



Paw Prints

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Columnist

Bring your dog along on summer vacation

When you're ready to hit the road this summer for some much-needed vacation time, you can bring your furry friend along for the ride. Many popular human escapes are places both pet parents and their dogs can enjoy together, especially here in Central Oregon. So, when you're packing for your weekend away, don't leave Rover's bag behind.

Getting out with your dog is a great opportunity to be active and have fun. Whether you're just driving down to the dog park, heading out to the coast, or taking that weekend trip to camp by the river, it's important to plan, be prepared and take precautions.

If it's been a while since your dog's last check-up, now's the time to take him in. Make sure your pooch is up-to-date for vaccinations, and ask if additional vaccinations are required for the trip since your dog may encounter different threats, like Lyme disease, at your destination or along the way.

One of the most important items to always carry with you when you travel with your dog is a water bottle. Dehydration should be a very real concern, especially considering how quickly it can occur in both humans and their pets when you travel. Play it safe and pack more than you think you'll need.

Remember to never leave your dog alone in a vehicle. Even if the windows are cracked, a car can start to feel like a sauna quickly.

Items you may need on your trip with Rover: Food and water bowls; toys for chewing and fetching; his normal food and his bed. And don't forget any medications; dog waste bags and his leash. If you plan to go boating you'll need a doggie life jacket.

If you're staying close to home you already know that Central Oregon is full of trails, rivers, and lakes — a dog's dream vacation.

When you get to your destination get Rover into

his normal routine as quickly as possible. Set up a section of your pet-friendly hotel room, or the home you arrive at, just for your furry friend. Put his bed/carrier, food and water, and his special toy or blanket in his special area and feed and walk him at your normal times to avoid throwing your pet's schedule off too much.

Lots of people who love the outdoors will vacation where there is great hiking. Here are a few tips when you take Rover along on those scenic trails:

It's important to stop frequently and offer your furry friend water throughout the hike. It's best not to feed your dog a large meal before a hike; instead, feed a portion of his meal and supplement treats throughout the hike. Also, avoid hiking during the hottest part of the day and keep walks to a reasonable pace and distance. Dogs do not tolerate the heat as well as people. Watch for signs of overexertion, such as excessive panting, drooling, weakness, or bright red gums.

Keep Rover on a leash while hiking so you can steer clear of poison ivy, oak and sumac. And while he's on a leash you can watch out for critters such as snakes, porcupines, bears, mountain lions and coyotes.

Don't forget to take water breaks, preferably in the



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

Tanner enjoys the water on vacation with his pet parent.

shade. After the hike check him for fleas and ticks.

There are many who plan to spend every chance they get splashing in the pool, hanging out at the beach, river or boating on a lake.

It's important for your dog to have a life jacket before you take him out onto the water. You may

think your dog is a strong swimmer, but depending on the conditions, including weather and currents, he could face problems.

Many dogs are well equipped to swim but contrary to popular belief, not all dogs are good swimmers. Each year approximately 40,000 pets die in drowning accidents. While accidents like this happen for many different reasons, it's always best to be well prepared to keep your dog safe this season. Always be aware of Rover's whereabouts while he is playing in the water.

And remember that freshwater lakes often contain harmful organisms, so don't allow your pooch to drink from a lake. Bring fresh water along and give him that.

Whether you and your furry friend are into hiking, swimming or even surfing, there's a great vacation out there for both of you as long as you're prepared!

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