

Walk-a-thon collects money for Colchester dog park

By **ELEANOR BALL**

For The Norwich Bulletin

Posted Sep 24, 2009 @ 06:17 PM

Colchester, Conn. — Several dogs had their day — and a lot of fun — Sunday at the Colchester Dog Park Committee's walk-a-thon to raise money for the town's planned dog park.

More than 50 dogs and their families participated in the event, held at the town's recreation complex. Activities included a disc-catching competition and a best-dressed dog contest.

The dog park group is more than halfway to its goal of raising \$44,000, and the walk-a-thon was a fundraiser conceived to help meet that goal.

Town residents Steve and Kathie Arbuckle came with their Norwegian Elkhound, Tupsa.

"It's Swedish for sweetheart," Kathie said, noting that her husband's family is Swedish. The couple takes Tupsa to the Norwich dog park, and supports building one in Colchester.

Rescue groups

Booths for animal rescue groups and vendors were set up for visitors. Ruth Lack of Blue Dog Rescue, which rescues and places cattle dogs, tried to find a home for Morgan and Tyson.

Lack's husband, Fred, cuddled with Morgan, who is blind and has three feet.

"They found him walking on the road," Ruth Lack said. "He's such a love. He's a love dog."

At the Labs4Rescue booth, Cheryl LaPorte had one of her dogs, Maggie, on a leash. LaPorte browsed a book with small snapshots of several Labradors available for adoption and paused at a photo of one.

"How gorgeous. How could anyone dump that dog?" LaPorte said. But she's not looking to adopt. Her other dog will be 14 on Halloween.

"He can't get up and has cataracts," she said. "(Maggie's) gong to miss him."

As many feet and paws grew tired, Ed Jakubowski of Disc Dogs A to Z announced the start of the disc accuracy and distance competition. Jakubowski said he's also known as Ed Jaku "bow wow wow" ski among his friends.

Families watched as their dogs jumped through the air to catch the discs thrown high above their heads. Ian Duncan competed with his dogs, Nessie and Tartan. Jakubowski said the pair will be in a competition this weekend.

Tyson, the cattle dog looking for a home, had a good day.

"We adopted it," Colchester resident Dick Eisman said. Eisman owns a cattle dog named Pepper, too.

"Pepper is going to have a brother," he said.