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By Sarah Mason
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Applause was met with yips, barks and the wagging of tails Saturday at Sunnyside Park in Pullman. As Soulstice, a local band, finished playing, nearly half of the listeners looked on with tongues lolling.

Around 60 community members attended the Whitman County Humane Society's Mutt Strut, the first fundraiser for the proposed Pullman dog park.

Supporters walked the trail around the park Saturday morning. Donations were accepted dressed specially for the event in hotdog bun outfits, complete with mustard- and ketchup-colored swirls on their backs.

Bella and Buddy are kept on a leash not only because of Caplan's fear of losing them. A Pullman law requires all dog owners to keep their mutts leashed. The dog park will be the only place, outside of owners' lawns, where dogs can romp off-leash.

Heather Kelley helped bring the Mutt Strut to life as a project for AmeriCorps. She brought the idea of putting on a fund run to the Pullman Dog Park Committee and acted as an event coordinator. Kelley said the event was a success.

"It's a very, very, very big event considering it's the first year doing it here in Pullman," Kelley said.

Shelley Calissendorff worked with Kelley to reign in sponsors like Red Lion Hotels and Horizon Air. Calissendorff is a former volunteer and employee of the Progressive Animal Welfare Society in Lynnwood, Wash. "Asking people here for donations for prizes or to participate in events is so easy," Calissendorff said of Pullman. "It seems like everyone says 'yes.' "

One of the strutters, Lori Ammons, worked for days before the Strut to get people to say "yes" to donating to the park. Ammons posted a plea on Craigslist.org, stood at Walmart accepting donations and made numerous phone calls telling people about the dog park in search for more funds.

"A lady at the theater had four cents and I said, 'We'll take it,' " Ammons said.

Ammons raised more than \$1,820 for the Mutt Strut and was awarded the first prize for her efforts: A five-night stay at the Red Lion Hotel in Anaheim, Calif., and two round-trip tickets from Horizon Air. She donated the prize back to the Humane Society.

Holding the leashes of her two dogs, Pawsly and Cinnamon, Ammons said a dog park is an invaluable resource for Pullman.

"An exercised dog will go home and rest," Ammons said. "an un-exercised dog at home will look for the first thing they can chew - usually the carpet or shoes."

The committee and the Humane Society still have a ways to go in their fund raising. The cost of the planned park is projected at \$64,000.

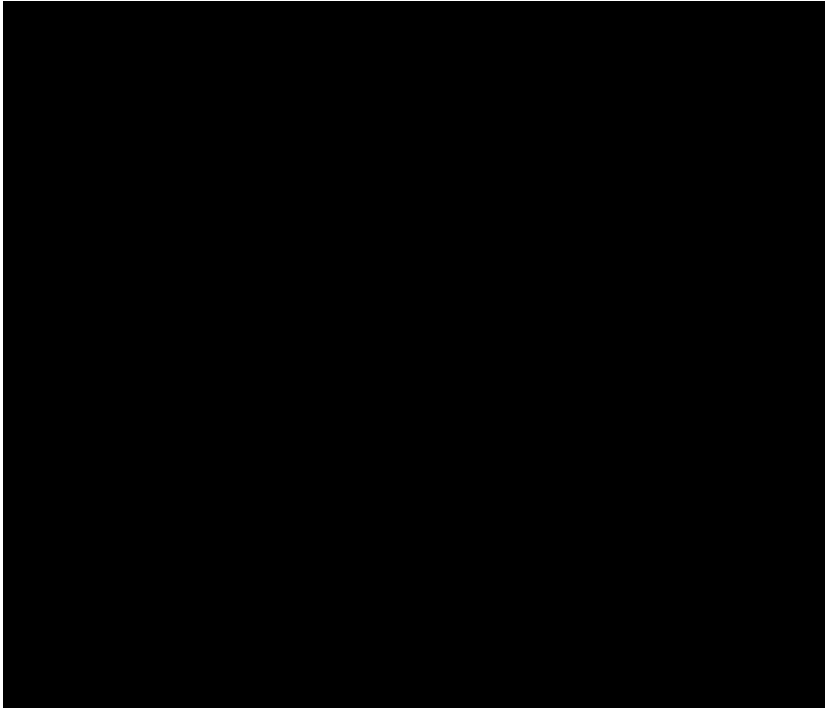
The park will span 2 acres of land donated by Susie Hardy-Gormsen and Mike Gormsen on Old Moscow Road, next to the Humane Society's Animal Haven now under construction, said Whitman County Humane Society Board President Colleen Harrington.

Dog owners will pay between \$50 and \$75 a year to use the park, which will pay for the upkeep of the park, Ammons said. wWPark members will have a key card to enter the gated area, which the Humane Society will use to track the park's use.

Ammons said dog owners will be held responsible for their own dogs, but if a problem dog or owner frequents the area, the Humane Society will maintain the right to void their membership.

- To learn more about or donate to the dog park, visit www.whitmanpets.org, call (509) 332-2246, or

send donations to the Whitman County Humane Society, attn: dog park, at P.O. Box 1095, Pullman, WA 99163.



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