

Aylmer Canine Club – AGM 2015

Chairman's Report

This past year was marked by two important events: **our canine exercise area at Paul Pelletier Park is finally all set up and open for visitors, and following our petition, the City of Gatineau decided not to prohibit access for our dogs into the Boucher forest.** On April 24th, 2015, all parties (the Aylmer Canine Club and the City of Gatineau) have officially signed the MOU for our new enclosed exercise area. You can look at this MOU at our Website in the section “Nouvelles du Club, Club News”; you will also find paper copies of this MOU on the Reception table at the back of the room.

Two minor happy events happened since last June. First, the chair of the Boucher Forest Foundation, Mr. Adrian Corbo, has indicated that he wishes to maintain a spirit of **collaboration between our Club and the Foundation.** Secondly, we are very happy with the Club's growing popularity. We have almost **800 human members and more than 900 canine members.** We are therefore one of **the largest dog owner associations in Quebec.**

Since we do not charge membership fees, our organization must finance its operations with fund raising events (the BBQ's we hold twice a year), with the grants city counsellors donate from their discretionary budgets and with our Commercial Partners' contributions. About that, I wish to stress that we receive considerable help from the **Pitou Minou et Compagnons** Pet shop. On top of the fee they pay as a Commercial Partner, they have decided to give our Club all the donations they collect at their monthly Nail Cutting Clinics... PLUS, they give us the free rolls of pooh bags we place at the gates of both parks for users who forget theirs.

I also wish to remind you of the two main objectives of the Club's Constitution: managing an enclosed dog exercise area, and keeping dog owners aware of how important hygiene and security can be. These objectives are essential not only to build our association's credibility in the region, but to **keep our two parks open for our dogs**. Thanks to all the park users who help emptying the bags and bringing them to the blue bins, our dogs can play in clean and welcoming "pastures". We have hired a company by the name of Entretien Desjardins who cuts the grass regularly at Paul-Pelletier Park. The Canine Club inspects this area continuously and makes minor repairs whenever necessary. At J.-L. Park, we have added a few garbage cans around the basin and installed more solid supports for some of them.

Thanks to all our members' donations and to our volunteers' hard work, we have set a cement slab on which we will secure two new park benches. The Club has spent close to \$3,000 for the digging, the slab and the benches.

Regrettably, I have to mention the vandalism happening at the Park every spring and summer, practically destroying our bridges, benches and stairs. We have lodged an official complaint with the City's Park Surveillance Service and with the Police, hoping that they will act and improve the situation. We urge all our Park users to notify us immediately if they come across any information which might help identify the culprits.

As far as our future activities and projects are concerned, we hope to offer our members and all the Parks' users (Paul-Pelletier and Jardins-Lavigne) workshops on canine behaviour. We would hold these workshops when the parks get the most visitors. We could also organize breed events highlighting a specific breed for one day. We are also thinking of opening a small snack counter on certain Sundays with coffee, soft drinks, buns, etc. Of course, the success of these initiatives will depend on the availability of volunteers.

Let me conclude by stressing how important solidarity is between dog owners. It is the only way to get public officials to respond to our needs and to finally offer and maintain special dog exercising areas and services in Gatineau's urban setting.

Thank you to each and every one of you,

André Lemay, Chairman
Club canin Aylmer