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WINE TASTING HAS GONE TO THE DOGS...

Chardonnay with your Sharpei
A nice Cabernet with your Chesapeake Bay

Imagine yourself on a late Saturday afternoon mixing and mingling with fellow wine lovers and tasting some great California wines while having hors d'oeuvres. Now imagine your fluffy canine pal is having the time of his life frolicking with a few dozen new friends just steps away. New friends, wine, food and dogs playing. We've heard of wine pairings before, but this is definitely a new twist. This wonderful idea is the brainchild of Jeff Sizemore, owner of The Dog House doggie daycare in Englewood.

Jeff was approached earlier this year by a former employee and member of The Denver Doggie Happy Hour Group. The group was losing it's organizer and needed new leadership or they would have to disband. Jeff agreed to organize the group and took the helm in late February. Let's just say he has wasted no time scheduling fun and interesting events for dog lovers and their canine pals. "It's a great way to meet other people who are animal lovers and to also socialize your dog," Jeff said. It also helps to own

an indoor/outdoor doggie daycare in which to host such events.



So how did the idea of doggie wine tastings come to pass? One of The Dog House's daycare clients is a wine distributor. Jeff discussed the Denver Doggie Happy Hour group with her and the rest is history.

The first doggie wine tasting event was held at The Dog House on March 9th. A dozen California and Washington State Merlots were selected by a local wine merchant for the occasion. They included the 2005 Mirassou

Merlot, a 2005 Cellar#8 Merlot, Pine & Post's 2006 Merlot and the 2005 Smoking Loon Merlot to name a few. The first tasting had forty participants who tasted wines and noshed as the dogs played both inside and out.

The second wine tasting event, held on April 12th, was also hosted at The Dog House. The tasting was conducted by Rick Frazier, a local representative for Ironstone Vineyards. Award winning Ironstone wines sampled included the Dog Tail Vineyards 2005 Purebred Chardonnay and Dog Tail 2005 Purebred Cabernet as well as blended or "Mutt" Fire Hydrant Red and Watchdog White wines. Appetizers to accent the wines were provided by The Dog House.

The Denver Doggie Happy Hour Group plans more wine tastings in addition to a barbecue and other events in the months to come. For more information on how to join this fun group of dog lovers, check out www.meetup.com.

*Photo by Mark Siegfried
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