



Kennel Talk

Volume 9 / Issue 8

August, 2017



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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 all over the world, from Washington to Vietnam, then back to sunny California.

Our parting shot is from Australia.

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

K-9 trains to fight

Story and photos by Senior Airman Mackenzie Richardson



The 92nd Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog section ruck marches to prepare for their upcoming deployments May 10, 2017, at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. MWD focuses on detection of explosives and narcotics and deterrence of individuals at home, in training and while deployed.

It's May in the state of Washington and the temperature is sitting at a stale 78 degrees. The 92nd Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog handlers are training for deployment.

"It takes a lot of hard work and long hours in the elements to prepare for deployment," said Senior Airman Kyle Wentz, 92nd SFS MWD handler. "The trainers' job is to make sure we are ready the moment our boots hit the ground."

These long hours of rigorous training involve acclimating both the handler and K-9 to various environments, stimulants and stressful situations that best simulate deployed locations around the world.

MWD focuses on detection of explosives and narcotics and deterrence of individuals at home, in training and while deployed. When training, the unit conducts detection sweeps of roadways and villages, ruck marches with simulated explosives and gunfire and challenging physical training in order to prevent injury.

When deployed, handlers are not only carrying more than 50 pounds of their own equipment; they are carrying their K-9's equipment and at times, their K-9. A dog's stamina will be tested when for hours on end, they sweep for explosives in 100-degree weather.

"All the training we do mentally and physically prepares us for the increased workloads of deployments," Wentz said. "It is crucial for the

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handler and K-9 to be prepared in every situation to ensure they carry out their responsibility.”

As a 92nd SFS MWD trainer, Staff Sgt. Kyle Shy looks for a strong and committed mentality when seeking handlers.

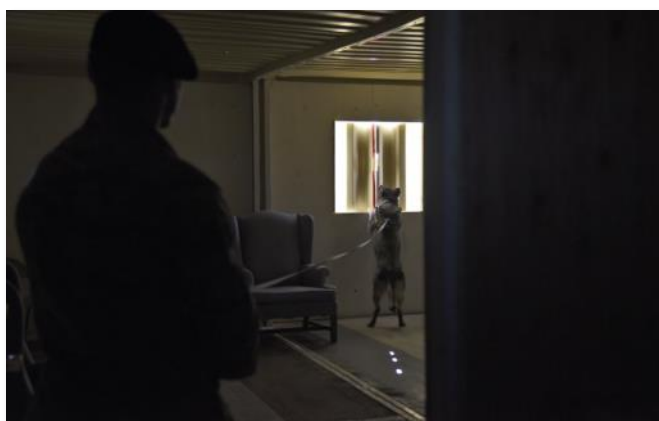
“Many people think working with MWDs everyday would be great, but that’s not always the case,” Shy said. “There are days when the K-9s are stubborn, difficult and lazy; those days the handlers really need a positive and contagious attitude to motivate their dog.”

In addition to being mentally and physically prepared for a deployment, creating trust between handler and K-9 is extremely important.

“During deployment training the relationship between the dog and handler becomes an extremely strong bond,” said Staff. Sgt. Brian Brady, 92nd SFS MWD handler. “You both are going through high stress situations together and learning how to work as a team in new environments.”

Many of the handlers have only been with their K-9s a short time and are constantly striving to improve their working relationship.

“The rapport between MWD Brenda and me has definitely increased since the start of the rucks and deployment training,” Wentz said. “It helps build trust and an unbreakable bond, two things that allow us to work better in every situation.”



Senior Airman Kyle Wentz, 92nd Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog handler, and MWD Brenda sweep a room during detection certification April 28, 2017, at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. Maintaining detection and deterrence certification is a top priority to ensure K-9s and their handlers are deployable.



The 92nd Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog section prepares for deployment with mental and physical exercises such as ruck marches. When deployed, handlers are not only carrying more than 50 pounds of their own equipment; they are carrying their K-9’s equipment and at times, their K-9. A dog’s stamina will be tested when for hours on end, they sweep for explosives in 100-degree weather.

The importance of deployment training for handlers and MWDs is crucial to the success of the team and the unit with which they deploy. The mission of each MWD team varies on location, on the dog and the Department of Defense unit with which they are paired.

“MWD teams not only give the base detection presence, they also provide a psychological deterrent,” Shy said. “Whether deployed or stateside, the importance of the MWD cannot be stressed enough.”



Staff Sgt. Jacob Diers and Senior Airman Ivan Mendez, 92nd Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog handlers, sweep a roadway with MWD Rosso during a ruck march May 10, 2017, at Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington. When training, the unit conducts detection sweeps of roadways and villages, ruck marches with simulated explosives and gunfire and challenging physical training in order to prevent injury.

Rick Julian Air Force K9 Cop—Part 3

Story by Dixie Whitman and Krista Hernandez. Photos courtesy of Richard “Rick” Julian.

This is the third part of a three-part biographical portrait of Richard “Rick” Julian.

In October 1970, Rick Julian found himself deployed to Cam Rahn Bay Air Base in South-east China. As the new kennel master, Rick managed dog teams that patrolled an 18-mile perimeter around the base. In hindsight, Rick estimates that he needed 300-400 dog teams to adequately patrol the huge area. But at the time, he only had 90 teams that had to be split between two shifts.

Handlers at Cam Rahn Bay carried tremendous responsibility. The lack of fencing made the patrol teams the only defense between the base and the enemy, and also gave the Vietnamese an advantage. The clear sight lines made it easy for combat engineers, known as sappers, to surveil base activities. So, Rick made sure to utilize his scant resources wisely and “keep ‘em guessing,” as he was wont to say. The wily kennel master randomized night time patrols and avoided creating patterns for duties and locations.

Rarely did a night at Cam Rahn pass without at least one or two active alerts. Sometimes, dog teams were at the right place at the right time, alerting to enemy combatants along the shoreline. But security forces were spread too thin to prevent every enemy breach. On several occasions, daylight revealed canteens, web belts, and clothing left behind by sappers. One night in August 1971, sappers successfully infiltrated the base from the western bay. They moved undetected into the ammo dump, where munitions were stored. The sappers rigged charges that exploded throughout the night, causing fires at the dump for several days. Over \$10,000 worth of ordnance was destroyed in that one attack.

Even though security forces couldn’t prevent every attack, not a single handler was killed under Rick Julian’s tenure as kennel master. That is just one of many reasons he was well liked and respected among his men, who affectionately referred to their boss as “old man.” Rick was a wise leader, one who understood the importance of rules while



Above left: One of the jeeps used by the kennels at Cam Rahn Bay. A jeep like this was hidden in plain sight.



Above right: Rick hated snakes and his handlers loved to play practical jokes on him with snakes.

Rick Julian continued from page 3

recognizing that they must sometimes be bent in times of hardship. Resources were scant in Vietnam, so the best units were those that could filch, trade, or hustle supplies and equipment. Rick recalls one occasion in which his teams wanted to work on the K9 cemetery. The area was up on a hill and the project required a lot of back-breaking man hours. Rick sent his best “scrounger” out for supplies, astonished when the man returned with a bulldozer. “Don’t tell me how you did that,” Rick cautioned.



Above: Nancy and Rick Julian continue their military support in their retirement in central Florida.

The crew responsible for the cemetery liked to live on the wild side. Outside of a movie theater one night, they “borrowed” a vehicle belonging to the base Provost Marshal. The men immediately took the car to a friend in the motor pool, who removed the serial number and repainted it with the number of one of security forces’ current vehicles. Unless both transports were parked side-by-side, no one was the wiser. Rick responded to the new vehicle in classic plausible deniability mode: “I don’t want to know.”

Despite strong camaraderie, shenanigans, and practical jokes, Rick and his handlers felt the strain of unrest back home. The *Stars and Stripes* consistently reported on protests in the States, painting a bleak portrait of an unsupportive nation. The teams read stories of angry protesters spitting on returning veterans and branding them “baby killers.” Men were even being discouraged from wearing their uniforms off base. The negativity was soul crushing, and some of the K9 handlers escaped the constant barrage through drugs,

which were sadly both plentiful and cheap for soldiers in Vietnam. By October 1971, a weary Rick Julian was more than ready to leave the jungle.

Rick returned to Ellsworth AFB in South Dakota, where he was awarded the Bronze Star for his exceptional service at Cam Rahn Bay. As he adjusted to life back home, Rick served as NCOIC of Aircraft Security until he volunteered as an Armed Forces Courier. He was then assigned to Clark AFB in the Philippines, and eventually bounced back to Ellsworth AFB. Rick was not thrilled to return to the frigid desolation of South Dakota. In another stroke of fortune, a kind superior took pity on Rick. The officer pulled a few strings and got Rick transferred to Grissom AFB in Indiana, where he could be near his home and family as he transitioned into civilian life.

After twenty-five years in the Air Force, Rick settled into retirement in Indiana. But after twenty-two years of working with very active

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dogs, he wasn't ready to slow down completely. For a time Rick worked in human resources at a Kokomo steel mill and later held a similar position just over the border in Joliet, IL. Once Rick retired for good, he and his wife, Nancy, moved back to the heat of central Florida, where their life together had begun decades before.

In 2004, the ever restless Rick channeled in his energy into forming a new veteran's organization called Four Lakes Veterans. Based in Winter Haven, FL, the organization actively encourages veterans to socialize with the surrounding community and utilize the resources of other veterans' groups. Rick served as an officer for thirteen years and commander for six years. His efforts had such an impact that the Four Lakes Veterans Organization was

invited to present our National Colors at a Tampa Bay Buccaneers football game at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, FL. on four different occasions.

If we've learned anything about Rick over the past three months, it's that he can't sit still for long. So, it's no surprise that our featured dog man is also a proud member of Polk County Chapter (1040) of Vietnam Veterans of America, the American Legion, and his local VFW. We at MWDTSA salute him for his decades of helping others. As both an airman and a retired civilian, Rick Julian embodies the Air Force's core values like no one else: Integrity first; service before self; integrity in all we do. Thank you, Rick.



Donor Spotlight

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:

Patricia Carter
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Nikki Rohrig
 Sherborne, Inc. Aberdeen, North Carolina
 Richard Snyder
 Stansport Inc. Los Angeles, California
 Christa Ursini
 Pamela Wadsworth
 Jonathan Wilcox
 Working Dog Magazine Eureka, Missouri

No Dog Left Behind: Taking A Stand To Ensure U.S. Military Working Dogs Return Home After Deployment

Story by Elliott Steere and Leigh Steere



Combat Tracker Team (CTT) heading out on mission, early 1969.

Imagine going on a trip with your dog then purposely leaving him behind in a strange city.

That's what happened to most of the 4,000-plus dogs who served with the U.S. military in Vietnam. After risking their lives to protect our troops, these dogs were left behind as if they were unneeded surplus equipment. According to The United States War Dog Association, "Only 204 dogs exited Vietnam during the 10-year period. None returned to civilian life."

The human troops who served with canines in Vietnam saw their dogs as soldiers. They were four-legged heroes who deserved to return to the U.S. with their human comrades and have forever homes after retiring from the military.

The advocacy for these dogs started during the Vietnam War and continues today. It's a journey that shows four aspects of taking a stand for what's right.

Background

In his book *Dog Tags of Courage*, Army veteran John Burnam writes:

"At the end of WWII, surviving war dogs were returned to U.S. soil, hailed as America's canine heroes,

and given military service medals, parades, and official discharge certificates. Many were repatriated with the families that donated them, while others were released into the custody of their handlers to live out the rest of their lives in peace.

"That was not the case in South Vietnam, however, where all war dogs were classified as expendable military equipment for the duration of the war.

"The North Vietnamese Army, known as the Vietcong (VC), constantly surprised us with their hit-and-run guerilla tactics. The enemy was adept at hiding within the local civilian population or in neatly camouflaged positions and remote jungle base camps, where he was exceptionally difficult to find or surprise.

"Courageous, well-trained, disciplined war-dog teams were called on to counteract the enemy's tactical success. Their deployment in Vietnam dramatically improved the infantry's ability to search, locate, and engage the enemy, and eradicate his ability to surprise, inflict casualties, and destroy equipment.

"By 1973, when the Vietnam War had ended, and all the American ground troops had abandoned their base camps and withdrawn from Vietnam, not one surviving war-dog hero was officially discharged and sent home to the family it once knew, or released to the handler it loved and protected. Instead, most of the surviving dogs were crated and shipped to U.S. military quarantine camps. A few lucky dogs made it out alive and were reassigned to other U.S. military installations in various parts of the world.

"Despite the handlers' and veterinarians' pleas to ship the remaining dogs home, they were instead either given to the South Vietnamese Army as a good-will gesture, or were euthanized by the U.S. military."

No Dog Left Behind continued from page 6

Taking a stand to correct this injustice didn't happen overnight.

Taking a stand: ASPECT ONE

A moral dilemma leads a person or group to take a stand.

In Vietnam, the military classified war dogs as equipment, similar to a gun or pair of binoculars. This meant that dogs were subject to the same rules as inanimate objects.

When people create rules and procedures, it is hard to picture every situation where those rules will apply. What if following a rule will put humans in grave danger? What if following a rule will lead to the unnecessary death of an animal? Military dog handlers faced these questions while serving in Vietnam.

Because the rules for equipment applied to these dogs, a commander could not request a replacement for a dog unless the original dog was declared dead. This left soldiers with a terrible dilemma. "Do I kill the injured comrade who just saved my life because he can no longer serve?" This decision isn't like trading in a pair of broken binoculars to get a new pair.

Taking a stand: ASPECT TWO

Taking a stand often starts as a single act to handle a single situation.

Vietnam veteran Dick Baumer of MWDTSA is one of many who faced these tough questions. He commanded the 62nd Infantry Platoon (Combat Tracker), part of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, and tells this story:

"I confess that toward the end of 1969 I was one of those that faked a dog's death. I needed a replacement dog to protect our troops. Bruce (6B45) was no longer willing to track but I wasn't able to get a replacement without sending him back to the Dog Training Detachment in Bien Hoa. I knew that doing so would have resulted in having him put down. Only a veterinarian can sign a death certificate, but I instead wrote a report of survey claiming that he had been blown up. I was able to get a vet to sign a death certificate later. That way I couldn't be expected to produce his left ear showing his tattoo but I could take him off my property book and get a replacement."



One of the many Labradors in Vietnam, Lucky, aka "Six."

In his particular case, Baumer needed a dog to protect his soldiers. He had to choose between following a rule, which would have led to the dog's death, and breaking a rule to save the dog. He took a stand to save the dog's life.

Taking a stand: ASPECT THREE

Sometimes, there is a delay between seeing a problem and taking a broader stand to do something about it.

Vietnam was an unpopular war. When soldiers returned, they did not receive a hero's welcome. After the U.S. involvement ended, the nation's attention turned elsewhere and talk of Vietnam faded. The fate of Vietnam War dogs was not immediately known. There was mixed information on what happened to them.

Vietnam veteran dog handler LTC Ken Besecker, USA (Ret), co-founder of MWDTSA, reports, "It wasn't until after the war that I learned most MWDs in Vietnam were declared 'surplus,' as if they were unneeded equipment, and left behind to face euthanasia or worse."

Dick Baumer heard something different: "I didn't learn about my dogs until I returned from Germany, where I was stationed from 1972-75. When I left Vietnam in early 1970, I was aware that the US military was alarmed about the spread of a disease that primarily affected German Shepherds. It was referred to as IHS (Idiopathic Hemorrhagic Syndrome). No cause nor cure was found, and I heard much later that potential contagion of other military dogs and humans was the reason for the wholesale euthanasia. I never learned whether this was actually true."

No Dog Left Behind continued from page 7

Euthanasia to prevent spread of a deadly disease sounds practical, although sad. Euthanasia to dispose of surplus equipment, when that “equipment” has a personality and feelings, seems cruel—both to the dogs and to the soldiers who loved them. What is the truth?

Baumer describes how the issue faded from the public eye: “After Vietnam, the military dog program was cut back significantly. Upon the end of the war, the US military eliminated all units and programs except for the Air Force sentry dog program. With little visibility, the issue of the dogs’ fates simply went away.”

Taking a stand: ASPECT FOUR

Taking a stand for what is right may require many voices and many years.

Eighteen years went by before the conversation resurfaced in a public way. Starting in 1993, nonprofit organizations began to raise awareness about the role of military working dogs and take a stand on behalf of these four-legged heroes.

The military amped up its working dog program following the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon. With so many dogs deployed overseas, the question of how to make sure they all get home became more pressing.

In the book *Dogs Who Serve*, author Lisa Rogak writes, “Before the year 2000, military working dogs who retired were required to be euthanized as a matter of course; the government believed the dogs were deemed unsuitable for living in a home situation with a family.”

But in 2000, President Clinton signed “Robby’s Law,” which allows adoption of retired military working dogs. It clarified that the military should not euthanize the dogs unless it’s medically necessary. The law also required the military to report the number of dogs adopted versus euthanized. Unfortunately, the law did not include a provision to transport the dogs back to the continental U.S.

Baumer explained, “Only active duty dogs were allowed to travel on military aircraft. If they are retired, they couldn’t.”

Legislation in 2015 was supposed to correct this problem, but the wording left a loophole. The dogs are supposed to be retired on U.S. soil (allowing them to fly back to the U.S. to be retired). However, all U.S. bases around the world are technically considered “U.S. soil.”



62nd Combat Trackers supporting C 2/12 Cav in 1969. In front, Terry Watson with Bruce, unidentified soldier, standing is “Hojo” Johnson, background in camo is Jack Bell.

Despite legislative activity to close this loophole and the tremendous strides taken to reunite handlers with their dogs, there is still work to be done. For example, if a handler wants to check on the status of a dog they previously worked with, there may not be an easy way to find out that information. Another example: prospective adopters may need logistical and financial help to reunite with their dogs. Some nonprofits are providing this assistance without asking anything in return. Unfortunately, there have been cases of nonprofits funding a handler-dog reunion but handling the PR for that reunion in a way that causes personal or professional discomfort for the handler. This has left some handlers wary of requesting or accepting nonprofit help in covering adoption travel expenses.

In summary, taking a stand to ensure these dogs return home has been a multi-decade, incremental process—and it’s still a work-in-progress.



Lucky riding in Dick Baumer’s jeep.



Base Visit

MWDTSA visits San Diego Marines

Story by Jesca Daniels

On July 17th, I had the pleasure of being a part of the MCRD San Diego kennel visit. I am always a sucker for feeding people and seeing them smile, so my very first kennel visit as a volunteer was an absolute blast!

We were able to bring the guys donuts from Devil's Dozen as well as some Black Rifle Coffee Blends so they can remain "Fit To Fight." T-shirts, travel coffee mugs, snacks, drawstring bags, tactical patches, and KONGs were all from MWDTSA, and collapsible dog bowls donated by PetChatz were all very welcome items. The favorite item of the day was the Orbee-Tuff Baseball donated by Planet Dog. The MWDs absolutely loved this toy, as you can see in the pictures below.

While the kennel itself was small, compared to some, their obedience course was beautiful. The dogs are in great shape and the handlers are in good spirits. You

could really tell that they take a lot of pride in their roles as both Marines and handlers.

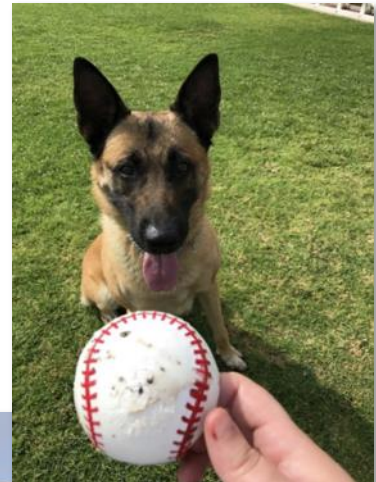
After a lively demo (my favorite part being the beautiful MWD Dixie), we sat down for a bit to devour the donuts and talk about what MWDTSA does. They all expressed how much they appreciate us as an organization. The handlers mentioned that at other bases they've been at, when a MWDTSA box arrives, they all rush to see what's inside.

It made me personally proud to be a new volunteer and see that what we do each day does truly effect and uplift the people it is our mission to help. I look forward to more visits and future events. I am so grateful to support these handlers and to be a part of such a stellar group of volunteers!



Left: Swag bags filled with MWDTSA goodies are gifted to the handlers and dogs.

Right: Thanks to Planet Dog, Orbee-Tuff Baseballs were a favorite gift of the ever-energetic military working dogs, like MWD Aace.



Above: A traditional kennel pose often places dogs and handlers on stair steps going up and kennel staff in the front.

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Above: This handsome Marine dog, Dixie, is excited to work.



Above: Sgt. Scott hugging his MWD, Jocky. Jocky really enjoys his great gifts; in particular, the Planet Dog Orbee-Tuff Baseball was a favorite.



Above: San Diego handlers and staff pose with volunteers Hailey Jane Lowe and Jesca Daniels.

It's time for a Hail Mary

We are approaching the final few weeks that we can accept donations for our 3rd quarter care packages. Football is our theme and we need you to throw us a pass! These care packages are being packed and shipped in Traverse City, MI by our awesome Board member, Allison.

Please check out our Amazon Wish List links below. Our most pressing items are the football dog toys and dog grooming wipes on the list. Your purchases are tax deductible, so make sure to leave us your mailing address in the note section during checkout so that we can send you an official thank you note for your tax records. Thank you for helping us support both ends of the leash.

Link for PC or Mac: https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/3DBNK8NXFLSLE/ref=cm_go_nav_hz



Link for Mobile Devices: https://www.amazon.com/gp/aw/l/ref=aw_wl_sr_res_1_2?lid=3DBNK8NXFLSLE&ie=UTF8

Kongs for K-9's



MWDTSA is proud to partner with The KONG Company again this year to kick off our annual KONGs For K9's donation drive. We are looking for veterinary offices/clinics, businesses, pet stores, gyms, etc. nationwide to help us collect KONG toys from August through December. Last year we collected 854 KONG toys and we want to surpass that goal in 2017.

To participate in this yearly drive and qualify for the matching toy, your business must collect a KONG toy for at least a 30-day period. (If you wish to collect for more than 30 days to increase donations, that is encouraged!) For each KONG toy donated during this drive, The KONG

Company will match it, one for one. MWDTSA will take these KONG toys on our kennel base visits throughout the year and will also include them in our upcoming care packages.

We are asking our partner stores to collect one of these two toys: KONG Extreme Ball (size M/L) or the KONG Squeezz Stick (size large). You will receive personalized marketing materials to notify your customers and clients about this donation drive.

If you are interested in obtaining more information about this event, please e-mail president@mwdtسا.org for details. We look forward to hearing from you soon!

Stores collecting in August:

Beach City Dogs, Oceanside, CA

Chuck & Don's, Longmont, CO

Dunbar Animal Hospital,
Charleston, WV

PetSmart, Superior, CO



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MWDTSA 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!

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

<http://mwdtisa.org/about/links/>

Parting Shot

Australia

An Australian Army soldier tends to his military working dog as they demonstrate working dog tactics and procedures at Rockhampton Airport, Queensland for Exercise #TalismanSaber 2017. More than 33,000 U.S. and Australian personnel are participating in the biennial military training exercise.

