

Popularity of Dog Parks



SOARING at Davis-Monthan AFB

With two dog parks on base, as well as a pet-washing station, life for man's best friend has improved greatly over the last few years at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz.

The newest dog park, which opened in 2013, is located near the Welcome Home Center at Soaring Heights, the military family housing community on base. Davis-Monthan Wing Leadership, and Soaring Heights Communities representatives, opened the new park to residents and community members at an official ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Located next to one of the largest parks in the housing community, the PetSmart Dog Park is central to the entire housing area, which was key during development, according to Kiki Villanueva, assistant development manager for Soaring Heights Communities. "We wanted to make sure the park was accessible to all residents, and not in a location that would only be used by a select few," she said.

"At Soaring Heights, almost 60 percent of residents have dogs," added Jim Switzer, Soaring Heights Communities project director. "From the native vegetation to the outdoor lighting, which allows residents to use the park after dark when the outside temperature is cooler, the PetSmart Dog Park was built with our climate, and residents, in mind."

The total cost for the park was \$56,000. PetSmart, which was the

primary donor, contributed \$43,000 to the project, while Lend Lease (US) Community Fund, and the Lend Lease Foundation together donated \$13,000 for the project. Soaring Heights Communities is a 50-year partnership created between the Air Force and Lend Lease (US) Public Partnerships through the Military Housing Privatization Initiative (MHPI).

"We are so thankful for the generosity of PetSmart and our other community partners, whose contributions made this dog park a reality," said Villanueva. "At Soaring Heights, our goal is to improve the quality of life for service members and their families, and the PetSmart Dog Park is an amenity that we know our residents will enjoy for years to come."

The new dog park is three-fourths of an acre in total, and includes a small dog park (for dogs 30 pounds or less) and a large dog park (for dogs more than 30 pounds). Both parks have LED lighting for night use, benches for pet owners, pet drinking fountains, pet waste stations, large rocks for climbing, and shrubbery and small trees for future shade.

Many companies and community partners contributed to the success of the project. For example, Dog-ON-It-Parks provided a discount on pet waste stations and pet water fountains; ParknPool donated a bench, and provided a discount on trashcans and DOGIPOT pet waste stations for each park; F&F Electric provided a discount on installation of LED lights; Diggum provided a discount on installation of new water

The first dog park to open at Davis-Monthan is located at the RV Park on base, and features agility equipment and other amenities.



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Air Force Recreation



Davis-Monthan AFB opened its newest dog park last summer, with a ribbon cutting that included base leadership and dog owners (and their dogs) from the Soaring Heights Community, where the park is located.

service for pet water fountains; Arizona Trucking provided a discount on delivery fees for pea gravel and ¾ minus rock; and Security Fence of Arizona donated maintenance gates and provided a discount on fencing and installation.

“The groundskeeper also provided herbicide and ground clearing, labor for gravel spreading and irrigation installation for trees and shrubs,” noted Villanueva. “Additionally, the groundskeeper provided a donation of large rocks, and Civano Nursery donated two trees and five shrubs through the groundskeeper.”

Villanueva pointed out that the large dog park also includes a tractor-trailer tire, fire hydrant and large tree for shade, and both parks have a mixture of pea gravel and ¾ minus red rock in the shape of a dog bone. “Because we live in the desert, we decided to create a dog park that was environmentally responsible for this area.”

Families in the Soaring Heights housing area continue to provide positive feedback about the park, and “rave about how much their pets enjoy it,” noted Villanueva. “In addition to having happy furry family members, whole families enjoy getting to know their neighbors within the community through trips to the park.”

In addition to the two dog parks, Davis-Monthan has a pet-washing station at the FamCamp.



She continued, “Having a dog park on base for the entire community to use was very important to us. Like many of the other facilities on base, the dog park is open for use to all who have base access, not just our families. The dog park is

another way to draw our Soaring Heights families out, and set the stage for them to get to know their neighbors. The dog park builds a strong sense of community, and that is our ultimate goal.”

The new PetSmart Dog Park is the second dog park to open at Davis-Monthan, with the first one opening in 2010 at the RV Park on base. According to FamCamp Coordinator Pamela Lane, the first dog park on base came about because of the great demand that existed at that time.

“Our guests wanted and needed someplace where they could let their dogs run and play in a safe/secure off-leash area,” said Lane. “Many of our guests travel with dogs and we wanted to cater to their needs.”

The dog park is a large fenced-in area that includes numerous amenities including two DOGIPOT Pet Waste Stations and Dog-ON-It-Parks agility equipment, as well as a pet drinking fountain and bench.

“The dog park also has two sets of double gates, so when a guest enters/exits the dog park the dogs that are currently running loose in the park cannot get out,” noted Lane. “The dog park is extremely successful, and we continue to get lots of positive feedback from our guests.”

In addition to the two dog parks, the FamCamp on base added a pet washing station from All Paws Pet Wash. “The pet wash station was purchased to give our guests a place where they can wash their pet, as most RVs have very small bathrooms, and it isn’t very easy to wash a dog in them,” said Lane. “Many of our guests travel with pets and we wanted to meet their pet-washing needs. The pet washing station has been successful.”



—GRF