

Amherst Paw Park in the News

Amherst Paw Park Association

The efforts of the Amherst Paw Park Association have been documented in several local newspapers. In 2005, the Association obtained unanimous approval from the Amherst Town Board to establish a dog park dedicated for public use.

Amherst Bee

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Players from the Mel O'LeTT Little League carry a banner to their home field on Mayer Road to mark the past Saturday's official start of the 2005 season. The league was formed in 1958 and named for the Hall of Famer who played for and coached the New York Giants baseball team from 1925-1948. Photo by Jim Bisher

Play ball

East Amherst dog park gets unanimous approval from town board

First off-leash area in Erie County to be privately funded

by VICTORIA R. SPAGNOLI
Associate Editor

Dog owners who let their four-legged friends roam free in Amherst will no longer be able to use the excuse that there's no place for them to run off-leash.

On Monday, the Amherst Town Board gave its unanimous support for a dog park in Paradise Park.

A town-wide committee made up of dog owners and interested residents have spent more than two years researching dog parks and lobbying the board for support.

The board's approval gives the grassroots committee the backing it needs to start fund-

► In order to use the park, all dogs must be licensed and therefore vaccinated.

ing. The dog park will be privately funded. Most town funds are expected to be used to build or maintain the area, town officials said.

Town Hall was almost filled to capacity Monday night, with very few seats left in the board's chambers and residents lining the aisles.

More than a dozen people lined up to comment on the dog park prior to the board's approval. After the first speaker, Mike Rogers, made his comments, the crowd erupted into applause and loud cheers.

"Because so many people had turned out to show their support, the board moved the resolution up on the agenda and voted on it after only the first five speakers."

Only one person spoke of their concerns regarding the park. Resident Colleen Bogdan,

who stressed she was not against the park, was concerned that people outside the town would use the park.

"She asked the board to include some language in the resolution making it clear that the park is only for town residents."

The board agreed and also added some clarification that maintenance of the park will be funded by the town.

"The dog park will be an area of Paradise Park that is currently wooded and unused. A barrier will be placed, but a wooded buffer will remain to separate that off-leash area from the rest of the park and neighborhood," said resident Andy McDonald.

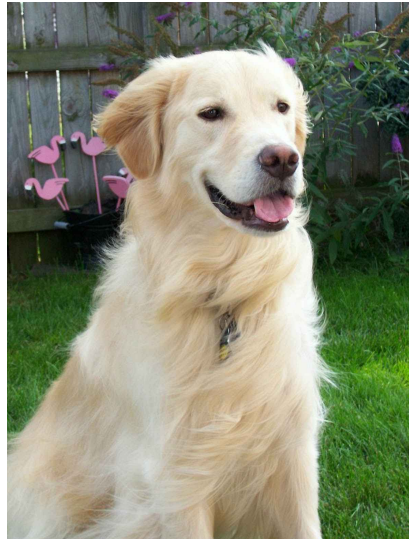
"There will be two, side-by-side, fenced-in areas — one for large dogs and one for smaller dogs — see our large-dogs and see for smaller dogs."

Inside

Prom season
Williamsville South student Brendan Kerr prepares for the senior prom. See page 27

Close to home
Western New York offers some superb vacation destinations. See page 22

News



Proposed dog park

(Continued from page one)

owners outside Amherst. Ward, who wrote the bill, said that the board approved the resolution in order for residents here that the park is only for town residents.

"I heard the proposed one was 'the Shantel side' and heard that it would probably be the same group, now called the Amherst Paw Park Association, that's applying the same great funding."

"We're interested... then all of these amounts of revenue would be closed off," Ward said.

The group is trying to apply for a grant from the New York State Parks and Historic Preservation Commission, but the deadline for applications is at the end of June. And even then, some don't see it as a big deal.

"In order for the park to apply for state grants, the park needs to be open to everyone. By keeping it open for all dogs, owners in Erie County that own dogs can use any facilities, including Colleen Bogdan."

Bogdan is supportive of the dog park in general, as long as the town

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LAW TALK
BY CRIG POPE
Attorney at Law

THE FIRST STEP
Many of us don't realize that our own lives are often more complicated than we think. In fact, the more we know about the law, the better we can protect ourselves and our families. In this column, we'll discuss some of the most important legal issues that affect us all. If you have any questions, please contact me at 716.741.1330.

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Disability museum proposed for Mennonite Meeting House

by VICTORIA R. SPAGNOLI
Associate Editor

It's a museum like no other. On one wall hang a pair of crutches, that an elderly Douglas Platt man told they were something they had used in Charles Dickson's "Christmas Carol."

In a corner is an old-fashioned cane wheelchair and all over the walls are photographs of signposts and institutions in a mixture of colored, black and white and sepia tones.

People here is Museum of Disability History is reportedly located in two rooms of a house next to the organization's building on North Forest Road.

But the collection of memorabilia, books, pictures and medical equipment is growing and needs a new home, explained James M. Babin, president and chief executive officer of People Link.

MORNING COLLISION — Snyder investigators begin efforts to determine the cause of a fatal trucking accident at the Christian Center at 745 E. 1st St. last Monday in Tonawanda. The crash was transported to the Erie County Medical Center for treatment out state of the children on the bus. See page 12.



Amherst libraries depend on volunteers — see page seven

Proposed dog park open to everyone

by VICTORIA R. SPAGNOLI
Associate Editor

When the Amherst Town Board gave its unanimous support of a proposed dog park at Paradise Park in May, many people believed its use would be limited to town residents.

In fact, most meeting observers — including the media — thought the "residents only" condition had been included in the board's resolution, which supported the

dog park concept.

But apparently, it did not.

The board supported the residency restriction, but it was never made into an actual amendment to the resolution.

And it took a letter by a dog park supporter to point out the mistake.

Open to all

Peter Warn said the group never intended to warn that the park closed off to other dog

(Please turn to page 14)

Proposing 'doggie run' in Amherst

By HAROLD McNEIL
NEWS NORTHTOWNS BUREAU

A group of Amherst residents is working to build interest in setting aside parkland where dogs can roam free.

The volunteer committee — which calls itself Off-Leash Recreational Area — will discuss a proposal for a fenced-in "doggie run" inside a town park during informational meetings planned for 7 to 9 p.m. Tuesday in Harlem Road Community Center, 4255 Harlem Road, and 7 to 9 p.m. April 20 in Williamsville East High School, 151 Paradise Road.

Dog owner Mike Rogers, a committee member, said the grass-roots campaign was begun about two years ago after several dog owners — during a public hearing on the draft master plan Amherst State Park — advocated a closed-in recreational park for unleashed dogs.

"This would be a fenced-in, grassy area within the structure of an existing park," Rogers said. "The Town Board has been generally supportive, as long as there is no burden on the taxpayer."

"We want to start making the public aware (of this plan) so they can voice their concerns and we can garner additional support," Amherst Supervisor Susan J. Grellick said she has spoken with members of the group and is open to the idea.

"I've told them that if they can find a way to do it without burdening the taxpayers, I'm willing to work with them," Grellick said.

Rogers said the committee is seeking private sponsorship, which has supported similar parks in Rochester and Syracuse.

"We're seeking contingency approval right now, and after that, our committee would then shift into fund-raising mode to develop the park," Rogers said.

He said that even though many dog owners in the town might have back yards for their pets, a doggie run would also serve elderly and physically challenged pet owners who might be unable to exercise their dogs at home.

Such parks also foster a sense of community among dogs and their owners, Rogers added.

e-mail: hmcneil@buffnews.com

Dog Parks Across America



Amherst Paw Park Association

There are an estimated 700 dog parks throughout the United States -- each inspired by dog enthusiasts responding to their pet's health and exercise needs that are often restricted by public-area leash laws. For additional information and links to these parks, log onto HYPERLINK "<http://www.dogpark.com>".

Dog parks generally fall into one of three categories: private for profit, public, and private non-profit. The Amherst Paw Park will be open to the public while being operated as a non-profit. The Amherst Paw Park Association (APPA) is a 100% volunteer group, affiliated with the Amherst Conservation Recreation & Parks Foundation - a non-profit. APPA is responsible for raising the upfront funds necessary to build and maintain the park in accordance with Amherst ordinances and general accepted practices of other Dog Parks. The park will be built and maintained with no burden to the taxpayers.

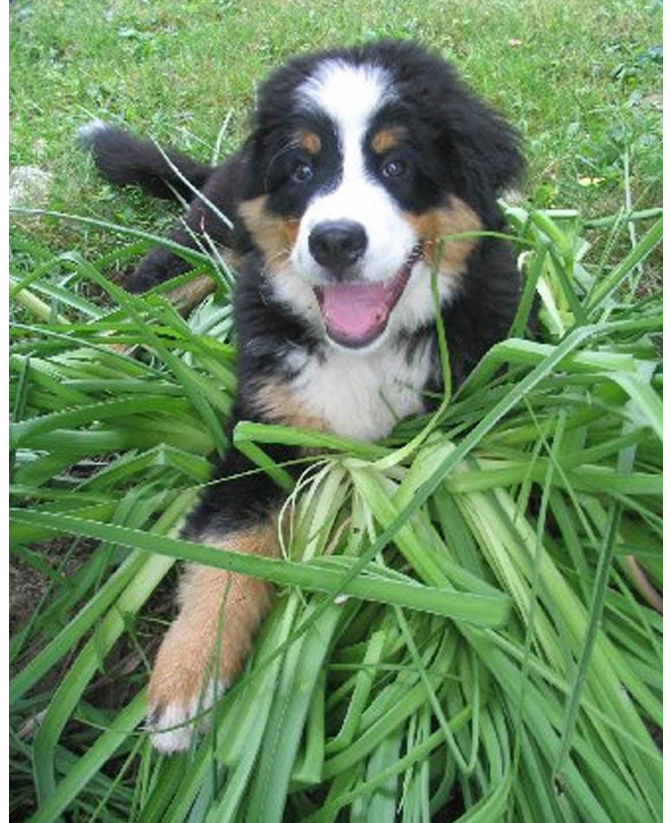
The Town of Amherst has donated the land in Paradise Park and will establish an oversight committee of volunteers to ensure the park's long-term viability and maintenance needs.

The park will open to all citizens, including both Amherst and non-Amherst residents.

Our success building the park depends solely on individual and corporate sponsorships and donations. Won't you help?

For more information, access our website at www.amherstpawpark.com or contact Michael Rogers at 716.830.8853

Correspondence May Be Mailed To:
Amherst Paw Park Association
c/o 83 Burroughs Drive • Snyder, NY 14226



"Dogparks are gaining in popularity and dogs certainly know why there is nothing as much fun for a dog (and its human) as to run around off-leash, and play together in a nice park."
~ www.dogpark.com

Donor Levels



Amherst Paw Park Association

POSSIBLE DONATION LEVELS




BEST-IN SHOW

Naming Rights - \$100,000

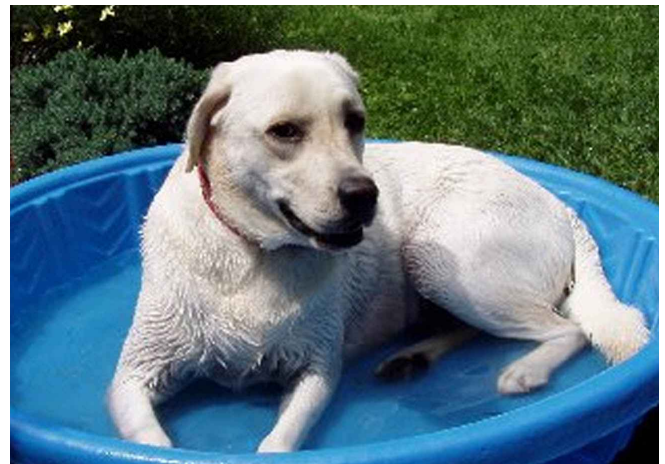
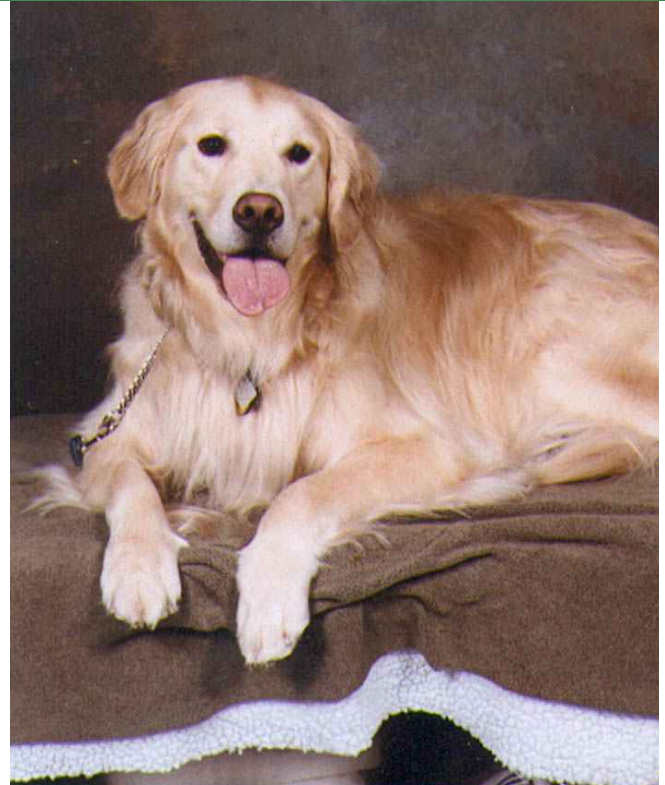
- perpetual naming rights to park
- name to be publicized and used in all park activities and events
- year-round community recognition
- company web-site link

 / 4 PAW = \$25,000+

 / 3 PAW = \$10,000 – \$24,999

 / 2 PAW = \$5,000 – \$9,999







Amherst Paw Park Association, through the Amherst Conservation Recreation & Parks Foundation, is a non-profit 501c(3) corporation. All donations will be used to build and maintain the park for the benefit of our community. Donations will be solicited from private individuals and corporations. Donors at the "two-paw" and higher level will be prominently displayed on a permanent plaque at the entrance to the park.



Benefits to the Community



Amherst Paw Park Association

-  Opportunity for dogs to socialize and play off-leash legally
-  Helps limit infringement on other parks and its users
-  Provides the elderly and disabled a safe place to exercise their companions
-  Promotes responsible pet ownership by sharing of information by other dog owners
-  Fosters a sense of community and a venue for people to meet
-  Provides an educational forum for dog owners and promotes dog licensing

Proper exercise and socialization results in healthier and friendlier canines making them better neighbors. Dogs that have the opportunity to run and play with other dogs (and humans) are less prone to excessive barking, digging, and anti-social behavior toward people and other animals – the most common complaints issued by neighbors.

Dog Parks are not new -- they began opening in the 1980's and continue today. The dedicated volunteers of Amherst Paw Park Association (APPA) have spent three years researching established parks and learning from their experiences. Our proposal for Amherst's first dog park has been met with overwhelming community support -- an informal petition gathered over 1,000 signatures from Amherst dog owners and non-dog owners alike. Additionally, the concept is supported by the majority of local veterinarians, Amherst residents, and the entire Amherst Town Board evidenced by their unanimous approval and donation of town land. Now, it's up to us to raise the funds necessary to complete the park!



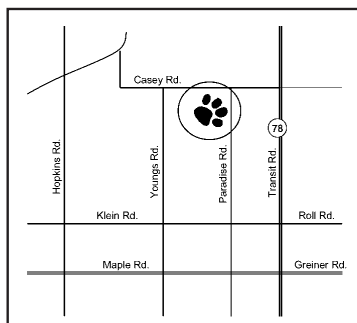
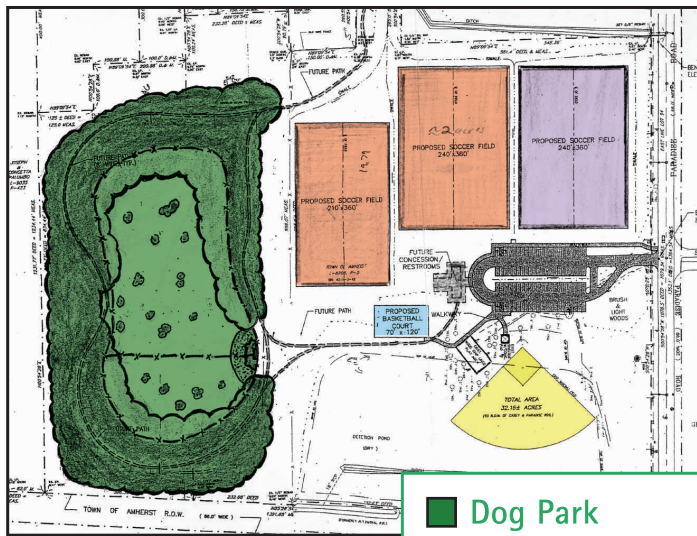
*"Dog parks are very popular in other parts of the country, and it's only fitting that Onondaga County's landmark park hosts the area's first park established exclusively for dogs."
~ Robert Geraci, Onondaga Commissioner of Parks, NY*

Amherst Paw Park Design



Amherst Paw Park Association

The proposed Amherst Paw Park site is a segment of Paradise Park located near Paradise and Casey Roads. Presently, the land is an unused, low-lying forested area on the western side of the park. The site will be shielded from homes by distance and a natural forest line and will not infringe upon existing or planned uses of the park.



PARK TO INCLUDE:

- Fenced-in area with dual gated entry/exit
- Small and large dog division
- Benches and shade trees
- Natural groundcover
- Accessible paths for people using walkers/wheelchairs
- Water fountains

DEVELOPMENT TIMELINE:

- Town Board Approval - Summer '05
- Fundraising - Fall/Winter '05-'06
- Site Preparation - Spring/Summer '06
- Construction - Fall '06

ESTIMATED TOTAL COST: \$120,000 - to include...

- Surveying / Engineering
- Clearing / Drainage
- Grading
- Fencing
- Amenities

"Paradise Park"- A Multi-Use Town Park



What is a Dog Park?

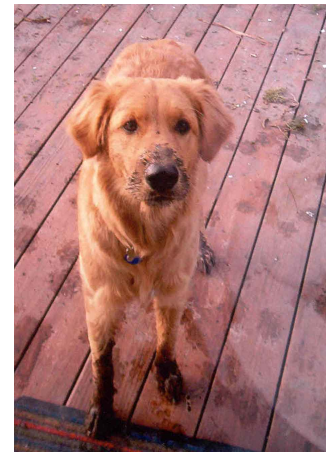
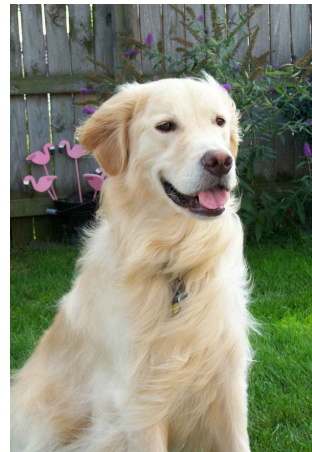


Amherst Paw Park Association

A dog park is exactly what the name implies – a recreational area designed for our canine companions. An increasingly popular trend, there are hundreds of parks around the country, both public and private. Many depend solely on private donations and corporate sponsorships -- Amherst Paw Park included. We are a non-profit group comprised totally of volunteers who share America's passion for their pets.

Dog parks are a practical and fun way to give dogs the exercise they need – off leash. They are particularly appealing to senior citizens and the disabled who otherwise do not have a place to exercise their beloved pets and service dogs. The parks are ideal settings for dog owners to meet others who share similar interests and to promote licensing laws and health and safety.

A typical dog park is fenced in, allowing dogs to run and socialize while not infringing on the activities of joggers, cyclists, and other park users. There are benches for people to relax and get acquainted, trees for shade, and other amenities such as drinking fountains; one for dogs and one for their people! The double gated vestibule allows leashed dogs to enter or leave the area without letting the off-leash dogs escape into the main park area. Of course, dog mitt dispensers and waste containers are provided to visitors for easy and mandatory clean-up.



Thanks to the Town of Amherst, the Amherst Paw Park Association (APPA) has the approval and the land to build a park for dogs and their humans throughout Western New York.

Your support and sponsorship are needed to complete the project.