



Kennel Talk

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Kennel Talk is an award-winning, free, digital publication of MWD TSA. Support MWD TSA 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 Kosovo and Belgium to various U.S. locations in Wisconsin, Virginia, Arkansas, on to California, and north to Alaska.

Our parting shot is from Kosovo.

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

Multinational MPs Meet on Bondsteel

Story and photos by Spc. Adeline Witherspoon



Military working dog Sgt. Beri, and his handler Cpl. Jared Lee, assigned to 131st Military Working Dog Detachment, support friendly relations between NATO nations during a military police training conference on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Feb. 1. The intent of the training, hosted by MPs from the Multinational Battle Group-East (MNBG-E), was to build international cooperation among allied forces.

KOSOVO

Multinational Battle Group - East (KFOR)

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo- Soldiers assigned to the Multinational Battle Group-East hosted law enforcement from Italy, Austria, Denmark and Slovenia during an international military police training conference on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Feb. 1.

The training, which focused on the use of military working dogs, was intended to increase cooperation among Kosovo Force Soldiers. The monthly training allows MPs from different nations to ask questions and learn from one another.

"Every month we do an MP meeting where we get together, all the MPs in Kosovo, and we have a brief, and afterwards do a demonstration," said Capt. Marc Schurch, a Swedish military policeman attending the event. "We're all MPs, so it's great to have a chance to learn what other MPs do and to see how they work."

One of those chances to learn included Sgt. Beri, a military working dog assigned to 131st Military Working Dog Detachment, who was happy to lend a paw during the demonstration portion of the event.

"He knows when it's training time," said Spc. Warren Bolden, a MWD handler assigned to MNBG-E.

Bolden, who led the briefing concerning the force capabilities of MWDs, explained that the canines are force multipliers able to search and clear buildings. The canines can also detect narcotics and explosives faster than their human counterparts.

"We don't like to tell observers what the dogs are capable of," said Bolden. "This way, the dogs work as psychological deterrents."

Multinational MPs continued on page 2

Multinational MPs continued from page 1

Beri, who is trained in bite work, showed the visiting multinational MPs how he helped his handler detain and subdue a suspect, as well as search for explosive devices. This way, the MWDs can aid their human counterparts without the need for lethal force.

"We, in Switzerland, have canines too," said Schurch. "But with us, it is a lethal aggression when a dog bites."

The intent of the monthly conference was to build international co-operation among allied forces.

"We come from different countries," said Schurch. "But we all work the same."



MWD Beri during the multinational military police training conference.



MWD Beri and his handler Cpl. Jared Lee demonstrate their force capabilities to multinational military police. The demonstration was part of a monthly training conference, hosted by Multinational Battle Group-East, discussing different aspects of allied joint stability policing.



MWD Beri and Cpl. Jared Lee, demonstrate their force capabilities on Pfc. Courtney Reeves, a military policeman assigned to Multinational Battle Group-East.

Military Working Dog and Handler Train in a Hangar

Photos by U.S. Army Visual Information Specialist Pierre-Etienne Courtejoie



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. John Christian, noncommissioned officer with the 100th Military Working Dog (MWD) Detachment, designates the area where Sgt. Brandon Meyer, and Meki, an eight-year-old German shepherd, will perform a training search.



U.S. Army Sgt. Brandon Meyer and Meki perform a training search inside a hangar on Chièvres Air Base, Belgium on January 11, 2017.



Sgt. Brandon Meyer designates a shelf that Meki will search.



Sgt. Brandon Meyer and Meki search plastic cases as they train.



Left: U.S. Army Sgt. Brandon Meyer congratulates Meki.

Right: Sgt. Brandon Meyer performs a gratification game with Meki.



Green Bay, Wisconsin welcomes Fort Campbell Army K9 handlers *by Michelle Clemens*



Students at Bay Port High School in the greater Green Bay, Wisconsin area learned about the Army career of Military Working Dog handler (31K) during a day of dog demonstrations. Thanks to WBAY for sharing this story. Click here to [see the WBAY TV spot](#).

SUAMICO, Wis. (WBAY) — Soldiers from Fort Campbell in Kentucky made their way to Green Bay Thursday, February 2, 2017.

It was their last stop in the upper Midwest as they educate students about different career opportunities in the Army.

Two-year-old Bratt, being trained by soldiers as a service dog, was the most popular pooch at Bay Port High School.

“Walking the halls with the dog creates a lot of excitement,” said Michele McCormick, school counselor.

“We teach them to find explosives, narcotics, stuff like that. Stuff that we find are risks and we need to get off of the street,” said Staff Sgt. Cyrus Vaughn.

The soldiers are stopping at schools to showcase the 150 types of jobs available within the Army.

“There’s a stigma that there’s only one thing to do in the United States Army, and it’s not,” Vaughn said.

The soldiers said having a service dog in schools gets a lot of conversations started.

“A lot of people don’t know about it and then when they hear about the fact that you can be a military police officer or a military working dog handler in the United States Army they look clueless,” Vaughn said. “They don’t know that it’s out there.”

The jobs highlighted at Bay Port High School Thursday are just some of the several the school showcases in order to help students with career and education choices.

“The focus is really on some of those skills that you bring to a job,” McCormick said.

Different careers have been showcased at Bay Port High School for years, but similar programs will be making their way to more Wisconsin schools in the fall.

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction is focusing on getting kids college and career ready.

“This is all about helping kids develop their academic and career plan before they graduate,” McCormick said.

Green Bay continued from page 4



PFC Griffin and Bratt do a long day of dog demos.



While visiting the area, SSG Vaughan tries out the General Manager position for the Green Bay Packers at legendary Lambeau Field.



SSG Vaughan narrates the K9 demonstration by PFC Griffin and Bratt while answering questions from students.



SSG Vaughan temporarily becomes a Cheese Head.

Drug Detector K-9 Certification Begins

Story by Chief Petty Officer Leeanna Shipps, Photos by USN MCS 3 Jeanyra A. Mateo

NORFOLK, VA, UNITED STATES

Puskos' bark is loud and his personality is even louder," said Master-At-Arms 2nd Class Jordyn Japec, assigned to Naval Station (NAVSTA) Norfolk Security Department. "Puskos is constantly actively searching for odors. He does not look like your typical Military Working Dog (MWD); since he is the smallest dog I've trained. However, he has a great nose and a natural ability to detect his target up to six feet taller than him."

According to the Department of the Navy Military Working Dog Program Instruction 5585.2C, the MWD's unique capabilities are used by naval security forces to defend bases and resources and to assist with enforcing military laws and regulations. MWDs supplement and enhance the capabilities of military security forces. When integrated into existing military security forces, MWD teams enable those forces to perform their missions more effectively and, in many cases, with significant savings in manpower, time and money.

Japec stated the position of dog handler is one that a person has to be selected for.

"I've been in the Navy for seven years, but I've only worked as a handler for two and a half years," said Japec. "Dog handlers are selected either during their initial training in Master-At-Arms school by being interviewed by First Class Petty Officers and Chiefs or while they are out in the Fleet. Since I was already working as a Master-At-Arms, I volunteered in the kennel division after hours and my leadership submitted a package. Once you are selected you have to attend an 8 to 11 week 'C' school."

Master-At-Arms Chad Perez Leading Petty Officer 1st Class of Security Department K-9 division, spoke about the importance of the handlers in the unit.

"When you are assigned to a dog it is your responsibility to make sure the dog is getting the proper care, grooming, nutrition, and training," Perez said. "This position is not



Master-At-Arms 2nd Class (MA2) Jordyn Japec, Military Working Dog Handler, and Puskos, a Jagdterrier MWD Drug Detector, begin the certification process Jan. 26.

typical; you are held to a higher standard since you provide your K-9 partner with the upmost care and education to make sure the mission is executed correctly. The Master-At-Arms dog handler community is small, but we all take great pride in our day-to-day work."

According to Perez, Puskos is the smallest K-9 in NAVSTA.

"Puskos is held to the same standards as the other K-9s in our command," Perez said. "He does not notice how small he is compared to the other dogs or he doesn't care. He barks extremely loud, is full of energy and is eager to train. He is a great addition to our division."

Puskos is one out of four Drug Detector Dogs assigned to NAVSTA; however, his small size makes him stand out and is a great advantage for the Security Department.

Drug Detector continued on page 7

Drug Detector continued from page 6

"Puskos is 17 pounds," said Japec. "The other three narcotic detector dogs we have in our department weigh an average of 70 pounds. Puskos' size allows us to sweep and search spaces that are challenging with an average size MWD. Once we are done certifying, we will be able to sweep spaces like submarines and small spaces on ships, which is very difficult to do with an 80 pound dog."

Perez elaborated on the benefit of having Puskos as a member of the K-9 division.

"MWD's have to be carried up and down ladders on ships," said Perez. "It will be significantly easier to take Puskos to a ship or submarine. We currently have to carry one of our 98 pound K-9 to search and sweep spaces on ships as big as a carrier."

Perez stated the training process Japec and Puskos are going through is the most rewarding part of being a handler. "Everyone in the Security department has a responsibility to protect everyone on the installation, which makes our job within the department very important, but no other division is as satisfying," said Perez. "As handlers, we are able to see the work we put in as our dog advances. Japec and Puskos will train in areas like obedience and detection for the next upcoming weeks. Puskos will perfect his ability to find targets and point them out by demonstrating a change of behavior. As Puskos detects the target, Japec will be able to recognize when Puskos is actively sniffing for the target and when his behavior changes to indicate he has found it. As handlers, we take great pride in our canine's abilities."

Japec elaborated on the training process that will take place.

"Puskos is great at detecting targets and I am confident that the more we train the better he will get," said Japec. "Because he is a high energy dog, we need a lot more obedience training, but that will come with time and I enjoy the process."

"Puskos is my partner," said Japec. "I treat him with the same respect I would treat any other person. I get to be a part of shaping what will be a security asset, which gives great satisfaction on my everyday job. I work long hours, but after Puskos' training and all needs are met, we get to play fetch and show him affection. It's the best job in the Navy."



MA2 Jordyn Japec, Military Working Dog Handler and Puskos, a Jagdterrier MWD Drug Detector, begin the certification process Jan. 26 to include obedience training and narcotic detector training.



Pusko sits as directed by his handler.

Dog's best friend: Defender's wingman embraces resilience

Story and photos by
Senior Airman Mercedes Taylor



U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. David Macdonald, 19th Security Forces Squadron kennel master, has been a service member since 2005. As a kennel master, Macdonald manages and monitors unit military working dog training.

LITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE, AR, UNITED STATES 19th Airlift Wing

Meet Ali, a sable German Shepherd, weighing 70 lbs. His best friend is U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. David Macdonald, 19th Security Forces Squadron kennel master at Little Rock Air Force Base, Arkansas, who uses his upbringing to train Air Force military working dogs.

"Growing up, I used to help my dad train hunting dogs," Macdonald said. "I have a passion for the things we can teach dogs to do."

Macdonald decided to become a civilian K-9 officer. However, he couldn't apply because of his lack of experience.

"I wanted to be a K-9 cop, but I was too young so I thought about joining the military," Macdonald said. "I wanted to use the military as a stepping stone. I first enlisted in 2005, two months after graduating high school."

In March 2010, Macdonald graduated from the Military Working Dog Handler Course at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas. Upon graduating, Macdonald received orders to Columbus Air Force Base, Mississippi, and was paired with Maci, a black male German Shepherd who specialized in explosives.

TRAINING BECOMES REALITY

Macdonald and Maci received orders to Khandahar, Afghanistan, and they were sent to Forward Operating Base Ma'sum Ghar in 2011. During that deployment, Macdonald developed a deep appreciation for the role MWDs play.

"I went on a mission where I actually got to use my dog," Macdonald said. "My dog did his job, he did exactly what he

Dog's best friend continued on page 9

Dog's best friend continued from page 8

was trained to do. It was a remarkable thing for me, because it made me realize how important our job is."

After returning home from his deployment, Macdonald swapped dogs with another dog handler to rehabilitate a dog who had suffered a heatstroke – Ali.

"Our relationship started rough because I hated him," Macdonald said. "I hated everything about him. I hated feeding him, I hated touching him and I hated pulling him. He even bit me one time."

Shortly after being paired with Ali, Macdonald received orders to Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan in 2013. Macdonald and Ali worked through their differences to prepare for their deployment. Once arrived, they were assigned to a special operations team under U.S. Army Special Forces.

"I got to experience being attached to a 12-man special forces team and what they really do," Macdonald said. "They were my brothers for six months. They even grew really close to Ali. They always wanted him there because he brought them comfort."

MWDs experience the same adverse conditions as their two-legged counterparts while deployed. Although they wear vests and other protective gear, they are not omitted from danger when threatened.

"There was a time where Ali and I were receiving gunfire," Macdonald said. "We were out searching in front of the team and all of a sudden I saw rounds hitting the area around him."

Macdonald immediately dropped to his knee and tried to call him back to his side but, in response, Ali lied down.

"I remember that moment because he's lying down, looking back at me and wagging his tail like he's having a good time," Macdonald said. "I was like 'Dog, you are getting shot at, come over here.' If one of the rounds would have hit him, it would have changed everything."

Macdonald sprinted to a ditch as he called back to Ali; Ali then darted after him.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. David Macdonald, dog handler, poses for a photo with military working dog Ali at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, in 2013. (Courtesy photo)

"He jumped on my chest and was wagging his tail, having a blast," Macdonald said. "He was having fun. He thought it was a game but he was really doing his job. Meanwhile, all I hear is rounds zinging by us; rounds all over the place."

BRINGING A WINGMAN HOME

A few months and many missions later, Macdonald and Ali returned home to Columbus AFB. Shortly after arriving, Macdonald received orders to Little Rock AFB in January 2014. After his permanent change of station, he was notified of Ali's retirement because of his separation anxiety. "His anxiety turned into muscle deterioration in his front limbs," Macdonald said. The veterinarian was monitoring him very closely because of his separation anxiety, it led to him being retired out."

But Macdonald had other plans for Ali.

Dog's best friend continued from page 9

"We were like best friends," Macdonald said. "It was like it was me and him against the world. He watched my back while we were deployed and I felt like it was my turn to watch his."

In July 2014, he drove from Little Rock AFB back to Columbus AFB to adopt his best friend.

"When I got there, you would have thought he was a puppy all over again," Macdonald said. "His tail was wagging and he jumped in my arms. It was the whole shebang, he was very excited to see me."

Since Ali's adoption, he and Macdonald have been inseparable.

"I brought him home and he will not allow me to leave one room without following me," Macdonald said. "It's almost like he has to keep eyes on me at all times."

Today, Ali continues to live with Macdonald, and his condition has improved.

"Most of the deterioration has gone," Macdonald said. "He still has separation anxiety but he's a lot calmer because he's not being worked the same way. Every morning I put on my uniform, Ali is standing up and he's ready to go. He'll even follow me outside while I'm putting stuff in my car for work. He still carries the characteristics of a working dog. That's all he wants to do."

Like Ali, Macdonald still desires to come to work every day. He plans on retiring from the Air Force in eight years. While Macdonald won't wear his uniform forever, he'll continue to carry himself with the same confidence and pride as his companion, Ali.



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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Donor Spotlight

The Mariani Packing Company

Story by Katie Cook, Mariani's Media Marketing Specialist. Photo courtesy of Mariani Packing Company.

Mariani Packing Company has always had family at the root of the business. The company was founded in 1906 by Paul Mariani, when the immigrant son of a European farmer, arrived in the lush Santa Clara Valley.

He planted fruit trees on four acres and within a few years, after working hard and surviving setbacks, began to prosper. Over the years, he expanded his acreage, opened new markets, and developed a keen understanding for prime fruit growing areas both locally and around the world.

The company was passed down from generation to generation, and in 1979, Paul Mariani, Sr.'s grandson, Mark A. Mariani became responsible for its legacy as the company's CEO.

For Mark Mariani and President George Sousa, Jr. (great-grandson of Paul Mariani) and their family, Mariani is more than a brand name. It is a family name. For all of us at Mariani Packing Company, part of that family name is upholding our company to a higher standard. With that, we seek to give back to our local community and military members as much as we can. We've enjoyed establishing a partnership with Military Working Dog Team Support Association and appreciate what our donations can do for the hardworking members of our United States Military. We look forward to continuing our partnership.



Above: MWDTSA volunteer, Brittany Rhodes, visited with members of the Mariani Packing Company of Vacaville, California on January 31, 2017. In recognition of their ongoing and substantial donations, she presented this flag to the management team at Mariani. This American flag was carried by a dog handler on a mission "outside the wire."

Above left to right for the presentation ceremony: Christine Lewis, Brand Manager; Christopher Mariani; George Sousa, Sr.; Joseph Mariani; Brittany Rhodes, MWDTSA Volunteer; and George Sousa, Jr., President of Mariani Packing Company.



Volunteer Corner

Our volunteers shine



Alyssa McClure volunteers for MWDSTA by putting together canine-related job lists to help service members find work that utilizes their skills and training. She is from Washington state

and is currently working for a nonprofit in Boston, Massachusetts.

Alyssa is passionate about supporting active duty and retired service members as well as America's hard-working canines. In addition to volunteering, Alyssa enjoys reading, writing, and hiking. She hopes to continue to use her skills in the public sector to support military members and their families.

Danielle Livoti, a Long Island resident, found MWDTSA through a social media post seeking volunteer illustrators. After learning more about the work MWDTSA does to help both military working dogs and their handlers, she knew that she wanted to volunteer her artistic services.

Danielle is a nine-year veteran high school art teacher, a practicing studio artist, and a freelance graphic artist.

She plans to get her students involved in future volunteer opportunities, such as providing drawings and letters for care packages.



Brittany Rhodes joined MWDTSA one day while sitting at home. She'd just graduated from UC Berkeley and was stranded during the weekdays with neither car nor job. She didn't want to waste away her days in front of the TV. She wanted to reach out, connect with people, and make a difference, even if she never left her house.

So Brittany found MWDTSA online -- growing up next to an Air Force base and a dog-lover at heart, Brittany felt a connection to MWDTSA's mission.

More than two and a half years later, Brittany's lifestyle has changed. She has a car, two jobs and hardly ever sits at home. Likewise, her role with MWDTSA has evolved from internet-based volunteer coordinating to functioning as an on-the-ground Northern California contact and coordinator.

Brittany works professionally in Compliance. In her spare time, she caters weddings and explores the beautiful countryside of the Napa Valley, preferably by horseback.

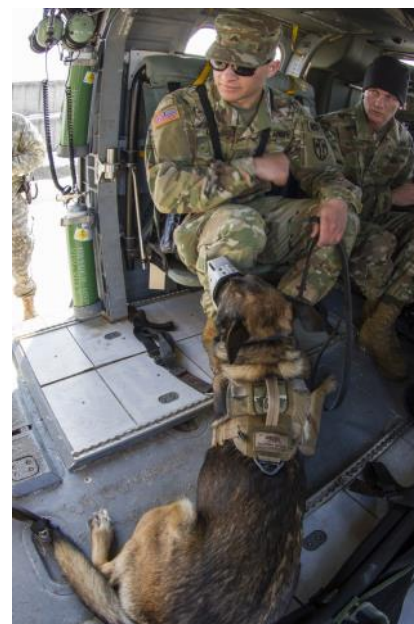
MWD Helicopter Familiarization Training

KOSOVO

Photos by Spc. Adeline Witherspoon

Multinational Battle Group - East (KFOR)

Right: Military Working Dog Sgt. Leo, assigned to the 131st Military Working Dog Detachment, and his handler Spc. Warren Bolden, are secured to a hoist during UH-60L Black Hawk familiarization training on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Jan. 27. The training was intended to familiarize the canine with the Multinational Battle Group-East flight crews and helicopter.



Above: Military Working Dog, Sgt. Beri and his handler Cpl. Jared Lee, also with 131st Military Working Dog Detachment, get comfortable during the training. Beri was attached, by a special harness, to the floor of the helicopter while Lee kept him calm. The training included medical evacuation procedures.



Left: After a long day of training with flight crew and medics of Multinational Battle Group-East, the military working dogs and their handlers, retire for the evening. The bond between military working dogs and their handlers is built on mutual trust and respect.

Above: Military Working Dog, Sgt. Leo, and his handler Spc. Warren Bolden, are hoisted into a UH-60L Black Hawk helicopter during training.

In Memory of MWD Grek J181

Story and photos by Jason Voelker

Last month, I had to make the toughest decision I've ever faced. With a heavy heart, I said goodbye to my favorite four-legged battle buddy, MWD Grek.

MWD Grek served four combat deployments in both Iraq and Afghanistan. No words can fully express my love and respect for the most trustworthy battle buddy with whom I've ever had the privilege of serving. Grek, I was fortunate enough to be by your side for the past four years. During our deployment, the team (Operational Detachment Alpha 7116) and I wouldn't have been so lucky without you on point. It is impossible to know just how many lives you saved throughout your years of dedicated service, but without you, the team and I may not have made it out of Afghanistan. For that, you have our eternal gratitude.

It was an honor serving beside you as your handler and partner. I learned so much from you, and often wondered who was really training whom. Even though your life with us was cut short, I know you're in a better place across the Rainbow Bridge. You may be gone, Grek, but you shall never be forgotten. I am looking forward to seeing you on the other side, knowing that you'll drive St. Peter crazy with that powerful tail banging on the gate when we meet again. But until then, my friend, rest easy as I stand your watch.

Rest in Peace MWD Grek SSD J181 - Retired
9/1/03-1/20/17

MWD Grek (SSD J181) EOW 20 January 2017

Right top: Jason faces the camera as Grek waits patiently for his handler in a Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle.

Right bottom: Jason spends the last minutes with his best friend and battle buddy, Grek J181.



In Memory of MWD Grek J181 continued on page 15

In Memory of MWD Grek J181 from page 14



Above left: Grek in a vehicle during a mission in Afghanistan.

Center: Jason and Grek were recipients of MWD TSA care packages, including this baseball-themed care package. We were delighted that Jason was a baseball fan and had deployed with his own glove to play catch during his down time.

Right: Jason and Grek were working with special operations missions in Afghanistan.

Below left: Grek cooling off in a small stream during a patrol break.

Center: A handsome Grek smiles beside the portrait commissioned by a special fan of Grek and Jason.

Right: After retirement, Grek eased quite happily into the life of a beloved family pet with Jason's family, where he remained until disease and old age took its toll.



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 nonprofit organizations to receive the GuideStar Platinum 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/about/links/>

Parting Shots



KOSOVO

Spc. Warren Bolden, a canine handler with 131st Military Working Dog Detachment, tells his MWD, Sgt. Leo, what a good boy he's been, after UH-60L Black Hawk familiarization training on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Jan. 27, 2017. The purpose of the training was to familiarize Multinational Battle Group-East flight crews with MWDs, and handler teams with medical evacuation procedures. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Adeline Witherspoon, 20th Public Affairs Detachment)