



# A Howlin' Good Time

## River Park Off-leash News

April



2011

### UPCOMING STUFF

#### BLOG AWAY IN EARLY MAY

The City of Calgary will release the proposed plan for River Park, Sandy Beach and the Britannia Slope at the beginning of May. This will be the last opportunity to comment online before the plan is presented to council.



#### NEXT PARK CLEAN-UP

**Sunday, May 1**  
**9:30 - noon**

It's time to finish what we started. We didn't get a chance to address the escarpment or Sandy Beach during our last clean-up effort.

Shoot me an email if you plan to help.



Please feel free to share this newsletter with friends. If at any time you no longer wish to receive communication, just let me know.

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River Park, Sandy Beach, Britannia Slope Update

### Last Chance to Participate

The City of Calgary website says by mid-May, we'll be able to review the first draft of a design and management plan for River Park, Sandy Beach and Britannia Slopes. They will offer an opportunity for us to post comments online.

The website also states a public open house will occur at the end of May. Then on June 29, 2011 an updated draft will be presented to Council. If the plan is approved, it will be submitted for budget consideration in November.

So far, there are a lot of competing interest groups wanting to reduce or eliminate off-leash access in River Park, Sandy Beach and the Britannia Slope.

Get involved in the process if you care about off-leash access and the future of the park. Visit The City's website ([www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca)) for more information.

### River/Pathway Clean-up

Can you help clean up the River Park escarpment on Sunday, May 1 from 9:30am until noon?

My husband and I have participated for several years. Each time we've found mostly garbage. The most remarkable thing we discovered was a car embedded into the escarpment. We were able to get hold of the grill plus a few rusty bits and throw them away, but the rest is still there.

We find a fair amount of broken glass, so it's best to leave dogs at home.

You'll need to bring a good pair of gloves. I'll supply garbage bags. We'll work in pairs starting at the south end near the transmission tower and finish by the bridge in Sandy Beach. Please send me an email if you plan to attend. If we get enough people, we'll work our way across the escarpment, rather than up and down.

### SCOOPY DOO DAY becomes a P.U.P.P.Y. Program

Most dog owners are familiar with the April event called Scoopy Doo Day. This is the annual clean-up effort held in several off-leash areas throughout Calgary.

River Park was only included in the program from 2007 until 2010, when Scoopy Doo Day was discontinued. Fortunately River Park dog owners have been holding their own clean-ups since the 1980s.

The City of Calgary recently launched a new educational initiative called Pick Up Pooch's Poo Yourself (P.U.P.P.Y.). It will consist of a clean-up effort, education and interaction with various experts. Four off-leash areas are slated to participate:

Sunday, April 17	Southland Park
Sunday, June 12	River Park
Sunday, Sept 25	Nose Hill Park
Sunday, Oct 16	Bowmont Park

The City of Calgary lists 141 off-leash areas in its inventory, but only four of them have an organized event. It's disappointing and worrisome that educational awareness events are reduced during the development of an off-leash area management plan for the city.



Off-leash issues really come to the forefront in spring. It's when the level of dog feces left by negligent dog owners is worst and competing interest groups are more common in the park.

Calgary dog owners will have to step up their good behaviour and maintain park cleanliness. The result: Everyone benefits.

# A Fond Farewell

On March 3, Sheila said a sad farewell to her 'Baby Girl', **Marias**.

Many dog lovers are familiar with the Collie rescue effort in 2002, when officials discovered 170 Collies and a few cats crammed into a reeking truck-trailer at the Canadian border crossing. The animals were cold, emaciated, dehydrated, sick and soaked in urine and feces.

Marias was one of these dogs.

When Sheila welcomed Marias into her family, it was the beginning of a new life, which included becoming a River Park dog member. Sheila gently and lovingly nurtured her until she gained confidence to trust people again.



Marias (#53 at Camp Collie)  
July 26, 2003 (reborn) – March 3, 2011

Sheila wrote:

*Heaven has one more angel among them. Marias's delicate body just could not handle the strain she was enduring and I did not want to see her go through any more pain.*

*Marias has always shown quiet strength in one of the gentlest ways I have ever seen. She was the Princess Grace of Collies. She was so gentle with her touches, elegant in her stance, polite with her manners, and had a beauty that would take your breath away.*

*It is with the deepest sadness that I had to say goodbye... Until we meet again over the Rainbow Bridge.*

## Fundraising Effort Continues A Bench 'For Dogs'

Are you interested in creating a bench dedicated to past and present dogs? If so, we need to raise \$3500. We have \$1180 so far.



Payment covers materials, a small plaque and any maintenance required for a 10-year period. If payment is submitted in May, the bench would be in the park by July. After the 10-year period, a maintenance contract must be renewed or the bench goes back into the adoption pool.

The plaque will state: "In honour of River Park dogs: our best friends and family members."

Please email me if you're interested in donating. You can send payment directly to Parks Foundation Calgary or give your cheque (made to Parks Foundation) to me and I'll deliver with other people's payments. Tax receipts are available for amounts of \$25 or more. If we don't get enough interest, I'll cancel the application and return cheques.

# Dog Bylaws

Park users have already noticed some bylaw officers at River Park. This is a good time to brush up on the rules.

### In Parks:

- Carry a leash with you at all times
- Ensure your dog is wearing its collar and license tags
- Off-leash still means under control (your dog must be within sight and come to you when called)
- All parking lots are on-leash
- Know where off-leash access begins and ends
- Always pick up your dog's waste

### On Pathways:

- Sandy Beach's pathway is on-leash (leash can't exceed two metres)
- You and your dog must stay on the right-hand side, unless passing someone travelling in the same direction
- Dogs must not interfere with, obstruct or chase other pathway users

# Caring For Your Pet *For the Health of It*

**The Animal Health Care** website lists Giardiasis as a disease caused by a microscopic parasite called Giardia, that infects the intestines.

Commonly known as Beaver Fever, it is thought that the organism comes from the feces of infected wild animals (including rodents).

It can be easily contracted by drinking water from a contaminated source such as a pond, a lake, or even a puddle. Dogs have also been known to contract it by licking their paws after walking in a contaminated area.

This extremely hardy parasite is able to survive outside the host for long periods of time and can be transmitted from pets to people.

Symptoms in humans and pets include vomiting, significant diarrhea, and a

gassy, bloated abdomen. Immuno-compromised people, including the elderly, newborns, pregnant women, and cancer and AIDS patients should be particularly careful.



In pets that show no clinical signs, the parasite can be harmful by robbing the intestines of essential nutrients during digestion, causing weight loss or lethargy. Note that some infected pets can carry this parasite without any signs of illness.

The safest bet is to discourage your dog from drinking pooled water. It could save yourself and your dog a lot of grief.

The Animal Health Care website suggests to have your veterinarian test your pet's stool on a regular basis, particularly at the end of the summer.