



*Monkton Community Dog Park Newsletter
Issue 5, Nov. 21, 2021*

A Community Dog Park for Monkton -- Newsletter

Welcome to our anniversary issue of our *Monkton Community Dog Park* Newsletter!

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The Monkton Community Dog Park is celebrating its first anniversary today! On Nov. 21, 2020, we tentatively opened the dog park under the state emergency authorization, which allowed outdoor activities with plenty of social distancing. The dogs were thrilled, and so were their owners who were desperate for safe outdoor activities to keep the dogs exercised.

In this issue, we are going to look back at our first year, and enjoy a few pictures of happy dogs and happy owners. We'll laugh about some of our challenges, reminisce about our successes, and introduce some upcoming events to look forward to.

First, let's start with a **Note of Gratitude** from Linda Anderson Krech, a happy pet grand-parent:



I've always liked dogs. They're cute and funny and playful, and they make me laugh. But now I love dogs. And the older I get, and the crazier the world becomes, the more I love dogs. So to have the Monkton Community Dog Park open up -- just as my daughter adopted a puppy and the pandemic went into full swing -- was almost too good to be true.

I had never been to a dog park before, but from my first visit I was hooked by the sheer unabandoned wild playful puppy joy and zooming energy of Ella and her new friends. To watch all of these dogs, each one so beautiful and unique, as they run to the gate to greet new friends and usher them into the rough and tumble world of the dog park is, for some reason, endlessly entertaining. It's also free -- free entertainment out in the fresh air, with beautiful views surrounding us. In such a wide-open space, without the constraints of a leash, our dogs can be their most vibrant and engaging selves, while running, wrestling, tugging, chasing, catching, dancing, and doggie schmoozing.

And although the dogs are the main attraction, the dog-loving humans they bring with them are an added bonus. Especially during these pandemic times, it's lovely to have a local place to connect with members of our own tribe.

Many thanks to those who took an idea and turned it into the Monkton Community Dog Park. Amazing.



Our First Year at The Monkton Community Dog Park

If you build it, they WILL come!

The Monkton Community Dog Park Committee organized in 2018 with a dream of building a dog park in Monkton. We reviewed potential sites, hosted events where we talked to many, many town residents, visited other dog parks and established connections with them, researched fencing, and started writing grants and fund-raising. We wrote a lot of grants, and reached out to our awesome community, which responded with generous donations.



(photo by Buzz Kuhns, August, 2020)

Our first choice of site was located within Morse Park. The Monkton Recreation Committee and the Monkton Select Board, with the support of the VT Housing and Conservation Board, which holds the easement on

Morse Park, agreed to our use of this site, and we were off and running. Between local fund-raising and a \$2000 grant from the VT State Buildings and Ground Services, we had the money we needed to start building in the fall of 2020.



Since the entire area around Monkton Pond is known to contain early American artifacts (both prehistoric and Colonial era), any digging on a project that receives state funds must be preceded by an archeological investigation. So, under the supervision of the VT Department of Historic Preservation, volunteers ensured that construction would have minimal to no impact on Colonial and prehistoric artifacts.

A few small artefacts were found, bagged, and catalogued.



Red School House Construction donated both cash and labor to design the fencing system and build the park. Pet Food Warehouse donated our waste station inside the Dog Park, and Casella Waste Systems brought a trash receptacle and donated pick-up services. Linda Reynolds designed our logo, and Callie Brynn designed our Rules and Sponsor Recognition signs. When these finishing touches were completed, we were ready to open!

With dogs happily frolicking, the Dog Park Committee tackled the next project on our list. A generous donation from Hinesburg Aubuchon Hardware allowed us to purchase the materials and Monkton Boy Scout Troop 525 Assistant Scout Master Jeff Densmore built two solid wood benches to earn his Wood Badge. The dogs love them! And so do their owners.



Scout Master George Parker delivered the benches



*...and the dogs lined up to say thank you!
[photo by Mountain Dog Photography]*

One of the success stories at the Dog Park was the happy group of puppies that learned appropriate social behavior together during the winter of 2020-2021. Ella, Bodhi, Winnie, Arrow, and Ollie formed the first puppy pack, and their pet parents enjoyed meeting and

socializing with each other while the pups expended all that excess puppy energy. Ella celebrated her first birthday at the park with all her buddies, who got to wear hats and play games, while proud parents munched cookies. It was a great party!



We can happily report that a year later, another group of puppies is starting to meet and play together, and we look forward to watching them become well-behaved adults. Just as importantly, their chauffeurs are meeting each other and making new friends also. This is one of the biggest benefits of a dog park for a community!

By May, 2021, public health conditions had eased considerably, and the Dog Park was ready to celebrate. We hung our Sponsor Recognition signs, and threw a party.



We followed the fun with a little more serious exploration of dog training, with Alec Sparks speaking to a small group about the foundation work which is the start of Balance training. While he concentrates on training field dogs, Alec also takes on companion animals, and works with a large number of rescue organizations as a foster trainer to get dogs ready for re-homing. He talked about basic training techniques, and brought his Malinois “Bug” along to demonstrate. She loved showing off her total focus on Alec, as well as the plentiful treats provided for an hour-long talk. A lively question and answer period followed his presentation.

We hope to bring Alec back next summer for an exploration of more advanced training techniques. Other educational events are also in the works as soon as the weather warms up again. Kim Frigault (VT Barks & Recreation) has promised a talk focusing on how dogs socialize in groups, and how pet parents can promote “good” behaviors at the park.



Remember Mud Season?

In our May 2021 issue, we asked, “Who knew that mud season could last so long, or be so miserable?” The rains have returned, the mud hasn’t improved any, and we’ve developed a few more wallows, but we’ve also developed a great relationship with some of our neighbors, who have helped facilitate some solutions. Many thanks to Brian Cota of Champlain Valley Site Work and Teachers Tree Service for continuing to supply us with wood chips to fill in those hollows. The committee is working on a more permanent solution to implement next spring.



Right now, the entire northern half of the large dog area is very muddy, and the rain isn’t going to stop soon. As park users, you can help!

Please consider these options:

- 🐾 take a week off to give the ground a rest,
- 🐾 try to keep your dog’s play in the southwest corner,
- 🐾 or use the small dog area (if no puppies are in there).

Are you ready for Winter?

It won’t be long before the ground is frozen and the wallows are full of snow. Everyone who enjoys the park can help keep the gates open by spending a few minutes shoveling the snow around the entry gates if you arrive while it is still fresh and soft. Once it is packed down, it can be impossible to dig it out, and the gates can freeze closed

We will post our “Winter Weather Advisory” at the Park and on our Facebook page when winter really arrives, and we will put the shovels out for everyone to pitch in. Thanks so much for helping keep your dog park open!



Winter Weather Advisory

From your friends at the Monkton Community Dog Park



Please help us keep the gates open!

Pups and people love the snow, but our gates can be damaged when pushed through heavy snow.

If you arrive and notice that the entry gates have not been cleared, please take a few minutes to shovel before you walk on the snow and pack it down.



This will help us keep the gates in good shape for the rest of the year!





Coming Soon!

We were thrilled when local Girl Scout, Lucy Parker, came forward to express interest in creating a beautiful shade structure for the dog park as her Girl Scout Gold Award project. With approval to move ahead from the Girl Scout Council Lucy teamed up with a couple of our MCDP Committee members to review designs and navigate the approval process.

Archaeologist Scott Dillon returned to the Dog Park with a small crew from the Department of Historic Preservation to ensure that no artefacts were lost when we sink the posts for our newest project. Lucy and her Dog Park Committee mentor Cathie Buscaglia reached out to our other stakeholders,. To date the project has gained the approval of the Monkton Rec Committee, The Vermont Housing Conservation Board, and the Vermont Division of Historic Preservation.

Lucy's next step is fund-raising and building the structure. We are hopeful that when the spring and summer sun shines, we will have a lovely retreat from the heat. Keep an eye out for opportunities to donate to this great projectk.



A Reminder:

MONKTON COMMUNITY DOG PARK

WELCOME!

Please read and understand all dog park rules before using the dog park.

- Dogs must be licensed, vaccinated and healthy
- Dogs must be kept in sight and under voice control at all times
- Limit: 2 dogs per adult
- Minimize excessive barking
- Dogs in heat and dogs under the age of 12 weeks are prohibited
- Pick up your dog's waste and dispose of it properly
- Dogs that display aggression toward people/dogs must be removed immediately
- Children under 12 must be supervised by an adult
- Keep your dog from jumping on other dogs or people
- Owners are legally responsible for their dogs and any injuries caused by them
- No glass, food, alcohol, or smoking - all other Morse Park rules apply

Hours of Operation: The Park will be open from dawn to dusk.

In an emergency, please call 911.

Questions or concerns?

Contact dogpark@monktonvt.com

The Monkton Dog Park Committee and/or Town of Monkton will not be liable for any injury or damage caused by any dog or person in the park. Users of the park do so at their own risk. All dogs and their owners must comply with the Town of Monkton Animal Control Ordinance.



Join Us!

The Monkton Community Dog Park Committee is transitioning our focus from BUILDING a dog park in Monkton to MAINTAINING our Community Dog Park, and we are welcoming new members to support us as we move forward. If you are interested in joining us, please contact dogpark@monktonvt.com. We look forward to planning fun events and ensuring that the Dog Park continues to be a fun, safe, place for our pups to meet and play.



FUNDRAISING

A big THANK YOU ❤️ to Wahl Landscaping, our newest White Ribbon Sponsor!

We would also like to thank our new Community Supporters Lauren Parren and Lisa Brugger, and those of you who are utilizing our Amazon Smile fund-raiser!

One of the realities of owning dogs is cleaning up after them, and one of the delights of a dog park is the poop bag dispenser and waste can RIGHT THERE! so the clean-up job is easy and doesn't go home with you. But those bags have to be purchased, and this will be a significant and on-going expense. We all want the beautiful grassy field to stay beautiful and grassy, and this involves mowing and trimming along the fenceline. Again, this is a significant expense. Our goal is to never have to burden the Monkton taxpayer with any costs related to the dog park, so we will continue to look to our supporters for funding for these on-going expenses. Here are some ideas on how to help:

- 🐾 Are you looking for that special gift for a dog-lover in your life? Or are you the dog-lover, and someone is asking you what you would love to receive? How about a donation in your (or your pup's name) to the Dog Park? Skip the in-person shopping, or even the on-line stress, and give the gift of helping the Dog Park.
- 🐾 You can now use Amazon Smile to generate funds for the Dog Park! For any holiday or shopping need, if you use Amazon for your shopping, you can select the "Monkton Community Coffeehouse" as a charitable recipient, and 0.5% of the purchase price (for all qualifying purchases) will be donated directly to our bank account. All you have to do is go to <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/26-4429225> to start your shopping! It's easy to do, and your purchases will not cost you anything extra.
- 🐾 We are providing an opportunity for dog-lovers to memorialize a beloved pet's life with a small engraved plaque. For \$25, your pet's name and information can be engraved on a dog tag, and your dog can play on in memory at the park.

- 🐾 As public health conditions permit, we hope to continue to offer events at the dog park which will help us raise money through small attendance fees and donations.
- 🐾 We will continue to receive donations at both our PayPal (<http://monktonvt.com/community/monkton-community-dog-park/>) and our GoFundMe (<https://www.gofundme.com/f/monkton-community-dog-park>) links. If you prefer donating by check you can do that too! Please make your check payable to Monkton Community Dog Park and mail it to Monkton Town Hall 92 Monkton Ridge North Ferrisburgh, VT 05473.



Questions, concerns, want to pitch in and help?

We are committed to ensuring that decision-making for the Monkton Community Dog Park is an inclusive and transparent process. Anyone interested in joining the workgroup or sharing ideas is welcome. The next meeting of the Dog Park Committee is Wednesday, Dec. 8 at 7:00 pm by Zoom. Please contact us (see below) for meeting login information.

To come to a meeting, join the committee or request additional information contact us at dogpark@monktonvt.com.

We look forward to seeing you at the Dog Park!