

# Redmond - Caring to be dog friendly



If the notion of pleasure conjures up images of frolicking with your dog in the great-out-of-doors, you're not alone. Dog owners enthusiastically report that Redmond is very dog-friendly, with a lot of opportunity for play in parks, on surrounding trails at Redmond Town Center or other outlying areas.

Dogs are allowed on leash at most all Redmond parks and trails, and in downtown Redmond, with a few exceptions. These are Idylwood Park, where dogs are allowed on leash but cannot be within 150 feet of the shoreline for health reasons and The Redmond Watershed, which does not allow dogs at all due to its fragile flora and fauna. Pets are also restricted from Farrel-McWhirter Park for the protection and health of the park's farm animals. Service dogs are the exception to this rule. However, dogs and their owners may enter the farmyard area to access the park's "Charlotte Trail." Redmond Town Center also allows leashed dogs. Some merchants even offer treats and water dishes for visiting canines.

For over thirty years, the nearby King County Marymoor Park off-leash area has provided 40 acres of fields, woods, paths, walkways, bridges, a lake and a river for dog play. The area's main path runs alongside a fresh water stream where dogs can wade, swim and drink, so there's no need to bring water. The deeper water here is fenced off twice a year when the salmon are running to protect wildlife, however, so check with the park before throwing your dog's ball or Frisbee. The



area's large field section is open year-round. Here, dogs can

meet and romp with other canine friends. If your dog is rambunctious, alongside this section is another even larger, grassy wild field where dogs are free to run and leap. Easy, people-friendly walking paths meander through this area. Dogs are allowed anywhere here but are not allowed in children's play areas, on beaches or on organized athletic fields. For directions to the off-leash area, call 206-205-3661.

If you've enjoyed agility shows on television, now you can "tune in live" to events right here in Redmond! Once a year in late August, Marymoor Park is also the location for the Sammamish Kennel Club All-Dog Breed Show, featuring agility, obedience and conformation presentations. The event is free, open to the public and very kid-friendly. Information about the show is available at

**425-861-9030.** Cheryl Sackmann, Educational Director for the non-profit organization RAT (Rainier Agility Team, [www.ratagility.com](http://www.ratagility.com)) says of agility training, "it's a great way to create team spirit between you and your animal. Dogs learn obedience skills through organized play. It is fun, increases your dog's confidence and it's healthy for you too." Also, if you don't think dogs can fly, then you've never visited Marymoor's spring event, Dockdogs National Dog Jumping Competition, which always draws a crowd. Dogs jump into the water for distances of twenty feet or more!

Information about this event is available at 206-296-0673.

*"The greatest pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself too."*

—Writer Samuel Butler

If you like to participate in outdoor adventure alongside your dog, Bill Corson of the Redmond Police Department, who designs kayaks for Northwest Kayaks and is one of its owners, says he and his business partner Tony Helsel have designed a kayak that actually has a third seat for your dog. The dog-friendly handcrafted kayaks are made in Redmond and are available at the Outdoor Adventure Center, 15143 NE 90 St. Redmond, WA 98052.



## Dogs Make Caring Companions

For some, in addition to a loving friend, dogs are vital assistants. Canine Companions for Independence ([www.caninecompanions.org](http://www.caninecompanions.org)) is a non-profit organization that enhances the lives of people with disabilities by providing highly trained assistance dogs and ongoing support. Through the organization, dogs learn to assist people with physical or developmental disabilities; to pull wheelchairs, turn on lights and retrieve items.

Raider, a Black Labrador/Golden Retriever mix, assists nine year old Redmond resident Christopher Miller, who is developmentally delayed, affected by anxiety distress and has minor challenges with balance on stairs. "Raider helps me," says Christopher, "so I won't be scared." Kristin Miller, Christopher's mother adds, "At Christopher's command, Raider will press his head against Christopher or put his front paws and head on Christopher's chest to calm him down during stressful situations." Kristin says Raider also helps Christopher socialize with other people who

gravitate toward the dog. "It builds Christopher's self-esteem to be able to show others how Raider responds to his commands." Christopher's sister, seven year old Claire Miller, is currently co-raising a Golden Retriever who will become someone else's companion. "For a kid with challenges," notes Kristin, "having a dog that cares becomes very important."

## Dogs listen

Reading with Rover ([www.readingwithrover.org/](http://www.readingwithrover.org/)) is a community-based literacy program involving kids and dogs in schools, bookstores and libraries in the Puget Sound. Staffed by volunteers, the program is available to all schools and reading and learning facilities to enhance their reading programs. Children with reading difficulties actually read stories to a dog who listens attentively. A child who might otherwise be hesitant to read aloud to peers is often less stressed when reading to a dog since the child knows the dog will not judge his or her reading ability. Benefits of the program are kids develop

more comfort in reading aloud, achieve higher reading levels, lessen their shyness and improve their confidence.

Italian Cane Corso Marcello is a patient, attentive dog with large, drooping, sensitive brown eyes. Trained as a therapy dog, with intermediate and advanced obedience training in "Puppucino" (beginning obedience) and "Starbarks" (advanced obedience) from the Bellevue, Washington based Delta Society [www.deltasociety.org](http://www.deltasociety.org),

Marcello visits retirement homes, schools, bookstores and special events. Delta Society is an international, non-profit organization that unites people who have mental and physical disabilities and patients in healthcare facilities with professionally trained therapy animals. Delta

Society partners with Reading with Rover to train the dogs for service. Teamed with owner Pat Gowinka, every first and third Tuesday, Marcello listens patiently to kids read at Borders Bookstore in Redmond Town Center. "He just loves kids," says Pat. "One day we were sitting at the Starbucks in Redmond Town Center. A woman who was there with her 8-month old grandson approached us. Marcello gave the baby a soft lick on the cheek and the baby gave Marcello a full chops kiss right on the lips! Marcello adored it."







Another popular Reading with Rover assistant is Mocha, an 11-pound chocolate Pomeranian. Since Mocha is mostly fuzz, small in stature and resembles a stuffed toy, she's developed a quite a fan club at Reading with Rover. Owner Deb McKinney says, "I've been told if we are late to the bookstore, a chant starts -- "Mocha, Mocha, Mocha" --until the kids are assured that Mocha will be there soon." McKinney says numerous parents have commented on the difference Reading with Rover has made with their children. One parent told her that his daughter's reading skills had improved three grade levels during the school year since she started coming to Reading with Rover. Another parent said that her son never voluntarily picked up a book unless he is at Reading with Rover and can read to one of the dogs.

Therapy dogs assist in other ways too. In addition to work with Reading with Rover, Great Dane Wally and his owner Michelle Alford volunteer ten hours per week in nursing homes and assisted living residences. Alford says research has shown many there are actually health

benefits to pet therapy; lower blood pressure and relieved depression among them. At Emerald Heights, one gentleman in the Alzheimer's unit had never spoken. When he saw Wally he looked long and hard at him and then said simply, "too big." "After that," says Alford, "the man would only speak when Wally was in the room."

## Dogs Assist in Search and Rescue

Finally, while it's true Redmond dogs are social, caring canines, they are also assist in emergency life support. City of Redmond Fire Department employee LaFond Davis' three dogs, Sunny, Rose (Golden Labradors) and Spring (a lab mix), in partnership with Davis, assist the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) in search and rescue. Through volunteer work with the Puget Sound Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, Davis and her dogs assisted with both the aftermath of the 911 attack on the World Trade Center and hurricane Katrina. A regional team made up of over 25 different jurisdictions and organizations, the Puget Sound Urban Search & Rescue Task Force (WATF1) is one of the first 12

Task Forces to be deemed deployable by the Federal Emergency Management Agency. "I work with one dog at a time. We have to certify as a team," says LaFond, "The dogs are trained to bark and hold if they find something, navigate surfaces of rubble and concrete, climb fire ladders and be directed from a distance. We do put people in the rubble during training. The dogs have to be comfortable in that environment."

So, from pure recreational fun to vital life support, dogs in Redmond are, most arguably, among those we can honestly call our "best friends."

## Sanitation

Sanitation in our parks is important, so the City does rigorously enforce the "poop scoop" law. Additionally, for the safety of your pet, get your dog licensed. If you should by some outside chance get separated from your dog, a license is a way to guarantee your buddy will be easily and quickly reunited with you. Licensing information is available at <http://www.metrokc.gov/lars/animal/services/plindex>. In order

to preserve each of our park's unique and varied environments, park visitors are asked to cooperate with the City of Redmond Municipal Code relative to bringing pets into the park. (Section 9.32.070) Keep in mind that it is unlawful for any person to allow a pet to run at large, all dogs must be under leash at all times and anyone in possession of a pet in a park shall be responsible for the animal. The Park Director or designee may ban pets from any area of the park where it is determined they may be a nuisance.

*For specific park locations that allow dogs and for other general park information, go to [www.redmond.gov/insidecityhall/parksrec/parks.asp](http://www.redmond.gov/insidecityhall/parksrec/parks.asp) or contact the Redmond Parks and Recreation office at 425-556-2300.*

