

The Dog Guardian

Newsletter for Responsible Dog Owners of Canada

SPRING 2017

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Highlights by Julie More

Welcome to the Spring Newsletter. Yep, there are signs that winter is actually coming to an end 😊. Our main feature in this newsletter is our Retirement Homes and Pets article: How to look for a retirement home that's pet friendly, find out about their pet policies, etc.

We also have another article from [Alexandra Seagal](#), this time on how to get your pet ready for moving out of your house (where he had free run in your fenced-in backyard) to a retirement home where he will need to be on leash for all his walks.

Loud barking at your house may not be a problem, but it will be a problem in a retirement home. It will take some time for your pet to learn these new life skills, so it may be a good idea to start training him about 6 months prior to moving. Alexandra has some great suggestions in her article.

Thank you, Jill, for your tip about elevators. "Most apartments and retirement homes have elevators. Practice riding in an elevator with your dog before moving in. Your dog should be trained to sit quietly at the back of the elevator, preferably in a corner, where she can't disturb other riders. Some people feel very uncomfortable when confined in a small space with a dog they do not know."

Kit and I went to the Pet Expo again this year. We thoroughly enjoyed it, and had fun writing up the article.

Sit back and enjoy the newsletter!



Board News

We had our board meeting on Sunday, January 22nd. Here are some of the topics we discussed:

- ❖ We decided to participate in the CHEO Teddy Bear Picnic with Ottawa Therapy Dogs again this year, on Saturday, June 24th. We had lots of fun last year - it was very educational for the children to learn about some of the safety rules when meeting a dog, and then be able to practice their new knowledge with the therapy dogs.
- ❖ We will continue to do the park clean-ups (see the schedule in the Park Clean-Ups section of this newsletter). We all enjoy meeting the pups and their owners during this event.
- ❖ The “Going to the Dogs” Fundraiser will be held on Sunday, September 24th at 5 p.m. We are in the process of forming a working committee. Interested in joining the committee? Just email me at morejulie@hotmail.com.
- ❖ Our 2nd Annual Garage Sale will be held on Saturday, May 13th. We will start at 8 a.m. Set up will be on Friday, May 12th in the afternoon and evening. We will have a Garage Sale meeting in April to finalize everything.
- ❖ We decided to stay with our existing web provider. We are forming a committee to update the website.

Retirement Homes and Pets

Moving into a retirement home is a very big decision, especially if you have a pet. Most of us want to bring our beloved companions with us when we move.

How do you choose the perfect retirement home not only for yourself, but also for your pets? Well, we decided to do some research. We don't know about the perfect retirement home for you, but we can help by giving you information about the pet policies of several different retirement communities.

We recently sent out a questionnaire to the retirement homes in the Ottawa-Carleton Region to learn about their pet policies. During our research we found that quite a few retirement residences welcome pets. **

Here is the questionnaire we sent out:

“Responsible Dog Owners of Canada (RDOC) (<http://www.responsibledogowners.ca/>) is a registered, non-profit, national organization comprised of volunteers who believe that responsibility, respect and recognition are fundamental components of dog ownership.

Many seniors have pets and would like to bring them to the retirement home they move to. RDOC is sending out a questionnaire to the retirement homes in the Ottawa Carleton region to learn about their pet policies. We were wondering if you could complete the enclosed questionnaire and give us permission to post your answers on our website and in our newsletter?



1. Do you allow your residents to bring their pets with them when they move to your retirement home? If not, why not?
2. If / when the pet dies, would the owner be allowed to get themselves another pet?
3. What pets do you allow, e.g. dogs, cats, birds, fish etc.?
4. Do you have size/weight/breed restrictions on the pet?
5. How many pets can each person have?
6. Is there an extra charge for the pet?
7. What happens if the pet becomes too much for the owner?
 - (a) Would staff be able to feed etc. (and in the case of a dog, walk) the pet?
 - (b) Would there be an extra charge?
 - (c) How long before you would ask the owner to rehome his pet?



Thank you for completing the questionnaire."

According to Victoria Newark at [Queenswood Villa](#) & [Ogilvie Villa](#) ([section 9](#)): "We understand that pets are a part of your family and you want them to come with you. We have 2 resident birds at Queenswood Villa. They don't have official names, but I like to call them Bert and Ernie."

According to Jenna Lacharity from [Alta Vista Retirement Community](#) ([section 5](#)) "Revera also celebrates National Dog Day across all of our retirement communities."

Homes like Redwoods Retirement Residence even have a pet care package that includes feeding, walking etc. for an extra fee. To the question "What happens if the pet becomes too much for the owner?" April Johnstone at [Redwoods Retirement Residence](#) ([section 11](#)) said: "They can buy a care plan and we will help care for the pet. Many residents have an external dog walker to help with the proper ownership."

Juanita Cody from [City View Retirement Community](#) ([section 3](#)) wrote: "We have a pet agreement which outlines our pet policy; owners need to be able to properly care for the pet at all times. If the owner is unable to care for the pet, other arrangements would have to be made for the pet."

To the question "Would staff be able to feed etc. (and, in the case of a dog, walk) the pet?" Jackie Jarbeau at [The Court at Barrhaven](#) ([section 15](#)) said "Yes - depending on the circumstance."

Some staff bring their pets to work. Lynn Gratton at [Les Jardins Camilla Gardens Retirement Residence](#) ([section 10](#)) wrote: "Actually my 8 yr. old dog Zoe, a Bernese/German Shepherd mix,

comes to work with me every day. She is well loved and fervently returns it! LOL! When she stays home on occasion, I'm asked what I've done to her!!

Camilla Gardens is also visited by 'Brightening Lives', a program offered by the Ottawa Humane Society, where volunteers visit monthly accompanied by their pets, to interact with the seniors. I see first-hand how pets make a positive difference in a senior's life, especially when afflicted by dementia, depression, end of life or just everyday boredom."

Some, like [Carlingwood Retirement Community \(section 2\)](#), have weight restrictions (approximately 30 lbs. or under). [City View Retirement Community \(section 3\)](#) prefers dogs under 15 lbs., while Alta Vista Retirement Community has no weight restriction. According to Jenna Lacharity from [Alta Vista Retirement Community \(section 5\)](#): "... the restrictions on all the questions involving pets are whether the resident or the family are able to help care for the pets"

Paula Patterson from [The Ravines Seniors' Suites & Retirement Residence \(section 4\)](#) wrote: "Small dogs preferably, but we do have two large dogs, one is a service dog." Margaret Dennis from [Chartwell Kanata Retirement Residence \(section 8\)](#) answered: "Pets need to be smaller, as they are required to stay in the resident's room. The resident is 100% responsible for their care, including taking them for walks, if needed. Pets are not allowed in the public spaces within the residence."

Many retirement homes allow different types of pets. Alaina Rossiter, Marketing Manager at [Carlingwood Retirement Community \(section 2\)](#) said: "We allow various types of animals, i.e. dog, cat, bird, fish etc."

Each retirement home allows a different number of pets. Lisa Leonard from [Amica at Bearbrook \(section 6\)](#) wrote: "Maximum two cats or two dogs, one large fish tank and one large birdcage."

On the other hand, some retirement homes don't allow dogs, but cats, birds and fish are fine. According to Andre Charlebois from [Billingswood Manor Seniors' Residence \(section 7\)](#): "If the client can take care of their pet, they may bring them in. We do not accept dogs, as barking can be disruptive in a retirement home. The owners are responsible for keeping the habitat/litter clean, and the room must be free of smell."

Mara Eby from [Park Place \(section 14\)](#) wrote: "We don't have a restriction on the breed, size or weight as long as they are on leash and under control when travelling through the building."

I would like to end this article by quoting Christina O'Neil from [Unitarian House of Ottawa \(section 13\)](#): "Each situation is unique. We even gave meds to a pet of one of our residents. Each morning the nurses would bring the resident her meds, and also the cat's. The resident did not have transportation so I took the cat to the vet when he needed to be seen."

Pets are viewed as part of the extended family. We even mention the pets when we do our celebration of life service. My dogs come to work with me every day and when my older dog died, the residents were just as upset as I was. My dog has a plaque in the memorial garden, with the residents who have passed away."

**** More in-depth information is available on our website by clicking on the section references throughout this article.**

RDOC would like to thank the retirement homes featured in this article for answering our questionnaire and giving our organization permission to include this information in our newsletter and on our website. We would ask our readers to contact the retirement homes directly if they are interested in discussing their own circumstances, rather than relying on the information in the article.

RDOC has done its best to reproduce the information from the retirement homes accurately. However, the organization is not liable for any errors that may be in the article.



Five Things to Do to Get Your Dog Ready to Move Into an Apartment or Retirement Home

By Alexandra Seagal, www.animalso.com

For a dog, living in an apartment or retirement home setting is a whole new ball game to living in a house with a backyard. You should **start getting your dog ready before the move** to help your dog adjust to her new living situation.

Read on to find out the 5 main things you need to focus on:

1. Get her used to the sounds of people passing by

When living in an apartment building or retirement home, you will be surrounded by noises your dog might not be used to, such as people passing by the door or talking in the hallways. This may well make your dog [bark](#).

You can work on this before you move with a little help from a friend or a neighbour. Have them come to your home and walk past the door outside, and have them talk, too.

If your dog begins to bark, use a command she knows already, whether it's "leave" or "stop." Once she is silent and showing calm behaviour on hearing the noises, you can **reward her with a treat**.

Depending on how [easy to train](#) she is and how strong her guard dog instinct is, you may need to repeat this exercise several times over a few days before you see results.

Another tip to get her used to the sound of other human voices is to put the radio on from time to time. This can be a [good thing to do](#) when you leave her on her own, as she will feel comforted, but will also be less likely to react to noises from outside.

2. Socialize her with other dogs

If your dog is not sociable with other dogs, you should start working on this now, as she needs to get used to being around other dogs in the apartment building or retirement home.

Take your dog to a neutral setting like the dog park and introduce her to other dogs, big and small, and of all ages. If she shows her teeth, tucks her tail under her body or avoids other dogs altogether, it means she does not feel comfortable.

Keep at it and be encouraging. The more she is around dogs, the more accustomed she will get. After a while, she will be able to relax and realize it can be a lot of fun to play with four-legged friends!



3. Potty train her

If your dog is used to having a backyard, she will need to be trained to do her business indoors. This can take time and dedication, but it is entirely doable.

We already covered this topic in the [previous newsletter](#), so stick to the Do's and Don'ts there and don't hesitate to check the [complete potty training guide](#) over at [Animalso](#).

One quick additional tip:

Lately, potty pads are becoming very popular. I personally find them very useful for apartment living. This is especially the case if you own a [small breed dog](#) like a [Chihuahua](#), as these dogs have small bladders and need to go outside at least 6 times a day. However, not all dogs like them, so try it out before ordering a whole batch of potty pads from the store.

4. Train her to walk nicely on a leash

If your dog is not used to leash walking, she will need to be trained to walk without pulling. Start with short **10-minute sessions**, and build up from there as she progresses.

You should get a **training leash**, which is shorter than a regular leash so that your dog stays at your side.

Keep her on the same side of you at all times — that way, she won't trip you if she moves back and forth.

On the walk, **monitor your dog**. If she is a puller, **don't let her learn the lesson that if she pulls, she gets what she wants**. Stop walking as soon as you feel tension on the lead. Once she notices you've become a statue, she will probably turn around. As soon as you feel the leash slacken, praise and reward with a treat. If she pulls again, repeat the process.

You may have to do this over many days before she gets the hang of leash walking. It takes time and patience ... and having lots of doggy treats in hand!



5. Get her used to mobility aids

If you are going to be living in a retirement home, there is every chance that your dog will be exposed to mobility aids such as **wheelchairs, canes, or walkers**. If your dog has never been around these before, she may well show signs of fear or confusion, and either bark at or try to avoid the person using the aid.

First of all, **start slowly by letting her see and sniff these aids without a person** using them. You can also provide positive rewards if she shows acceptable behaviour towards them.

Second of all, I advise you to **keep her on the leash until she is familiarized with people using these aids**, as, if not, she may jump up or run towards the person.



You should **expose her** to people using these aids **slowly**. Never force her to interact, and whether it is you or someone else using the aid, try to avoid jerky or sudden movements that could scare her. She needs to see the wheelchair, cane, or walker as non-threatening.

You will know that she doesn't feel threatened once she is showing calm behaviour around them, which means **she should not be fixated on the aid in any way**. That means no staring, barking, jumping or whining.

6. Conclusion

So, there are five main things to do to prepare your dog for life in an apartment or retirement home. You should get her used to noises outside her home, socialize her with other dogs, potty train her, practice leash walking, and familiarize her with mobility aids.

Tackling these five issues before the move will help her enormously when it comes to adjusting to her new lifestyle.

"Going to the Dogs" Fundraiser



Join us on Sunday, September 24th at 5 p.m. for the "Going to the Dogs Dinner and Race Night" at Rideau Carleton Raceway.

We are looking for volunteers to get donations for our silent auction, distribute posters, help with publicity, and help on the day of the event.

Email morejulie@hotmail.com and let us know what you are interested in helping with. Thanks 😊

Park Clean-Ups

It will soon be Spring (we all hope). That means it's park clean-up time. Join us for our bi-annual Spring Clean-Up Days that take place once in the Spring and then later again in the Fall.

Most dog owners are very good in cleaning up after their dogs, but are not so good cleaning up after themselves. You wouldn't believe the number of Tim Horton's cups we collect on the clean-up days.

These events also help promote our organization and give us an opportunity to answer questions.

During the morning we hand out bags and gloves to dog owners. They are the ones who do all the work picking up the garbage etc. Their reward is a much cleaner park, and their dogs get dog cookies.

RDOC would like to take this opportunity to thank all the wonderful dog owners who help keep our parks clean.

Spring Schedule (Ottawa area):

Conroy Pit Park – Saturday, May 6th from 9-10 a.m.

Stittsville Park – Saturday, May 20th from 9-10 a.m.

Bruce Pit – Saturday, May 27th from 9-10 a.m.

Heritage Park, Orleans – Saturday, June 3rd from 9-10 a.m.



Garage Sale

RDOC is very pleased to host our second annual garage sale. It will be held on Saturday, May 13th at Betty's house (24 Elderwood Trail in Stittsville) starting at 9 a.m. Thank you, Betty, for offering to hold the fundraiser at your house.



Everybody, go through your house. It's time to declutter. Whatever you don't need we will be happy to take. Items can be dropped off at Betty's house on Friday, May 12th.

Please put a price on each item as it will make our lives much easier. Please keep the prices low for quick sale. If there is an item you want back if it doesn't sell at a certain price, please mark "firm" so we don't let it go for less than the price tag.

We also need volunteers to help out on Saturday. If you can help please email me at morejulie@hotmail.com

Pet Expo

By Kit Watson and Julie More

Kit and I attended the Pet Expo held in Ottawa in November. We thoroughly enjoyed it. It is a very well organized educational event. Here is the link to their website: <http://www.ottawapetexpo.ca/>

Kit and I have been at almost every show since it started, and each time we go we learn more about new organizations. Here is the link to the list of exhibitors: <http://www.ottawapetexpo.ca/exhibitor-list/>



The exhibitors were divided into 15 categories:

Animal Welfare & Rescues	Pet Food Manufacturers
Art & Photography	Pet Memorial
Breeders	Pet Stores
Cleaning & Waste Solutions	Pet Toys & Products
Health & Nutrition	Vets & Animal Hospitals
Kennels & Day Cares	Groomers
Misc. Pet Services / Other	Pet Safety Trainers
Pet Fashion	

Most of the categories are self explanatory. However, we were wondering what the "Misc. Pet Services / Other" category entails. Here are 2 organizations under that category:

We found ElderDog Canada Inc. a very interesting organization. According to their website (<http://www.elderdog.ca/>), "ElderDog Canada Inc. is a national, registered Charitable Organization dedicated to ageing people, ageing dogs, and the important connection they enjoy." The volunteer we talked to said that the organization provides help with caring for a dog whose elderly owners, due to medical problems, etc. are unable to take their pets for walks, etc. They also provide dog food, etc., where needed.

We didn't get to the Empties for Paws booth, probably because, as we found out later, they were located in the parking lot, but we found their website very interesting. According to their website (<http://www.emptiesforpaws.com/>), the organization is "Challenging people and businesses everywhere to start 'Recycle 4 Animals' drives to collect items that are refundable in their area to raise money for their local animal rescue."

We enjoyed watching the Rideau River DockDogs diving into the water. Great fun. Check out their website (<http://www.rideauriverdockdogs.com/>). Your dog will thank you for it, especially if he loves water, jumping etc. Great way to keep him in shape!

They even had a Christmas Photo Booth by Beth Photography. According to her website (<http://www.beth-photography.com/>), "I provide convenient custom sessions specializing in pets and their families." Re the Pet Expo - here is Beth's comment on her website "I wanted to thank everyone for stopping by during the Pet Expo this year. It was an amazing turnout. We had 330 participants come by and get their pictures taken with their lovable pets." Judging from her comment, it was a great success.

If you were a cat person there was a whole section devoted to cats. It was here that you could find out everything you wanted to know about cats and shop for cat products. There were cat breeders who could tell you about specific breeds. There were presentations where speakers talked about the health, behaviour and grooming needs of cats. You could even adopt a cat.

Other booths that might be of interest to others are the City of Ottawa By-Laws & Regulatory Services, St. John Ambulance, Petsecure Pet Health Insurance and Safe Pet. For someone interested in getting a pet for the first time, they might want to check out the City of Ottawa By-Laws and Regulatory Services for information pertaining to responsibility, care, control, licensing and registration, liability issues, number of pets allowed in the household, etc.

If you already have a pet, you might want to look into getting Pet Insurance to cover those extra expenses if your pet contacts a serious illness/disease such as cancer, kidney or diabetes, or to cover injuries from, say, being hit by a car.

If your situation only allows you to temporarily have a pet, then maybe volunteering and signing up with Safe Pet Ottawa is an option. You can check this out through your veterinarian.

Safe Pet Ottawa is an organization that provides veterinary services and long or short-term fostering of companion animals for women and children leaving an abusive situation and staying in a shelter where they are unable to bring their pets. When the women are ready to leave the shelter, they are reunited with their pets so that they can move on to a better future together again.

The St. John Ambulance booth offered first aid training courses not just for people, but a pet first-aid course as well.

Plans are already made for this year's Pet Expo (November 11th and 12th, 2017). Mark the dates on your calendar. Your dog would love to come with you too. 😊

Kids Page

Don't forget to visit the latest edition of the Kids Page on our website. Just click on this link:

<http://www.responsibleogowners.ca/kidspage/activitypage-spring2017.html>



We have a new quiz for you, another page to colour for our contest, a trick to teach your dog ('Turn Around', or 'Turn Left') and a little article about gerbils.

Thank You

We would like to thank our committee for proofreading this newsletter. We really appreciate your help. A special thank you to Kit Watson for the final proofreading of the newsletter.

Jill & Julie (newsletter co-editors).



Dates referred to in this newsletter, and also listed on our [website](#) :

CHEO Teddy Bear Picnic - Saturday, June 24th

“Going to the Dogs” Fundraiser - Sunday, September 24th

2nd Annual Garage Sale - Saturday, May 13th

Spring clean-up at Conroy Pit Park – Saturday, May 6th from 9-10 a.m.

Spring clean-up at Stittsville Park – Saturday, May 20th from 9-10 a.m.

Spring clean-up at Bruce Pit – Saturday, May 27th from 9-10 a.m.

Spring clean-up at Heritage Park, Orleans – Saturday, June 3rd from 9-10 a.m.

Pet Expo – November 11th and 12th

Responsibility • Respect • Recognition

Contact RDOC by:

E-mail: inquiries@responsibledogowners.ca

Phone: 613.258.0697 / 613.868.2201 (leave message)

Write to us at:

9 Liette Ct., RR1, Kemptville, ON K0G 1J0

Or visit us online at:

www.responsibledogowners.ca

Annual Membership Fees:

Seniors and Students - \$10

Adult and Family - \$20 (volunteers get a 50% discount)

Not-for-Profit Organizations - \$35

Corporations and Businesses - \$50

To join or renew your membership, please email: inquiries@responsibledogowners.ca

or go to our website at: www.responsibledogowners.ca/membership.html