

Join MWD TSA now so you won't miss any of the photos, stories, news and highlights of 2010!

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Over the course of this year, MWD TSA volunteers plan to visit various military installations.

Please know that MWD TSA travel policy states that -"All travel done by anyone for MWD TSA is at the cost of the individual traveler." We do not use any supporters' donations to fund our travel and wanted to let you know.

Stroke of Genius: K9 Health Benefits



01/15/2009 - U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Mark Henderson, left, a dentist with the 386th Expeditionary Medical Group, performs a root canal on a military working dog at an undisclosed air base in Southwest Asia, Jan. 15, 2009. Assisting, at right, is U.S. Army Capt. Elizabeth Williams, a 218th Medical Detachment veterinarian. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Courtney Richardson/Released.)

Every so often a simple truth will smack you upside the head and attach itself to the adjective "self-evident".

In a recent online conversation with one of the dog handlers, I found a precious, eloquent, yet, mostly unspoken truth; that all Military Working Dogs are veterans and should be recipients of veterans' health benefits.

Self-evident, right? But that currently does not happen.

Once a dog is adopted out by someone, that individual (who quite often is a loving, former handler) must pull out of his or her own pocket the funding that is necessary for health costs. The adopter often must cover expenses for health issues that are exacerbated by

years of grueling complex military work: running, jumping, twisting, while sleeping and living on a concrete floor in a kennel.

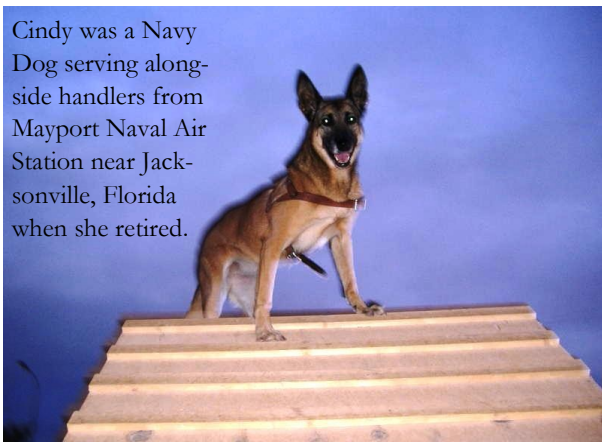
In just two conversations, I've found two additional handlers who have adopted their old partners: one with Degenerative Myelopathy and the other needing to undergo some expensive

www.mwdtsa.org

Why you should consider adopting a retired Military Working Dog!

Cindy For All Seasons : A Navy Military Working Dog

Cindy was a Navy Dog serving alongside handlers from Mayport Naval Air Station near Jacksonville, Florida when she retired.



"Well guys,

I was just informed that My Best partner in Crime passed away this morning in GA. MWD Cindy passed away from what seems to be a stroke. Her adopted family sat by her side all the way to the end. She will be greatly missed."

Robert Pennington USN

Robert and Cindy B0129 off the plane in Iraq.

"As far back as I can remember, every Kennel Master/ Trainer I have seen has always told handlers trust your dog. And when I am helping young handlers now this is the story I tell. ~~

I was at a gate at Naval Station Mayport Florida doing Vehicle searches with a brand new kennel support that we were about to send to K9 school. I was just going through the motions with Cindy since she and I were to be leaving for Iraq the next week, when I noticed her have a change of behavior on a truck's passenger side. She then sniffed under the seat and responded. I

looked at her and said, "you've got to be kidding". Well just to prove she wasn't, she stuck her head back under the seat and pulled out a bag of marijuana. It was then that the Kennel support said, "I guess you should have trusted your dog". And even Cindy gave me a look that pretty much said the same thing. So from that moment on, I have trusted my dogs."

Robert Pennington USN

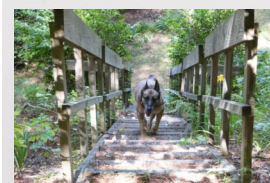


Smiling Cindy



Cindy

Cindy had 5 handlers and was deployed twice to Iraq. She also was in Puerto Rico for a bit and she worked in El Paso, Texas on the border in her younger years. She retired at the age of 10 from her last duty station in Florida.



Cindy still willing to please

Thanks to Rob and Avery for
Sharing their love and stories of Cindy.



Remembered As a Warrior and a Loving Family Pet

May 4, 2010

This morning at 3:30 A.M. Cindy, our Retired Military Working Dog, died. Our Lord was gracious to us in all ways concerning Cindy. We have always considered her to be a gift on loan from God. She was unquestionably the most delightful dog that we have ever been privileged to bring into our family. When we adopted Cindy from Robert on May 23, 2008 she was ten years old. Our goal was to give her as many good years of retirement as possible after her brave and honorable career serving our country. I am sure that she brought us far more pleasure than we were able to give her, but we did our best to spoil her. She was an intimate part of our life for almost two full years, for which we will be eternally grateful.

Her passing was sudden but peaceful. In my opinion Cindy had at least one stroke. From shortly after 9:00 P.M. her eyes were almost a blank stare and there was little if any response to attention. Normally Cindy could communicate more clearly with her eyes than most people can with pen and paper. In my mind Cindy's passing was peaceful and comfortable. I was holding her in my arms when she took her last breath.

Reflections on the life of our dear companion:

We adopted Cindy on May 23, 2008. Cindy immediately assumed her position as the third member of our family. I have loved and kept pet dogs from eight years of age, I am now sixty-seven. I have never been around any dog as well behaved and socially adapted as Cindy. I can only imagine the affection that she received and the comfort she provided for so many soldiers overseas.

Many retirement handlers refer to their dog's retirement to, "Fort Living Room." This was far from the case with Cindy. My wife, Jan, and I are both retired and spend a lot of time traveling. Our first trip with Cindy was from Georgia to North Carolina to visit Jan's family. It was obvious that Cindy was in her element in the back seat of a moving vehicle. Although we drive an Isuzu Trooper and not a Humvee, she would "Load" on command, settle into the seat looking straight ahead and never move until the vehicle stopped. It seemed as though she considered herself to be "working" – which was her passion.

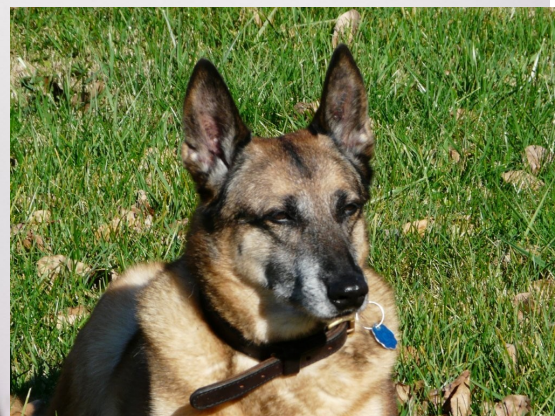
For two years Cindy seldom left my side. If I got involved with something that she did not want to be a part of, like mowing the grass, Cindy immediately found Jan and kept her company until I returned. Because of Cindy, Jan and I made many wonderful animal lover friends of all ages. Children were drawn to Cindy like a magnet and she was de-

lighted to be loved on by them. Seldom did we go for a walk, tour a flea market, or visit a drive through window that someone did not comment on our beautiful, well mannered companion. Upon learning that she was a retired MWD who had protected our troops for the past ten years in places like Iraq; there was almost always an immediate air of respect and gratitude manifested by her admirers.

I will never forget an occasion when we traveled to South Florida to watch one of our grandsons play "Travel Ball" in a professional baseball park. It was Memorial Day. When I arrived at the ticket gate I was told that I could not take Cindy into the park. I asked to speak to someone with authority. After telling the park manager that she was a Retired Military Veteran and that was what Memorial Day was all about, he personally ushered Cindy and I to special seats with his blessing. I wish everyone of you could have seen how excited she became when the players began to throw balls all over the field during pre-game warm up. You could tell that she really wanted to join the team for the game.

Even if space were available, time and words would fail to express the love and joy that Jan and I received from sharing our home and or life with Cindy. We will be eternally grateful for the opportunity to be a small part of her life.

Avery Kelly



Retired Cindy

Thanks to Cindy and two men who loved her and treated her well. May her memory remind us all of the love and dedication given above and beyond by Military Working Dogs everywhere.

Base Visits: MacDill, Grand Forks, Minot and Malmstrom



Dani loved his new KONG: a big black Extreme KONG toy for a big black shepherd.

(Photo of Dani does not imply in any way that he specifically endorses MWD TSA. However, we suspect that he does appreciate the KONG folks that did support MWD TSA during our "Kongs for K9s" event.)

On May 21, 2010 MWD TSA was given a tour of the MacDill AFB kennels near Tampa. I laughingly refer to the day as 100 degrees with 100% humidity—but I can't have been too far off. I am imagining that this kennel does a lot of training before the sun comes up across the Florida peninsula.

Our tour included a visit to the kennel and a great demo of two dogs working in a real-life scenario with police cars.

We really appreciate the efforts of all the handlers who were present that day to do the demonstration and join us for a recognition luncheon of pizza and soft drinks. (I finally found some handlers who do not require prompting to eat more than two pieces of pizza.)

Our connection with Tampa began with Richard Starks, who spearheaded our **KONGs for K9** drive in the Tampa area during the holidays last

year. Richard is a former dog handler and is the manager of the South Tampa Puppy Palace. tampapuppypalace.com (If you live in or are visiting the area and want to give your dog a real treat, let them relax here. Absolutely the neatest kennel I've ever seen. Kudos to you Richard, for the design and oversight. Thanks again for your unwavering support of our Military Working Dogs and MWD TSA.)

Great publicity for the drive was provided by Anna Cooke and ***The New Barker***, which pushes every dog magazine I've ever seen for quality of publication. It rocks. thenewbarker.com

Two very strong supporters, Patt Glenn and Betty Gagnon, both joined us for the day. Awesome day, thanks to everyone for their time and energy.

One of MWD TSA goals is to introduce ourselves to kennels and make sure they know we

are here and willing to support their deployed handler teams. So heading off in the opposite direction in mid-June, hubby and I visited three additional kennels on what seemed like a world tour. We drove from North Georgia to Montana's Glacier National Park and were able to include stops at three Air Force bases on the way to Glacier: Grand Forks, Minot and Malmstrom. (A big thank you to my hubby who was willing to give up three vacation days to stop and visit the military installations.)

We stopped at all three bases to introduce ourselves, to tour the kennels, visit with the handlers and make sure the dogs had a new KONG on which to chew.

It was a really awesome experience to meet these young men in North Dakota and Montana. I have to admit, I loved the weather up north in the summer, but cannot imagine how cold, windy and dreary it can be that far north in the winter. It's

only about 30-35 miles to Canada from Minot and probably a little more from both Grand Forks and Malmstrom. Grand Forks and Minot were no surprise in that they were in the open—wide open—prairie. Malmstrom, however, surprised me. We had been in a beautiful mountain valley, and came out of that valley up onto a butte of some huge dimension. The entire base is sitting on that high open plain. One cool perk that I noticed at Malmstrom is that airmen get to pasture their horses for free there. The pasture was next to the kennel. Amazing.

At the bases, we connected with handlers that we had met previously at other bases so that was an awesome surprise and also some handlers who had been deployed last Christmas and had received MWD TSA gift packages and that was just heart warming.

Four great visits. Thanks to all of the guys who went out of their way to make us welcome. On behalf of all MWD TSA Supporters, we thank you for your service.

Chips: America's WWII Hero Dog

Original Article by Dixie Whitman

Not long after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the American Kennel Club (AKC) and Dogs for Defense (DFD) started the recruitment process for War Dogs. Many patriotic Americans, who would soon be giving so much in support of the war efforts during World War II, began by donating their pets. One of these dogs was Chips, an unruly dog owned by Mr. Edward J. Wren of New York. At the time, nobody knew that this mixed German shepherd dog would become the most decorated dog hero of his time.

Trained at Front Royal, Virginia, this smart, reformed, former chicken-chaser would soon gain skills to accompany his herding skill that were required to travel throughout Europe and North Africa in support of the Army's Third Infantry Division.

Tales of Chips' exploits are the tapestry from which legends are woven. He was selected to serve as sentry dog to the Roosevelt-Churchill conference that took place in 1943 in the north African city of Casablanca. He later reportedly alerted to an impending ambush, which would seem right in character with his guarding tendencies as a shepherd.

Once, with a phone cable attached to his collar, Chips ran back to a home base, avoiding incoming small arms fire to establish communications for an endangered platoon. And, perhaps the event that most resonates his status as a hero occurred in Sicily. Chips and his handler came under fire from a machine gun nest. Chips broke away from the handler and catapulted himself right into the pillbox. He bit at least one enemy



Chips was a true hero — but also categorized as equipment. Medals he was awarded were later revoked when the Commander of the Purple Heart complained.

soldier who, along with the rest of the crew, was herded out of the pillbox with hands held high in surrender. Even as he licked his wounds from the morning battle, Chips alerted on an approaching enemy squad that evening, allowing his own infantry the opportunity to gather ten more Italian prisoners of War.

Chips was indeed a War Dog hero. He rightfully received a Distinguished Service Cross for extraordinary heroism, a Silver Star for valor, and a Purple Heart for his wounds. The ensuing publicity about his exploits and medals

awarded caught the eye of the Commander of the Order of the Purple Heart.

The Commander complained that it would demean all recipients of the Purple Heart if this honor were given to a dog and, sadly, the War Department listened. Chips was a true hero — but became categorized as equipment to preclude the receiving of awards. All of his medals, the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star and the Purple Heart, were revoked. The inconsistency is that he received an Honorable Discharge and retired back home, with the Wren family in Pleasantville, New York.

Sadly, the classification that Chips was equipment stayed in place for all War Dogs and resulted in thousands of needless deaths of dogs who followed in Chips' paw prints. When the U. S. left Vietnam, we abandoned or destroyed much of our equipment, which tragically included devoted, loving and heroic Military Working Dogs.

Over 4,000 dogs served in Vietnam, many sacrificing their lives. It is estimated that approximately 200 dogs came back home. The remaining K9 soldiers were killed in combat or died from disease, were euthanized or turned over to the South Vietnamese. Those numbers haunt me.

For saving the lives of approximately 10,000 American lives in Vietnam, our K9 Soldiers deserved a better fate and their memory remains a catalyst for Vietnam Dog Handlers and other supporters today.

Continued from page 1

leg/knee surgery which cost upwards of \$3,000. Friends held a fundraiser and got enough money together for the surgery, but what if that were not the case? What if a handler had to pull those bucks out of his or her own wallet?

Retired MWDs are not usually available for adopting until they reach a time in their lives when they become debilitated and are unable to work further, which automatically means they begin their adopted life with health issues. Bloat, spinal issues, degenerative myelopathy, hip problems are all health issues that I can imagine one would see fairly frequently among retired military working dogs.

Anyone who has been in dogs any length of time knows that these diagnoses do not come cheaply. And, that is my premise: the costs of caring for retired military working dogs' health benefits should not necessarily be borne by the adopter.

While I share in this article the

experiences of three handlers with whom I have spoken, I know there are other Americans out there, who have the capacity, devotion and heart to care for a military working dog, but because of the fragile economy are leery of taking on that economic responsibility.

I am not afraid of dealing with any disease or of losing health battles on a dog too soon; I've dealt with many such issues in the nearly 37 years that I have owned, trained and adored German shepherd dogs. But, what I am most afraid of is having to euthanize the dog, before necessary because of the expenses associated with the wear and tear on its body while serving our country. Hence, the dog may be unadoptable for financial reasons.

As one of the handlers mentioned, "We throw away enough money in this country that we ought to be able to fund this program." And, I believe he's right.

I know times are tough and money is tight, but, all you have to do is check one of the citizens' "watchdog" (pun intended) groups to know that funding is available for some truly wacky programs.

These comments should not be taken as a swipe against any military or K9 office, member or the government. I have the utmost respect for the due diligence they use with the ever diminishing budget dollars. This is, instead, a hopeful new direction to an ongoing issue.

I am not taking credit for broaching this truth, but I will take credit for immediately realizing that what my young handler friend is saying is indeed self-evident. These dogs are veterans, they have had no choice in their lives and deserve to be covered under medical care by the government should the need arise.

I am asking for input, ideas, directions and focused energy. How can we best assist these

"Daring ideas are like chessmen moved forward. They may be beaten, but they may start a winning game."

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe (1749-1832) German poet, novelist and dramatist.

dogs and their adopters? We want to fix an issue and not create a new set of problems.

As von Goethe once said, "Daring ideas are like chessmen moved forward. They may be beaten, but they may start a winning game." Won't you help join your voice with ours to start a new winning movement in support of the America's retired Military Working Dogs? They certainly deserve our support.

In Loving Memory of a Terrific Hero Dog: Rex D012



It is with great sadness that we learn from the kennels at King's Bay Submarine Base of the death of Rex D012. Rex was highlighted as MWDTSA's very first Hero Dog for his work in the craggy mountain ranges of eastern Afghanistan. You can read his entire nomination letter at:

<http://www.mwdtsa.org/calloway.html>

Rex, with his partner, MA1 Chris Calloway, were honored as the 2005 German Shepherd Dog Club of America Hero Dog, as well. What a sweet, talented and energetic buddy we have lost. "Rex, please look up my Sierra when you get to Rainbow Bridge. You guys will really hit it off."



Courtney Receives Mariel Hannah Award

by Dixie Whitman

Atlanta, GA – May 4, 2010 - Courtney Griffin, a Creekview High school senior in Cherokee County, was awarded the Atlanta Humane Society's 2010 **Mariel Hannah Humane Heroes Award** in an Atlanta ceremony May 2, 2010. Ms. Griffin has supported the dogs serving in Iraq and Afghanistan by working with a local charitable organization, Military Working Dog Team Support Association (MWDTSA).

The award was created to honor Mariel Hannah, an 18 year-old native of metro Atlanta who was tragically killed in a home invasion in Forsyth County in 2006. To honor Ms. Hannah's special love of animals, her family and friends have established a fund at the Atlanta Humane Society to recog-

nize selfless acts by teenagers who share Mariel's love for animals.

Courtney is deeply honored to receive this award for her work with Military Working Dogs. In addition to being an advocate for their support, Courtney designed a T-shirt as a fundraiser. When asked about her contribution to the organization, Griffin replied, "The greatest moment for me, apart from creating the design, was hearing the positive feedback from the active duty handlers and realizing that I truly have made an impact."

Along with her fundraiser, Courtney worked public education events, met Governor Perdue and Georgia based

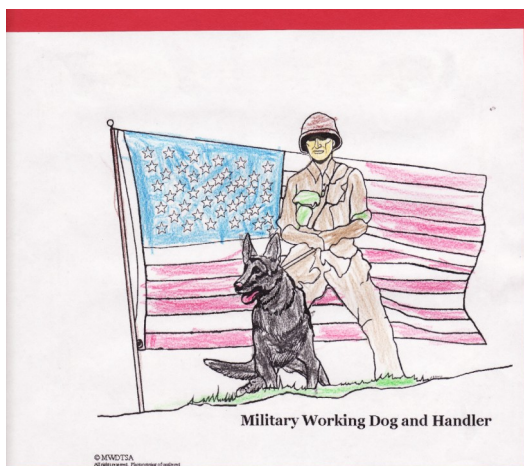
handlers on Military Dog Handler Day in Georgia and recently took a trip to Fort Benning to see the War Dog Memorial and get a hands-on experience with the dogs as she donned a bite suit.

She hopes that her project will bring some exposure to the importance of Military Working Dogs. "It's a wonderful cause," she said, "They are part of our U.S. military and deserve our support."



Shown above, Courtney receives her award at the Atlanta Humane Society's ceremony held at the Atlanta Center for Contemporary Arts. We are very proud of her!

Kindergarten Kids Color for K9s



Our co-founder and former Secretary/Treasurer, Ken Besecker, asked his granddaughter's class if they would be interested in coloring pages and sending notes to the soldiers. Here are two of the many pages that were created by those kindergartners.

THANK YOU FOR
SERVING OUR COUNTRY!
FISHER

Thank you for
protecting
our freedom!
♥Phoebe

San Antonio Fundraiser by Thai Dog Handlers

This donation fundraiser is held by members who were Thailand Dog Handlers <http://thailanddoghandlers.com> All donated funds raised by this no purchase necessary project will be divided evenly between two proven organizations, “Feed The Dawgs,” and the “Old Dawgs and Pups Program.” More information on these charities can be found at: <http://feedthedawgs.com/default.aspx> and <http://www.war-stories.com/odap/ws-odap-index.asp> The winner will be drawn at the reunion event in San Antonio in October. You need not be present to win.

First Prize



Second Prize



Send your check or money order donation (PLEASE, NO CASH!) made out to: John Homa, 151 CR 556, Athens, TN 37303

<p>USAF Air Police, Security Police</p> <p>Memorabilia Donation Fundraiser</p> <p>San Antonio, TX October 2010</p> <p>Donation: \$10.00 for 3 Chances</p> <p>You do not need to be present to win!</p> <p>A unique collection of Air Police, Security Police, K-9 badges and, Brassards and Patch Memorabilia from Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom.</p> <p>All proceeds will benefit the</p> <p>“Old Dawgs and Pups” and “Feed the Dawgs” programs</p> <p>No purchase necessary.</p>	<p>Memorabilia Donation Fundraiser Name</p> <hr/> <p>Phone #</p> <hr/> <p>Memorabilia Donation Fundraiser Name</p> <hr/> <p>Phone #</p> <hr/> <p>Memorabilia Donation Fundraiser Name</p> <hr/> <p>Phone #</p> <hr/>
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Visit this 1400 pound steel sculpture of Seaman at the Fort Mandan site on the Missouri River in North Dakota.

Seaman: First Military Working Dog in the United States.

Some people consider the first military dog in the U.S. to be Seaman, the Newfoundland that belonged to Meriwether Lewis of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Of Seaman, Lewis wrote many entries into his journals outlining the usefulness of this mascot. "Last night we were all alarmed by a large buffaloe bull, when he came near the tent, my dog saved us by causing him to change his course." Seaman became a very important part of the expedition saving them time and time again from bear, buffalo and more.

We were fortunate to find this statue of Seaman at Fort Manden, North Dakota, the location where the Corps of Discovery wintered.

While Seaman supporters may hold bragging rights, knowing the nature of dogs, I would bet that some stray pup attached itself to George Washington's infantry units and served as a sort of early Force Protection dog by sounding alarms at unknown intruders.

Schedule of Events:

Event Name	Dates and Details	
62nd Combat Tracker Reunion	August 6-9, 2010	Unit Combat Tracker Reunion from Vietnam, Matthews, NC
Pigs and Peaches Kennesaw, GA http://www.kennesaw.com/pigs-peaches-bbq-festival/	Public Education Event at BBQ Festival in Kennesaw and Kris tries her hand at peach cake. August 20-21 2010	Need volunteers— contact Kris Wilson at mwdtsa.carepacks@yahoo.com
Responsible Dog Owner Day Douglasville Kennel Club O'Neal Plaza, Douglasville, Georgia	September 25, 2010 10am to 1pm	We will have a table at this event and will be focused on working with kids. Need volunteers— contact Kris Wilson at mwdtsa.carepacks@yahoo.com
Top Dogs Paw Festival 2615 George Busbee Parkway Kennesaw, GA	September 26, 2010 –1-5 pm Top Dogs Boutique— An event showcase for one of our favorite vendors. Table will offer Public Education and support opportunities. Held indoors in small area.	Could use volunteers from 12-5 pm Contact Dixie Whitman at mwdtsa.dixie@yahoo.com (No dogs, please.)
VSPA Reunion Lackland AFB, TX	Early October	Vietnam Security Police Reunion— AF Handlers from Vietnam
German Shepherd National Farmington, Utah (Tentative)	Public Education Event and Fundraising/ T-shirts Mid-October	Could use volunteers - Contact Dixie Whitman at mwdtsa.dixie@yahoo.com

**Military Working Dog Team
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We are on the web!!

www.mwdtsa.org

Follow our Blog for more photos.

Sit. Stay. Support.



PLEASE RECYCLE
BY SENDING TO
A FRIEND



Donna LaRue enjoys the beautiful blue waters of Tampa Bay as she showcases her royal blue Courtney T-shirt. Where will Courtney's Tee show up next?

In Memory of Ronald J. Bullock



To the Vietnam era dog handlers, I want to share with you the memory that I have of Ron Bullock, a dog handler with the 47th IPST who was shot and killed by an off-duty FBI agent at Mac Dill AFB. I remember Ron as a gregarious, outgoing character. He added much fun and laughter to our Fort Benning reunion in 2002 and is here pictured with my dear friend, Claire. For more information, please see our Blog link below. <http://mwdtsa.blogspot.com/2010/05/in-memory-of-ronald-bullock.html>
With deepest sympathies to Ron's family and friends. Respectfully, Dixie

"Thanks for leaving a different memory of Ron Bullock than the recent portrait of him contained in local news reporting of his death. I've known Ronnie for many years and your description of him as 'fun loving with a big smile' was 100% accurate. Sure, he was a troubled Vet. He also served with honor in service to his country. He deserves special praise for dealing with his significant addictions and deciding to become clean and sober - and maintaining that sobriety - for many years on his own. That is a difficult and honorable achievement. Safe Home, Ronnie Bullock."

**Anonymous Message Left on
Our Blog**