

The DogChannel Newswire (12-20-08)

Dog park concept gets OK in Pacifica, Calif.; biophysics professor finds niche in training dogs; and other news.

Posted: December 20, 2008, 5 a.m. EST

Biophysics Professor Finds Niche in Training Dogs

Virginia Huxley has three "children": Ailsa, 16 months and 37.9 pounds; Jura, 5 years old and 51.4 pounds; and Baker, 7 years old and 40 pounds. Huxley lets them out to play in the same order every day when she gets home from work. Nevermind that the "children" are English Springer Spaniels. As in any family with a working parent, they often want to be the center of attention. Huxley's job in biophysics is plenty demanding. But over the years, she has managed to build in time for her other passion: dogs, the Columbia Missourian reports.

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Let the Dogs Out: City Council OKs Dog Park Concept

The Pacifica City Council unanimously approved the concept of a dog park on the east side of Pacifica Center for the Arts (Sanchez Art Center). During its meeting Dec. 8, the council members heard from members of Pacifica Organization of Canine Helpers (POOCH) and from neighbors of the proposed location. The POOCH members spoke in favor of a dog park and extolled its social, behavioral and health benefits for both canines and humans. The arts center neighbors brought up issues about noise, smell, aggravation and potential environmental problems, the Pacifica (Calif.) Tribune reports.

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Paws to Pet Program Celebrates One-Year Anniversary

The Paws to Pet program began one year ago at Hendricks Regional Health with one dog and has grown to include 10 dogs. The dogs are a variety of breeds and sizes but all have been through extensive behavior training and are certified by Therapy Dogs International. The dogs and their owner/handlers bring joy to patients who have a physician order for a therapy dog visit. In between patient visits the dogs bring smiles to the faces of hospital staff and visitors, the Indianapolis Star reports.

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Five Dogs Die, 8 Rescued in Illinois Pet-Grooming Store Fire

Eight dogs and a few birds were rescued from a fire that killed four puppies and their mother early Thursday at a pet-grooming store in Romeoville, Ill.. A passerby who was visiting a nearby convenience store noticed smoke coming from the back of Suzette's Dog Grooming and called 911 at midnight, according to Romeoville Fire Battalion Chief Robert Michalec, the Southtown Star (Ill.) reports.

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Dogs, Too, Losing Homes to Recession

Count two barking dogs - a Jack Russell Terrier named Shadow and a Rat Terrier named Precious - among the not-so-quiet victims of the recession. After six years of living together in a Dorchester apartment, they were surrendered to the Animal Rescue League of Boston after the woman who owned them lost her home to foreclosure. Now they share a chain-link kennel at the league's South End shelter. In animal shelters around the area, the story is the same. With the worsening economy comes an increase in pets abandoned or surrendered by owners no longer able to care for them, the Boston Globe reports.

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