

Support MWD TSA now  
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of the photos, stories,  
news and highlights of  
2012!

Kennel Talk is now an  
award winning  
MWD publication!

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## Who's Naughty & Who's Nice?



## Fido is a Good Boy ... When Santa is Watching

This is our  
most active  
shipping  
season. Funds  
are urgently  
needed to  
stock and ship  
holiday boxes  
headed to de-  
ployed dog  
teams.

By Dixie Whitman

Actually, Fido is also a good boy even while Santa is not watching. He is an especially nice boy when he takes down a naughty suspect. This handsome face belongs to Fido, a dog from the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, GA.

Will you help us send boxes of support to deployed dogs like Fido and their handlers for the holidays? They are all certainly on Santa's "nice list".

We are in our full out fundraising mode. We have received some great in-kind donations of KONG toys, grooming supplies and coffee, however, we still need funds to add addi-

tional items that were not received as a donation. We also need money to mail the boxes over to our handlers.

Requests to MWD TSA are increasing as more handlers become familiar with our organization and our efforts.

We have received requests from kennels that were at Iraq bases being closed and have minimal support during the closing process. We have also answered the call for specific items from handlers for their training, for the dogs' comfort or for keeping dogs fit in difficult surroundings.

Please join me in making a personal financial commitment

to keeping these packages flowing to our troops and their K9 companions who are working far from their homes, their families and their holiday traditions this year.

Mail your donation to:

MWD TSA

P.O. Box 5864

Canton, GA 30114

If you are in the north Georgia area and interested in helping us pack and ship care packages for the holidays? Please send an email to:

info@mwdtsa.org

Santa is watching.

## Fieldy, A Marine's Best Friend

By GySgt Rene Avendano



**A U.S. Marine holds the leash fastened to Fieldy, a military working dog, before departing together from Camp Leatherneck, Afghanistan, April 7, 2011. Marines assigned to 1st Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment, Regional Command Southwest, are attending a shura with Afghan civilians to discuss the education and safety of their children and the future of their nation. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Jacob R. Lamar/Released)**

Marines have long been known as a breed apart from the other services. Within the United States Marine Corps itself, there are specialized units. These units perform different functions but all have a common goal, to support other Marines. It is very rare that individual Marines get to do other occupational specialties related to their own job. This usually occurs when the unit is getting ready to deploy and additional courses arise which enhance the unit's combat capabilities. These courses enhance the infantryman's skills in fields such as weapons, communications and intelligence. One new specialty that has arisen in the past two years aimed to combat the growing improvised explosive device threat is the Improvised Explosive Device Detector Dog.

The Improvised Explosive Detector Dog or IDD as it is known is a unique breed

of animal. The IDD is typically a Labrador retriever, a hunting dog. The dog's natural instinct to hunt and search for his prey is what makes them just right for this type of work. These dogs are made for hunting. Keeping that in mind, the idea was brought up to fight the IED with the dogs. Man's best friend, continues to be his protector not only at home but in combat. To Lance Corporal Nicolas Caceres, the IDD is not only his best friend and protector, but the key to keeping Marines, Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen in the fields of Afghanistan alive.

Lance Corporal Caceres is a member of 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, Charlie Company 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion 23<sup>rd</sup> Marine Regiment out of Harlingen, Texas. He is a reservist mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Afghanistan. His fellow Marines are all from the Rio

Grande Valley. Nicolas Caceres was selected to be an IDD handler during his pre-deployment training at Camp Margarita, Camp Pendleton California. The 24 year old, Alamo, Texas native along with 17 other Marines made the trip to a small town in South Carolina named Hartsville. Here in the town roughly with the same population as Lance Corporal Caceres' hometown is where he met his new battle buddy, Fieldy.

Fieldy is a black Labrador retriever. He is going on three years old and is already a combat veteran. This will be Fieldy's third deployment to Afghanistan and it will not be his last. Fieldy will deploy three more times after he returns from Afghanistan. After his sixth deployment, Fieldy will make his trip to Lackland Air Force Base to be placed on the adoption list. It is traditional for Fieldy's first handler to get the chance to adopt him first.

If the first handler does not wish to adopt him, the choice is given to his next handler and so on.

Fieldy still has a few deployments left before adoption. He still must be ready to work wherever he is needed. He is needed right now in Afghanistan to battle the number one threat for the Marines, Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen, the IED or Improvised Explosive Device.

Lance Corporal Caceres spent 40 days training to find IED's with Fieldy in the fields and empty buildings of Hartsville, South Carolina. He is taught the basic of dog handling by experienced field trial handlers who are owners of champion dogs. This includes health checks, preventive medicine for the IDD and proper care and use. Using only a whistle and a few hand and arm signals, Lance Corporal Caceres learns how to maneuver Fieldy to clear a large area for IED's. With his nose to the ground, Fieldy smells

Continued on page 3



the air just above the surface for IED's. As he moves forward, his nose to the ground, Fieldy stops turns abruptly and begins to move side to side. Fieldy's tail begins to wag faster and you can see the excitement on Lance Corporal Caseres' face. He calls out, "change." This means there was a change in Fieldy's normal behavior. Fieldy then drops down and lays down, eyes gazed on his handler and licks his lips. He is waiting for a sign from Lance Corporal Caseres to move, he wants his reward. Lance Corporal Caseres then gives him a verbal and loud "atta boy," reaches for the bright red Kong and Fieldy races toward him like a bullet. Lance Corporal Caseres throws the rubber Kong close by and Fieldy grabs it and chews on it. Fieldy goes crazy for the rubber Kong. A Kong is the red rubber toy that drives the dog to hunt. That is his payment that is what he wants. The Kong is his reward. Fieldy will work hard to get his reward. Good job, says the

instructor as Lance Corporal Caseres takes Fieldy back to the trailer for water and food.

It is now a few months into the deployment and the place is a hot, barren desert near Camp Leatherneck in Afghanistan. Lance Corporal Caseres is part of a mounted patrol and they have come across a suspicious area of ground. Fieldy climbs out of the cab of the MATV (MRAP All Terrain Vehicle) and joins his handler Lance Corporal Caseres. He is a long way from South Carolina but has been in this country before. After a quick drink of water, Fieldy aligns next to his handler without command. It is time to work. Lance Corporal Caseres briefs his spotter, who will provide security for him, and gets ready to send Fieldy down the road. His only command to Fieldy is "hunt it up," and Fieldy moves down the road with his nose to the ground. He clears the roadway from side to side. He

checks out small areas of interest to him as he walks. Fieldy comes to a disturbed area of dirt. Like his days in South Carolina, Fieldy stops, moves from side to side. His tail is wagging side to side rapidly. Lance Corporal Caseres immediately notices the change. Fieldy comes to a halt and lies down and looks toward his handler. Lance Corporal Caseres has no doubt in his mind that his ID has found something. He calls Fieldy back to get him out of danger and puts him on lead. He walks him back to safety and cover and pays him with the red Kong. Lance Corporal Caseres praises him and lets him keep the Kong awhile, he has earned it. Fieldy had found more than thirty pounds of homemade explosive attached to a pressure plate and a battery pack. The pressure plate would have exploded and damaged the MATV's. Even though these types of vehicles are made to withstand the impact of the explosion, severe injury would

have occurred to the vehicle's occupants. This IED was in the direct path of Lance Corporal Caseres' patrol. Fieldy has saved the lives of his fellow Marines.

The patrol waits and secures the area to have explosive ordinance and disposal personnel come and dispose of the IED. Marines do not leave these devices in place. They pose a severe danger to the local population which the Marines are here to protect from the Taliban. The IED is disposed of and the Marines continue to drive forward with their mission. The day is not over for Lance Corporal Caseres. He and Fieldy must continue on patrol. Once they end the patrol and are in the security of the patrol base, Lance Corporal Caseres continues to train Fieldy with odor problems and plastic decoy drills before feed time. Fieldy then lies down for the night after a long day and is ready to do the same the next morning.

Fieldy and the other dogs at this kennel were supported with supplies shipped by MWD TSA.



www.mwdtsa.org

## KONGs for K9s: Toy and Supply Drive

Thanks to the KONG Company for their continued support of our Military Working Dogs and to all of these excellent participating stores & their kind customers for donations to KONGs for K9s.

**T C Country**  
100 Heritage Town Parkway  
Canton, GA 30114-9383  
770-479-8926

**Top Dogs Pet Boutique**  
2615 George Busbee  
Parkway Suite 17  
Kennesaw, GA 30144  
770-218-0602

**Top Dogs Pet Boutique**  
900 Mansell Road Suite 13  
Roswell, GA 30076  
770-641-8620

**Leash On Life**  
432 Highway 1 West  
Iowa City, Iowa  
319-354-4334



**DONATE**  
New Dog Products for  
DOGS SERVING OUR COUNTRY

Care packages will be sent to active duty handlers and dogs currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

**KONG COMPANY**  
will match each rubber toy donated with another

Visit participating retailers for details.

**WISH LIST**

- KONG TOYS
- KONG CLASSIC (KXL)
- KONG EXTREME (UXL)
- KONG TAILS (KTX)
- KONG BALL (KB1)
- KONG EXTREME FLYER (UF3)
- PET WIPES
- FURMINATORS
- TUFF PAD

NOTE: Sized items should be suitable for German Shepherds, Belgian Malinois and Labrador Retrievers.

Benefits Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc. (a 501(C)(3) organization). All donations are tax deductible.

**"Always Faithful, Always Alert, Always Remembered"**  
www.mwdtsa.org

KONGs for K9s donations accepted through the end of October. Check with a listed store. Update and photos in January issue.

Thank you to Anna Cooke & Patt Glenn

**Ma & Paws Bakery, Inc.**  
1227 East 3300 South  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84106  
801-487-3838

**Downtown Dogs**  
Hyde Park Village  
1631 W. Snow Circle  
Tampa, FL 33606  
813-250-DOGS

**Fluffy Puppies**  
1447 S Fort Harrison Ave  
Clearwater, FL 33756-2067  
(727) 446-7999

**Gone to the Dogs**  
310 Corey Ave.  
St. Pete Beach, FL 33706  
727-363-3200

**Groovy Cats & Dogs**  
10213-B Lake Carroll Way  
Tampa, FL 33618  
(813) 265-1333

**One Lucky Dog**  
5320 4th St. North  
St Petersburg, FL 33703  
727 - 527 - 5825

**Paw Paws Pet Boutique**  
John's Pass Village  
184 John's Pass Boardwalk  
West  
Madeira Beach, FL  
727-329-8789

**Pawsitively Posh Pooch**  
1425 4th Street North  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33704  
727-892-9303

**Pet Food Warehouse**  
6155 B 18th Street North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33714  
727- 521-6191  
St. Petersburg, FL

**Wet Noses Boutique**  
472 John Ringling Boulevard  
St. Armands Circle,  
Sarasota, FL  
941-388-DOGS (3647)



[www.mwdtsa.org](http://www.mwdtsa.org)

## *Wrap It Up Early with our "Pass It On" Gifts*

"Pass It On" offers the War Dogs of Vietnam T Shirt, sharing the message of the lives saved by the hard working dogs during the Vietnam War. Now through November 15th, this shirt is on a special sale price of \$14.95, which is a 25% savings in honor of our Vietnam War dog handlers.

The artwork is a great rendition of our very first T-shirt. It is based on a gorgeous water color work of both bi-color and of black and tan



German shepherd dogs. you opt to "pass it on" and purchase more, at your

direction, we can include one or more of the shirts, as a gift from you, in holiday packages being sent to our deployed dog handlers.

What better gift than both honoring Vietnam War Dogs and veteran dog handlers while sharing their history with current handlers?

Our eStore Dog Tagz:

[mwdtsa.org/estore.html](http://mwdtsa.org/estore.html)

## *You Are Not Seeing Double....But you Could!*

You are not seeing double, but you could! If your employer provides a matching gift program, your gift to MWD TSA could be doubled. Imagine how much more we could do with double the funds!

Doubling your gift is really easy. Many companies have a matching program to encourage their employees to make donations to charitable organizations. Check with your Human Resources department or company website to see if your employer is one such company. If so, obtain a matching donation form, complete it and send it along with your donation to MWD TSA at:

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



Already made a gift? You can still make your gift twice as nice by obtaining the matching gift form from your employer and mailing it to MWD TSA today.

Remember, we love seeing double. Thanks to these two teams who provided double the efforts on their last deployment to an undisclosed location. These dogs were sent packages from MWD TSA with specific workout toys to keep them in shape in a difficult environment.

I cannot quite bring myself to say "double the pleasure and double the fun" as I'm sure these teams are beyond ready to come home. They should be wheels on the ground around the time you read this newsletter. Welcome home, all!

*Thank you Palmer Middle School Panthers! Kennesaw, GA*

www.mwdtsa.org

## *Celebrating November 10th — USMC Day*

USMC Day celebrates the birth of the United States Marine Corps. The Marine Corps were created during the Revolutionary War.

The Continental Congress of the newly created United States of America, authorized the creation of the Continental Marines on November 10, 1775. It was later renamed the U.S. Marine Corps and abbreviated as USMC.

The Marine Corps has proudly participated in every war that has involved the United States.

During the battles in the South Pacific in World War II, the Marines' use of war dogs became legendary. Shown at right are Marines with scouting and messenger dogs heading to the frontlines of Bougainville in late 1943

If you see Marines today, thank them for their contribu-

tions to protecting our country. Active or retired, they deserve our thanks and appreciation.

Here's a shout out to all of our Marine Dog Handlers past and present. Thank you and your families for your service and sacrifice. Thank you for being a Marine.



## *Celebrating Veteran's Day 11-11-11 at 11:11*

Veteran's Day honors all members of the Armed Forces who served this country valiantly. They served and fought to protect us, to keep our country safe, and to preserve our way of life.

This holiday originally was called Armistice Day and was first celebrated in 1921. In 1954, President Eisenhower changed it to Veteran's Day in honor of those who served and died from all wars, not just WWI.

On November 11, 1921 at 11:11, 1921 the U.S. France and England each buried an unknown soldier in honor of those who died in World War I. This began the annual Armistice Day holiday. The time and day was picked because fighting ceased in WWI in 1918 on November 11 at 11:11. In keeping with this tradition, work stops on this day and time each year for a moment of silence.

MWDTSA is proud to be asso-

ciated with so many Vietnam veterans of Vietnam who served as dog handlers. So many of these handlers have worked diligently on behalf of

today's active duty handlers to ensure that the current dog teams (both handlers and dogs) are not forgotten. These veterans keep on giving and are an

inspiration to us all.

Check our Blog online for updates about free Veteran's Day offers. Happy Veteran's Day!



Vietnam Veteran Dog Handlers form the 47th IPSD reunite at Ft. Benning Memorial in May of 2002.

This unit first deployed from Fort Benning to Vietnam in May 1968.



## Pickle Packers Pack Pickle Paks for Puppy Pushers

Our sincere thank you to Mt. Olive Pickle Company and the fine folks who made this donation possible, including my awesome nephew, Steven Whitman. We received 240 Pickle Paks in four varieties. Everyone loves the crunch of those delectable Mt. Olive Pickles!

Please visit their website, [mtolivepickles.com](http://mtolivepickles.com), and write a note of thanks to this great American company for sup-

porting America's Military Working Dog Handlers. It will take mere moments to send, but will mean a lot to MWD TSA. Also, hang around the site and check out the creative, versatile and tasty recipes presented by Mt. Olive.

Nothing says "thank you" like supporting our supporters; so as you are shopping for your holiday meals, when you reach for a jar of pickles, reach for Mt. Olive to show your appreciation to this great group of

*Visit the website and say  
thank you!*

[www.mtolivepickles.com](http://www.mtolivepickles.com)

*We received donations of Kosher Dill Petites, Sweet Petites, Sweet Petites (No Sugar Added) and Jalapeño Slices*



## A Thank You to Our Great Donors

With many irons in the fire—maybe even in multiple fires, it can get pretty hectic at MWD TSA.

One thing which takes priority, however, is communicating with our remarkable handlers. I sometimes feel badly that all of you are not able to share in the repartee, the jokes, the photos and the notes of appreciation. The thanks and recognition that we receive, belong to all of the donors, whether of money, product in-kind, or shared talents.

Shown at right are a few notes highlighting the impact that MWD TSA and its supporters are making in the deployments of dog teams.

Our goal is to support dog teams wherever we can: to put a smile on faces and a wag in the tail.

~Dixie

"Andy and I both got boxes from the Rogers Family Coffee. The Irish Cream singles they sent are amazing!" Megan

"Thank you so much! We received the box today and in less than 5 minutes we had the dogs out in the yard playing and having fun with everything!!!" Shawn

"Thank you so much, the aroma of freshly ground coffee beans fills the air in the morning." Justin

"We got your care packages in the mail today and I had to beat my handlers back from tearing them open right in the middle of the road. Thank you so much for the care packages. Tonight we are doing some training and I will get some photos sent your way. Thank you for getting this started and keeping up with all of us that get somewhere and have nothing for the dogs." Travis

"Hey, just letting you know we got the coffee and it is great. Thanks." Brian

"I just received another package. And I can't thank you enough for all that you have done for me. I appreciate this more than words can express. This will certainly help me with Dog training." Andre

"Thank you for the fans. It put a long needed smile on my face :)" Conrad

"We all appreciate the time and effort put forth by your organization in helping these guys out." Thomas

"Hey there, just wanted to say thank you so much for the packages we received today, we really appreciate all the support you've given us and all MWD teams." Amy



*Thank you Community Coffee for continued support!*



Military Working Dog Team  
Support Association, Inc.

## Sit. Stay. Support.

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***Congratulations!***

Pardon Our Pride

Kennel Talk was honored by the German Shepherd Dog Club of America with a rosette at the National Specialty Show in Topeka, Kansas. We are now an award winning publication!

As a special side bar note, my friend Steven, shown at the right, was an inspirational volunteer in his adopted home of Minot, N.D. during the horrific floods there earlier this year.

The heart of a leader doesn't stop with his job or himself!  
Way to go, sir!



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Kathy Mercado's training sleeve is bitten by Lareco, a military working dog (MWD), while Staff Sgt. Steven Kaun assists her during training at Minot Air Force Base, N.D., April 25, 2011. The Airmen are MWD handlers assigned to the 5th Security Forces Squadron. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jesse Lopez/Released)



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Kayla Wolf, a military working dog handler, lets Afghan children pet her military working dog, T-Rex, during clearing operations in Cheshmah, Kandahar province, Afghanistan, Jan. 18, 2011. Wolf and T-Rex supported Golf Company, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and Afghan National Army 205th Corps to clear Cheshmah and build relations with Afghans. (U.S. Army photo by Cpl. Carol A. Lehman/Released)