
March 2016
Award Winning
Monthly Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 3

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and highlights of 2016!

Kennel Talk is an award
winning MWD publication!

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MWDTSA touches the lives of dogs and people near and far. This month, our articles and photos take us from Florida up the east coast to Maryland and Washington D.C., before heading to North Dakota's Minot AFB. We also stop at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia and go back in time to Vietnam.

Subscribe to see where we connect next month!

Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc.

MWDTSA KENNEL TALK



Sonic stands ready during the 2015 Emerald Coast K-9 Clash at Hurlburt Field, Florida. The 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron military working dog section hosted a two-day competition, where participants were judged on tactical obedience, building search techniques, scouting, and controlled aggression to determine the best overall team.. USAF photos by SrA Ryan Conroy.

Emerald Coast Competition

Story by MWDTSA Staff, Photos by SrA Ryan Conroy.

The 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron (SOSFS) at Hurlburt Field on the Emerald Coast of Florida reflects their worldwide mission--providing unequalled force protection for special operations.

Security forces members provide physical security, entry control, armed response, and police services to Hurlburt Field. They also deploy around the globe to defend Air Force Special Operations resources and troops in support of 1st Special Operations Wing and United States Special Operations Command missions. Included is a K9 attachment.

SOSFS armed response units are trained to deal with crisis situations such as active shooters, terrorist attacks, sniper incidents,

etc. They regularly train with local civilian law enforcement SWAT units.

Competition keeps this unit engaged, educated, and energized. It is no wonder, then, that some of the most stunning images of MWD Teams are a result of these competitions.

In these images, you will find inspiration, joy and grit as dog teams compete in tactical obedience, building search techniques, scouting, controlled aggression, and more. These are some of the most compelling images we have seen coming out of a competition and we hope you will enjoy them.

Emerald Coast Competition continued on page 2

Emerald Coast Competition continued from page 1



Left: Staff Sgt. Andrew Garrett, 122nd Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, carries his MWD during Emerald Coast K-9 Clash at Hurlburt Field, Florida. This photo was taken from the 1-mile "buddy carry".

All photos by USAF photographer, SrA Ryan Conroy

Right: Staff Sgt. Justin Gooding, 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, lifts MWD Eella through a sewer opening at Eglin Range, Florida. The 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron military working dog section hosted a two-day competition, where participants were judged on tactical obedience, building search techniques, scouting, and controlled aggression to determine the best overall team.



Left: Military working dogs and their handlers ruck through a creek during the competition. The "Iron Dog" endurance event, began with a 6-mile ruck march in which the dog handlers carried a heavy ruck sack on their backs. That challenge was followed by a 1.5-mile run, culminating with a 1-mile "buddy carry."



Right: Part of the competition involved suspect apprehension and bite work. Looks like the K9 has found his quarry.



Defenders, K-9s Embrace Deep Blue

UNDISCLOSED LOCATION, Southwest Asia U.S. and coalition service members participated in annual water-based aggression training with their K-9 partners at the base pool here, Jan. 18.

The purpose of the training, hosted by 380th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog Section alongside their Australian counterparts, is to familiarize military working dogs with bodies of water and encourage them to correctly perform their duties in such an environment.

"We have pups ranging from two to 11 years old with varying amounts of experience in the water so it's important to give the dogs adequate exposure to this kind of environment, something they might run into while out on a real world mission so they're prepared to respond," said Staff Sgt. David, a 380th ESFS military working dog handler.

Military working dogs were brought in one-by-one by their handlers to jump and swim in the water for a bit, before starting their bite work training.

Some of the dogs showed reluctance to enter the water and required coercion on part of their handlers with items such as tennis balls, tug toys, and a few other bite-sized items to entice them into the pool.

"Some of the younger pups didn't really care for the water too much," said Tech. Sgt. William, a 380th ESFS military kennel master. "They were trying to get out the entire time, but we held onto the dogs, soothed them, petted them – showed them positive reinforcement, that it's fine to go into the water. They still didn't like it."

Other, older dogs were more proactive in their approach, immediately seeking out the aggressor's bite sleeves upon entering the pool area.

"We use the bite sleeves to get the dogs to engage an intruder or any sort of bad person that may be in the water so the dogs know it's fine to go into water and attack if necessary," said Royal Australian Air Force Leading Aircraftman Grady, assigned to Combat Support Unit 14 and aggressor for the training. "We try to find something that has more [stimuli] for the dog to get

into the water to actually convince them more that 'hey, this is more fun, I'm not worried about getting wet.' For many of the dogs that's the bite sleeve."

Bite sleeves are leathery training aids worn over the arm by agitators or trainers to protect themselves from injury during bite training with military working dogs.

In addition to the water familiarization, Williams said the training allowed dogs and their handlers to strengthen their bonds.

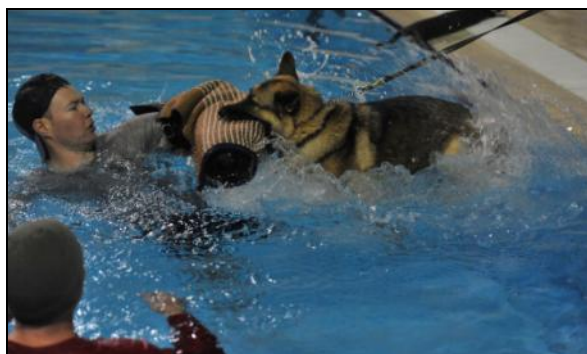
"We were able to show the dogs that 'hey, I'm here to help you out when you need me' in the water, further strengthening the bond that lets the dogs know they got this dad or mom to help them out. That's probably the best thing a handler can do."

(Due to security and safety concerns some last names were removed.)

Story and photos Staff Sgt. Kentavist Brackin



Above: Staff Sgt. Kenten, a 380th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, carries his K9 partner, Pixie, age 3, during annual water-based aggression training at the base pool at undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Jan. 18, 2016. In addition to water familiarization, military working dog handlers said the training allowed dogs and their handlers to strengthen their bonds.



Left: Satie, 380th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog, age 4, attacks a bite sleeve during annual water-based aggression training at the base pool. Bite sleeves are leathery training aids worn over the arm by agitators or trainers to protect themselves from injury during bite training with military working dogs.

Right: Satie, prepares to leap from the edge of a pool during annual water-based aggression training at the base pool at undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, Jan. 18, 2016. Older, more experienced military working dogs were more proactive in their approach to the training, immediately seeking out the aggressor upon entering the pool area.

The 380th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron is one of the units being supported with MWD TSA care packages while they are deployed.



MWD TSA Visits Joint Base Andrews

When you get the chance to visit one of your favorite MWD's, you take it, no questions asked. MWD Nirvana and I became quick friends last fall when I had the opportunity to meet her while she was on "duty" for a presidential visit that took place near my home. Perhaps she liked me because I brought her several toys, but we won't get into the specifics.

When Nirvana's handler, SSgt Monica Rodriguez, found out MWD TSA was going to be in Washington, D.C. for the Q1 care packing event, she invited our volunteers to visit their kennel at Andrews Air Force Base. Even though it was a Saturday and many handlers weren't on duty that day, we still had a very warm welcome from those who were there. In attendance

were volunteers Rob Schnell, Allison Merrill and me, along with Cindy Aronoff, a guest.

Our morning started with a tour of the kennel on base. I was delighted to see a German Shorthaired Pointer! Those sporting breeds excel at scent work and I always love seeing them. There were several German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois, as I expected. The kennels are very well kept and the dogs have around the clock attention from the handlers on duty. After the kennel tour, it was time to get down to business and witness a bite work demo. The lucky decoy, SSgt Cody Shwarz, was already fully dressed in his bite suit when we arrived. Perhaps he loves decoying or perhaps he was ready to get it over with; we'll never know. MWD

Story and photos courtesy Nikki Rohrig.
Additional photos Cindy Aronoff, Rob Schnell and Allison Merrill.

Dixi is the lucky dog that got to perform the bite work. Dixi is a strikingly handsome black German Shepherd and he was eager to get started, so we followed them to an open field. SSgt Tyler Hendrix is Dixi's handler and when he said, "Get em!", Dixi sprang into action and ran after the decoy, who promptly ran behind a building, out of view of our crew. We missed the take down! The decoy was gracious enough to let Dixi lunge at him again, this time in full view of our volunteers.

Top row left: MWD Dixi runs after a ball.

Center: MWD Dixi runs after the decoy, SSgt Cody Shwarz.

Bottom row left: Decoy take down.

Top row right: MWD Dixi on leash and ready for work. This event was just a few days after that major snowstorm in Washington, D. C.

Bottom row right: MWD volunteers Nikki Rohrig, Allison Merrill and Rob Schnell join Dixi, his handler, SSgt. Tyler Hendrix and the decoy, SSgt. Cody Shwarz.



Andrews continued on page 5

Andrews continued from page 4

After the bite work demo, MWD TSA presented some gifts to the kennel. ChuckIt Launchers and balls, Jolly Eggs, Bowser Beer, Platinum Pets aluminum dog bowls, T-shirts, coffee mugs and our tactical patches...it was like Christmas in January! After we handed out gifts, I looked up and MWD Nirvana was running toward me. When a MWD is running toward you, you shouldn't make any sudden movements, just to be on the safe side! Nirvana remembered me from our visit last Fall and just wanted to give me hugs and kisses,

thankfully. Crisis averted.

It was an absolute pleasure to meet some of the teams that we support. We got a couple of pictures back from the rest of the crew when they got back to work and they were so thankful for all of their gifts.

Enjoy a few pictures from our visit!



Above: MWD Nirvana is excited to meet Nikki again at her Andrews AFB visit. They met a few months ago and apparently Nirvana remembered all of the great toys that she got in her gift package.



Left: SSgt Tyler Hendrix lets MWD Dixie play with the Jolly Pet Egg, one of our favorite toys to take to a kennel. Because of their egg shape, they do not roll as the dog anticipates. It is this erratic movement that keeps the dogs intrigued.

Right: Our volunteers took a large number of kennel gifts with them for the dogs, but were only able to meet a small number of the handlers on Saturday.

That following Monday the rest of the handlers arrived and were happy to open great gifts for their dogs. Here is a kennel photo taken of some of the handlers with their favorite gifts.

Three of these handlers joined MWD TSA in the prep work for packing the 1st Quarter Care Packages that took place in Washington, D.C.



Thanks to our great donors

MWD TSA relies on the generosity of our donors, without whom we would be unable to make the care packages to the MWDs and their handlers happen. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following companies and individuals who gave recent donations:

Lisa Aaron
 American Humane Association, Wash. D.C.
 The Animal Keeper Encinitas, Oceanside & Poway, Calif.
 Anser Innovation Burnsville, MN
 Dick Baumer
 Debra Bennett
 Bonnie Schenk Memorial by friends & family
 Nichole and Addison Miller
 Robert and Lori Bieker
 Fort Hays State University Foundation
 Terrence and Patricia Werth
 Robert and Marilyn Schumacher
 Charles and Carolyn Parmer
 Melvin and Norma Schumacher
 Stanton Bost
 Tom and Anita Brengle
 Anna Busha In Memory of Rodie
 Patricia Carter
 D.O.G. Bakery, Traverse City, MI
 Shawn England
 Get It Done Dog Training, San Diego, Calif.
 Kathy Hass
 Pamela Hatchell
 Diane Sullivan Hayes
 Sarah Henry
 Mark Johnson
 Jenifer Kelty
 Jennifer Martus
 Kira MacAlpine
 Marianne McCusker
 Jennifer McLaughlin
 Kerri Moss
 Laurie Newton
 Virginia S. Nordstrom
 Pet Suites Aliso Viejo, Calif.
 Joe Polizzi



Thanks to the family and friends of Bonnie Schenk for the generous memorial gift given in her memory. Through her gracious daughter, Nichole Miller, Bonnie's light continues to shine brightly in service to our military working dogs. We are humbled by your great kindness and send to you our sincerest condolences.

MWD TSA appreciates everyone who was involved with this memorial gift and we will be sharing your kindnesses with our dog teams, both in our care packages and in our kennel visits.

Stephen Redden
 Maureen Reese
 Jeannine and Daniel Riley
 Marty Rosenstock
 Kristen San Antonio
 Shannon Sempsrott
 Gina Stanislawski
 Richard Snyder
 Sylvania Junior Womans Club, Sylvania, Ga.
 Christa Ursini
 Kennette Wentner
 Heidi Weston
 Whitebridge Pet Brands, St. Louis, Missouri
 Kathie Woodring

The Animal Keeper KONGs for K9s Donation

Our great friends at The Animal Keeper and Pet Suites family of boarding, grooming, and training centers, based in southern California, gifted us with another great round of KONG toys to complete our 2015 KONG for K9s program. In this program, the KONG company will match each KONG purchased and donated by one of our partners with another free KONG toy.

Thanks to the wonderful support of clients, staff, and management of The Animal Keeper and Pet Suites, MWD TSA has 100 new toys which will be matched, making a total of 200 KONGs for our K9s.

Included in their donation were KONG Classics, Extremes, Tails, Biscuit Balls, Geniuses and Wubbys.

Toys are the award for a job well done by our military working dogs. Dogs work extremely hard to spend play time with their handlers and these new KONGs are the equivalent of a K9 paycheck. They will be used in care packages and base visits.

The importance of new toys cannot be overstated. As outlined by Alex Baron, a MWD handler, "KONGs in particular are usually a handler's toy of choice when it comes to rewards. It's generally the primary reward for when a dog does something good."

He continued, "Having multiple KONGs allows the handler to have more options to play with the MWD in general, whilst preserving the specialness of the KONG that is used for the primary reward."



Right top: Volunteers Jerry Whitman and Rita Richardson are joined by her husband, Rusty, to show off the new KONG donations from The Animal Keeper and Pet Suites.

KONG photos showcase several of the designs that were included in this great donation, including KONG Classic, KONG Extreme, KONG Tails, Kong Balls, KONG Biscuit Ball and KONG Wubbys.



And They're Off

Our Q1 care packages are currently making their way across the globe and we're happy to give you a quick run down of what went on over the three-day event. This quarter was a bit different for us. The American Humane Association has awarded MWDTSA with a postage grant and they wanted to host a care packing event, so a few of our volunteers packed our bags and headed to their Washington, D.C. office to assist. There were around two-dozen volunteers in the AHA office to pack the boxes and we were able to get all of the 200 boxes stuffed within a couple of hours! Some of the packers included staff from the office of Congressman Richard Hudson (R-NC), Disney VoluntEARS, active duty MWD handlers and AHA staffers. Axel, a service dog that works with retired Marine Corps Captain Jason Haag, was our

quality control manager and was in charge of making sure all of the boxes contained plenty of treats and toys for the MWDs.

The theme for this quarter, chosen by AHA, was Super Bowl 50. These boxes were shipped right around the time that Super Bowl 50 was kicking off their week-long celebrations, so we tried to include some items that go along with that theme. ChuckIt Footballs are sure to be a MWD favorite. Our long sleeved t-shirt featured a special football logo and one of our loyal donors, D.O.G. Bakery, provided football shaped cookies. It isn't truly a football game without beer, so we made sure that the dog's got a bottle of beer... Bowser Beer, that is. Bowser Beer is a broth that you can pour directly onto your dog's food or use as a special treat and it comes in

Story and photos by Nikki Rohrig. Additional photos by Rob Schnell and Allison Merrill.

three flavors: beef, chicken, and pork. You can create a custom label for your dog on their website at www.bowserbeer.com.

Several other items were included in the boxes including Uncle Ben's Ready Rice packets, cup of soup packets, dog nail trimmers and styptic powder, fleece blankets, collapsible water bowls, hot chocolate, energy gummy bears, and other snack type items. We like to let the pictures speak for themselves, so please enjoy a few from the packing event. We would like to extend our thanks to AHA for hosting this event and for providing postage for these care packages.



Left: Some of the 200 boxes that were packed.

Right: A collage of some of the items included in the care package.

Below: A photo including MWDTSA volunteers and volunteers from AHA who packed the boxes for 1st quarter care packages.





Above: Allison Merrill and Nikki Rohrig pose with boxes.

Center: Nikki Rohrig and Rob Schnell with Axel

Below: MWD TSA Volunteers join forces with handlers from Andrews Air Force Base for pre-packing prep.

MWD TSA Volunteers joined forces with volunteers from American Humane Association (AHA) at their headquarters in Washington, D.C. to pack our 1st Quarter Care Packages.

Included inside the boxes were many items donated via the MWD TSA Wish List on Amazon and we thank all of our supporters who stepped up to the plate to send Wish List items for this care package.

The theme of this box centered around the celebration of Super Bowl 50 and all things football. Some of the goodies we included were Chuck-It Footballs, Football Cookies from D.O.G. Bakery, and the NFL provided some Team hats. (Allison, our die-hard Lions fans was a bit bummed that none came from the Lions.) Please enjoy these photos from the event.



Above: CPT Jason Haag, USMC (Ret.) AHA's National Director of Military Affairs, and his Service Dog, Axel, doing press photos.

Below : Adorable D.O.G. Cookies.

Center bottom: Axel posing by our sign and in front of care pack goodies.



Jalk L467 Honored in Rassmusen Cartoon

A huge thank you to cartoonist John Rassmusen of Minnesota for sharing this artwork of one of our favorite MWDs, Jalk L467.

We supported Jalk and his handler, Megan, on their last deployment in Afghanistan. Later, we had the opportunity to meet this team in person where we fell in love with retired Jalk all over again. He was such an honorable, kind soul.

Jalk was lost in May of last year and remains one of our most handsome and photogenic dogs ever. We are delighted that Megan got permission to use this cartoon in our newsletter and we hope that Mr. Rassmusen's creative rendering of Jalk and his own beloved Jack touch you as deeply as they did us. Courtesy of Megan, we are also including three older photos of Jalk working and in retirement.

R.I.P. Jalk L467.

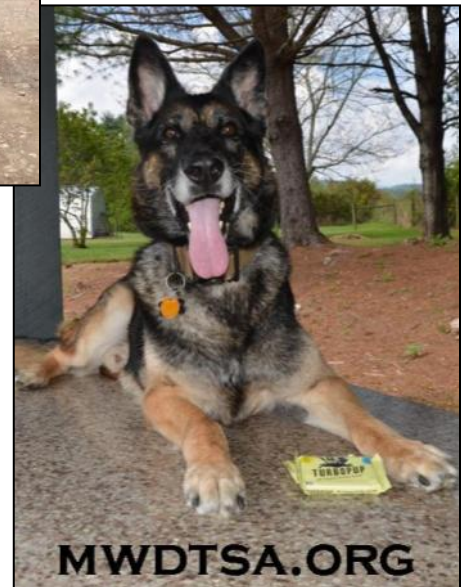


Above: Megan and Jalk in a village in Afghanistan.



Left: This is a forever favorite photo. Gen. Petraeus may have been the Commander of U.S. Forces in Afghanistan (USFOR-A), but Jalk still felt the need to keep an eye on him and keep his mom safe, because you never know about Four Star Generals.

Right: In retirement, Jalk moved into the role of MWD TSA spokesdog. He's shown here showcasing a donation by TurboPup. TurboPup produces high quality portable dog food for active owners and dogs. The owner is Kristin Guerrero, former USAF-C-130 pilot during OIF, OEF and Horn of Africa, who has donated the bars to us previously, as evidenced by the photo.



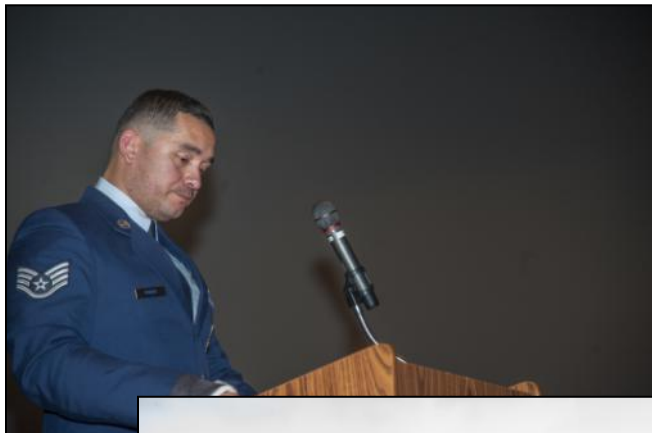
Remembering A Life of Service: MWD Kitty L121

5th Bomb Wing Public Affairs

Security Forces members gathered to honor the life of one of their own - Military Working Dog Kitty. Nine years ago, Kitty arrived at Minot Air Force Base and quickly became the base's first dog to deploy. She also completed over 20 Secret Service missions including protecting President Barack Obama. She was posthumously awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for all her achievements.

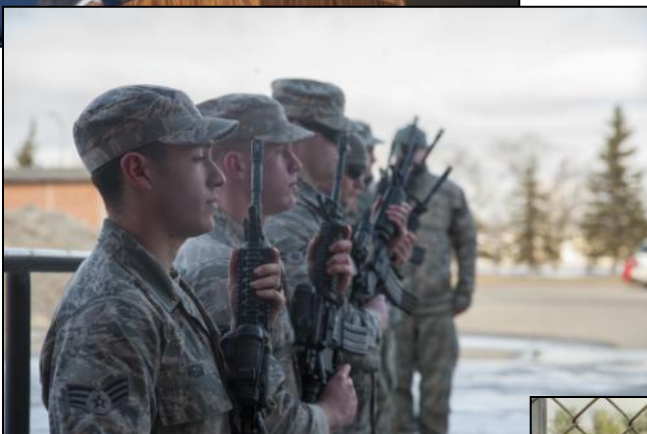
"In my time spent with MWD Kitty, I formed a relationship that will live on with me for the rest of my life." - SSgt Garcia

Please join MWD TSA as we honor this life of service with our friends at Minot AFB.



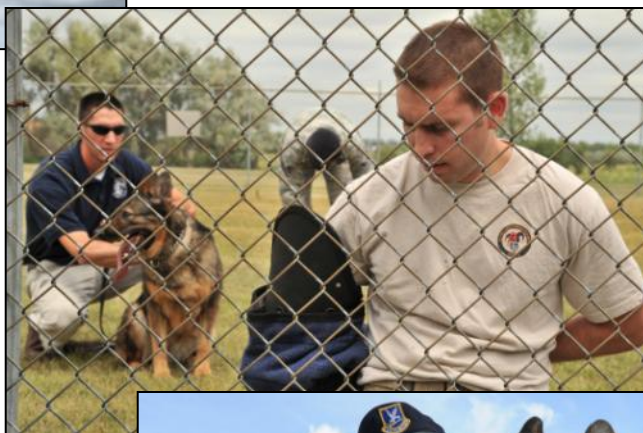
Top left: Staff Sgt. Roland Garcia, 5th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, speaks at MWD Kitty's memorial service at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., Feb. 2, 2016. Garcia was Kitty's last handler and her adopter. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Christian Sullivan)

"Friends come in and out of your life, but the impact they leave lasts forever." - SSgt Garcia on MWD Kitty



Above: Members of the Minot AFB EOD Flight prepare to deliver a 21-gun salute during Military Working Dog Kitty's memorial Service. Kitty had been retired for a month when she died of an illness. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Christian Sullivan)

Right: A few years back, Tech. Sgt. Mark Jenner, 5th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, and military working dog Kitty, detain Tech. Sgt. Steven Kaun, 5th SFS military working dog trainer, during a demonstration at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., July 17, 2012. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Brittany Y. Auld)



Right bottom: Tech. Sgt. Mark Jenner, 5th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, and military working dog Kitty at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., July 17, 2012. (U.S. Air Force photo/Senior Airman Brittany Y. Auld)

Our thoughts are with the handlers and staff at Minot AFB.

Rest in peace, Miss Kitty.



Sit. Stay. Support.

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MWD TSA is committed to ethics in everything we do. We are honored to be among the select few non-profit organizations to receive the GuideStar Gold Participant seal.

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!

Kennel Talk is the proud recipient of multiple
GSDCA Special Newsletter Awards!



We invite you to join the ever-growing MWD TSA family!

To learn, volunteer, engage or subscribe, click here for info:

<http://mwdtsa.org/mwdtsa-one-click.html>

From the Archives



Photo courtesy, DoD. U.S. Marine dog handler, Corporal Michael Galloway and his Scout Dog, Stormy search a tunnel and find an enemy satchel of explosives (Vietnam – 1970)

Mine, Booby-Trap, Tripwire and Tunnel Detection

Reports from the field indicated that German Shepherd scout dogs had been observed to alert on mines, tripwires, and other man-made artifacts. A six-month study was conducted to explore the feasibility of training such animals specifically to the tasks of detecting mine/tripwires and tunnels, by means of techniques that were sufficiently objective to permit instruction of military handlers in their use.

Following the study, the platoon was judged ready and deployed to Vietnam April 20, 1969 as the 60th IPSD. An additional three-month program was undertaken to study the practicability of cross-training tunnel and personnel detection dogs. The results of this work were ambiguous. The dogs trained at Raleigh, NC, and Fort Gordon, GA were trained by a company named Behavior Systems, Inc (BSI).

The unit later became a tunnel dog unit, and then was disbanded, and the dogs, and handlers assigned to other units.

"The soldier in the photo is wearing a uniform that was not worn in the States during the period, so it is probably Vietnam.

The tunnel looks a lot like training, or a bomb shelter, as the ones I remember in Vietnam were very well hidden, sometimes below water levels around the banks of lakes and rivers.

Marine MBT (Mine and Booby Trap Detection) dogs were trained in Raleigh, NC, and NTA Okinawa, Japan by the same company only about a year later.

The Marine dogs and handlers walked point on combat patrols, the Army dogs and handlers were sent out when someone thought they had found a booby trap."

Notes from the Final Report from Behavior Solutions, Inc. of Raleigh, N.C., as well as, facts shared by Mr. Perry Money.