



Kennel Talk

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Kennel Talk is an award-winning, free, digital publication of MWDTSA. Support MWDTSA now and you won't miss any of the photos, stories, news and highlights of 2017!

The Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc. touches the lives of dogs and people near and far. This issue's articles and photos take us from Germany and Kuwait to various U.S. locations in Colorado, sunny Florida, North Carolina, and on through New Mexico to Arizona.

Our parting shot is from Djibouti.

Subscribe at MWDTSA.org to see where we connect next month!

Surgical soldiers get their paws dirty

Story by Maj. Chris Angeles
67th Forward Surgical Team



Spc. Branden R. Baldwin, a Licensed Practical Nurse assigned to the 67th Forward Surgical Team, struggles to escape as MWD Lion grabs ahold of his sleeve, Dec. 7. (U.S. Army Photo by Maj. Chris N. Angeles, 67th Forward Surgical Team)

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany –

The 67th Forward Surgical Team conducted training with the military working dog handlers from the 100th Military Working Dog Detachment and the veterinary staff of the Dog Center Europe at Pulaski Barracks, Germany, December 5 – 14.

The focus of the training was to ensure the team was ready and capable of providing emergency surgical and resuscitative care to military working dogs in a deployed setting.

Forward surgical teams are often the closest asset with surgical capability to the point of injury and can be the difference between life and death for any critically wounded Soldier. In the military, MWDs are treated with the same urgency as any other wounded Soldier although they can present different challenges for surgeons, nurses, and medics who are primarily accustomed to human patients.

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Surgical soldiers continued from page 1

“The 67th FST has conducted a block of education, to include both didactic and practical training with the veterinarians at Pulaski, the MP handlers and MWDs to ensure the FST is capable and prepared to care for all of our soldiers, human or canine,” said Maj. Linda C. Benavides FST Team Chief, “Military working dogs protect us humans in time of war and we need to be able reciprocate and take care of them should the need arise.”

The training was conducted with two aspects in mind. The first encompassed working with MWDs and their handlers and learning aspects of caring for patients that could harm the Soldiers trying to care for them.

Sgt. Nicholas A. Milano and Sgt. Kenneth Mendez, dog handlers with the 100th MWDD, brought MWD Lion, a patrol explosive detector dog, and MWD Dark, a patrol drug detector dog, to provide the Soldiers of the FST with valuable information. They familiarized the team with safe and proper handling of MWDs, basic medical care, and capabilities of these four-legged Soldiers.

“In a deployed environment, there may not always be a veterinarian or a veterinary technician readily available to assist with an injured military working dog,” said Milano. “This training gave us, as handlers, an opportunity to teach the 67th FST how to properly handle and treat a military working dog. We were able to teach how to properly hold and examine an MWD as well as how to react when one may become aggressive or bite.”

“I really enjoyed learning some basic medical care for MWDs and to see the interactions that the dogs have with their handlers,” said Maj. Elizabeth Kassulke, emergency room nurse and officer in charge of Advanced Trauma Life Support. “After being chased and taken to the ground by MWD Lion in a matter of seconds, I was amazed to see the discipline and power that these MWDs possess.”

The second aspect of the training involved the team participating in canine surgery, which most of the members of the team had little or no experience with. Prior to the training, the team conducted a review of the Clinical Practice Guidelines for military working dogs and over the course of three days, members of the team worked at the Dog Center Europe starting intravenous catheters, placing endotracheal tubes, and assisting Maj. (Dr.) Lane A. Hansen, a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Director of Dog Center Europe, with surgery.

“The opportunity to invite the FST into our veterinary hospital and spend a couple of days together discussing and providing patient care is a great means to educate their team about similarities and differences in veterinary patient care,” said Hansen. “Expanding their knowledge and awareness of how to apply their skills to military working dogs could be key to saving injured canine patients (when veterinary assets are not available).”

“I found the experience very valuable, said Capt. Jason R. Maan, certified registered nurse anesthetist. “Although I could read the anesthesia CPGs for military working dogs, there is no substitute for active participation under the supervision of a subject matter expert.”

Maj. Joshua A. Scott, a general surgeon, gained valuable insight while assisting with veterinary surgery. He discovered not only similarities but also differences between his human patients and his potential canine patients.

“Performing surgery on a dog is a lot like performing surgery on a human. However, there are many subtle differences and it’s knowing these differences that can have a drastic change on the outcome,” said Scott. “What struck me the most is how much more resilient canine patients are compared to human patients. You can do major surgery on a human and he or she will be laid out for days. However, you perform a nearly equivalent surgery on a dog and he’ll be up and running around 15 minutes later like nothing ever happened.”

Surgical soldiers continued on page 3

Surgical soldiers continued from page 2

In just over a week, the surgeons, nurses, and medics of the FST developed a greater knowledge of working with and treating MWDs. They will be put to the test during a Field Training Exercise scheduled in January, which will involve the 100th MWDD and the 64th Medical Detachment Veterinary Services Support, and C Company, 1st Battalion, 214th Aviation Regiment, an aeromedical evacuation unit out of Grafenwoehr, Germany.

“Learning about the MWDs in regards to medical treatment and handling was beneficial and eye opening,” said Pfc. Marisol Sanchez, Advanced Trauma Life Support Medic. “It is definitely something I never thought I would have to encounter as a medic.”



Maj. Elizabeth L. Kassulke, an Emergency Room Nurse assigned to the 67th Forward Surgical Team, grimaces as MWD Lion leaps and grabs her sleeve. The MWD handlers of the 100th Military Working Dog Detachment were demonstrating the capabilities of their dogs, Dec. 7.



Sgt. Nicholas A. Milano, a Military Working Dog Handler with the 100th Military Working Dog Detachment, instructs Maj. (Dr.) Joshua A. Scott, a General Surgeon assigned to the 67th Forward Surgical Team, on how to check for a pulse on military working dogs, Dec. 7. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Chris N. Angeles, 67th Forward Surgical Team)



Capt. (Dr.) Aaron J. Vandenbos, an Orthopedic Surgeon with the 67th Forward Surgical Team, attempts to evade the relentless attack of a military working dog, Dec. 7. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Chris N. Angeles, 67th Forward Surgical Team)



Spc. Nicholas R. Pflug, a medic assigned to the 67th Forward Surgical Team, tumbles downhill after being chased down and caught off-balance by a military working dog, Dec. 7. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Chris N. Angeles, 67th Forward Surgical Team)

Medical Soldiers train with military working dogs

By Sgt. Angela Lorden



Lara, a military working dog, participates in a medical exercise that provided U.S. Army Central medical Soldiers with a hands-on training opportunity Dec. 19, 2016 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.



U.S. Army Central Soldiers pose for a group photo during a medical training event Dec. 19, 2016 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. The training provided an introductory lesson to medical personnel, which included familiarization with military working dogs, litter training, radio training and medical evacuation training.



Army Spc. Ian Long, a military working dog handler from Fort Campbell, Kentucky, reassures Lara, his military working dog, while she is being examined by U.S. Army Central medical personnel.



Lara wears a flight helmet during a medical exercise. USARCENT medical Soldiers from across Kuwait trained with military working dogs to prepare for scenarios in which dogs need treatment in the battlefield.



A U.S. Army Central medical Soldier finds the pulse of a military working dog. The training provided an introductory lesson to medical personnel, which included familiarization with dog anatomy, dog-specific medical issues, and treatment possibilities.



U.S. Army Central medical Soldiers and military working dog handlers practice carrying military working dogs on and off of a medical helicopter.

The art of care packages

By Leigh Steere

For the Q4 2016 care packages, a precious bundle of art arrived from a Colorado school: 175 paintings of dogs in winter stocking caps. These high-quality 8.5" by 11" pieces fit perfectly in our hockey-themed boxes.

We, at Kennel Talk, wondered how the art teacher went about the project with her students and reached out for an interview. In the Q&A below, Lisa Weir of Jefferson Academy Elementary in Broomfield, Colorado, describes how she worked with her 2nd, 3rd, and 4th grade students to produce such stunning creations.

KT: How did you present the care package art project to your students? For example, what background information did you provide? Did you paint your own sample picture so students had a model to work from?

Lisa Weir: I hoped to build a sense a personal connection to the recipients of our art, so I began my unit by exploring students' experiences with their own pets. Both the second and third graders expressed great love and enthusiasm sharing specific details about their favorite critters with the class.

Next, I transitioned the class to a "YouTube" tribute video about military working dogs and their handlers. The students were very moved emotionally by the brief video and curious about the different roles of dogs in the military. At this point, I shared some of the specific information that I had researched, as well as information received from MWDTSA and a sample art project.

KT: Did you need to get any permissions to do this project—for example, from parents or school administrators?

LW: Completing service-oriented projects supports the mission and vision of Jefferson Academy, where I teach. As a result, I did not need to get permission to participate in the project. Actually, I was particularly thankful that MWDTSA presented the opportunity around our school's Veteran's Day program. Not only were students able to participate in a project that honors servicemen and servicewomen; we were also able to create a display for visiting veterans to enjoy.

KT: What materials did the students use for their projects?

LW: The materials used for the project included mixed media paper, black oil pastel, and liquid watercolors. All of these materials are staples in our art room and not especially costly. The idea for the art was inspired by a lesson plan from one of my favorite online resources: deepspaceparkle.com.



Above: Lisa Weir, art teacher at Jefferson Academy Elementary School in Broomfield, Colorado poses with two of the pieces of artwork which were created by her students for MWDTSA's 4th quarter care packages.

KT: What teaching and/or classroom management methods did you use to get such high-quality pieces?

LW: In my classroom, some art lessons are quite open-ended, while others utilize a method called "directed line drawing." For this lesson, I decided to use the directed line method to ensure that the final drawings had all the charm of student-created art, but were also recognizable to the recipients.

Each class voted for a type of dog that they wanted to draw. Students then followed step-by-step drawing instructions in oil pastel that I presented on a document camera. After the

Artwork continued on page 6

Artwork continued from page 5

drawing portion was complete, students wrote a simple note of thanks on their art and proceeded to watercolor their dog and background.

With materials organized and accessible for each table group, there was little need for additional classroom management. As long as students were taught the expectations for the project and the artistic process, their high level of motivation to create a special gift mitigated any potential classroom problems. The main problem-solving opportunities were accidental “additions” to our dog drawings such as extra legs or misshapen parts. When we encountered those moments, students were encouraged to be creative and work the “mistakes” into the drawings with or without support.

KT: How long did it take from introducing the project to students to having finished art ready to ship?

LW: The project took three 40-minute class periods. In the first period, students shared about pets and watched the tribute video for inspiration, and we discussed the specifics of the project. During the second period, we completed our directed line drawings and wrote a note of thanks. For the third period, students painted their drawings with bright, colorful watercolors.

KT: Did students have questions or run into stumbling blocks as they worked on their art?

LW: Most of the students’ questions centered around the lives and service of military working dogs and their handlers. They were very interested in any information that I could find and may have benefitted from having an MWDTSA fact sheet or video geared to kids, or even a skyped conversation with a more knowledgeable person.

Depending on the art experience of the teacher, it might be helpful to use a resource like deepspaceparkle.com to find a step-by-step art project. I also had to be strategic about how to gather so many pieces of art; I ended up having 7 classes participate.

I also liked having the art project connect to our Veteran’s Day celebration so that the students’ display had a meaningful audience. In addition to our small display of students’



Above: Artwork by Lisa Weir’s class at Jefferson Academy Elementary in Broomfield, Colorado is showcased gallery style at the kennel. Handlers were impressed with the quality and joyfulness of the creative pieces.

work, which I copied and matted, I also featured the students’ project in my quarterly art newsletter, which goes to the entire school community.

KT: Lisa, MWDTSA is grateful for all the work and love you poured into this project (and into this interview). We are thankful for your support and for providing this road map for other schools who want to contribute to future care packages.

Editor’s note: If you know a teacher who might be interested in creating care package art as a class project, please contact Nikki Rohrig at president@mwdtسا.org for details on upcoming care package dates and themes.

Dog-gone good retirement

Story by Cheryl Sawyers



Maj. Jason Williams, 96th Security Forces Squadron commander, bends down to present Military Working Dog Kanjer his official security forces flash in the form of one of his favorite treats at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Kanjer's 10-year military career culminated at his retirement ceremony January 23. (U.S. Air Force photo/Cheryl Sawyers)



Kanjer expresses his gratitude to Staff Sgt. Jeremy Rice for his adoption during the military working dog's retirement ceremony January 23, at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. Rice, an active duty dog handler at Patrick Air Force Base, was one of Kanjer's handlers for four years. (U.S. Air Force photo/Cheryl Sawyers)

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, FLORIDA

Retirement day is something most Airmen dream about and plan for, but one 96th Security Forces Squadron retiree remained blissfully unaware, even right through his ceremony.

Military Working Dog Kanjer was full of life and wonder during his retirement ceremony January 23. Kanjer dedicated 10 years of faithful service to the United States military, eight of those here at Eglin.

During his service, he searched over 1,800 hours for explosives in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and six separate United States Secret Service missions.

Maj. Jason Williams, 96th SFS commander, officiated the ceremony and congratulated Kanjer on his service and job well done.

"I hope life after your service to our country will be full of squeaky toys, belly rubs and treats," he said. "We are truly grateful for all you've done and the lives you've saved."

The MWD received several gifts during his time in the spotlight, including a plaque with his leash and toy and an official security forces flash in the form of one of his favorite treats.

His retirement will be lived out with one of his most faithful friends, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Rice, one of his first handlers, whom he was with for four years. Rice is still an active duty K-9 handler assigned to the 45th Security Forces Squadron at Patrick Air Force Base.

"It only felt natural for him (Kanjer) to live out the rest of his days in my home," said Rice. "He kept me alive in Afghanistan, so the least I can do is spoil him for the rest of his life."

Kanjer's ride away from the ceremony was the perfect picture of one happy K-9, with his face out of the window and the wind in his ears.



In honor of Military Working Dog Kanjer's service, the Airmen at the 96th Security Forces Squadron presented him with a plaque January 23, at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla. The plaque contained his leash and favorite toy among other items of significance. (U.S. Air Force photo/Cheryl Sawyers)



The Eglin honor guard waits for Military Working Dog Kanjer's retirement ceremony to begin in front of the Air Force Armament Museum January 23. The 96th Security Forces Squadron specifically requested for the base honor guard Airmen to be in ABU's (Airman Battle Uniform). (U.S. Air Force photo/Cheryl Sawyers)

 Donor Spotlight

San Francisco Bay Gourmet Coffee



Recently, one of our MWDTSA volunteers in northern California, Brittany Rhodes, stopped by the home office of San Francisco Bay Gourmet Coffee in nearby Lincoln. Brittany presented the company with a gift as thanks for their years of generous donations to our MWD teams.

On behalf of the company, Jim and Emily Rogers accepted a certificate of appreciation, as well as an American flag flown by a dog handler while deployed. Jim stated that they would be showcasing the flag with other awards in their front office display.

San Francisco Bay Gourmet Coffee has been a proud and consistent supporter of MWDTSA for many years. Visit their website at: <http://www.sanfranciscobaycoffee.com/>



Above and right: Jim and Emily Rogers pose with a flag and certificate from MWDTSA.

Thanks to our great donors

MWDTSA relies on the generosity of our donors, without whom we would be unable to complete our missions and prepare care packages. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following companies and individuals who gave recent donations:

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- Danah Younce, In honor of Lola and Rusty Rohrig



Volunteer Corner

Christmas with K9s — some creatures were stirring

Story and photos by Ashley Dunkle, Shelli Patty, and Dixie Whitman

The holiday season is a bustling time when many military members travel on leave to spend time with loved ones. So for a couple weeks, skeleton crews man kennels to feed, monitor, and care for MWDs.

Awesome MWDTSA volunteers, Ashley and Kyle Dunkle, who live near Fort Bragg, made it a priority to share their holiday cheer with the handler who remained at the Fort Bragg kennel on Christmas Day. Ashley and Kyle arrived with lunch and gifts to brighten the day of the handler and his K9 charges.

Shelli Patty, a volunteer from Nevada, continued the season of giving. She reports when we received the notice that MWDTSA was assisting Santa in spreading good cheer this Christmas, we were ready to join the fun! Our celebrations were close to Luke AFB, which was our “assistant elf” assignment.

Due to the bare bones crew, the Kennel Master asked us to postpone the festivities until the week between Christmas and New Year’s. We were happy to oblige and used the extra time to do some shopping for our visit.

Our group for this visit was quite diverse, with volunteers ranging from ages 16 to 78. We were greeted by SMSgt Cunningham, SSgt Quigg, and SrA Pedroza. SSgt Quigg and SrA Pedroza were lucky to be on duty that morning. SMSgt Cunningham, a former handler and currently a logistics supervisor joined us. SSgt Quigg recently transferred to Luke AFB from Kansas and has been a handler for several years, while SrA Pedroza is a new handler awaiting her dog assignment. Both airmen were overjoyed when we presented them with a giant galvanized bucket full of gifts, complete with a bow on top. The handlers received coffee, cookies and homemade goodies, kettle corn, and blowers and sparklers for New Year’s Eve. Not to be outdone, the four-legged “airdogs” received Chuck-it balls, grooming tools, organic treats, and items from Zukes.

Even though this was not a full base visit with demonstrations, the appreciative handlers offered to give us a tour of the kennels and training grounds.

Both SSgt Quigg and SrA Pedroza were very knowledgeable and took great pride in informing us about the mission of

MWDs at Luke AFB. We are grateful to them for sharing this special day with us and glad that we were able to spread some holiday joy.



Above: (Left) A Christmas run for one Fort Bragg K9. Kyle Dunkle (right) shares his Christmas cheer with another Fort Bragg dog.



Volunteer Shelli Lee stopped by the Air Force kennel at Luke AFB near Phoenix, Arizona during the holidays to bring a bit of cheer to the skeleton crew on hand.

Left: Retired MWD Maxo enjoyed posing with the treats and felt right at home in the Air Force kennel.

Below: SSgt Quigg, SMSgt Cunningham, TSgt Keller, and SrA Pedroza were on hand to receive a galvanized tub that had been stuffed full of dog and handler treats.



A day in the life—military working dogs

Story and photo by Airman Alexis Dougherty

HOLLOMAN AIR FORCE BASE, N.M. --

A small figure drifts down a dimly lit hallway. Its silhouette a murky shadow against a white background.

The sound of its feet are a faint drum against the hall's linoleum flooring, and it breathes in soft pants.

Its pointed nose sweeps low to the ground, and its ears are perked high—listening... In search of what lurks beyond the shadows.

In a flash, a broad man leaps from the darkness.

The dog charges forward and pounces, latching onto his arm with a vise-tight grip.

Doesn't sound like an average day, but this specialized patrol simulation is just one of the many routines that military working dogs at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. engage in.

To become an MWD, a dog must undergo a certification process that encompasses a diverse training course. This training course covers such skills sets as basic obedience and aggression, explosive or narcotics detection, and patrol work. The MWDs are selected for service between the ages of one and a half and four years, from European breeders or Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.

"In order to become qualified or certified as a working dog, (each dog) starts their life at Lackland AFB where they go through dog training school," said Senior Airman David, a MWD handler with the 49th Security Forces Squadron.

"There, they learn the basics on how to do their job, as far as detection and patrol work. They will go through testing, and then they will get certified as a working dog."

From there, the dogs ship out to their respective bases.

"Once they get to their base, they will be assigned to a handler," David said. "The handler and the dog will work together as a dog team for about 60 days. In that 60 days, the handler will work on the dog's detection, and will go into a little bit more detail about how to work the dog and how the dog works specific to that base. They will also do patrol training, where they will work on their bite work and their searching. Once they are trained with the handler, they will get validated."

Validation is a test that determines whether or not a dog is proficient in their skill sets and if they can accurately per-

form their job. Certification comes from the search grant authority of a base. In Holloman's case, this would be the Mission Support Group commander.

"The whole process takes less than about six months, from the time they (arrive at) Lackland AFB, to the time that they are certified as a dog team with a handler," David said. "It's a pretty quick process."

Though Holloman's MWDs are not permitted to play with one another, each dog is granted a routine dose of "play time" with their handler, to relieve any stress or anxiety they may experience. This also helps the dogs to work on basic obedience and training.

"The dogs do not ever get to interact with each other," David said. "We do not let them socialize with each other or with other dogs as far as base populace goes. The reason for that is because they may end up fighting. Because they are trained in patrol work and in aggression, they are trained to protect themselves. We do not want to take the chance of them fighting out here in the yard or in our kennels."

Though the dogs are not allowed to play with other dogs or untrained people, they do not miss out on play time.

"They get plenty of time to play with their handlers, we play with them every day," David said. "It's up to the handler how much play time they get, whether it be 10 minutes, 30 minutes, an hour, two hours, whatever it might be for that day."

However, to play hard the dogs must also work hard.

"We're required to do a minimum of one hour of obedience every day, and we like to make the obedience fun," David said. "We throw their toy around, we run around with them, we pet them. The obedience we do is sit, down, stay, heel and out. But, we will do that as a bare minimum, and we will work on different things that are more complex. So, if we want the dog to sit at one end of our yard, we will have them sit, then we will tell them to stay, then we will walk to the other end of our yard, and then we will give commands from there, whether it be down, sit or heel. So, though we do very few actual commands, we can make them a little more complicated, make them a little more fun."

Training an MWD can be a rewarding process for a handler.

A day in the life continued from page 10



Left: Jop, a military working dog with the 49th Security Forces Squadron, chews on a rubber toy during a “play time” session with his handler at Holloman Air Force Base, N.M. Dec. 7, 2016. Holloman’s MWDs are afforded play time daily. Oftentimes, basic obedience is incorporated into the dog’s play time. Handlers are required to do a minimum of one hour of obedience training every day, which involves commands such as sit, down, stay, heel and out.

“The best part of this job is taking a dog that has issues, working with them, and then seeing that ‘lightbulb’ click on—seeing them get and understand something—and having them perform the way in which you want or need them to perform,” said Staff Sgt. Krystle, a military working dog handler with the 49th SFS.

Holloman’s MWDs may appear strong as steel, but they struggle with health and medical related issues like any other domesticated animal. To combat illness, the dogs routinely attend dental and medical checkups.

“We have four dogs who are facing medical challenges,” David said. “Two of them have cancer, and one has a bad knee that is going to need surgery. So, medical issues are a huge (concern) with working dogs, especially with how active the dogs are, how much physical activity they have to do, and how much demand they actually have in their everyday lives. We have a vet on station who sees (the dogs) whenever we need them—24/7, 365. So, care is never an issue. It’s just that as they age they have the normal issues that every dog is going to have.”

The relationship between an MWD and their handler is unique, and specific to every handler and dog.

“Personally, I look at my dog as a partner at work,” David said. “He stays here at the kennels overnight. This is where

he lives. I come to work. I pick him up. We get in our patrol car; we do our job. We come back, and we relax for the day. (I) let him have some fun and play around. Then, I go home. I would trust my dog with my life, and I would hope that he would trust me with his. I don’t see him as a pet. He’s a great dog, he works really well and I trust him.”

Holloman’s MWDs exemplify the Air Force’s core value of service before self.

“What makes these dogs special is that they do not get paid to do this,” Krystle said. “They do it because we ask them to. They do not get a paycheck; they do not get leave. They do not ask for anything in return.”

Being an MWD handler is a calling that requires patience and resourcefulness. Security forces K-9 units, no matter their station, are a vital asset to the Air Force and the Department of Defense.

“I find this job to be very rewarding, depending on what we do in a day,” David said. “If I come in and the dog is having a bad day, it is not very rewarding because we get nothing done. Sometimes, we actually backtrack on what we end up doing. But, on a day-to-day, I find it very rewarding because we have opportunities to protect and defend the base or important people, like the president, distinguished visitors or foreign dignitaries.”

Sit. Stay. Support.

MWDTSA
3501 MacCorkle Ave. SE #326,
Charleston, WV 25304
Editors: S. Lunney, D. Whitman

Phone: 470-585-9254
Email: info@mwdtsa.org



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All of our volunteers sign a code of ethics, which outlines how we do our business. We are committed to transparency, but also handle the monies and goods you donate with efficiency, respect and appreciation.

Our missions include supporting active duty dogs and handlers, veteran dog handler causes and events, and war dog memorials where handlers can gather to remember, recognize and heal. We offer educational opportunities for the general public and advocate on behalf of retired military working dogs. Please support us!

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<http://mwdtsa.org/about/links/>

Parting Shots

Djibouti



U.S. 5TH FLEET AREA OF OPERATIONS: 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit Law Enforcement (LE) Marines and Tessa, a military working dog, walk a patrol route around a forward operating base during Exercise Alligator Dagger. The patrol served two purposes: to sustain the LE detachment Marines' patrolling tactics and procedures, and acclimatize Tessa to the region's high temperatures and arid environment. The 11th MEU is currently supporting the U.S. 5th Fleet area of operations' mission to promote and maintain stability and security in the region.

Photo by 1st Lt. Adam Miller