



## Dog Scout Troops

# People and dogs coming together to learn, socialize and help others in the community

In addition to supporting the goals of DSA, local troops (where available) offer numerous activities to encourage the development of the bond between you and your dog. These activities may include: weekend walks, monthly meetings, campouts, water activities, fundraisers and an introduction to various sports and events for dogs and their people.

Most troops strive to help their community by participation in, and development of, various fund raisers for local humane societies, breed rescues, assistance dog programs and shelters as well as raising money to buy local police K-9's bullet proof vests or pet oxygen masks for fire departments. Often troop members also benefit people within the community with their registered Therapy Dogs by visiting hospitals, nursing homes and other care facilities.

If you would like to join us in our missions while strengthening the bond with your dog, visit the website for membership information.



Coyote puts a donation into a bucket during a fundraiser to get a police K-9 a bullet proof vest



## Badges!

Just as with other scouting organizations, Dog Scouts can earn badges. These are more than cute little patches; they signify a significant amount of training and learning as well as the level of communication and bond between the dog and parent. Each badge has requirements for the dog and the parent to learn and these often take a lot of work.

DSA strives to keep the testing done for each badge as consistent as possible regardless of the location or Scoutmaster giving the test. Because of this, you and your dog will need to demonstrate your level of training and knowledge for a DSA approved Scoutmaster or Dog Scout Evaluator. If you don't have one in your area, you can submit a videotape (and in some cases a written test as well) instead.

The Dog Scout badge is the foundation for all others and must be earned before the paperwork for the specialty badges can be turned in. The dog does not have the title of "Dog Scout" until they successfully pass this test with their parent.

The Dog Scout website has extensive training information available for most of the badges. There is an entire training manual for the Dog Scout badge! This will help you teach your dog all the things he or she needs to know to pass the test.

Each badge has its own fee to help cover various costs within DSA related to providing the badge system. But these fees are lower than what you might spend to get a title on your dog through other organizations and you'll have patches to display proudly.



*For people and dogs of all ages!*



## Dog Scouts of America

P.O. Box 158

Harrison OH 45030

(513) 505-5071

Email: [DogScouts@hotmail.com](mailto:DogScouts@hotmail.com)

National Website:

[www.DogScouts.org](http://www.DogScouts.org)





## What is Dog Scouts?

Dog Scouts of America (D.S.A.) is a non-profit organization founded in Michigan in 1999 by Lonnie Olson for dogs and their people. The goals of DSA are to promote responsible canine care and raising and the importance of the human-canine bond. This is summarized with the phrase “**Socialize, Train, Neuter and Contain.**”



## Raising a dog takes parenting

The use of the term “parent” has been used to describe the dog’s handler, parent, caretaker, etc. because **DSA defines parent as:** A person who raises, nurtures, loves, provides for, teaches and protects a younger being so that he or she can become a welcome and productive member of society. This comprises all the tasks involved in raising a youngster to be an independent adult. Parenting begins even before the youngster is born or adopted, it is a part of the relationship within a family and it is something that lasts a lifetime.

Many people who share their lives with dogs have the same level of bond with their dogs as most people have with their human children. While we recognize that as far as the law is concerned, dogs are considered property, we feel the relationship is much greater than that of object and owner.

Being responsible for a dog involves parenting. Responsible dog parenting is something that needs to be taken seriously in this country. Too many dogs are dumped or taken to the nearest shelter for issues that could be resolved with a little bit of education. Educating people about normal dog behaviors, how to teach dogs the manners they need to live in a home and in society using positive reward training and teaching people about proper care of their dog can help reduce the numbers of dogs entering

shelters. This all helps form a stronger and longer lasting bond between the dog and person and it encourages people to go more places and do more things with their dog. If we want to turn around the attitude that dogs are “disposable” or that it’s “just a dog” and help them be welcome in more places, we have to try to help all dog parents take responsibility for their dogs and become “model citizens.” This is part of the goals of Dog Scouts of America.



## What does it mean to be a responsible dog parent?

Being a responsible dog parent is not always easy and it involves many things. It means making sure that your dog is not a nuisance. Basically this means being a “good citizen.” It means making sure that your dog does not roam freely, destroy property, chase livestock, maul children or other animals, leave excrement behind where he goes in public, become a nuisance barker, or in other ways decrease the quality of life of others in your community. It boils down to proper containment and control, good training, cleaning up after your dog’s messes, proper care and providing your dog with enough physical exercise and mental stimulation that he does not create his own “vices” out of frustration or boredom.

DSA helps teach people the critical importance of early socialization of their puppies. This is the first step to a well-adjusted adult dog that is less reactive and less phobic in unusual situations. Adopting a pup after 8 weeks of age and proper socialization (the on-going introduction to all sorts of people, animals, places, sights and sounds in a neutral or positive way) is the key to having a calm, confident adult dog. This dog will be less likely to panic in unusual situations and bolt,

bark or bite. We teach people that dogs have a social behavior that is vastly different from our own. They will not miraculously develop a set of human “manners” by being around humans. As parents, we must encourage (reward) behaviors that we find acceptable (good behaviors). We must stop perpetuating “bad” (unwanted) behavior by rewarding it with our attention and instead direct the pup or dog to a suitable behavior we can reward.

We advocate positive reinforcement training, which is less stressful for both the dog and the parent, and is fun and easy to learn. By equipping the dog with some basic manners and control, rather than letting him grow up doing as he pleases, there will be far fewer strained relationships that so often result in the decision to part with the dog.

DSA strives to make dogs welcome in more public places by encouraging people to be responsible dog parents. We ask people to clean up waste and anything else that comes out of their dog, and to clean up after non responsible owners too. We encourage people to respect leash laws and to train their dogs using positive methods so that their dogs are well behaved and under control in public. As the general public sees the many joys of being a responsible parent with a well behaved dog, they will hopefully be inspired to likewise manage, train and bond with their own dog. DSA encourages interaction between people and their dogs through the many fun and educational sports and activities available to dog parents.

**The Motto for Dog Scouts** is “Let us learn new things so that we may become more helpful.” The dogs become more helpful because they have learned valuable skills and help within their communities.

**Dog Scout Owner’s motto:** “Our dog’s lives are much shorter than our own; let’s help them enjoy their time with us as much as we can.”