July 2012 Award Winning Bi-Monthly Newsletter Volume 4, Issue 4

www.mwdtsa.org

Support MWDTSA now and you won't miss any of the photos, stories, news and highlights of 2012!

Kennel Talk is now an award winning MWD publication!

Inside this issue:

Fort Stewart, GA	1
2012 Proclamation Presented at Moody AFB, GA	3
Road Trip!	4
Offutt—Nebraska's Military Dog Handler Day	5
John Douangdara War Dog Park	8
Thank You to our Donors	9
Celebration at	10

What skills can you share to support our dog teams? We are looking for volunteers in:

Fundraising

Davis-Mothan AFB, AZ

Grant writing

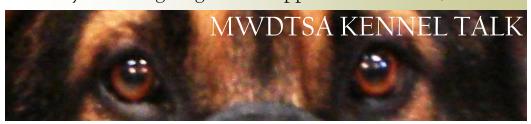
Giving presentations

Soliciting in kind - donations

Newsletter editing

Social networking

Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc.





Members of the Vietnam era 62nd Combat Tracker Platoon with the 385th Military Police MWD Section at the MWD kennels on Fort Stewart near Savannah, GA.

Military Working Dog Demonstrations at Fort Stewart, GA

By Avril Roy-Smith

On Friday, June 8, 2012, Vietnam era 62nd Combat Tracker Platoon members, along with their family members, were guests of the MWDTSA at an event held at the 385th Military Police Battalion MWD Section kennels on Fort Stewart, GA. Dixie Whitman, and I represented MWDSTA.

The 62nd Combat Trackers were some of the most highly decorated special teams in Vietnam. They worked in teams consisting of a Visual Tracker, a Cover Man, a Radio

Man, a Team Leader and, of course, the Dog Handler and dog. The dogs used in these teams were more akin to SSD dogs than the Patrol and Security dogs employed by the 385th Military Police Battalion MWD Section.

SSG John Hughey, the Training NCO of the 385th MP Battalion MWD Section, was our military contact for coordinating the event. His patience and help were a big factor in the success of the day. SSG Hughey met us near Fort

Stewart's Gate 1 and guided the convoy of attendees through the Fort to the kennels

The kennels are located in a secluded and rather charming area on Fort Stewart surrounded by some of the great old oaks for which the Georgia coast is famous. As it was a typically warm, sunny and humid day for the Savannah area, the oaks provided some welcome shade

The event started with a welcome from Kennel Master SFC

Continued on page 2

Page 2 MWDTSA KENNEL TALK Volume 4, Issue 4

www.mwdtsa.org



Above: We saw demonstrations of scent work.

Lavalle who asked the ten dog handlers of the MWD Section to introduce themselves and describe their military experiences. Their youth coupled with the extraordinary number of deployments greatly impressed and moved the 14 members of the 62nd Combat Trackers attending the event. The Vietnam era Veterans then introduced themselves and recounted their service and experiences.

The demo at Ft. Stewart was outstanding, a real eye-opener for us old "dog" men. Especially of interest to us trackers was the new reward-based training process. Quite a bit different than the classical conditioning we employed (praise, correction, repetition). The kennel facilities were also outstanding, far above the conditions we experienced even in CONUS.

SFC Lavalle and her team went out of their way to make us feel welcome and their training demonstrations prove that indeed, "the Army is in good hands."

Dick Baumer COL, Inf (USA Ret.) CO, 62 IPCT (1969) CO, 26 IPS (1968)

Next was a quick tour of the offices and training areas along with gear familiarization. Articles used by the MWD handlers and trainers everyday were laid out and explanations of their uses given. This display included the full padded suits and gradations of padded pants, jackets and sleeves, collapsible water bowls, foot protection for the dogs, leashes and collars and other items. All these have to be carried when the teams are down range and are stuffed into a backpack which was also shown. We had the opportunity to inspect and handle the items and ask further

questions about their uses. Parked nearby were vehicles used to transport the dogs here and in the field.

We were offered a tour of the kennel area and saw how the dogs live between training sessions and deployments. The medals won by the individual dogs were on display outside their respective kennel and it was sobering to see Purple Hearts displayed there.

SFC Lavalle presented a demonstration by some of the handlers of the training methods used in the section. Although the dogs are trained before being sent to the section, the handlers and dogs train on a daily basis to keep proficient in their skills. Current training methods employ positive reinforcement with rewards such as Kongs, rather than the repetitions reinforced by praise and corrections used in the past. The former dog handlers who had served with the 62nd Combat Trackers were awed by these differences.

Continued from page 1- Fort Stewart

I was at Fort Stewart and was very impressed by many things. The number of the handlers that had been deployed and the many that had 2, 3, 4 deployments. Wow, America will always be safe with the Troops we have. A great group of guys and gals......

I enjoyed them letting me "practice" with them. As a Visual Tracker I had never seen the dogs in action, or in any type of training.....just a great day and a day I will always remember.

We can never thank our Troops enough, and we KNOW what these Troops do, very special in our hearts.

Estel Matt Visual Tracker

Demonstrations were given of basic training techniques and scent work. Then we were treated to a display of search techniques as a dog was put through an obstacle course. After, we got to witness bite work training

Below: Current training methods employ positive reinforcement with rewards such as Kongs, rather than the repetitions reinforced by praise and corrections used in the past.



Below: We were given a deomonstration of basic training techniques .



Continued on page 4

2012 Proclamation Resides at Moody 820th Kennel

By Dixie Whitman

In late March, Georgia Governor Nathan Deal signed a proclamation honoring Military Dog Handler Day. That original proclamation, framed and ready for its new home, was driven to Moody Air Force Base near Valdosta, GA on April 20, 2012 and presented to the staff of the 820th Kennels.

What an amazing day it was! The day started early with an opportunity to do some basic introductions, meet the skilled dogs and their devoted handlers, visit the kennels and get familiar with the gear used on missions.

Following that, MWDTSA supporters were treated to a special opportunity to visit the cool F.A.T.S building. What is an F.A.T.S. building? It's a Firearms and Training Simulator building with really cool, new, cutting edge technical gizmos and a chance to go "down range" without the travel time or the sand to

shoot in a simulator. I'm not sure who enjoyed the shooting simulator more, the guests or the handlers. We had a blast – literally.

Shooting weaponry is hard-wired in the DNA of most men I know and my husband was no exception. He got to shoot all kinds of guns – the more automatic and the bigger the caliber, the bigger his smile. We also got to see technical gadgets being used in the current conflicts and we were

truly impressed by the creativity and engineering of America's innovators. One of the "rides" in the building is a simulator that allows trainees to practice egress from an overturned Humvee. While I think I made the right decision not to test my breakfast by being turned upside down and spun around, the young folks making their way out of the vehicle were learning important survival lessons before heading down range with their dogs.

The best time of the day was getting to sit and watch the breath-taking military working dogs work, their caring handlers eager to show off the results of the endless love and work that it takes to build a great dog. The majority of the dogs utilized at Moody are German shepherd dogs and Belgian Malinois, both breeds from the herding group. We watched the six phases of aggression, which highlights the various ways in which

Right: The proclamation was presented to the Kennel Master, MSgt. Keith Crowder, by Jerry Whitman, MWDTSA supporter.





Left and Right: The best time of the day was getting to sit and watch the breath-taking military working dogs work, their caring handlers eager to show off the results of the endless love and work that it takes to build a great dog.





Continued on page 6—Moody

Page 4 MWDTSA KENNEL TALK Volume 4, Issue 4

www.mwdtsa.org

Continued from page 2 - Fort Stewart



Above: We got to witness bite work training utilizing the different levels of padded protection.

utilizing the different levels of dogsepadded protection. SFC Lations valle donned padded jackets tions and sleeves and acted as the baiter for some of these the demonstrations.

An opportunity for the visitors to volunteer and take part in these exercises was given. A couple of the veterans donned a padded sleeve and experienced what it was like to be the target rather than a handler. Estell Matt, a veteran Visual Tracker, was one of these. In an email to MWDTSA, he said: "I enjoyed them letting me "practice" with them. As a Visual Tracker I had never seen the dogs in action, or in any type of training.....just a great day and a day I will always remember."

Emphasis was made that each dog was an individual and worked slightly differently and that each had its own personality. All the dogs we saw were either German Shepherd Dogs or Belgian shepherds and seemed eager to perform their jobs. The control the

dogs showed and their reactions to the different situations presented to them were very instructive. All in all, the demonstrations were stellar and an unforgettable experience.

Dixie Whitman presented SFC Lavalle with the 2009 Military Dog Handler Day Proclamation as this was the first opportunity to coordinate the presentation event. MWDTSA handed out Kongs to the dog handlers, with some of the dogs enjoying their new toys immediately. T-shirts were also given to the active duty and veteran soldiers. The t-shirts prompted an explanation to the active duty soldiers of how the various members of the Combat Tracker teams worked together.

A lunch of pizza, salad, soft drink, water and cookies was provided by MWDTSA and enjoyed at tables set under the shady trees. While eating, the 385th soldiers and the 62nd veterans exchanged stories and experiences. A

couple of the working dogs joined us and were much admired and petted, especially by the children present.

The day was deemed a great success with all participants enjoying the time spent together. Dick Baumer, the 62nd Combat Tracker Platoon Leader, emailed: "SFC Lavalle and her team went out of their way to make us feel welcome and their training demonstrations prove that indeed, "the Army is in good Estell Matt also hands." emailed:" I was at Fort Stewart and was very impressed by many things. The number of the handlers that had

This was my first MWDTSA event and I felt that our mission of offering assistance to MWD programs of both active duty and veteran organizations was well demonstrated. The reception of our donations and the feedback I got from various people I talked to convinced me that this is a cause worth supporting.



Above and below: SFC Lavalle donned padded jackets and sleeves and acted as the baiter for some of these demonstrations.



Road Trip!

By Dixie Whitman

In the spring, MWDTSA members visited several military installations where dog kennels are located. Because MWDTSA does not use donated funds for travel, we try to incorporate stops at kennels across the country when we are traveling nearby – or, in many instances, a loose interpretation of "nearby".

Two such stops were made on a recent vacation to the Midwest to visit family. The first stop at Scott Air Force Base

(AFB) in Illinois, just east of St. Louis, was definitely on the way. Many times we have traveled past the entrance road, but because of the day of the week or time of day, we were unable to coordinate a stop.

This time we made it a priority. The Kennel Master at Scott AFB, TSgt Turcott, pulled out all stops to make us feel welcome. Great kennel masters are like that; they like to show off their kennels and get great support for their handlers and dogs. This gentleman was no exception.

The visit to the kennels was relaxed with the chance to really talk to individual handlers. One handler had just

Left and below: I got to meet a very handsome shepherd, Chris, who somehow translated "Do not move a muscle." into perfect English. His handler, Sgt Trapp, recently returned from down range. returned from an undisclosed location down range and after chatting a few minutes, we realized that MWDTSA had sent support to the handler he replaced and were already sending boxes to the handler who replaced him, but had not had his contact information. Lack of continuity is the bane of my existence. One can understand how deployed folks have other priorities, but it really does require many hours spent trying to make those connections over and over again.

As we do with our normal kennel recognitions, we handed out KONG toys to the dogs and our new T-shirts to the handlers, who appreciated them. We also enjoyed a luncheon at a local restaurant of their choice: Buffalo Wild Wings. We spent a lot of time at lunch talking dogs, talking dog equipment, talking dog competitions and talking dog support. Thanks so much for your time, guys.

The second stop, at Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri, was a stretch on the meaning of "nearby" as it was over 200 miles and 3 ½ extra hours of driving. But, as most folks know, Fort Leonard Wood, also known affectionately as "Fort Lost in the Woods" is not really close to anything. It's in the middle of Missouri and is a huge basic training facility. The kennel was actually lost in the woods to me as it took about three passes through to pin point it.

But it was worth the extra effort as we got a chance to spend quality time with the staff at the regular military police kennel and also met two of the kennel masters with the engineer kennels which are also located at Fort Leonard Wood. This military post has lots of dogs! I learned that these engineer kennels are exclusive to Fort Leonard Wood and deploy dog teams trained to clear roadways; therefore, most of their dogs are Labradors or other sporting breed dogs. MWDTSA shared toys and shirts here, as well.





Page 6 MWDTSA KENNEL TALK Volume 4, Issue 4

www.mwdtsa.org

Moody - Continued from page 3

dogs can be used in patrol work to both apprehend a suspect and serve as over watch to assist their handlers with prisoner escort. All of these dogs were well-loved, very happy campers and performed to their top standards.

After the dog demonstrations, we were ready for some chilling time. MWDTSA was delighted to be able to share the day with all of the dogs nels. It was activated in and handlers present. As a 1997 and mirrors some of token of our appreciation, the activity of Safeside, a MWDTSA left new KONG toys for the dogs to enjoy biting and one of our famous the mission of Air Force po-MWDTSA T-shirts, showcases a former Moody protection to outside the AFB dog, Rita, on one of her deployments in Iraq. Members of the kennel staff grilled yummy burgers and hot dogs nel down range often. One

for a great luncheon during which time the proclamation was presented to the Kennel Master, MSqt. Keith Crowder, by Jerry Whitman, MWDTSA supporter.

The 820th is a special unit of the United States Air Force which can, at a moment's notice, deploy anywhere in the world. It includes the 822^{nd} , 823^{rd} , and 824^{th} kenspecial Air Force unit from the Vietnam era, which takes which licemen from base and asset wire. This kennel has a fast tempo of deployments which finds the folks from this ken-

of MWDTSA heroes, Rico, was based at Moody during his deployments.

At the end of the day, we loaded into the car and left this very special place with memories of a wonderful time.

Below: Military Dog Handler Day Celebrants pose after enjoying some time in the Firearms Training Simulator.



MWDTSA Visits Offutt for Nebraska's Military Dog Handler Day

By Dixie Whitman

Offutt Air Force Base handlers, Vietnam dog handlers and local dog fanciers from Omaha joined MWDTSA's Chan Follen and Dixie Whitman for Nebraska's first Military Dog Handler Day on June 1st.

Chan coordinated the occasion with the Kennel Master, TSqt Pevestorf, to create a day that honored dog handlers from Nebraska's only military kennel, along with veteran dog handlers and the state's war dog heritage.

Part of the proclamation signed by Nebraska Governor, David Heineman, read as follows:

WHEREAS: Canine handlers and their dogs are ac-

tive on Offutt Air Force Base; and

WHEREAS: Nebraska remembers its extensive World War II canine heritage with Fort Robinson, Nebraska serving as the training ground for some of our best dog

teams; and



Proclamation to the Offutt Kennel Master.

WHEREAS:

Nebrska is proud to recognize and honor the United States Armed Forces Canine Handlers and their dogs, who have given of themselves to ensure our continued freedom, liberty and way of life;

Thanks to the help of a Vietnam Dog Handler Association friend, MWDTSA was able to track down and invite a handful of local veteran handlers who all reported enjoying a great time being back in a working kennel.

The day started with an opportunity to meet and greet all of the attendees. We were treated to a great dog demonstration and a Kennel Tour by a devoted staff of Offutt dog handlers, while witnessing some great dog work. All dogs have their own personalities that they bring to their work; some dogs have a goofy side when not engaged in performing their job and some are always serious.

Throughout the day, guests had great opportunities to interact with the Offutt handlers and at lunch, over world class BBQ, new relationships were forged. After the luncheon and the occasion to connect with the team at Offutt, Chan was beaming as she presented the Governor's Proclamation to the Offutt Kennel Master. After a successful event, attendees were already planning a similar day for next year.

According to the official website, Offutt Air Force Base is home of the 55th Wing, the Fightin' Fifty-Fifth, and a variety of partner units. Offutt's diverse missions and global responsibilities put it on the cutting edge of the Air Force's transformation. Offutt is a beautiful community situated near the Missouri River in the rolling hills of southeastern Nebraska.

Right: Dick King, a Vietnam era Navy dog handler, shows off one of the T-shirts MWDTSA handed out to the dog handlers for Nebraska's Military Dog Handler Day.





Left: Two generations - one CALISE

Offutt Air Force Base handlers and Vietnam dog handlers ioined MWDTSA for Nebraska's first Military Dog Handler Day on June 1st.

Road Trip - Continued from page 5

The regular kennel master range. It seems that this was out of the office, but Sqt. Durham was a great stand in. He and his staff did some terrific demos for us. We got to We went to eat at the local meet the first ever Springer restaurant of their choice and Spaniel at a base, who was introduced by his devoted handler, Wells. The springer was cute and animated and loving what he did. The other dog that I got to meet was a handsome shepherd who somehow translates "Do not move a muscle." into perfect English. His handler, Trapp,

recently returned from down kennel does pretty heavy rotations, too.

talked for an hour or so. Just an enjoyable visit and time well spent getting to know our heroes, canine and human a bit better.



Left: Bandit, the English Springer Spaniel at Fort Leonard Wood. This is the first spaniel type dog that I've ever met who is a Military Working Dog. Bandit is a Specialized Search Dog, not required to bite, only required to smell really well and communicate with the handler.

Page 8 MWDTSA KENNEL TALK Volume 4, Issue 4

www.mwdtsa.org

John Douangdara Memorial War Dog Park

South Sioux City, Nebraska has named a park in honor of John Douangdara, who was killed in action August 6, 2011 alongside 29 soldiers and his Military Working Dog in a downed Chinook helicopter in Afghanistan. John was a graduate of the 2003 class of South Sioux City Senior High.

John's family is trying to raise funds to erect a monument of John and Bart, the Military Working Dog that died with him, and place it in the John Douangdara Memorial War Dog Park. This park is part of Siouxland's Freedom Park and is to honor all Military Dog Handlers as well as their loyal companions, the Military Working Dogs. This is a park where visitors can explore with their dogs.

The Douangdara family has contracted with Susan Bahary, a well-known international sculptor, to create the statue of John and Bart. She has worked on many pieces including the piece "Always Faithful", a monument honoring Marine Military Dogs in Guam. The cost of the statue is \$45,000, and additional costs of

the pedestal bring the total amount needed to approximately \$55,000.00. The family is currently searching for a contractor to complete the pedestal where the statue will sit. The target date to erect the statue is Memorial Day of 2013; however, work on the park has already started. Fencing was erected on May 4-5 of 2012 and people are now able to bring their dogs.

With kind donations and fundraising events the family has already raised \$18,000.00. They are still a distance from reaching the needed goals, but are determined to get there.

The family organizes fundraising events and is looking for corporate sponsors or donations to move them closer to the reality of completion. The family and friends of John Douangdara appreciate everyone's support in memory of fallen dog teams.

For more information, or updates: http://www.inmemoryofjohn.com/

By Chan Follen

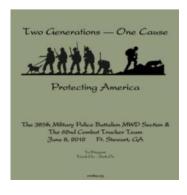


Above: Siouxland Freedom Park committee with John Douangdara's family – Chan with the hard hat, her father, Sith, to her left holding a shovel, and her mother, Seng, standing behind her and to her right.

Below: Chan Follen points out the location of the memorial on a diagram of the Dog Park to one of the South Sioux City officials attending the event.



Continued from page 4 — Fort Stewart



Left: The graphics on the back of the t-shirts made to commemorate the event at Fort Stewart and given to the active duty and veteran soldiers.

Right: The 385th MP battalion MWD Section with the framed 2009 Military Dog Handler Day Proclamation that Dixie Whitman presented to SFC Lavalle.



A Big Thank You to Our Donors





Above: (L) Lickety Stix treats and (R) collapsible water bowl donated by Invisible Fence by Peachtree.

We would like to thank the following donors for their generous in-kind donations.

Invisible Fence by Peachtree donated collapsible water bowls and treats. Collapsible water bowls are always needed downrange.

Bethany United Methodist Church - United Methodist Women, Smyrna, GA donated items from our wish list, Tuffoot and cash.

Leland United Methodist Church - United Methodist Women, Mableton, GA donated items from our wish list.

Bethany United Methodist Church children for their cards and letters.

Memorial donations made by family and friends of James "Terry" Strickland.

Newton Kennel Club of Sussex County, New Jersey for their very generous, much appreciated cash donation.



Left: Children from the Bethany United Methodist church.

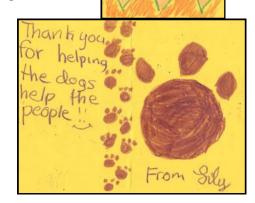


Above: Members of the Bethany United Methodist Church— United Methodist Women pictured with a selection of their donations which included (R) Tuf-Foot for the MWD and teafor their handlers.





Right: Some of the many cards and letters we received to include in the care packages we send to Military Working Dog Teams.



Page 10 MWDTSA KENNEL TALK Volume 4, Issue 4

www.mwdtsa.org

Celebration at Davis-Monthan AFB

By Kara Gniewek



Above: Dog handlers, their family members and volunteers shared a special event at David-Mothan AFB. Jon Hemp's grandson, Vincent E. Holguin, took photos in front of the 355th's mural to commemorate the day.

On Saturday April 21st, two generations of Military Working Dog handlers came together to celebrate each other's service at Davis-Monthan AFB in Tucson, Arizona. The event was organized by Feed the Dawgs, a California-based group whose focus is to recognize active duty Military Working Dog Teams and to say "thank you" to all the Military Working Dog heroes, past and present. Feed the Dawgs was started in 2008 by a group of Vietnam-era handlers who wanted to provide support and mentoring for their contemporary counterparts. They travel to bases around the country to organize and serve steak BBQs. They also sponsor individual kennels, offer resources for handlers of all ages, began the annual Iron Dog Competition, and spearheaded the creation of the Military K-9

Heritage Exhibit at the March Air Field Museum. At the heart of the organization are Jon Hemp and his family. Jon is an extremely dedicated Veteran Air Force K-9 Handler, (who served at Tan Son Nhut Air Base with the 377th Security Police Squadron) and a retired teacher. Having served with a generation of handlers and K-9s who received little recognition in their time, Jon and the FTD co -founders consider it to be a duty and an honor to forge connections between the "Old Dawgs" and "Pups".

The afternoon began with the volunteers, handlers, and family members gathering at the Davis-Monthan Kennel which is home to the 355th SFS Military Working Dog Teams. The 355th boasts 8 outstanding teams, 3 of whom were de-

ployed at the time of the BBQ.

I was privileged to attend as the representative for MWDTSA. In this capacity, I would have the honor of presenting a large bag of treats and Kongs for the K-9s to Kennel Master TSgt Jose Valdez from MWDTSA. I was especially excited as this was my first on-base event

As the sun began to bake the grounds, I was acutely conscious of the extreme conditions under which these handlers and K-9s train. The Arizona summer reaches 108 degrees on a daily basis, providing a realistic preparation for the conditions these teams encounter in their service overseas.

Before the meal, Jon gave a prayer of remembrance and protection for all service members with special recognition to the spouses, parents, and children of the Davis-Monthan teams. This was followed by a reading of the names of recent international dog team casualties. The haunting status of MIA was given to several of our K-9s.

The 355th's commanding officer, Major David Lederer, spoke and recognized the distinguished legacy of Military Working Dog Teams, emphasizing the inestimable value of our Working Dog heroes' service. He told us of the recent discovery of an explosives cache by one of the Davis-Monthan teams. This discovery had saved thousands of lives in Afghanistan.

After these solemn and humbling moments, some levity followed when the Davis-Monthan handlers honored one of their own, Bill Cummings, a Veteran K-9 handler who served at U-Tapao RTAB, Thailand with the 635th Security Police Squadron of Marana, Arizona. Bill served out of Davis-Monthan during the Vietnam War, and is a tremendous friend and resource for the current handlers. The humor and affection in that relationship was evident when SSqt Ian Porter presented him with a plaque to commemorate his support. Bill is a tireless advocate for MWDTs. As the founder of Old Dawgs and Pups, he has provided supplies, networking, and mentorships for our K-9 troops.

Bill was one of several Vietnam-era handlers and service members who were present to participate in the event. As I circulated amongst the guests, I was consistently humbled and moved by the stories that these Veterans shared. It was

Below: The youngest and newest member of the Davis-Monthan team, SrA Daniel Sayarot, and his dog, Figo.



also clear how influential that generation had been in establishing K-9 units in their local police departments following their military service. I heard stories of beloved K-9 partners, many of whom were still remembered with tears and shining praise.

As emotional as the afternoon was, it was also a simple gathering of friends around the grill. There was plenty of laughter and conversation over plates of steak, corn on the cob, potato salad, and plentiful desserts. In keeping with Feed the Dawgs tradition, the meal began with Major Lederer serving a steak to the voungest and newest member of the Davis-Monthan team, SrA Daniel Sayarot. Daniel was also presented with Ray Allen training leads and tugs from Feed the Dawgs.

The kennel's training ground was briefly turned into a play area with both children and adults bouncing around in an inflatable iumpina castle. Three generations of the Hemp family were proudly volunteering at the BBQ, with one of Jon's grandsons, Vincent E. Holguin, serving as staff photographer. All of us assembled for a group photograph in front of the 355th's mural. The mural is based on a photo of one of Bill's fellow handlers with his dog.

At this time four of the K-9s were brought from the cool of the kennel to join us. We were delighted with the presence of the regal German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois who were simultaneously at ease and alert to work. They were soon re-

Below: Major David Lederer (Left) and Jon Hemp (Right).



turned to their kennels, but my heart followed them.

As a German Shepherd lover and ER Veterinary Technician, I often have cause to reflect upon the indelible bond between these magnificent working dogs and their handlers, especially in the dangerous situations they must endure. I can only imagine the extremes of love, loyalty, and sacrifice that Military Working Dog Teams experience in their togetherness. When I asked Daniel about how he copes with fearing for the safety of his K-9 partner, Figo, he responded, "It's in the training, Ma'am. That is why we train so hard, so that we can stay safe."

Being a part of the event was an unforgettably moving experience. The Veterans, volunteers, families, and brave men, women, and K-9s of the 355th all deserve recognition for their sacrifice and service. It was an important opportunity to express thanks, in person, to our Military Working Dogs and Handlers. Let us remember and share our gratitude with all those generations of heroes who came before us, and let us continue and never stop saying "thank you".

Below: The 355th's mural based on a photo of a Vietnam era dog handler and his dog.



Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc.

Sit. Stay. Support.

MWDTSA P. O. Box 5864 Canton, GA 30114 Editor: Avril Roy-Smith

Phone: 404-451-2539 Email: info@mwdtsa.org



We are on the web!! See our Blog! www.mwdtsa.org <u>Kennel Talk</u> is the proud recipient of GSDCA Special Newsletter

Please Recycle by Sending to a Friend







Above: Vietnam era dog training at Fort Benning.

Then and Now-MWD Training

Below: Bosco and his handler Cody Aloi enjoy a break in training.

