



SEGER PARK DOG OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

WWW.SEGERDOGRUN.ORG

JULY 2007

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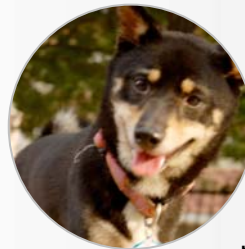
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1 RESURFACING IN THE WORKS!

The answer is hardwood chips with better drainage underneath!

What you Need to Know!



As you have hopefully heard, the Seger Park Dog Owners Association (SPDOA) has been researching and discussing resurfacing the wood chip-covered area for months.

We've now made a decision and the request for bids is circulating. We anticipate that the dog run will be closed for several days, in August or September. Information will be provided in advance on the web site, by e-mail and through posters. The dog run is maintained by SPDOA, a nonprofit organization, not by the City of Philadelphia.

Why is the Dog Park Dusty?

Part of the issue is more and more people are discovering our great dog park. However, there are two issues to address:

- Drainage gravel was laid incorrectly in the major reconstruction project about three years ago. Also, it settled more than expected in the middle of the park.
- The recent replenishing chips were pine, a soft wood that has decomposed rapidly.

What Happens Next?

I. The contractor will remove the old wood chips and take out the two dead trees.

2. The contractor will grade the low area (aka the dust bowl) to better match the area around it, lay fabric to keep mud out of the drainage gravel, then put down new gravel. A last detail being determined is what should be put between the gravel and a thick new layer of fresh hardwood chips. Hardwood chips are expected to resist decomposing up to three times longer than the recent pine chips. They will still need regular raking and annual replenishing.

3. Other minor work will be done. The most intriguing part may be installation of a test patch of playground / dog park grade astroturf in the small area with the fire hydrant.

We will keep you up to date as we know more. Thank you very much for your support as these improvements are made to the dog park.

2 **WOW! MATCHING FUND!**

Great News! A generous person has offered to **match your contribution** to the resurfacing project dollar for dollar. You also are eligible for the same cool gifts as for membership contributions. Please make a gift marked "resurfacing" through our web site www.segerdogrun.org

\$35 Annual Membership

Add in \$20 marked "resurfacing" and get a SPDOA hat!
Add in \$30 marked "resurfacing" and get a SPDOA leash!

3 **SUGARLESS GUM WARNING**

ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center warns that dogs ingesting significant amounts of items sweetened with xylitol could experience seizures and other problems. Symptoms can develop in less than 30 minutes.

For more information, see:

www.aspc.org/site/PageServer?pagename=press_082106



Figure 1a.

	mh	+
+	mh / +	+ / +
+	mh / +	+ / +

Figure 1b.

	mh	+
mh	mh / mh	mh / +
+	mh / +	+ / +



Top: Normal Whippet

www.westminsterkennelclub.org/breedinformation/hound/images/whippet.jpg

Bottom: Mutated Whippet

www.canada.com/victoriatimescolonist/story.html?id=67f15c17-2717-4022-bb761b982456e793&k=94653

Photograph by Bruce Stotesbury, Times Colonist

4 UNFOLDING THE GENETICS OF CANINE MUSCLES

A current article in PLoS Genetics (Mosher et al. 2007 May 25;3(5):e79) describes a recently characterized two basepair deletion mutation in the canine myostatin (*MSTN*) gene. Inheritance of one copy of this deletion mutation is associated with increased musculature—leading to enhanced racing performance—in whippets. Ordinarily, elevated levels of myostatin in the body act to limit the development of skeletal muscle. However, naturally occurring variation in the DNA sequence of *MSTN*, such as the two basepair deletion mutation, can disrupt the native suppressor function of myostatin resulting in increase musculature. Interestingly, other dog breeds including many in the “bull and terrier” family also known for their muscular stature do not carry this deletion in *MSTN*. Inheritance of two copies of the *MSTN* mutation leads to a “bully” physique in which whippet musculature is excessively enhanced or “double muscled”. The inheritance of the bully physique occurs in an autosomal recessive mode: breeding of a whippet without the mutation (+/+) and with a normal physique to one with with the mutation (mh/+) and with increased musculature will lead to a litter in which half will have enhance muscle stature and half will not (Figure 1a); whippets with bully physiques (mh/mh) can only be born when both the bitch and sire carry a copy of the mutation (Figure 1b). Unfortunately for dog lovers, too much of a good thing can result in an undesired outcome. Because the bully stature is not aesthetically desired among many dog breeders, probably because bully whippets do not meet American Kennel Club standards, often whippets with this physical characteristic are put down.

5 BABY’S BEST FRIEND

Living with 101 Dalmatians might be overkill, but a recent study shows that babies who share a house with at least two dogs and a high level of certain types of a bacterial substance are less likely to develop allergies.

Researchers studied more than 500 infants who were at risk of developing allergies because at least one parent had allergies. The babies living in a house with two or more dogs and a high level of indoor end toxins (natural

compounds produced by bacteria) were a third less likely to develop wheezing. That's good news because wheezing in infants is linked to a higher risk of having allergies and asthma later in life.

Why are having a few dogs around a good idea? The researchers said they didn't yet understand why exposure to high levels of end toxins and multiple dogs in the house have a protective effect. Other experts speculate that furry pets and end toxins may somehow affect the immune system, heading off problems like allergies early on.

Source: *Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology*

6 SPECIAL THANKS

We would like to offer special thanks to all those who so generously give their time and energy to the Dog Park. We especially want to recognize Franklin Shores who helped us get the much needed cart and Charlie and Susan Hancock for installing the new weatherproof roof over the bulletin board. SPDOA gives an extra big thank you to Richard Felder, who has gone far beyond his trashcan-emptying duties to make the dog park clean and pleasant.

7 MONTHLY MEETINGS

The monthly meeting of the association will be held:

July: Thursday, July 19th at 7:30.

August: Thursday, August 16th at 7:30.

For More Information: Please visit www.segerdogrun.org

Location: Weather permitting, meetings are held at the dog park. Otherwise, they are at Seger Park Building / Lombard Street

GET INVOLVED -

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION NOT JUST
A COMPLAINER

