we are trying to do is build a park for people first and foremost. People who are looking for a safe place to take their dogs to

run and play off-leash."

The next step upon acquiring the property under a monthly lease will be acquiring enough funds to get started.

There are necessary costs such as insurance and the cost of services such as port-a-potties and pooper-scoopers. One of the major expenses would be a security system and a swipe card entry.

"We will need about five-thousand dollars to get started," said Lisa.

The land in question is undeveloped and will need a lot of work including clearing and leveling until it would be suitable as a dog park. The Happy Tail group is hoping to be able, once the land has been approved for use, to recruit more members and volunteers to help with the work that will need to be done.

"Realistically, it will take about a year from approval until the park would be open for use," said Lisa.

Even though most of the support for the park comes from dog owners in Belmont, Laconia and Gilford, the park would be of use to anyone and everyone throughout the state. A registration form will be filled out and certain rules and regulations would be put into effect and enforced in order to keep the

park a safe zone for all dogs and their owners.

"There are other dog parks in other parts of the state," says Lisa. "They are more than just a place to exercise your dogs, they are also community builders. How often in the world today do you not even know your own neighbor?"

The dog park would be three-seasonal and there would be no mandatory fee to use it. The park will be privately funded and donations will gladly be accepted.

The Happy Tails Dog Park of The Lakes Region is always looking for new member and volunteers as well.

"There are many areas of volunteering we need help with," said Lisa. "Everything from helping to clear the land to stuffing envelopes and everything in between."

The Happy Tails group will also be holding fundraising events to help raise that initial five-thousand dollars. On Saturday, September 18th, a pet CPR and first-aid class fundraiser will be held at the Opechee in Lakeport. The event goes from 9am-4pm. The cost of the CPR class is \$65 and a dental care for pets class will cost \$20. Happy Tails was also at

Canterbury Shaker Village Sunday, September 12th with their "Wags To Riches" fundraiser.

Lisa Clutters is, of course, a dog owner. She looks forward to spending the afternoon with her husband and their yellow lab, Collyn, at the new park. Lisa serves as the President of Happy Tails as well as a board member for Cause For Paws NH and the Cinderella Project of New Hampshire. She is also an alumni of the Leadership Lakes Region class of 2009, has been nominated for the 2009 Lakes Region Community Leadership Award and the 2009 Concord Young Professional of the Year.

It's apparent in talking with Lisa that nothing will stand in the way of her dream.

"We plan on a big celebration once the dog park is officially open," said Lisa. "Everyone will be invited."

Any and all dog owners who would like to become part of, learn more about or donate to Happy Tails Dog Park of the Lakes Region can visit their website at www.happytailsdog-parknh.org visit them on Facebook or contact them at belmontdogpark@yahoo.com.