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| | <p>>>Male Narrator: Dogs are amazing, adaptable, and they really can be our best friends. On this program we'll meet therapy dogs, agility dogs, and hunting dogs. And we'll explore how to train and travel with your dog. Coming up next!</p> |
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| | <p>>>Narrator: Man's best friend loves to go outdoors and play. There is an old joke, that if your dog is overweight, then you need more exercise! And there are certainly lots of ways to get that exercise with your best friend. Whether your dog is a pure bred pooch or a pound-puppy, good training and a little knowledge can be all you need to take your dog anywhere.</p> |
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| | <p>We're here at Doggie Days, an annual festival celebrating man's best friend, and a dog-gone good time for humans and K9's alike. Doggie Days is an annual fundraiser for Dreamworkers, a non-profit organization of people who train and work with therapy dogs.</p> |
| | <p>>>Waidelich: Today we're doing Doggie Days, and that's just kind of an awareness for people to just kind of come and be able to spend time their family and with their four legged children as well as their two legged ones.</p> |
| | <p>Dixie Golden Retriever Rescue interview...</p> |
| | <p>>>Teeg: I'm here at Doggy Days to have fun with my dog and to celebrate and have fun because our dogs have accomplished very—lots of things and we just wanted to tell them how much we love them by taking them out to play.</p> <p>>>Waidelich: One of the goals is for these animals not to end up in the shelters. That's what kind of Doggy Days is all about. It's just kind of a fun thing, ah, to try to help educate people. It is a fundraiser for us because we are strictly a nonprofit organization. We're able to get a lot of people involved with vendors from other, other areas whether they are selling crafts. Some of them are rescue groups that have come in. it's really been</p> |

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| | <p>great to be able to have other people come out and, and share this day with us and I think they've been pretty pleased with the turn out that we've had.</p> <p>>>Miller: I'm with Dixie Golden Retriever Rescue. We're a non-profit organization that rescues golden retrievers from pounds. We have owner turn-ins and strays that we find. And we try to find good homes for them. This is our little bobbing for tennis balls game and it's for Dixie Golden Retriever Rescue. She has problems; she sees one ball and then says, "Oh there's more!"</p> <p>>>Teeg: We won the Doggy Days cakewalk and we got a dog pie with treats and meat.</p> |
| | <p>>>Narrator: If you have an active dog who likes to chase a ball, then flyball, might be a great sport for you and your dog.</p> |
| | <p>>>Wilson: Well we're here promoting this sport because we just love it and we think everybody would like it.</p> <p>Fly ball is a team sport. We worked together as a team of four, and we race against another team. Typically the dogs run at about four seconds. And the fastest holding team at the moment is a sixteen and half second run. And, you want to do it with no faults, no missed jumps, no dropping of the ball, no errors.</p> <p>Typically a dog that's pretty energetic and likes to do things. We love dogs that have tug drive or ball drive. Those are the easiest and seem to love it the most.</p> <p>>>Narrator: The North American flyball association is the governing authority for flyball and welcomes new members. The equipment is easy to build or buy online. And tournaments are not expensive.</p> <p>>>Texidor: The reason I like flyball is running with the dogs then trying to have competition with them and just seeing how fast they can run.</p> |
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| | <p>>>Narrator: For the acrobatically minded dogs, you might consider agility training. Here at Doggie Days, dog handlers learn how to get</p> |

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| | involved. |
| | <p>>>Cook: The reason I do agility with my dog, first and for most, is it's a lot of fun. Agility is a sport that any dog that doesn't have a physical limitation can do, and it's also a sport that any person can do. I know people in their eighties who have agility dogs. It's a sport where the dog does most of the running, and you do most of the handling. So, if you're a person with any kind of a disability, I have very bad arthritis, and my dog and I compete in higher levels of agility.</p> <p>If you enjoy training animals and you like being outside and you have a high-drive dog who needs a lot of exercise, you need to do agility with him.</p> <p>If you really want to seriously do it, of course, you'd want to take some kind of a class because you don't want to injure your dog and you are going to have safety concerns. You can go on the Internet and find all kinds of websites that tell you how to build equipment, and there are even websites on the Internet that tell you how to build cheap equipment out of things you might have around the house.</p> |
| | <p>>>Narrator: Other dogs got to try their feet at the agility course as well. Sasha is a former agility champion, and now that she is in her golden years, has found a new career with Dreamworkers as a therapy dog. Her handler, Rhonda Hunt, is a teacher who has made Sasha an important part of classroom learning.</p> |
| | <p>>>Hunt: The children are visiting the classroom to see what their books are like and to meet the teacher and to meet Sasha. Many of the children have seen Sasha throughout their school years and so now they are excited about the fact that now they'll be in the classroom with the dog. The parents also are coming to find out about just the general aspect of being in third grade, but they also want to find out more about the dog, what the purpose of the dog is, why she's in the classroom. It's not common to have a dog in the classroom. I hope that they walk away from the classroom finding that their children are going to have a unique experience. If they have children that are weak or reluctant readers I'm hoping that they will be looking forward to seeing their child improve their reading. And that they will have the feeling that the classroom is going to be an inviting and safe and enthusiastic place to come during the school day.</p> |

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| | <p>Your job is to write a letter to Sasha and you can ask her some questions or you can tell her about your pet or you can tell her about being in class, how you feel about having her in class, anything you want to write about, but your letter is to Sasha.</p> <p>I think the thing that Sasha gets out of it, and it's very basic for her; she gets treats and she gets pets. She likes to travel around the classroom and she'll lean up against a child to get pets and likes to see what they're doing and she also likes to just lay down beside them and relax.</p> <p>Some of the things that she does, we do dog-bite prevention lessons, and we will visit any class that invites us. This is a basic health lesson, and it meets the state standards on safety.</p> <p>Sasha has a baskets of books that are about cats and dogs, and the children will select a book and they'll sit down on Sasha's mat with her, and they read to her. What's positive about this is that it's informal reading so the child is seeing a pleasurable aspect of reading rather than it being something that's required. They have some social time because other children will sit with them. They'll either read out loud to each other, or they will pass the book around and read. You can see children helping each other with words. But the whole time that you watch them you'll see that they are sitting there stroking Sasha. And so they can experience some of the pleasure of reading with someone who is going to be non-judgmental with them.</p> <p>That is one of the things parents often wonder is, well does the dog cause a distraction in the classroom. And I've found that it's just the opposite. Sasha will lie around, on the floor next to the children and as long as they're working quietly then she'll stay with the class. If they get really noisy then she'll get up and go and get in her crate, and they know that when she goes in her crate it's timeout for her, and that means that they cannot interact with her. So I've actually heard children telling each other that they need to talk quietly because if they get too loud Sasha will get up and leave. So, yes, she does help keep a calm atmosphere in the classroom.</p> |
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| | <p>>> Narrator: Sasha's other job is visiting nursing home residents in her home county along with other Dreamworkers dogs and handlers. These dogs take their jobs very seriously.</p> |
| | <p>>> Waidelich: Our main project really is with the nursing home that we visit with in Paulding County. We go up there on</p> |

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| | <p>Thursday evenings, and we spend anywhere from an hour to two to three hours. It just depends on how many patients are there for us visit. It's incredible what I see at the nursing home. Every week there's patients that sit in a gathered area, and they can't hardly wait for the dogs to come. And, they almost fight over, "no come see me, no come see me" and that sort of thing, so it's really neat to see them get so excited about having a dog. And, then they'll usually tell you about their pets and everything, so it's just a neat thing that we can do for them. It's been an incredible thing, and no matter what, I'll always do therapy because I think that's what it's really all about is being able to share the dogs with other people. And for them to understand what an animal can bring into their lives.</p> |
| | <p>>>Narrator: The dogs here are all certified therapy dogs. Many of them dogs who had a rough start in life and were rescued from the humane society or rescue groups. Some of them once had fear or obedience issues that were resolved by much attention and a basic obedience class taught by Dreamworkers. Whether or not your dog would become good therapy dog, both of you could have a great time and learn a lot at Good Canine Citizenship class.</p> |
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| | <p>>>Adcock: This is Lance. I've had him for about a month. He was a stray from the street, and animal control picked him up, had him on their website for a while. They turned him over to Sheltie Rescue. Sheltie Rescue is how I ended up with him.</p> <p>>>Miller: This is Ally; she's my chocolate lab. I've had her for little over a year now. She was a rescue; she was tied up in somebody's backyard. She had heartworm and a mass cell tumor on her neck when I got her.</p> <p>>>Hamilton: And Cookie is a boxer mix. She's a rescue dog.</p> |

>> Hunt: Ok we're just going to do some initial greetings for saying hello. So just make sure that your dog stays, give him a stay and make sure that they are either sitting or are in a position that they are going to be comfortable in.

Well I think if you've got a dog with basic training that has passed the canine good citizen test, you've got a dog that is going to be able to communicate with you and you're going to be able to communicate with that dog. You're going to get, I think you're get a lot more from your dog. I think you're going to enjoy your dog more because you can take your dog out in public.

In a typical class what we normally do, we start out with running through the canine good citizen test. We start out with greeting the handler without petting the dog. That's the first component of the test.

>> Adcock: Well this is his first class so I wanted to be a little bit more freeform with him. I didn't want to put him in a rigid schedule.

>> Waidelich: I would never have a dog that I haven't done basic obedience with. You just get so much more out of your dog. And I'm just always able to take my dogs anywhere I want to go with them and never have to worry them misbehaving, they've been well socialized and everything else.

>> Hunt: We spend a little bit of the class time working on approaching the dog so that the dog does not break, walking around the dog, working with distractions so that the dog is able to handle distractions and unusual moves.

You may see someone bouncing a ball, throwing sticks, running past the dog. We work on the dogs approaching each other. They have to stay out of each other's face and stand politely beside their handler while their handler is greeting another dog handler. We try to work on all of those skills because those are the components of the canine citizen test. It also helps the dog in just every day life with having good manners and being able to go out in public and behave himself.

>> Hamilton: Well this class gives us an opportunity to accustom her to a lot of different things, unexpected things, but it gives her poise. When I first brought her here, she couldn't stand still. She would try to run behind me and hide. She's just now starting to come out and it's because of Dreamworkers, because of people like Rhonda who've helped me and taught me how to train my dog.

>> Hunt: Because we are a nonprofit organization we do this as a service to the community so it's a low-priced, low-cost obedience class.

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| | <p>Because we are an organization that does service to the community we ask the people that come to the class to also help us with some of our projects. We use the dog walk in the park not so much to teach agility for competition, but we use it as a confidence builder. Dogs, particularly large dogs, sometimes they're not real confident on unusual surfaces so we try them out on different surfaces. It also gives them—helps the handler improve their communication skill with the dog because it changes the level and it changes the position with the dog so they have to change their communication a little bit. They have to improve their communication. It also gives the handler confidence in knowing that they can approach an unusual obstacle.</p> <p>>>Waidelich: This is just constant just experience for me learning how to read my dog better, learning how to anticipate things that are going to happen</p> <p>>>Hunt: The tests are usually arranged with the tester and it is often given at the end of class where we can still use some members of the class for things like walking through a crowd or approaching a neutral dog, but we don't actually do it in the class. It's normally toward the end of the class or in between the two classes that we're doing.</p> |
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| | <p>>>Narrator: Pets with good training are appreciated at more places than those who cause problems for others. If you want to treat your dog and your dog has good manners, check to see if your area has a park with an off-leash area like the one at Piedmont Park in Atlanta. The Piedmont Park Conservancy made a big effort to include an off-leash area in the restoration of the park.</p> |
| | <p>>>McCown: Well, the Piedmont Park Conservancy is a nonprofit</p> |

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| | <p>organization in partnership with the city of Atlanta. That means that we are private, charitable, and folks can make donations to the conservancy. And we use those donations to restore and preserve Piedmont Park.</p> |
| | <p>We looked at other off leash areas, Seattle, New York to see how others were operating off leashor dog parks. It is funded completely with private contributions and maintained with those contributions. The city does not maintain the off leash areas; the conservancy does. Folks are coming from all over. They love the ability for the dogs to interact. Everything we do as the conservancy is community building, and this is another way that we bring people together and create community.</p> <p>>>Stephenson: The leash-free alliance of piedmont park is a free volunteer organization that anyone in the greater Atlanta metro area can join. And if you're interested in using the off-leash area and helping us to make it an even better place, then it would be great to join.</p> |
| | <p>>>Narrator: Another place in the Atlanta area where responsible pet owners can get outside with their dogs is the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. Because of the high volume of visitors, this park is an example of how important it is to follow the rules.</p> |
| | <p>>>Morris: We have a tremendous amount of visitation annually. Many of those people, especially in an urban area here, own pets. One of our primary problems with dogs here is pets off leash. Not only is that illegal, but it intimidates people who are maybe intimidated by dogs or don't like dogs. One of the other significant issues that we have is pet excrement. In the summertime we may have 5 to 7 thousand visitors a day. Approximately 1000 to 1500 of those visitors will have dogs with them. Every one of those dogs that walks this 3-mile loop eventually leaves excrement at least once. Approximately 60% of the people that walk here are responsible pet owners, do bring an excrement device, a shovel or a bag of some kind, pick up their dog's excrement and dispose of it properly. You also have to have your current rabies tag on the collar of your dog.</p> <p>>>Narrator: There is also the problem of bank erosion. Dogs off leash at river's edge destroy vegetation in closed areas and create siltation problems in the river.</p> |

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| | <p>>>Morris: This is one of the areas here on Cochran Shoals that is substantially eroded primarily from people coming down to the water, let their dog run in the water, chase balls, chase Frisbees off of leash. This type of erosion, in most of our park units, this is one of the worst examples, worst-case scenario of what can happen. You can see the exposed roots causing these trees that were here are now dead. The trees behind that are part of this root structure will eventually be affected. In addition, all this dirt that was here at one time has now washed out into the river and is permanent siltation. There's really no way for us to get that back out.</p> |
| | <p>GEOFACT:</p> <p>>>Female Narrator: Dogs love to be part of family travel plans. Just follow these guidelines so everybody has a good time. Restrain your pet to reduce travel anxiety and increase safety for all. Get your dog used to riding in a vehicle. Take short, fun trips at first. For a carsick pet, ask the vet if medication would be appropriate. Check your local pet store for an assortment of collapsible bowls for travel. A favorite toy can reduce travel anxiety. Never leave a pet unattended in a car with the windows up. In case you become separated, bring a recent photograph and written description of your pet. Verify that your pet's tags are current. Pick up after your pet. Follow the rules. Be respectful of the environment and others. Check out this website for more information.</p> <p>>>Narrator: The dog has earned the right to be called man's best friend and will likely continue to occupy the place closest to humans in the animal kingdom. Dogs deserve our respect and understanding for everything they do for us. A mistreated or misunderstood dog usually deserves a second chance and a new home. And a dog well trained to fit into human society is a treasure and a joy to be around.</p> |
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