

CHATHAM County Line

where all voices are heard



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Vol. 15, Issue 4

FREE ~ GRATIS

May 2017

Talk'n Trash at Jordan Lake

by Francis A. DiGiano

Most everyone is familiar with orange DOT trash bags stacked along roadsides after cleanups. But very few are aware of bags collected by 5,200 volunteers for Clean Jordan Lake since 2008.

Our accomplishments are mind boggling. Volunteers have removed 12,500 bags of trash, enough to fill 40 large dumpsters. That's about 120 tons. If placed side by side along a roadside, the bags would stretch for 6 miles.

Inside bags is the ugly footprint left by

human activity in the 1,700 square miles of watershed reaching up to Greensboro and the Hillsborough-Durham area. The unexpected finds are commercial-sized soft drink CO2 cylinders, playground objects (basketballs, baseballs, softballs, soccer balls, plastic baseball bats), children's 3-wheelers, doll heads, toys, car bumpers, and large plastic objects (chairs, pails, tubs and crates). There are coolers, Cigarillo tips, Styrofoam remnants, plastic bottles, and cigarette lighters. Ironically, we've even recovered blue recycle boxes!

As proof that trash originates from far

away, we've found heavy plastic water meter covers imprinted with City of Greensboro and items with a Duke Energy label from their depot in Burlington.

We also find things that could threaten water quality like chemical residuals from pesticide sprayers, containers of lubricants, hydraulic fluids, solvents, and industrial adhesives, fire extinguishers and aerosol spray cans of insect repellent, personal care products, paints, and paint remover. Recreational use

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The Importance of Good Mothers

It's May, so Happy Mother's Day, to moms everywhere! Whether human or canine, the role a mother plays in the lives of their young is so important, and there is so much we have in common.

Puppies can inherit personality traits from either parent. If possible, people should meet the parents before deciding on a pup from that litter. If a mom or dad has aggression or major anxiety issues move on and look somewhere else. Otherwise, unless you are an expert puppy raiser, your puppy has a good chance of growing up to be just like their unstable parent.

In the dog world, fathers aren't usually around for their offspring's puppyhood. All the responsibility falls on mom, and there is so much she has to do. From the moment a puppy is born duty calls. Mothers lick each puppy clean, which removes the placenta sack from the pup's face and stimulates the puppy to breathe.

Mothers protect their puppies, sometimes with their lives, taking on threats that greatly outweigh and out match her. This is something most mothers do without hesitation. In any other situation she would have backed down, but having young to protect gives her a drive and intensity that most animals are not willing to take on.

Mothers do the best they can to provide for their pups. When food is scarce a mother will waste away to skin and bones while her nursing puppies remain at a good weight. She is literally sacrificing herself in order to feed her young, and will do the best she can for as long as she can.

Puppies can be greatly influenced by their mother's example. From their mom, puppies learn how to react to certain situations. An example would be, when the mother barks every time a stranger comes into the house the puppies learn that is what you do when you see a stranger.

Mothers correct, direct, and discipline their puppies, as needed. Mothers don't let their puppies get away with ignoring them. The heat is on until they follow her instructions. Mothers also play with their puppies, as well as sharing tender moments. As they grow, mothers allow their pups to venture out to investigate and experience the world around them.

Some puppies are not able to spend enough time with their moms to properly develop emotionally. In these cases, perhaps the mother has died, or rejected the litter, most of the time, the reason is because the puppies were given away way too young. Pups should stay with mom for at least six weeks and with the litter until at least eight weeks old. When puppies are separated from their moms too soon they can have major anxiety issues that last a lifetime.

Hand-raised and bottle fed puppies are at the highest risk for growing up to be entitled brats. The humans raising them have done everything for them. They have kept them warm, given around the clock feedings, cleaned up after them, and even helped stimulate them to pee and poop like the mother dog would have done. There has been a lot of love, affection, and doting on the pups, but often there have been no consequences for bad behavior. Often, bad behavior is seen as cute and maybe even encouraged. Not disagreeing with bad behavior is the same thing as accepting that it is okay. Hand raised puppies (and

the Canine Coach

by Valerie Broadway



kittens) often grow up to be aggressive, even with those who have taken such care raising them. Since they have never been given boundaries they understand or been put in their place when needed, they grow up to be quite cocky. They resent being corrected and angrily lash out when someone tries to rein them in. Because they have little to no respect for others their aggressive outbursts can be extreme.

In the dog world, if there is a female in the group she is almost always the one in charge. It is important that the highest ranking human female in the home be seen as a leader, especially if there is a female dog in the house. The top female in the house should be calm and confident, and give clear directions and consequences. This is the environment where dogs feel safe, and there will be fewer problems.

The sign of a good leader is it is difficult to tell who the leader is. Good leaders deal with issues swiftly and appropriately. Followers trust her and know if they step out of line she will be right there to put them back in place. Good leaders were once good followers, who learned to do it well from the example of a good leader.

At times motherhood can be a tiring, seemingly thankless job, but when challenges are met head on and love and guidance are provided, the results can be extremely rewarding. The end goal for any species of mother is for their young to eventually go out into the world and be successful in their own lives. For most humans, mothering never ends, it just adjusts as the children age.

Whether biological, adoptive, or foster, we all need good mothers. Moms give so much of themselves that goes unrecognized and under-appreciated. They do all they do because their heart and mothering instincts push them to. Perfect or sometimes imperfect, where would we be without good mothers?

I must mention, while I believe canine mothers are extraordinary, most female dogs should not experience being one. Some people believe a wives tale that suggests dogs are happier if they've had at least one litter. That is simply not the case. Reality is, there are millions of wonderful dogs and puppies euthanized every year in America, simply because no one wants them. As long as this is the case, bringing more puppies into the world seems senseless.

Both Chatham Animal Services (919.542.7203) and Chatham Animal Rescue and Education (919.542.5757) or www.chathamanimalrescue.org offer low cost spay/neuter options to qualifying residents of Chatham County.

Valerie Broadway, the Canine Coach, is a dog trainer and behavioral specialist. 919.542.4726 or visit www.caninecoachingservices.com.

Chatham needs big parks to survive urbanization

by Joe Jacob

Seems that parks are the subject of conversation this Spring. Siler City just hired a new park's director. Pittsboro is in the process of developing a parks master plan. The Chatham County Economic Development Corporation and the Chatham Conservation Partnership separately put on sessions which discussed the economic benefits of parks and recreation. What are parks, and why all the interests now?

To me, a park is an oasis in the urban landscape, a place to reconnect with Nature and de-stress, whether it be by finding solitude or physical activity. I believe that the idea and need for parks result when a society becomes too crowded. It is a culture's attempt to survive in an un-natural environment.

Just look at history. Perhaps Central Park in New York City is one of the most famous urban parks. It was Frederick Law Olmstead, designer of Central Park, that believed "every city should have a large rural park as an alternative to the density of buildings and crowding of the metropolis, a place to provide for an unbending of the faculties." As cities grew larger and more and more people moved away from the central location of the larger parks, there became a need for more and smaller parks designed to meet the recreational needs of their citizens.

Look at the word recreation. Look at it again; re-creation. As adults there is a tendency in an urban environment to disconnect from a rather mundane and repetitive life. We seek to break away from the boredom through either getting out into Nature or by physical activity we call recreation. Walking on a treadmill in the safety of our homes just doesn't satisfy us like a walk in the park. Playing a virtual game of baseball on our computer just isn't the same as playing baseball in a neighborhood park. We need to find an outlet to remember who we are and we often find that outlet in parks.

As a kid growing up in New Orleans, LA, I lived 12 blocks from Audubon Park and four blocks from the Mississippi River. My friends and I were always on our bicycles going to play at either place. Lucky for us the only rules we had were "be home before dark, don't cross over any major streets and stay away from the railroad tracks". Well, we were always home before dark, but I can't say we always paid attention to the other two rules. Looking back at those times with my friends in the park or by the river, I can see that they are among the happiest times of my life. We got dirty. We rolled in the grass. We climbed every tree numerous times and knew them intimately. If there was a puddle of water, we jumped into it. We were too busy having fun to get involved in drugs or mischief. I am who I am today because of parks and rivers. Parks are not open space or ball fields. Parks are a society's investment in who we become.

No-one doubts that Chatham County is about to burst at the seams. Actually, we see it happening right now, and I have seen it gradually happening for the 30-plus years I have lived in the County. The new development of Chatham Park, which isn't a park, and the possible development of two mega-sites for industrialization are about to push us into becoming a metropolis. Are we up to the task of creating the parks we will need to survive in such a place? Is it possible to create our own Central Park before it is too late? I believe it is so if the public and political will is ready to make the commitment.

Like New York City, we will need a large rural area and are lucky to have three naturally, although impaired, functioning ecosystems, the Haw, Deep and Rocky Rivers. We should declare them to be our Central Parks and begin compensating landowners for keeping their riparian corridor natural which means not building in the floodplain, not cutting the trees along the banks, not removing the understory and not allowing grazing. Protecting these three rivers will not only provide us with a place to de-stress from the concrete, asphalt and steel that is surely to come, but could also insure that we have clean, fresh water to support fish and wildlife and our own drinking water needs.

Joe Jacob, a Chatham resident for more than 30 years and a marine biologist by training, is president The Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co., www.hawrivercanoe.com, 336.260.6465. He worked for The Nature Conservancy for 20 years and served as Director of Science for TNC's Southeast Region.