



Office of the Mayor

News Release

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Thursday, Aug. 4, 2011

Mayor honors Poochpalooza coordinators as July Volunteer of the Month

MARYSVILLE – Mayor Jon Nehring is proud to announce Doug and Leslie Buell as community Volunteers of the Month in July for their work maintaining and improving Strawberry Fields for Rover Off-Leash Park and their popular annual Poochpalooza outdoor dog event that raises money for park improvements.

Leslie Buell, founder of Marysville Dog Owners Group (M-DOG) and Poochpalooza, and her husband, Doug, the City's community information officer, created the nonprofit group in 2008 to provide opportunities for Marysville residents and visitors and their dogs the freedom to enjoy an un-tethered outing.

The Buells are largely responsible for the continued success of the City's off-leash park program and regular maintenance and operations of the three-acre Strawberry Fields for Rover Off-Leash Park in north Marysville.

"While Doug and Leslie are not alone in the quest to provide a healthy lifestyle for pets and their owners, they have created a legion of supporters that stand side by side in the true spirit of volunteerism to make Marysville a great place to live and play," said the Mayor when the couple was greeted with surprise honors at the July 25 City Council meeting.



Parks and Recreation Director Jim Ballew, who nominated the Buells, said "promoting the concept of off-leash dog recreation, encouraging the establishment of additional off-leash dog recreation areas and educating citizens about responsible dog ownership is a passion shared by both."

This year's Poochpalooza on July 9 drew 2,000-3,000 visitors to Strawberry Fields for a great day with their pets and raised \$3,200, with most of it to fund off-leash park needs including installation of a fenced small-dog play area. Several dogs were adopted that modeled in the event's first-ever Fashions and Rescues Runway Show. Visitors came from as far away as Bellingham, Spokane and Longview to attend, and one vendor flew from Wisconsin to sell her high-end dog fashion accessories.

The Buell's direct the efforts of many other hard-working volunteer members of M-DOG in monthly outings to work on the city's off-leash park, contributing at least two weekends each month of their lives to keeping the park in great shape and providing educational events for pet health and safety.

"The Buells are sure to keep tails wagging in Marysville for a long time to come," the Mayor said.

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CUTLINE: Mayor Jon Nehring presents Doug and Leslie Buell with their Volunteer of the Month certificates for July at a recent City Council meeting.