



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

July 23, 2001

CONTACT: Alysa Slay or Dave Eisendrath
(312) 683-5264

A New "Breed" of Camp Chicago professionals mark a unique territory

(CHICAGO, IL) – The "campers" attending Camp Dogwood this fall will not have to worry about lugging heavy duffel bags, being homesick or making yet *another* lanyard. Instead, they get to go to camp with their "parents," participate in roasted weenie hunts, and even receive a massage. More than a doggie daycare or kennel, Camp Dogwood, which premieres this fall, is an overnight camp experience **for people and their dogs**.

"We have designed our program to be reminiscent of summers spent at sleep-away camp, keeping dog-related interests in mind," says co-founder Dr. Alysa Slay, "Camp Dogwood affords adults a unique travel destination with their dogs." One of only a few dog camps across the United States, Camp Dogwood is the first of its kind in Illinois and is conveniently located between Chicago and Milwaukee.

Keeping in mind the Camp Dogwood motto, "where your dog can be a dog!", the camp is situated on 180 acres of woods, wide-open fields, and wetlands, all set against the shores of Wooster Lake in Ingleside, Illinois. Camp Dogwood will offer human and canine participants over 30 activities drawn from the following categories: Sports, Training & Recreation, Lectures & Discussions, Demonstrations and Pure Fun & Relaxation. Camp participants plan their day by choosing from an array of scheduled activities like agility, lure coursing and tracking, workshops including health & nutrition, canine massage, and training issues; and demonstrations from pet professionals such as a groomer, canine chef, and pet photographer.

"In addition," notes Dave Eisendrath, co-founder of Camp Dogwood, "participants are welcome to enjoy traditional camp fun by hiking a trail, swimming at the beach, rehearsing for the all-camp Human/Canine Talent Show or toasting s'mores around a campfire."

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As a clinical psychologist and graphic designer, respectively, Alysa and Dave applied their creative and innovative planning skills in selecting appropriate "counselors" for Camp Dogwood. This selection process involved turning to the dog training community around them, in order to identify quality staff members whom would best represent the ideals established for Camp Dogwood. After months of interviewing, observing classes, and discussing philosophies, they feel fortunate to have chosen "the pick of the litter." Moreover, by drawing from a pool of local resources, Camp Dogwood staff members remain accessible to participants even once camp is over.

And although camp is only in session October 5 -8, 2001, the founders are committed to Camp Dogwood's mission year-round. "We support and encourage educational programs regarding the health, behavior and emotions of our dogs," says Eisendrath. "We believe in a training philosophy that emphasizes positive-reinforcement and the strength of the bond between human and dog companions. Camp Dogwood maintains involvement with community programs in order to promote the positive role that dogs play in our society. By taking such philosophies home, Camp Dogwood participants can play an integral role in improving the quality of canine life in their community."

In anticipation of a great inaugural session, Slay and Eisendrath are busy taking the final steps to ensure everyone's camp experience is a memorable one. Come October 5th, if you should happen to be traveling on I-94, passing car after car filled with smiling dogs hanging out the window, know that they are headed to "*a new breed of camp*" ...one which would not be complete without dogs!

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Camp Dogwood, an overnight camp experience for people and their dogs, is located just one hour from both Chicago and Milwaukee. With only a handful of dog camps nationwide, Camp Dogwood is the first of its kind in Illinois and offers "campers" opportunities for training, recreation, lectures, discussions, demonstrations, fun, and relaxation. Since its inception, Camp Dogwood has been dedicated to the Dog, by providing educational programs regarding the health, behavior, and emotions of canine friends; the Bond, through offering a range of activities that enhance the relationship between human and dog companions and the Community, in their commitment to supporting programs which improve the quality of canine life within society. Additional Camp Dogwood information can be accessed by telephone at (312) 683-5264, through the website at www.campdogwood.com, or by sending e-mail requests to happydog@campdogwood.com.



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Camp Dogwood Fact Sheet

Leaders of the Pack-

Passionate dog owners Alysa Slay, Psy.D., Clinical Psychologist, and Dave Eisendrath, Freelance Graphic Designer, have recently marked their territory as founders of Camp Dogwood. Dave and Alysa derived their inspiration for Camp Dogwood by identifying a need within the Chicagoland dog community for a unique place where individuals could spend quality time with their dog in an outdoor setting.

The Den-

Camp Dogwood, an overnight camp experience for people and their dogs, is located one hour from both Chicago and Milwaukee, in Ingleside Illinois. Camp Dogwood utilizes the Camp Henry Horner Conference Center, situated on 180 acres of woods, open fields and wetlands on the pristine shores of Wooster Lake, a beautiful and rustic setting for camp.

Unleashed-

For four days and three nights, Camp Dogwood offers its human and canine campers a full range of over 30 activities which include agility, obedience, lure coursing, flyball, tracking, Frisbee, trick training, arts & crafts, canoeing, canine massage, and campfires. Notable camp highlights include Canine & Human Talent Show, Cooking for Canines and the Photo Scavenger Hunt. Daily lectures on topics related canine health, nutrition, behavior, and community issues will be offered. Campers can choose to participate in any of these activities or just relax on the beach, a trail or an open field.

No Bones About It-

Whether training or recreating, Camp Dogwood's philosophy is rooted in the role of positive reinforcement, motivation, and **fun for dogs and people alike**. This philosophy reflects the values of the Camp Dogwood staff and the high regard placed on a pet as a family member. The staff represent a group of individuals whose collective experience reflect years of work within the dog community as instructors, trainers, and animal rescuers. In order to ensure accessibility between camp sessions, staff members were carefully selected from the communities in which Camp Dogwood participants live.

S'More About Camp-

- Camp Dogwood's inaugural session is October 5th-8th, 2001. Multiple camp dates for 2002, tbd.
- Camp rates include all lodging, meals, and activities.
- A vet will be at camp to triage emergencies and treat minor injuries.
- Human campers must be at least 18 years of age, puppies at least 3 months old are welcome.
- Accommodation options include cabin, lodge, or tent camping. Daily passes are available.
- On-line registration is available at www.campdogwood.com

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Camp Dogwood Personalities

Alysa Slay, Co-Founder & Co-Director of Camp Dogwood

Dr. Alysa Slay is quite familiar with terms like “behavior management,” “positive reinforcement,” and “shelters.” She has a doctorate in Clinical Psychology and currently works as the Director of Psychological Services for a child welfare agency, as well as a consultant in the Clinical Division of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. With over 10 years of experience working in, and consulting to, many summer camps for children, Alysa is excited to bring the “joys of camp” to dogs and their human companions. Alysa’s prior camp experience and knowledge of behavior has served as a strong foundation in the development of Camp Dogwood. Over the years, she has discovered many parallels between children and dogs. Primarily, both groups thrive when given love, opportunities for play, positive attention and a consistent environment. Although Alysa is new to life as an entrepreneur, she is excited to be incorporating her passion for dogs into her professional life. She derives pleasure and inspiration from her 4-year-old dog Forrest, a born camper. Together they volunteer in the Rainbow Animal Assisted Therapy program for children. Alysa’s writings have been published in Chicagoland Tails and the American Camping Association’s Camping Magazine.

Dave Eisendrath, Co-Founder & Co-Director of Camp Dogwood

Until the recent passing of his first four-legged love, Bitsy, Freelance Art Director Dave Eisendrath shared his office space freely with both of his dogs. Now, as he works, he knows that at any given point in time, Muddy is sure to be seated directly behind him, ready for anything. Dave’s wide variety of local and national clients provides him with a full range of projects in which to apply his creativity and unique “style.” His talents can be seen in logo development, publication & advertising design, as well as event marketing and promotion. Last year, Dave’s successes with publication design (INSider Magazine, Velocity) and his avid love for his pets, allowed him to combine his passions by collaborating with publisher, Janice Brown, in creating the award-winning pet magazine, Chicagoland Tails. Much like Camp Dogwood, this one-of-a-kind magazine is dedicated to “celebrating the relationships between pets and their people.” Regardless of how busy such projects may be for Dave, he always finds the time to pack up his car, alert the troops and get away from it all, by going camping. Knowing the joy camping brings to his dogs, and seeing the charge that dogs get from a change of pace, made any challenges in developing Camp Dogwood all worthwhile! Dave’s anticipation of the fall session is bittersweet, as he knows how much Bitsy, an inspiration for camp itself, would have loved the experience. As a best friend to “man’s best friend” and a true outdoorsman, these thoughts reaffirm his belief in the importance of a place “where a dog can be a dog.”

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The Bark About Camp Dogwood

"Camp Dogwood exemplifies celebrating the relationship with one's dog."

-Janice Brown, Editor
Chicagoland Tails

"The Directors of Camp Dogwood have been dedicated to dog related community organizations since day one. Their positive support of shelters, volunteer groups, and advocacy organizations shows commitment to people as well as animals."

-Karen Okura, Director of Behavior & Training
Anti-Cruelty Society

"I am confident that Camp Dogwood will inform, educate, and strengthen the Chicagoland dog community in a relaxed and recreational setting."

-Stacey Hawk, Founder & Co-Chair
Dog Advisory Work Group (D.A.W.G.)

"I have been looking forward to Camp Dogwood for months, finally an opportunity to vacation with my best friend."

-Carla LaPointe
Registered Camp Dogwood Camper

"Who let the dogs out?"

-Jonathon Mussman, Producer
MTV, News and Specials

"Dave and Alysa are taking the appropriate measures to ensure the safety and health of their canine campers while at Camp Dogwood."

-Jane Lomar, DVM
Family Pet Animal Hospital

"Even though all of the time and effort put into the development of Camp Dogwood has cut into my personal park time, I am sure it will be more than worth it."

-Forrest Slay
Alysa's dog

"Camp Dogwood has carefully selected experienced instructors and trainers who emphasize positive reinforcement, motivation, and fun."

-Wendy DiCarlo, Obedience Instructor
Dog Obedience Group (D.O.G.)

"At first we thought Dave and Alysa had gone a little crazy, maybe loved their dogs a little too much, but now that Camp Dogwood is getting close we think they maybe on to something."

-Sharon & Peter Eisendrath
Dave's Parents

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