

Join MWD TSA now so you won't miss any of the photos, stories, news and highlights of 2010! If you haven't renewed your membership for 2010, now is the time.

Please support the teams.

Inside this issue:

Why We Love Lucy	2
Military Dog Handler Day	3
K9 Veteran's Day Event, Knoxville TN	7
Tribute to Ann Wilkerson	10
Fort Benning Visit	11
Where's Courtney? With Muse Watson	12

News Flash: Congratulations to Courtney Griffin, recipient of the 2010 Mariel Hannah Humane Heroes Award, an annual award established by the Atlanta Humane Society to honor a Georgia teen for exemplary service on behalf of animals. Photos & story will be next issue. Event: May 2, 2010.

Check out the Blog for news and exciting photos.

Operation Sleep Tight: Sending Kurandas by Dixie Whitman



When I first heard the word Kuranda, I wondered if it was some tribe in Northern Iraq that I had never heard mentioned in the news. I soon learned that the Kuranda was a doggy bed — a durable doggy bed — so durable, in fact, that almost every rescue organization and animal shelter across the country has these beds on their wish lists.

Patt Glenn, an SPCA member/supporter from Florida wanted me to have a look and see if these would meet our needs. If so, she promised to donate the very first one. We knew that we'd get the feedback we needed from Lucy and Scott so the first one was sent over to rave reviews. Lucy loves it. Scott loves it. In his thank you note back, Scott mentioned that he thought Lucy might want to be the spokes model

for MWD TSA's Kuranda drive and sent this wonderful photo of Lucy on the Kuranda. Since then Patt has donated two more beds and our veterinary contact in Afghanistan, Caroline, is excited that those will be going to 7 year old and 10 year dogs. As a veterinarian, she is thrilled that some of the dogs will be able to be off of the concrete to help support joint issues.

If you are able to support our Sleep Tight Kuranda bed drive with the donation of a bed, it's very simple to do. All you do is go to :

<http://kuranda.com/donate/4732/> and make your donation online. It's simple, fast and the company actually ships the beds directly overseas for us to the point of contact on file. Right now that is our

One of the most requested items for kennel dogs in Iraq and Afghanistan is beds to get the dogs off the concrete. In the winter months, the concrete is cold on the dogs and year around causes them uncomfortable calluses and elbow issues, especially for those older, hard-working dogs. We sent one over to Lucy and Scott for a "guinea pig test" and the results were phenomenal. Lucy loves it so much that Scott photographed and then created a Photohop image of her on her Kuranda.

veterinary contact in Afghanistan. She will distribute from there. Our "point of contact" address will rotate throughout the theatre of operations as we begin to get beds for the dogs most in need. As a donor, you also get a receipt immediately from Kuranda that can be used for tax purposes.

Please also consider a Kuranda for your personal pets. The company has many styles and options when it comes to dog and cat beds. They are durable, washable and are appreciated by both the canine and feline members of your household.

Thanks, Patt, for the heads up on this remarkable dog bed and to the Kuranda folks who have worked hard to make their program work for deployed Military Working Dogs. We appreciate all of your assistance and your enthusiasm.

www.mwdtsa.org



**“The
FURminator is
the BEST!!!
And the
wild cherry
shampoo?? Well,
I can barely keep
the local boys
off of me,
LOL.”**



Lucy and Scott taking
a break

Why We Love Lucy

Original Article by Scott, Lucy's Daddy

To My MWD TSA Family,

I would like to thank each and every one of you for your support during these times. Serving my country has so far been a great experience. I've gotten to travel all over the world and most dogs just can't say that. Afghanistan has been no walk in the park but thanks to your gifts I'm able to find comfort and enjoy a little taste of home.

Dad does a lot of clean up around my area and he sure is thankful for all the supplies you send to get the job done. He also keeps me looking and smelling great with the grooming stuff you send me. The FURminator is the BEST!!! And the wild cherry shampoo, well I can barely keep the local boys off of me, lol. Like any lady, I love to look good.

I'd like to thank you all for the collar I just received. The

skull and cross bones design is right up my ally. I'm a rebel chick, lol. Oh, and my new harness, it's PERFECTO!!! There's nothing like working in style.

I like to watch my figure but who can resist some good ole comfort food. Thank you all for the variety of snacks that you've sent. I'm especially fond of pig ears, raw hide chews, and jerky. It's been quite cold recently and to be frank the concrete isn't a comfortable place to lay anymore. Not to mention, kennel sores from hard surfaces just aren't attractive. I'd love a doggy bed that would get me up off the ground a little.

I love toys as well. Regular tennis balls last longer than the pet store kind, even if they say "tuff" on them, I usually crush them pretty fast. Anything Kong brand is nice. If anyone from "Kong" is reading

this, I'm available for any kind of endorsement deal you want to throw my way. LOL.

I can be so vain, but wouldn't you be if you looked this good? I'm a Lab so you must know that I love anything that relates to retrieving. I would LOVE a duck or pheasant retrieving dummy. Oh I can't wait to retire and actually hunt out birds with dad.

I would like to thank you all again for all the wonderful gift boxes that you've send for dad and me. I've included some pictures of me at work and play. If you have the opportunity when I get back home stop by and see me some time. I'm sure dad can arrange it.

Lucy



Scott loved the collar we sent to Lucy and the new T-shirt he got. He spent some of his free time between missions doing some creative work in Photo-shop of Lucy and one of the vehicles in their compound.

Military Dog Handler Day with Governor Perdue

by Dixie Whitman



Military Dog Handlers from various military installations across Georgia join Governor Sonny Perdue at a signing ceremony in the Georgia capitol building which proclaimed March 25, 2010 as Military Dog Handler Day in Georgia. This is the 9th year with such a designation. Handlers were honored at a luncheon following the event.

Twenty-nine active duty MWD handlers and one veteran MWD handler joined Governor Sonny Perdue in the Georgia Capitol on March 25, 2010 to sign a document proclaiming that date as Military Dog Handler Day in Georgia. The proclamation outlines the role that dogs have played in fighting wars, terrorism and drugs. It also spotlights the role of Georgia military installations in training, supplying and honoring War Dogs.

Joining the dog handlers were dogs representing all

four branches of service that have installations in Georgia. Wero (Army), Donja (Navy), Rico (Air Force) and Cindy (Marines). These K9 representatives were all so impressive in their calm demeanor and charmed us all; it was easy to fall in love.

After the signing at the capitol, handlers drove to a local cantina called Tin Lizzy's for a luncheon of fresh tacos and quesadillas. They were joined by members and supporters of MWD TSA.

During the luncheon, a plaque honoring Rico, MWD TSA's 2009 Hero Dog, was presented to his handler, SSgt Phillip Mendoza III from Moody AFB. A plaque was also presented to Ken Besecker, co-founder and first Secretary/Treasurer of MWD TSA for his years of service.

Also having a photo opportunity with Governor Perdue was the teenage volunteer, Courtney Griffin, who chose MWD TSA as her conduit to assist the dogs and handlers who are deployed in harm's way.

Please enjoy the following pages with a few additional photos of the moments during the day.

It was truly a marvelous day and a blessing to be in the company of such remarkable men and dogs.

Thanks to all who took precious time from their kennels to attend. Almost to man, they have all served in Iraq and/or Afghanistan multiple times. Thanks from all of us for the dangerous work you undertake to keep America safe.

Continued on page 4-5 for photos

www.mwdtsa.org

Military Dog Handler Day Photos



Ft. Stewart Handlers with Wero

Check out the mwdtsa.org blog for more photos of this day spent with the handlers.



Mendoza shows off Rico's Award



King's Bay Naval Sub Base Handlers with Donja



Handlers from MCLB Albany with Cindy

Thanks to Jody and Brent McGlothlin for donations of bags, tissue and ribbons to prepare our goodie packages.

A day to honor and thank our dog handlers.



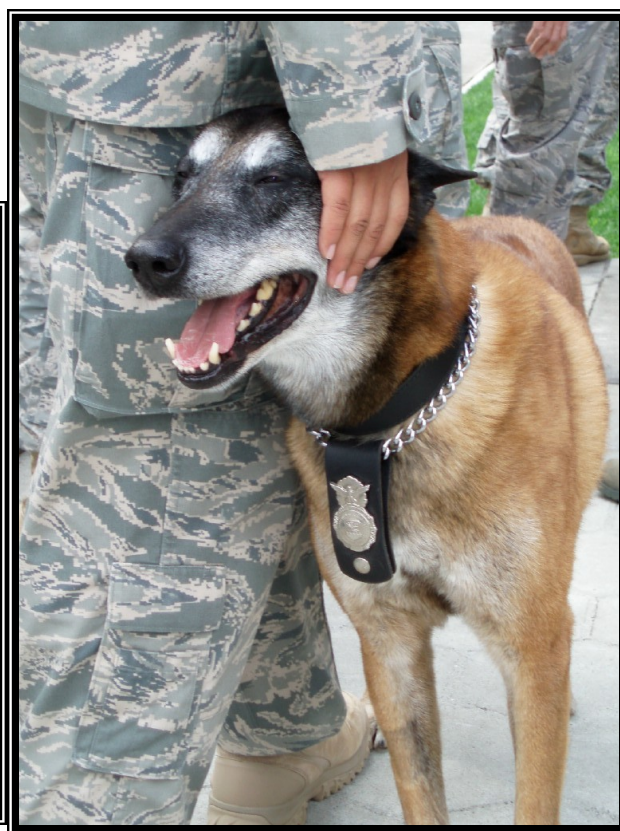
Handlers from Fort McPherson



Handlers from Fort Stewart with Wero



Handlers from Moody AFB with Rico



2009 Hero Dog Rico

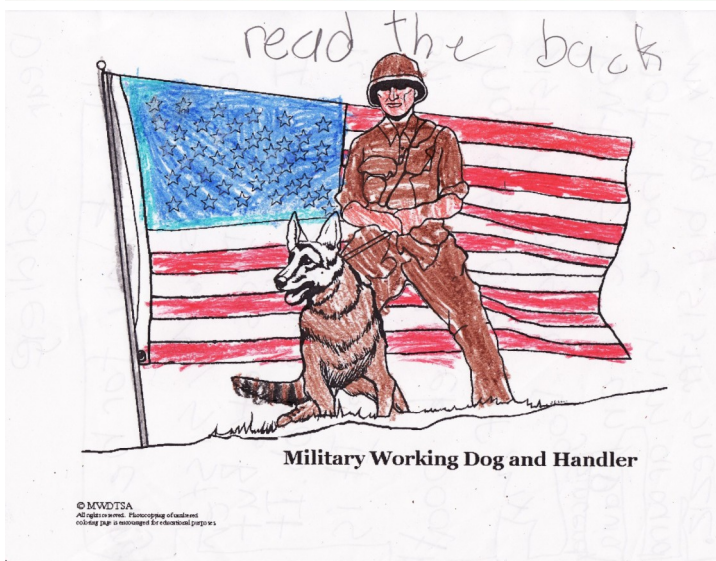
Thanks Brent McGlothlin, Kris Wilson, & Ann Wilkerson for additional photos of the day.

Sponge Bob, Pizza Crust and Other Iowa Kids' MWD Questions



Thanks to our young friends from **Emerson Elementary in Iowa** and Mrs. Kuethe's second grade class for these wonderful letters.

Dear Soldiers,
What do the dogs eat? do they eat dog food?
What do they eat? I have a German Shepard.
His name is Mason. He is good.



Dear Soldiers
thankyou for helping
the Dog. My sister
love's Dogs cats. But
I love sponge bob. It
is my favorite. It is
on up or 33 chcek boat
chanelk. One of my
sisters has a Dog
but she can't ^{Sincerely} David
not have him around
my big big sister sneez.



Dear Soldiers,
What do you do? What
do the dogs eat? do they
eat pizza crust? My dog does. Do
you like dogs?
Sincerely,
Brenden

K-9 Veterans Day Knoxville, Tennessee

Original article written by John Homa - Korat, Thailand & U-Tapao, Thailand. Reprinted with his kind permission.

The idea for K-9 Veterans Day originated with Vietnam veteran Joseph J. White, 47th Infantry Platoon, Scout Dogs. Unfortunately, Joe passed away unexpectedly in October 2009 without seeing his dream fully realized, but his widow and innumerable other dedicated volunteers continue to work towards his goal.

Additional background about this endeavor can be found at k9veteransday.org

The German Shepherd Dog Club of East Tennessee, together with the University Of Tennessee College Of Veterinary Medicine, hosted a "K-9 Veterans Day" observance on March 13, 2010. The event took place at the UT Vet Clinic, site of the replica WWII Guam 25 Marine War Dog Memorial. This event honored all dogs from all wars, including past and present military working dogs, police dogs,

search and rescue dogs, dogs used by the Secret Service and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, dogs used by other agencies, and even the therapy dogs and assistance dogs who comfort and help our wounded veterans. This event was an opportunity to recognize and pay tribute to those dogs that selflessly serve humanity and make our world a better place - one of the many benefits derived from the human/dog connection.

Five dog handlers attend the Knoxville event, Perry Money, Carl Hartman, Tom DeHoog, John Ammons, and John Homa. There was a good turnout from the public for a first time event. Knoxville Police Department K-9 Officers accepted a K-9 Veterans Day proclamation from the City Mayor and handlers from the Knox County Sheriff's Department accepted a similar proclamation from the County

Other handlers from nearby Loudon County also attended. The Vietnam Dog Handler Association provided certificates of appreciation for the event hosts as well as Vietnam Dog Handler Association challenge coins and pins given out to the military troops present and law enforcement handlers. The ceremonies included a Marine color guard, an Air Force singer for the National Anthem and a bugler for taps. There were speakers from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, City of Knoxville, Knox County, and John Homa, representing the Vietnam Dog Handler Association.

There was some great air time dedicated to the event from a local TV which could still be found at <http://www.wbir.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=115840&catid=2> as of this printing. There was a display table with information about the Vietnam Dog Handler Association, Feed the Dawgs and, Old Dawgs and Pups programs.

Four Veteran Dog Handlers, lead by Perry Money, placed a wreath at the Guam Memorial to honor all service dogs.

Not that they all aren't, but today was an excellent day to be a dog handler. The Vietnam Dog Handler Association celebrates memorials with events throughout the country and at times, they seem to be enclosed around us, but today it felt to be reaching out to a greater audience. Joe White would be proud of Donna

Fefee with the German Shepherd Club of East Tennessee and the UT College of Veterinary Medicine for their involvement and hosting the event for all types of service dogs.

Text from John Homa's speech:

Imagine - Back in the mid sixties to mid seventies if you were not a volunteer but served somewhat willingly, it usually meant you were drafted.

Imagine - Being in a foreign country in tall grass at just about eye level and you hear gunfire going off in front of you. All of a sudden something hot slams into your left shoulder. Next thing you know you're in a helicopter heading for a medical unit to get patched up.

Imagine - Being on post all night, then hitting the sack and being awakened just two hours later by your buddies and being dragged down to the beach for a swim and a few beers. But you go. Could be fun!

Imagine - Being in the jungle on night patrol and looking out for booby traps and land mines. Heck it's hard enough doing it during the day let alone at night and in monsoon season!

Imagine - Being on post for eight hours, hopefully in mid shift, and if you're lucky someone brings out the box lunches or you eat out of a can.

Imagine -Being on a scouting patrol in the jungle and feeling a sting on your leg and then you start to lose consciousness. Next



Marine Corps Color Guard at the University of Tennessee Marine War Dog Replica.

www.mwdtsa.org

thing you see are bright surgery lights in the medical unit and some happy faces. Someone says "same thing happened to another in your unit two weeks ago. Snake got him too, but he didn't make it."

Imagine -Talking trash with the other guys on the back of a truck going out to post and maybe getting into a fight or two. But all is cool out on patrol, everyone watches out for each other's backs.

Imagine -Your best buddy coming up to you and saying, man I zeroed out today on my short timer days and I'm leaving on that jet plane. My tour is up today pal. I am going home! I am sorry you can not go with me.

Imagine -For years being in a concrete room with a wooden pallet for a bed and you sleep on the concrete because you get tired of the pallet. Or, you are chained up to a wooden looking bird house structure on stilts with some poorly made bedding. You are given the same old food to eat every day. And what about all those mosquitoes and bug bites.

Imagine -Today's forces doing three and four tours of duty. Can you envision doing seven and eight tours back in the sixties?

Imagine -One day you are declared surplus. Surplus?

Imagine -Being lead back into that medical unit and looking up at a few grim faces and feel-

Continued column d bottom

Do you have a Hero Dog?

Calling out to any military working dog handlers, kennelmasters or veterinarians out there. If you know of a military working dog that you feel deserves the title of Hero Dog, please let us know.

To qualify, dogs should have performed above and beyond their level of training with tangible results. What we are seeking is the truly exceptional dog that you would be like to see honored as a Hero Dog.

To see some of the previous nominations, please go to our website at www.mwdtsa.org and click on the Heroes Tab. There you will find the stories of Rex, Lucca, Tess and Rico.

We are delighted that we have been

able to work with so many handlers to get the details of their dogs' stories. An added plus is that we never send any nominations off without complete review and approval of the dog handler.

There are several places that will recognize Hero Dogs: the AKC, the German Shepherd Dog Club of America and MWD TSA. Nominations are sent to the appropriate organization based on the breed of the dog.

The cut off time for nominations is fast approaching so please send contact information to MWD TSA by mid-May at

mwdtsa.dixie@yahoo.com.

Continued from column b

ing a pin prick in your arm and going to sleep for the last time.

Over 4000 military working dogs served in Vietnam, Thailand, Laos, and Cambodia during the Vietnam era and are estimated to have saved 10,000 lives. All experienced many of the things I have just mentioned and more. Very few returned back to the states. Some were sent to the Philippines or Korea. Some lived out their lives where they were stationed in country. Many, many more went into that medical unit for the last time. I have been told stories about handlers letting their dogs go free in the jungle to fend for themselves rather than bring them into the kennels for the last time. They could have been just that, just stories, but I wish, with my three dogs, I had done that! They were drafted and served more than willingly and gave their lives for this country.



DeHoog, Money, Homa, and Hartman discuss K9 Veterans' Day and the events at Knoxville, Tennessee.

Ronald McDonald House Gets a K9 Visitor



04/07/2010 - Tough guys have a soft side. Rex, a military working dog with the 56th Security Forces Squadron, poses for a picture with a statue of Ronald McDonald before his demonstration at the Ronald McDonald House in Phoenix, Arizona on April 7, 2010. Ronald McDonald houses allow families to face the weight of illnesses together. The Ronald McDonald House accommodates families of sick children who must travel more than 30 miles to receive the specific medical care they need. Activities and demonstrations, such as Rex's, allow a diversion and directs thoughts of the children away from their very personal health battles. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Tracie Forte/Released)

Military working dogs become available for adoption if they fail to meet training standards, have completed their service or have become medically unable to continue to serve. Priority for adopting is given to civilian law enforcement agencies, former military dog handlers and finally to the general public. 90% of the dogs are adopted by their handlers, but there are still many available to be adopted every year. Dogs can be adopted from installations around the world or from the Lackland Dog Training Center in San Antonio, Texas. There are no costs to actually adopt the dog, but transportation costs are picked up by the adopter.

The adoption folks at Lackland AFB keep a list posted on their website of dogs that are suitable and available for adoption to the general public from the Lackland facility. These dogs, along with basic information may be found at :

<http://www.lackland.af.mil/shared/media/document/AFD-080317-046.pdf>

Advocating for adoption of retired military working dogs is a fundamental mission of Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc. We feel strongly that these fine K9s have worked long and hard in both training and in battle and deserve to enjoy a cushy retirement.

Can't you just imagine a fuzzy face similar to one of these great dogs sitting on your sofa??

Recent Air Force Retirees



03/25/2010 - U.S. Air Force military working dogs Doc, Kisma and Jampy pose for a photo at the military working dog kennels at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz., March 25, 2010. All are assigned to the 56th Security Forces Squadron. The dogs are scheduled to be medically retired April 6, 2010, because of osteoarthritis. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Jason Colbert/Released)

A Thank You Tribute to Ann Wilkerson

by Dixie Whitman

In 2000, my husband and I attended our first war dog event, the dedication of the War Dog Memorial at Fort Benning.

In 2001, the Combat Tracker Teams added a pedestal to the memorial and there was a dedication to that pedestal honoring dogs and handlers that were part of the Combat Trackers in Vietnam. Ann attended with us and, from that moment, has been an invaluable supporter, confidant, cheerleader, fundraiser, side-kick and friend.

Together we have worked reunions at Fort Benning, proclamations at the Georgia Governor's office, trips to King's Bay, Moody AFB and St. Louis, Missouri to name a few. All in support of America's Military Working Dogs.

When the time came to officially create Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc., Ann was the natural choice for the Vice President's role.

Over the past few years changes in her life have caused her to miss a few events and she now feels that she needs to step down from the official role to a more supporting role, particularly as we are now expanding so significantly. We will miss her enthusiasm and good cheer.

Please enjoy photos of a few of the events to which Ann was a stalwart supporter.

Ann, thanks for your time, energy and friendship. The time we spent together will never be forgotten.

Dixie



In 2002 Ann and I made the first trip to the **Governor's office** to request a proclamation for Military Dog Handler Day in Georgia as a way to say thank you to the Vietnam Era handlers who were not thanked for their service. At that time two handlers from Fort Benning came up to lend support, along with Vietnam era Representatives from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marines.

Beginning in 2002, we began supporting both the events and **War Dog Memorial Dedications**. We made strides in fundraising to support the pedestals being purchased at the Fort Benning War Dog Memorial at Sacrifice Field. Ann made the trip down to speak with "Ranger Joe" in Columbus, GA and came back with 125 donated War Dogs of Vietnam T-shirts that we gave to attendees of the reunion that year. In this 2007 photo at right, Ann is dressing a dummy for a display at the Hospitality Room for the event.



Ann lent support at **Public Education events**, God Bless Fort Benning Days, installation visits, packages to the troops and letters of support.

She spearheaded our role at various local events, such as Paw Fest, even before we became an official organization. Lifted, toted, wine and dined and enjoyed the company of all handlers and dogs. At left, with one of her favorite breeds, the irresistible Newfoundland, Dreyfuss, she met at Top Dogs Pet Festival in September, 2009.

Playing Catch and Catching Up at Fort Benning

Last year our trip to Fort Benning was punctuated by lots of heat and an unrelenting flat tire that just refused to be repaired. This year we went back to visit with our handler friends again, to see the new kennels that are about to be opened and to take our high school volunteer, Courtney Griffin, to see both the War Dog Memorial and the real war dogs in action.

And, action we got. Up close and personal. In the photos to the right, Courtney and Kris Wilson, a new Board Member, both suited up, were instructed by SFC Allred on how to behave and how to run while the dog chases you down. Everyone had a great time being “the bad guy” and our handsome German shepherd got lots of practice biting and taking down.

Several of the handlers that we met last year are now deployed down range so we send them our thoughts and prayers. Godspeed them on their journey back home.

Our tire-changer friend and dog handler from last year, Sgt. Vonloh, has ended up with a cushy duty assignment so we congratulate him!

The new kennels are gorgeous and boast four times the space the dogs currently have. They are the ultimate in MWD kennels. The punch list is being worked on as I write so hoping that the new kennels will be inhabited by some very happy MWDs shortly. Thanks again to all of the handlers from this wonderful Army installation for their hospitality.

Visiting the War Dog Memorial at Fort Benning is a great opportunity for anyone interested in War Dogs—it inspires, honors and educates. If you are near Columbus, GA, try to stop by for a visit. It's worth it, I promise. The memorial is inside the base at Sacrifice Field. Base access requires your automobile registration, Insurance Information and Driver's License or photo ID for every adult in the vehicle.



Above: Courtney Griffin getting instructions from SFC Allred while, Below, she is on the biting end of Sgt. Myers MWD.



Left: MWD TSA Secretary/Treasurer, Kris Wilson, getting instructions from SFC Allred, while on the right, she is catching Sgt. Myers, Military Working Dog.

Great job to all involved!!



Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc.

MWD TSA
P. O. Box 5864
Canton, GA 30114

Phone: 404-451-2539
E-mail: mwdtsa.dixie@yahoo.com



PLEASE RECYCLE
BY SENDING TO
A FRIEND

We are on the web!!

www.mwdtsa.org

Follow our Blog for more photos.



Get Your "I Support the Teams" Wristband

Supporters, step up and order your "I Support The Teams" wristband in patriotic red, white and blue. It sports the outline of a German Shepherd Dog and also displays MWD TSA's website address. It's a great summer accessory for all of the season's patriotic holidays from Memorial Day to the 4th of July. And, for only \$5.00 you can let your wristband declare your support of Military Working Dogs and MWD TSA. Add \$2.50 for postage for as many wristbands as you'd like to order. For dog handlers: We have a second version in Down Range Sand with the words "Bite Me". :)



Sit. Stay. Support.

Be sure to submit your photos wearing your "Courtney" T-shirt or Hoodie someplace interesting, exciting, unique or beautiful and look for your photo to be on the blog or in the newsletter!!



Where's Courtney? In Hollywood.

Frequent guest star playing the old style Agent, Mike Franks, on NCIS, Prison Break's cat-loving con, Charles Westmoreland, and "I Know What You Did Last Summer" villain, **Muse Watson** shares a moment from his busy production schedules to support MWD TSA and our military working dogs and handlers. Posing in front of the famous Hollywood sign, Muse proudly shows off his "Courtney T Shirt". For the moment, Courtney is in Hollywood. Please see our website to order your very own shirt. www.mwdtsa.org Please stop by Muse's Facebook page or movie group and thank him for his support. Muse Watson demo reel and character tribute videos are now available at <http://www.youtube.com/profile?user=musewatson> or you can stop by his Yahoo Group site and say thanks at: <http://movies.groups.yahoo.com/group/musewatsonclub/>

Scoop: Look for Muse Watson to appear as Mike Franks on NCIS in late May!

Color me tickled "red, white and blue!" Check the MWD TSA Blog later on our website for the exact episode airing date.