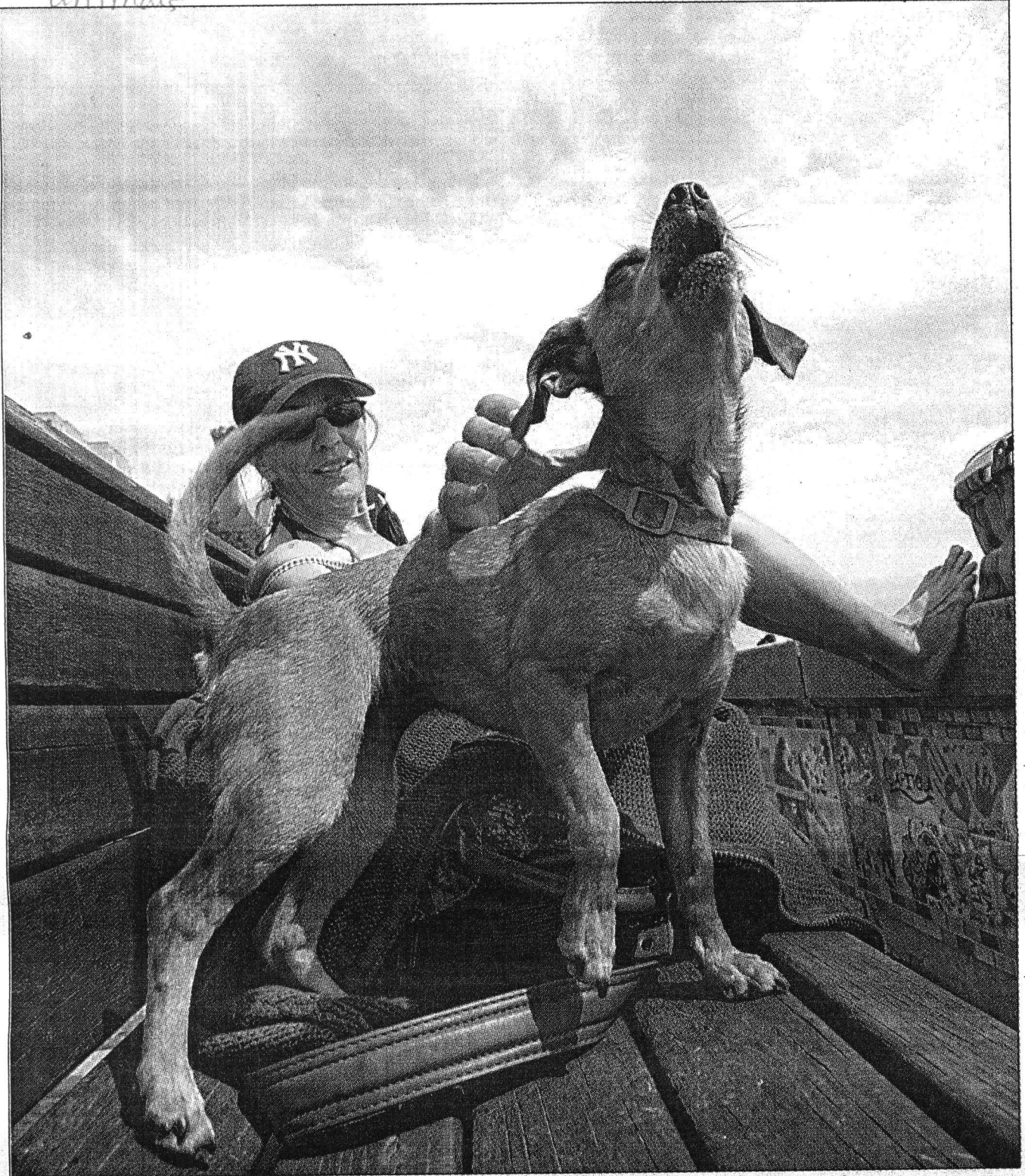


# Dogs on the beach?

Capitola council to consider opening the sand to canines

Animals

4-10-12



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL PHOTOS

Daisy the dog airs it out before the long arm of her owner reaches over to put a clamp on her howling from an Esplanade bench in Capitola Village on Monday, where dogs are allowed on the street but not on the beach.

## Public hearing set for Thursday

By JONDI GUMZ

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**CAPITOLA** — Dog owners can walk their pet on a leash in Capitola Village, and in six city parks. So why not let them stroll on the beach, too?

The City Council plans a public hearing on that subject during a meeting Thursday. Mayor Michael Termini requested the discussion after being approached by several dog-



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

Capitola City Council will have a discussion Thursday about allowing dogs on the beach.

## AT A GLANCE

### DOGS ALLOWED

Dogs are allowed on leash in these Capitola areas:

- Esplanade and other parts of Village
- Monterey Park
- Noble Gulch Park
- Perry Park
- Soquel Creek Park
- Jade Street Park (except for lawn and tennis court areas)
- Esplanade Park (except for lawn)

# CAPITOLA

Continued from A1

owning residents about letting them exercise their canines on the beach.

"I thought it was worthy of looking at," he said, pointing out that he himself is not a dog owner.

Asked how many dog owners live in Capitola, Termini said he isn't sure. But based on his walks around the city during political campaigns, "there are easily as many dogs as voters," he quipped.

The city municipal code prohibits dogs on public beaches and requires dogs on the street or sidewalk be leashed.

Public Works Director Steve Jesberg said the council will look at amending city code to allow dogs on the beach, with or without a leash, and whether to set time limits. Options include seasonal access, restricting hours and different rules for Main Beach compared to Hooper's Beach, an area farther north.

Police report an average of three to five contacts a day during the winter about dogs being off-leash or defecating, with the numbers rising to 15 per day in the summer. However, very few dog owners are issued citations for violating the beach ban.

"We try to educate people," Sgt. Matt Eller said. "It's fairly well-posted."

He said he sees dog owners in one of two camps — "those

## IF YOU GO CAPITOLA CITY COUNCIL

**WHAT:** Discussion of allowing dogs on city beaches

**WHEN:** 7 p.m. Thursday

**WHERE:** City Hall, 420 Capitola Ave.

**INFORMATION:** [www.ci.capitola.ca.us/capcity.nsf/CtyCnclAgendas.html](http://www.ci.capitola.ca.us/capcity.nsf/CtyCnclAgendas.html)

who are responsible and pick up after" their pet and "a few who don't (and) make it bad for everyone else."

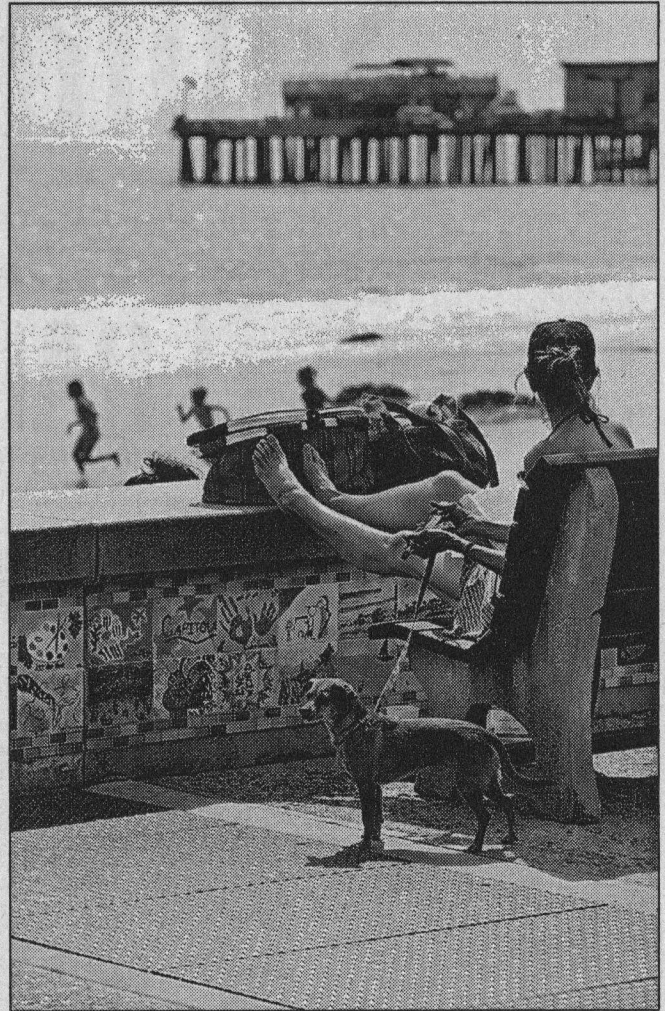
Sandi Pensinger, dog trainer and president of the Coastal Dog Owners Group, welcomed the discussion about allowing dogs on the beach.

"Dog owners are a substantial group in our community and they deserve reasonable consideration," she said, citing 2010 census figures indicating households with dogs, at 43 million, outnumber households with children under 18, at 38 million.

"Responsible dog owners who have reliably trained dogs and who clean up after their dogs should be allowed some access to beaches for off-leash exercise time," she said.

This could benefit dogs and their owners.

"People exercise more," Pensinger said. "Dogs who are well-exercised with other dogs are better socialized and better behaved and are less likely to have behavioral issues."



DAN COYRO/SENTINEL

While dogs are now allowed in Capitola Village, the City Council will entertain debate about allowing dogs on the beach, as well.

Capitola resident Pam Martinez, owner of Canine Promenades dog-walking service, heard about the public hearing during the weekend.

"I'm interested in what

they're going to do," she said. "We just need open spaces where dogs can be dogs."

Follow Sentinel reporter Jondi Gumz on Twitter @jondigumz.