

PAWPRINTS

Special Interest Articles:

- Chocolate and dogs are not a good mix!
- Our first annual Halloween Canine Costume Parade
- Free dog training seminar

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Dog Owners Gathering Society of Vernon (D.O.G.S. of Vernon)
www.dogsofvernon.com

Welcome Dog Lovers

Dear Dog Lovers,

Welcome to our first edition of our newsletter.

The Dog Owners Gathering Society of Vernon (D.O.G.S. of Vernon) is a volunteer community group dedicated to establishing and maintaining an off leash dog park in Vernon Township NJ at no cost to the tax payers.

Our Goal is:

1. To establish and maintain a leash-free recreation area ("Dog Park") within Vernon Township
2. To promote responsible dog guardianship within the community
3. To protect our resources on public lands

4. To advocate responsible dog management rules and policies
5. To act as a liaison between local government and dog guardians; and
6. To be a resource in dog related matters.

This group has been organized to encourage humane treatment of animals in an effort to prevent animal cruelty.

We'd like to take this opportunity to extend another thank you to everyone who has already supported the organization, including our members, volunteers of the Vernon Veterinary Clinic, the Vernon Fire Department, Paw Purree, and the Vernon Animal Welfare League.

We created this Newsletter to keep our members and other interested parties informed of upcoming events, fundraisers, park progress and useful training and care tips.

We hope you enjoy the articles and will support us in our efforts.

If you would like further information on our organization, please visit our website at

www.dogsofvernon.org

Sincerely,

Eliza Amthor

President

First Annual Halloween Canine Costume Parade



*Beware of all the ghosts
and goblins at our first
annual Halloween
Canine Costume
Parade.*

Does your dog dream of being a super hero, or a fairy Princess? Or perhaps he or she is more a little devil or witch? Whatever it may be now, is the chance to show off their true personality. Come join us for a fun filled day of costumes, parades, contests, prizes, food and fun at our first annual Halloween Canine Costume Parade.

Wantage Dog Park and DOGS of Vernon will be holding this event, sponsored by the Wantage Township Recreation Committee, on Sunday October 21st (rain date 10/28) at Woodbourne Park in Wantage Township. Registration begins at 1PM, activities start at 2PM.

There'll be plenty of vendor's showing their wares and services including Paw Puree, Howdie's Poop Scoopers, Mary Kay Cosmetics, My Gourmet Celebrations-events and party planners, Linda O – dog wear and Pet sitters Lisa Watkins and Crystal Howey.

Prizes, donated by local businesses, will be awarded for the most original costume. Also for the funniest, the scariest, senior dog category, most comical, best couple, best homemade, best group, best family group and peoples' choice. Be sure to stop by the DOGS of Vernon and the Wanaque Dog Park tables. DOGS of Vernon will be selling \$5.00 raffle tickets to win an oil portrait of your dog!

Pre-registration is encouraged. The cost is \$15.00 per dog, \$25.00 for 2 dogs and \$30 for 3 dogs.

Send your registration to:
DOGS of Vernon
PO Box 21
Vernon, NJ 07462
Pre-registration forms can be downloaded from our Website at www.dogsofvernon.org. Please make checks payable to DOGS of Vernon.

Vendors welcome! For more information call Barb at 201-230-3973 or Pat at 973-764-3165



Tails of Progress

Establishing an off leash dog park is huge endeavor. This is especially true when you are trying to do all this at no cost to the Vernon tax payers!

Our first meeting was held in January of 2007 and we've come a long way in 10 months. We realized right away that we could do very little without establishing our group as a non-profit organization. We've been working toward obtaining that status ever since.

First we needed to form a Board of Directors. Next we had to draft a mission statement and By-Laws. Once they were approved by the membership, we filed for our Federal Tax ID number.

Next came the hard part...filling out the tedious 501C3 application. Yuk! Before we went too far we realized we also needed a 3 year budget and we had to file our Articles of Incorporation. WHEW! The AOI's were mailed in September and we expect that process to take about 4 weeks.

Once we are officially incorporated we will file for non-profit status. Thanks very, very much to the efforts of Mary Bradley, and all the hours she spent pouring over the 501C3 application.

Our goal was to be an established non-profit organization by January, 2008, but we recently heard that there are so many 501C3 applications that the State government is backlogged several months on approving non-profit applications.

Once we have our non-profit status we can begin in earnest. The first step will be to meet with town officials to discuss possible locations.

After we have a site selected, we'll need to design the layout of the park, put up fencing, a parking lot, benches, signs, and more. It sounds overwhelming but we understand that the average dog park takes 2 to 3 years from conception to fruition. We're dedicated to our cause and we're willing to put in the time and effort it will take to see

an Off Leash Dog Park in Vernon Township.

If you've ever taken your dog to the Wantage Dog Park, you understand why. It's so nice to see so many dog lovers enjoying the great outdoors with their best friend. At the dog park you get to meet new people with similar interests. Everyone knows everyone else by their dog(s). It's even a great spot for seniors to take their dogs for much needed exercise.

Everyone knows, a well socialized and exercised dog is a good dog. But most of all, the dogs just love it. Wouldn't it be great to have a park like that so close by that you could bring your dog every day?

If you agree with our goals and are interested in becoming a member, donating time, talent or just want to make a contribution to the cause, please come to one of our meetings, send a donation or e-mail us at info@dogsofvernon.org



We still have lots of work to do!

Chocolate Toxicity in Dogs

(A Caution for the Holiday Season)

By Michael Ramieri, DVM

“Symptoms of chocolate toxicity are variable and depend on the amount and type of chocolate ingested.”

The leaves are turning colors and there is a distinct nip to the autumn air. Orange and black, ghosts and witches, ghouls and skeletons all adorn our homes and neighborhoods. That's right, it's October and Halloween is right around the corner. We all know that one of the best parts of Halloween and the other coming holidays is the very conspicuous presence of lots of candy in our homes. When it comes to pet safety, the most important of these sweet treats is chocolate. Therefore, let us take a look at the causes, symptoms, and toxic effects of chocolate ingestion in our canine companions.

Chocolate is a great tasting food made from the beans of the cacao tree (*Theobroma cacao*). The particular substance in chocolate that is responsible for its toxicity is a chemical called theobromine.

Theobromine is a bitter tasting alkaloid that is related to caffeine and theophylline (methylxanthines). As such, its effects are similar

to those of caffeine. Dogs are much less efficient at metabolizing and excreting theobromine than humans are. That is why people do not develop toxicity like dogs do.

The toxicity of different types of chocolate varies based on the amount of theobromine (and to a lesser extent caffeine) in the mixture.

Unsweetened “baker’s” chocolate contains the largest amount of theobromine per weight. According to the Merck Veterinary Manual, baker’s chocolate contains 390-450 mg theobromine per ounce while milk chocolate (most common in candy bars) only contains 44-60 mg theobromine per ounce. Semi-sweet chocolate lies in between at about 150-200 mg theobromine per ounce.

The next obvious question is, “well Doc, how much chocolate is dangerous to my dog?” Very good question. The toxic dose of theobromine is 100-200 mg/kg body weight but problems may be seen

even at much lower doses. This means that the toxic level of chocolate is:

One ounce per nine pounds of body weight for Baker’s chocolate

One ounce per three pounds of body weight for Semi-sweet chocolate

One ounce per one pound of body weight for Milk chocolate.

Again, symptoms may occur at lesser doses depending on your dog’s particular sensitivity to chocolate. Always consult with your veterinarian after ANY known chocolate ingestion just to be on the safe side.

Symptoms of chocolate toxicity are variable and depend on the amount and type of chocolate ingested. Signs include:

*Hyperexcitability, nervousness, irritability, restlessness

*Tachycardia (increased heart rate)

(continued on page 5)

Dogs are much less efficient at metabolizing and excreting theobromine than humans are.

| Chocolate Toxicity in Dogs *continued*

- *Vomiting
- *Diarrhea
- *Increased thirst and urination
- *Muscle tremors/seizures
- *Coma
- *Death (due to cardiac arrhythmias)

There is no “antidote” for chocolate toxicity and the half-life of theobromine in the canine is 17.5 hours (meaning half of the absorbed amount will be eliminated in 17.5 hours, then half of the remaining quantity in another 17.5 hours and so on). This is why it is very important to begin treatment as soon as possible. Treatment will begin by inducing vomiting if the ingestion was within 1-2 hours. After 4 hours, most or all of the

chocolate will have moved lower down the digestive tract.

Therefore, at this point, activated charcoal will likely be given in order to bind the toxic principle and prevent its absorption into the blood. Supportive therapy is usually indicated if the amount of chocolate ingested is potentially toxic or the quantity is unknown. Intravenous fluids, anti-seizure medications, and cardiac drugs may be indicated depending on the clinical symptoms.

So, the moral of this little story is that while we humans can safely consume vast volumes of this “food of the gods”, dogs, however unfortunately for them, cannot. If Fido sucks

down a couple of M&M's the instant they hit the floor, this is probably not an emergency. However, the potential for very serious medical problems to occur at higher doses is real and pet owners should be aware of the potential consequences. Have a happy and safe Halloween and holiday season.



The “food of the gods” is a no-no for this little fella.

“The potential for very serious medical problems to occur at higher doses is real...”

D.O.G.S of Vernon

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E-MAIL:
info@dogsofvernon.org

Website:
www.dogsofvernon.org

Yahoo Groups
dogsofvernon@yahoo.com

MySpace page:
<http://groups.myspace.com/dogsofvernon>

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.dogsofvernon.org

Free Training Seminar offered by..... *It's Your Dog*

Jumping, barking, nipping and chewing are all second nature to dogs.

The Holidays will be here before you know it.

Instead of banishing Fido to the basement this year, learn the secrets to stop those unwanted behaviors. At this seminar you will learn how to prevent and correct common problem behaviors such as inappropriate use of mouth, destructive chewing, jumping, barking & more.

It's Your Dog is offering a **free** seminar that will

teach you how to prevent unwanted behaviors in your dog.

It's Your Dog is a local certified professional dog training service. They offer reward based obedience training and behavior modification with group and private lessons for dog owners throughout Sussex County. Classes are held in Sparta, Byram and now Franklin.

You can visit their website at <http://itsyourdog.com>

It's Your Dog will be offering this **free** seminar on Sunday, November 4,

2007 at 2:30PM.

The class will be held at their new training facility at 173 North Church Road, Franklin.

Donations to Benefit D.O.G.S. of Vernon.

To register call 201-841-2163 or 201-230-3973 but hurry as seating is limited!

PS-This Seminar is for humans only; please do not bring your dogs.

Our Organization...

Eliza Amthor- President

Barb Green- Vice President

Pat Lang- Recording Secretary

Linda Bruno – Treasurer

Dr. Mike Ramieri- Board Member at Large

Calendar of Events

MEETINGS

PLACE: VERNON SENIOR CENTER, VERNON MUNICIPAL BLDG, CHURCH ST., VERNON, NJ

TIME: 7:30 PM TO 9:00 PM

DATES: TUESDAY, OCT 9

MONDAY, OCT 22

TUESDAY, NOV 13

MONDAY, NOV 26

WE ENCOURGE EVERYONE TO ATTEND AND PARTICIPATE IN OUR BI-MONTHLY MEETINGS.

HALLOWEEN CANINE COSTUME PARADE

PLACE: WOODBOURNE PARK, SHERMAN RIDGE ROAD, WANTAGE, NJ

TIME: 20:00 PM (REGISTRATION BEGINS AT 1 PM)

DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2007 (RAINDATE 10/28)

FREE DOG TRAINING SEMINAR

PLACE: IT'S YOUR DOG TRAINING FACILITY, 173 N. CHURCH RD, FRANKLIN, NJ

TIME: 2:30 PM

DATE: SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2007