



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 all over the world, from Nevada, to Texas, Missouri, and Colorado, before skipping over the pond to Germany.

Our parting shot is from Puerto Rico.

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



Senior Airman Ryne Wilson, 99th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, and MWD Habo patrol the dorms at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, August 7, 2017. Wilson and Habo perform dorm patrols to ensure the safety and security of the Airmen living there.

Building bonds with man's best friend

Story and photos by Airman 1st Class Andrew D. Sarver
99th Air Base Wing Public Affairs

NELLIS AIR FORCE BASE, Nev. --

In a small building near the outskirts of base resides one of the Air Force's most unique assets: military working dogs.

Habo, a 7-year-old narcotic detection K-9, is lying on the floor

when a familiar voice from across the room breaks the silence.

"Habo! Who's a good boy?" asks the voice.

Curious, Habo lifts his head and perks his ears. Again, the voice playfully repeats.

Building Bonds continued on page 2

Building Bonds continued from page 1

“Who’s a good boy?”

Quickly, Habo rushes to the front door and finds his handler, Senior Airman Ryne Wilson, 99th Security Forces Squadron, who is ready to begin his shift at the MWD kennel. Excited to see his best friend, Wilson spoils Habo with a hug and a little praise to start the day.

Wilson discovered his knack for training dogs before joining the Air Force. In a single night, he taught his beagle half a dozen tricks with just a box of Triscuits. Therefore, when he walked into the local Air Force recruiter’s office, Wilson knew he needed to select a career field that would offer him the opportunity to be an MWD handler. He spent his first few years in Security Forces working the front gates and then the base defense operations center before getting an opportunity to train for his dream job.

Today, Wilson exercises that passion through one of the most unique partnerships in the Air Force.

“I have the best job in the Air Force, because I get to work with dogs for a living,” said Wilson. “I’m grateful for our trainers and kennel master because they really do test me, which makes me a better handler and Habo a better MWD.”

A mutual bond between a military working dog and a handler requires rigorous training, communication and performance under pressure to maintain safety and security across Nellis.

Wilson said the bond between a handler and his dog is crucial to mission success because dogs have unique and powerful abilities to detect drugs and bombs as well as engage a fleeing suspect.



Senior Airman Ryne Wilson trains with MWD Habo during their daily exercises. Handlers and their dogs train each day to maintain their skills and readiness for any situation.



Senior Airman Ryne Wilson praises MWD Habo. Handlers are encouraged to constantly praise their dogs when they successfully complete a task, regardless of its level of difficulty.

“K-9s bring a different aspect to law enforcement,” said Wilson. “Just having the dogs around is a psychological deterrent, and people will think twice about doing something they shouldn’t.”

When newly assigned K-9s and Airmen arrive, the kennel master and dog trainers evaluate their personalities and strengths to decide which dog is best suited for each handler, said Staff Sgt. Logan FitzGerald, 99th SFS MWD trainer.

Building Bonds continued from page 2



Habo, 99th Security Forces Squadron military working dog, crawls through a tube at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, August 7, 2017. Habo is primarily trained to detect narcotics.



Senior Airman Ryne Wilson praises MWD Habo during a patrol. Praising a dog for exhibiting good behavior is an exceptional way to help build a bond between the handler and his dog.

FitzGerald said sometimes the handlers and dogs will get off to a rough start. Commands won't be heard or given properly, or personalities won't complement each other, making it difficult for the dog to obey the handler's orders.

"If a handler doesn't mix well with a dog, it's very noticeable," said FitzGerald. "They might be able to get the mission done, but they won't exceed that – and we're always trying to exceed the expectations."

For the dog, it is difficult to obey the new handler they don't fully trust; for the handler, it is difficult to creatively forge a bond to maintain the dog's obedience. It doesn't always go smoothly, and mistakes can bite back.

"I've been bitten a few times in my career, but that's just part of the job," said FitzGerald. "If you don't leave the K-9 career field with a few scars, you didn't do it right."

Sometimes building a relationship with a dog just comes down to the handler spending time with the dog and praising it as much as possible.

Wilson and Habo have been together for more than a year, and they began bonding immediately. They are often found walking patrols around base, running through the obstacle course or making their way around various areas on base. Like most dogs and their owners or handlers, Wilson and Habo are inseparable.

Their relationship is unique and suits each other well because they are constantly training to become more efficient at their jobs. They need to know that when their skills are put to the test, they can rely on each other to safely and successfully complete the task.

"It's a privilege to work with Habo," said Wilson. "I look forward to going to work every day because it's always something new, which keeps Habo and I on our toes."

Breaking News: Kennel Talk is honored

Story by Dixie Whitman

Forgive us as we bust our collective buttons!

The *Kennel Talk* team is humbled and honored to again receive an award from the German Shepherd Dog Club of America for our newsletter's excellence. The announcement came during the excitement of the 2017 German Shepherd Dog National, an event which offered a kaleidoscope of German Shepherd Dog competitions and education. This year, the National took place at Purina Farms in Grey Summit, Missouri from October 11th through the 15th.

Pulling together news, photos, donor listings, memorials, and more each month presents many challenges to our very small, but dedicated team. Extremely talented individuals have been added to the *Kennel Talk* team in the last couple of years. These key individuals produce and distribute a professional-looking, authentic newsletter. We could not be prouder.

The German Shepherd Dog Club of America serves as the Parent Club to all local German Shepherd Dog breed clubs across the United States and has one representative with the American Kennel Club. For more information on the organization, please visit: www.GSDCA.org



Posing with the red and black GSDCA rosette awarded to *Kennel Talk* are, on the left, Carmen Battaglia, currently serving as President of the German Shepherd Dog Club of America. Carmen is a long-time GSD breeder, judge and fancier along with being an esteemed dog author. On the right is Lew Bunch, GSD judge, former President of the German Shepherd Dog Club of America, and a current member on the Board of Directors.

We thank them both for their support.

Training the Humans

Story by Leigh Steere

In a small classroom, twelve service members sat in a U-shape around tables, all eyes on their instructor. Their uniforms bore insignia from multiple branches of the military, because handler training for the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, and Coast Guard is centralized at Lackland's Medina Annex. During our late July visit to Joint Base San Antonio, we stopped in to introduce MWDTSA and let the handlers-in-training know that we would be supporting them with care packages during future deployments. We also got a brief glimpse of the handler training program.

When asked for a show of hands, only a few people in the group indicated they had set out to become dog handlers. Others found out about the role after joining the military or receiving an assignment.

In handler training, service members learn everything from basic first aid and vet care for a dog to basic obedience and controlled aggression. Older, experienced MWDs patiently work with the humans as they learn to communicate with canines and “read” their behavior—this is new territory for many service members. After graduating from this training, handlers go to their ultimate duty stations.

We asked the class, “What has surprised you most during this training?” Here are a few of the responses:

- “I was amazed by how intelligent these dogs are.”



SSgt. Byerly, one of the instructors at Lackland, shows his appreciation of the MWDTSA morale patch.

- “I was surprised how many things there are to learn as a handler—way more than I expected.”
- “My dog didn’t listen until there was incentive.”
- “Emotions really do travel up and down the leash. I had heard that, but now I’ve experienced it firsthand. I need to be aware of my own attitude and emotions, because they can affect my dog’s success and our success as a team.”

Instructor MA1 Shelby Smith, U.S. Navy, said the handler training involves long hours and can be hot and tiring, but he loves it. “I get joy passing on my knowledge, knowing that when handlers apply it in the field, it will help them stay safe.”

No ordinary dog

Not just any dog can work for the U.S. Air Force. Military Working Dogs and their handlers stand the ground between a base and outside danger. They must have an incredible bond with their handler to detect explosive threats and protect against physical aggressors before threats turn into casualties. To become an MWD, a dog has to be extraordinary.

To make the team at Ramstein, Orca must demonstrate his abilities. He is trained to sniff for certain chemicals used in explosives and show Staff Sgt. Steven Barnum, 86th SFS MWD handler, where they are coming from so that 86th SFS personnel can secure the area. He must also be prepared to neutralize aggressors, including individuals running, yelling and wielding deadly weapons.

According to Tech. Sgt. Lance Oaks, 86th SFS kennel master, MWDs are the Air Force's best explosives assets.

"We look for dogs that have outstanding drives to chase rewards and the willingness to work," Oaks said. "We need a dog that has a good genetic background and a good drive to perform."

Before he ever set paw in Germany, Orca had already been extensively vetted. Barnum explained that experts tested and observed the dog for certain characteristics. As a puppy, he proved he was not too timid. He had to be independent and active, not sluggish. He had to be willing to play with humans. Medical tests proved his genetics were solid and early training ensured he knew the basics when he reached Ramstein. It takes an extraordinary dog to do the job, but it also takes an extraordinary handler to shape him. So, Barnum is perfecting that early training to prepare Orca for his test.

Story and photos by A1C Elizabeth Baker



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven Barnum, 86th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, prepares to release his assigned dog, Orca, on to a simulated aggressor during training on Ramstein Air Base, Germany, Sep. 6, 2017. Handlers train MWDs like Orca to pick up on threatening behaviors and react immediately to neutralize attackers.

Whenever Orca does something correctly, Barnum enthusiastically shouts "Good boy!" and throws him a toy, pets him, and makes sure Orca feels congratulated. Barnum explained that he tries to keep work positive and fun for the animals, and to never push them too hard. The dogs slowly build behaviors by associating correct actions with positive reactions through hundreds of repetitions. Some dogs have the drive to do the work and some, like Barnum's first dog, just don't make the cut.

"So far we're doing well, but we still have a lot of work to do," Barnum said. "Orca needs to work on obedience and patrol work, but when it comes to explosive detection he was great straight out of the box."

The 86th SFS is not just testing Orca's ability to do his job; they're testing his ability to work as a team with Barnum. If Orca passes, he and Barnum will spend 12-hour days together, defending Ramstein.

No ordinary dog continued on page 7

No ordinary dog continued from page 6



Orca attacks a simulated perpetrator during his training. MWDs must be extremely disciplined and responsive towards their handlers so that when there is danger, the dogs will react immediately and correctly to neutralize the threat.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven Barnum directs Orca to run through an obedience obstacle. Handlers and their dogs must form trust, respect and understanding so that they can work together cohesively and react quickly to neutralize threats.

That means they need to have a good dynamic and pairing the two together was no coincidence.

“They decide with the dog’s personality who would make a good handler for the dog,” Barnum said. “They thought we’d be a good team.”

Barnum said some dogs need a gentler handler, and some a more stern one. Orca needs both, matching Barnum’s ability to shift between handling styles. Barnum said Orca is fearless, rarely shies away from anything and has a strong prey drive. He is very motivated to work for the explosive detection reward-toy. Orca is also more interested in detection than patrol work, which happens to be Barnum’s interest as well.

Their bond began, as most relationships do, in Orca’s first days at Ramstein when Barnum let Orca get used to him.

“That’s when a handler starts to see if the dog likes them,” Barnum said. “We can look for small things, like if the dog brings the toy back or takes off running, or if when a handler walks into the

kennel, the dog gets excited.” Over time, Barnum said, their bond will probably strengthen.

“I think he respects me more than when I first got him,” Barnum said. “When I first got him, if he was off the leash and he got the toy, he was gone. He wasn’t coming back. We still haven’t gotten to the level where he’ll bring it back but he’s not going to run away. We’ll get there.”

Barnum said it feels great to see Orca progressing and he is confident Orca will pass his test when the time comes.

“It’s awesome to see him compete with dogs who have been doing this six or seven years and he’s already accomplishing things they are if not surpassing them,” Barnum said. “This is my project. This is my baby. If in nine months he’s horrible at detection, that’s my fault. On the other hand, if he’s great, that’s my fault, too. That’s one of the things I can stand up and say ‘I did that. I made the dog what it is.’ Everything he is his whole career will come from me because his foundation came from me.”

No ordinary dog continued on page 8

No ordinary dog continued from page 7

From his years of experience as kennel master, Oaks believes that MWDs will always be an important asset to the U.S. military.

“There are machines that pick up on different chemical compounds, but their nose is far better than any machinery,” Oaks said. “It’s very hard to stump one of the dogs.”



Above: Orca jumps on an obedience training course on Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

KONGs for K9s: Where to shop in November

Store	Location	Toy	Month
Chuck & Don’s 720-354-4940	Longmont, Colorado	KONG Extreme Ball	November
Edwards Air Force Base	California	KONG Extreme Ball & Squeeze Stick	November
PC’s Pantry 303-245-9909	Boulder, Colorado	KONG Extreme Ball	November
Pet Suites 949-425-0700	Aliso Viejo, California	KONG Extreme Ball	November & December
The Animal Keeper 760-753-9366	Encinitas, California	KONG Extreme Ball	November & December
The Animal Keeper 760-941-3221	Oceanside, California	KONG Extreme Ball	November & December
The Animal Keeper 858-748-9676	Poway, California	KONG Extreme Ball	November & December



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:

“Run, Amanda, Run” donors:

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Garden Grove, California
Tommy, AWL, and all of our Amazon
Wish List donors for sending us such
wonderful in-kind gifts. We appreciate you all.

Preserving Security Forces History

Story by Leigh Steere

Photos by Nikki Rohrig and Leigh Steere

“The invention of the aircraft and its subsequent military use required a protective force to guard the aircraft and defend the people who fly and fight. In 1921, Italian General Giulio Douhet said, ‘It is easier and more effective to destroy the enemy’s aerial power by destroying his nests and eggs on the ground than to hunt his flying birds in the air.’ Security Forces are, and have been, that protective force.”

(Source: <http://www.defendermagazine.com/sf-history/>)

In late July, six MWDTSA volunteers had the privilege of celebrating the Air Force’s 70th anniversary by visiting the Security Forces Museum, located at Lackland Air Force Base. The small building chronicles Security Forces’ involvement in conflicts and protection missions from Korea to present day.

Security Forces (SF) now has more service members than the Marines. In addition to protecting aircraft, they provide security for visiting dignitaries, large athletic events, and much more. Over the past 40 years, SF has deployed to help with security and relief in multiple areas affected by natural disasters.

Our tour guide, Ken Neal, SSgt (Ret), enlisted in 1966, attended dog school in 1967, and deployed to Thailand twice (March 1968-March 1969 and March 1973-March 1974). He trained at both Lackland and Okinawa. Talk about an in-depth, firsthand knowledge of Security Forces and the museum’s contents!

We also met Mel Grover, Colonel (Ret), who commanded the Dog Training School at Lackland from 1988-1990.

Many thanks to both Ken and Mel for their hospitality! For more information, please visit www.securityforcesmuseum.org



Above: The museum provides a trip down memory lane for veterans, and it aids newer service members in understanding the role of Security Forces from 1947 to the present. Visitors can study the evolution of uniforms, weaponry, and other equipment.



Above: Under construction: A new area, slated to open soon, devoted to the history of military working dogs.



Above: According to securityforcesmuseum.org, “This museum is the only one in the world that tells the Security Police historiography. The Museum’s Archival Repository contains historical documents, photographs, films, videos, audio tapes, magazines, newspapers and military memorabilia.”

Preserving Security continued from page 10



Above: Nemo saved his handler's life in Vietnam and continues to inspire service members today.



Above: Our tour ended at the Nemo memorial. Typically, the gate is closed, but staff allowed us inside the enclosure to view the exhibit in more detail. Front row: MWD TSA volunteers Robert Schnell (NY), Anna Steere (CO), Elaine Byrne (TX), Krista Hernandez (TX), Nikki Rohrig (WV). Back row: Colonel Mel Glover (awarded a Bronze Star with valor). Beside him is Ken Neal, then SSgt Luis Veliz and SSgt DeLarge.



Left: MWD TSA volunteers learned about Security Forces heroes and trailblazers, including many who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend freedom.



Above: MWD TSA is grateful for Security Forces, and we are excited to be able to support your missions.



Above: Troops used this deck of playing cards to study the images of High Value Targets (HVT) during the early years of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Above: This bite suit protected decoys in the late 1960's to early 1970's. That burlap neck wrap had to scratch just a bit!

Simple Living: Donate via our Amazon Wish List

MWDTSA requests your donations to fill our 4th Quarter Care Packages. These boxes will be shipping in mid-November. Please visit the following links to find our Amazon Wish List, featuring many options from which you may choose. Please include your name and address at checkout to receive acknowledgement of your donation.

If using a Mac or PC, please use the following link: https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/ref=cm_wl_search_rvp_wl?ie=UTF8&cid=A31AV9MNMZ11HZ

If using Mobile devices: https://www.amazon.com/gp/aw/lis/ref=aw_wl_sr_res_1_2?ie=UTF8&lid=3DBNK8NXFLSLE



Fifty/Fifty Stainless Steel gives us 100% bliss

MWDTSA thanks the **Fifty/Fifty Company** of Wilsonville, Oregon for its monumental gift of double-walled vacuum-sealed stainless steel bottles to keep our dog teams hydrated. These great products safeguard warm coffee for a handler during the frigid nighttime shifts in Alaska, but also maintain cool, sweet water in the heat of the Iraqi desert. Our handlers love them and you will, too!

These great products are making their way into care packages headed towards the mountains of Afghanistan and to base visits in the heat of the deserts at Creech and Nellis, among other places. We cannot contain our excitement in partnering with this amazing company. Stop by their website and check out their line of products:

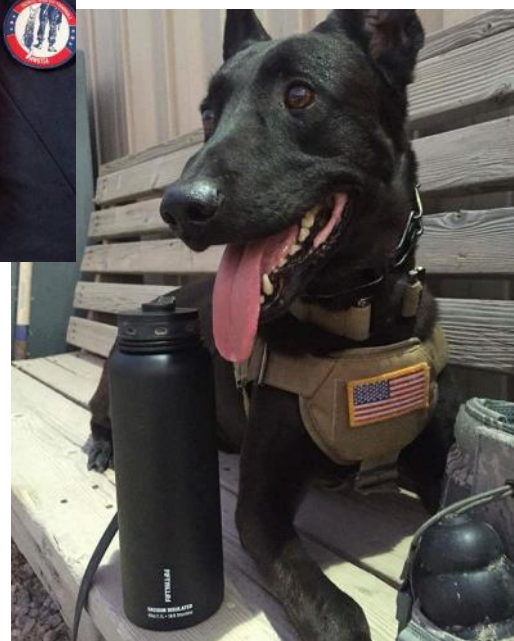
www.fiftyfiftybottles.com.

Thanks again to the team at Fifty/Fifty Bottles.



Left: One of the great vacuum-insulated bottles from Fifty/Fifty.

Below: Keeping an MWD's thirst quenched is paramount. Fifty/Fifty bottles are MWD Luigi-approved.



Veterans United Craft Brewery



Above: Sheryl and Ron Gamble, owners of Veterans United Craft Brewery in Jacksonville, Florida flank a chest filled with donated KONGs for our matching program with the KONG Company.

Our wonderful partners, Sheryl and Ron Gamble at **Veterans United Craft Brewery in Jacksonville, Florida**, continue their amazing support with our KONGs for K9s program.

“Our goal for this year's KONGs for K9s drive was to collect 100 toys, and we collected 126! Thank you so much to everyone who donated to this drive benefiting Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc. The KONG company will be matching the number of toys we collected, for a grand total of 252!” said Sheryl Gamble, co-founder and co-owner of Veterans’ United Craft Brewery (VuBrew).

MWD TSA is delighted in the results and suggests you stop by and try a Scout Dog 44 at VuBrew the next time you’re in Jacksonville, Florida. Please visit them at <http://www.vubrew.com/>.

Dog handlers rate it a 10!

We were giddy with joy when we got word that none other than THE Bo Derek generously donated her amazing Shampoo for Special Dogs to our 3rd quarter care packages— enough that each K9 could be squeaky clean. MWDs are indeed “Special Dogs” and we are delighted to match the generous giving of a Hollywood star like Bo Derek to the needs of our deployed dog teams.

Keeping dogs clean amidst the dust, dirt and sand of deployed locations can be a challenge, so we are honored to have been able to include this generous donation in our last care packages. Check out this winning shampoo for your own “Special Dog” at:

<https://www.boderepetcare.com/>



Above: MWD Reno’s bath before his first mission “outside-the-wire.”

Toss Us A Grenade!

Story by Leigh Steere

MWDTSA thanks Colorado-based True Dogs, LLC for its continuing generosity. They donated 200 of their clever Soda Pup Can Toys for our upcoming Q1-2018 care packages. And now, they've offered us a matching program to help us collect their new USA-K9 Grenade toy for our Q2-2018 boxes!



Above: True Dogs, LLC is matching the Extra Large toy. But the Grenade comes in two smaller sizes, as well. (Photo courtesy of True Dogs, LLC)

CEO Adam Baker arranged a special link on his company's web site to support MWDTSA. For every Extra Large Grenade you donate via this link, True Dogs, LLC will match by sending us a second XL grenade:

<https://sodapup.com/products/military-working-dog-donation-xl-usa-k9-grenade-treat-dispenser-chew-toy-red>

Below, Adam answers a few questions about this creative new product line.

Kennel Talk (KT): What led you to develop a line of military-themed toys?

Adam Baker (AB): As a veteran myself, I wanted to build a line of toys that would appeal to dog owners and professionals who

love working breeds like Malinois, GSD, Dutch Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers, and others.

Also, there is a larger trend toward *Made in America* products, and we wanted to create a brand that explicitly spoke to this sentiment. We hope that USA-K9 products hit the mark.

We believe that business can be a force for social good. So, the charitable focus of the USA-K9 brand is organizations that support working dogs and service members.

KT: Your toys are so clever—SodaPup and now USA K-9. What can you share about your company's creative process that has allowed you to come up with such out-of-the-box dog toy ideas?

AB: Dog owners are a diverse group of people, and yet most dog toys look alike—coming in predictable shapes like bones or resembling children's toys (stuffed animals). At True Dogs, LLC, we try to understand the diversity of consumers and then build products that will appeal to targeted segments. We work hard to create products that are unexpected.

The biggest challenge with making any consumer product is figuring out a way to build an emotional connection with the consumer. We hope that by creating toys in familiar shapes that consumers already have an affinity for, they will become curious enough to pick our product off the retail shelf and give us a try.

Toss Us a Grenade continued on page 15

Toss Us a Grenade continued from page 14

KT: Tell us about the rubber. MWD TSA's heavy chewers haven't been able to dent your Grenade toy.

AB: Dog toys are made from lots of different materials, many of which are called rubber. However, not all materials are alike. The vast majority of dog toys are made from thermoplastics which are petroleum-based products. These include synthetic rubber, TPR (Thermoplastic Rubber), TPU (thermoplastic urethane), EVA (Ethyl Vinyl Acetate).

The problem with these materials is that they may or may not be safe for your dog, and they are certainly bad for the planet because they won't biodegrade. USA-K9 products are all made from natural rubber. The raw material comes from rubber trees. It is a sustainable crop, and the material will ultimately biodegrade (although not in your lifetime). It is non-toxic and FDA compliant. It is perfectly safe to have in your dog's mouth even if he ingests bits of the material.

By reducing inexpensive fillers and maximizing the amount of pure latex, our material has superior durability and tear strength. Because our compounds are made in the USA (not China), we have much tighter control over our proprietary formulations, ensuring both quality and safety.

KT: Is there anything else you would like to share with Kennel Talk readers?

AB: The more toys you donate, the more matching toys we can send, and we are excited to be able to support MWD TSA in this way.

We also hope to introduce this product in the military exchange stores (AAFES, NEXCOM), because we think service members will enjoy these themed products as gifts for family, friends, and personal pets, too. We would love your support in bringing USA-K9 to their attention.

MWD TSA is grateful for True Dogs, LLC's support. We look forward to sharing photos of happy MWDs playing with their new toys. Please stop by this link to "toss us a grenade."

<https://sodapup.com/products/military-working-dog-donation-xl-usa-k9-grenade-treat-dispenser-chew-toy-red>



Above: Caden, whose humans volunteer with MWD TSA, gives his new Grenade a "paws up."

A TRIBUTE TO OUR OLDEST VOLUNTEER, VERNA GILMORE

Story and photos courtesy of Dixie Whitman



Over the span of fifteen years, Verna attended events, sold raffle tickets at fundraisers, donated funding, and volunteered for every duty available in order to support dog teams.

As a young lass coming of age during WWII, she worked in a factory in support of the war efforts. She never gave up that love and support of her country and the young men and women who serve in its military.

July 29, 1923—September 20, 2017. In the early days of our K9 support, you could find Verna selling tickets at a Combat Tracker Reunion, enjoying the company of heroes at the Georgia Governor's events or attending base visits. Whatever she was asked to do, she did it selflessly and with all her heart.. The words "I can't." or "I don't want to do it." were not in her vocabulary. She gave, and gave, and gave.

Mother, aunt, friend, dancer, and hugger-extraordinaire, her death leaves a hole in our lives. We appreciate the kind words and deeds given by so many people in her honor.

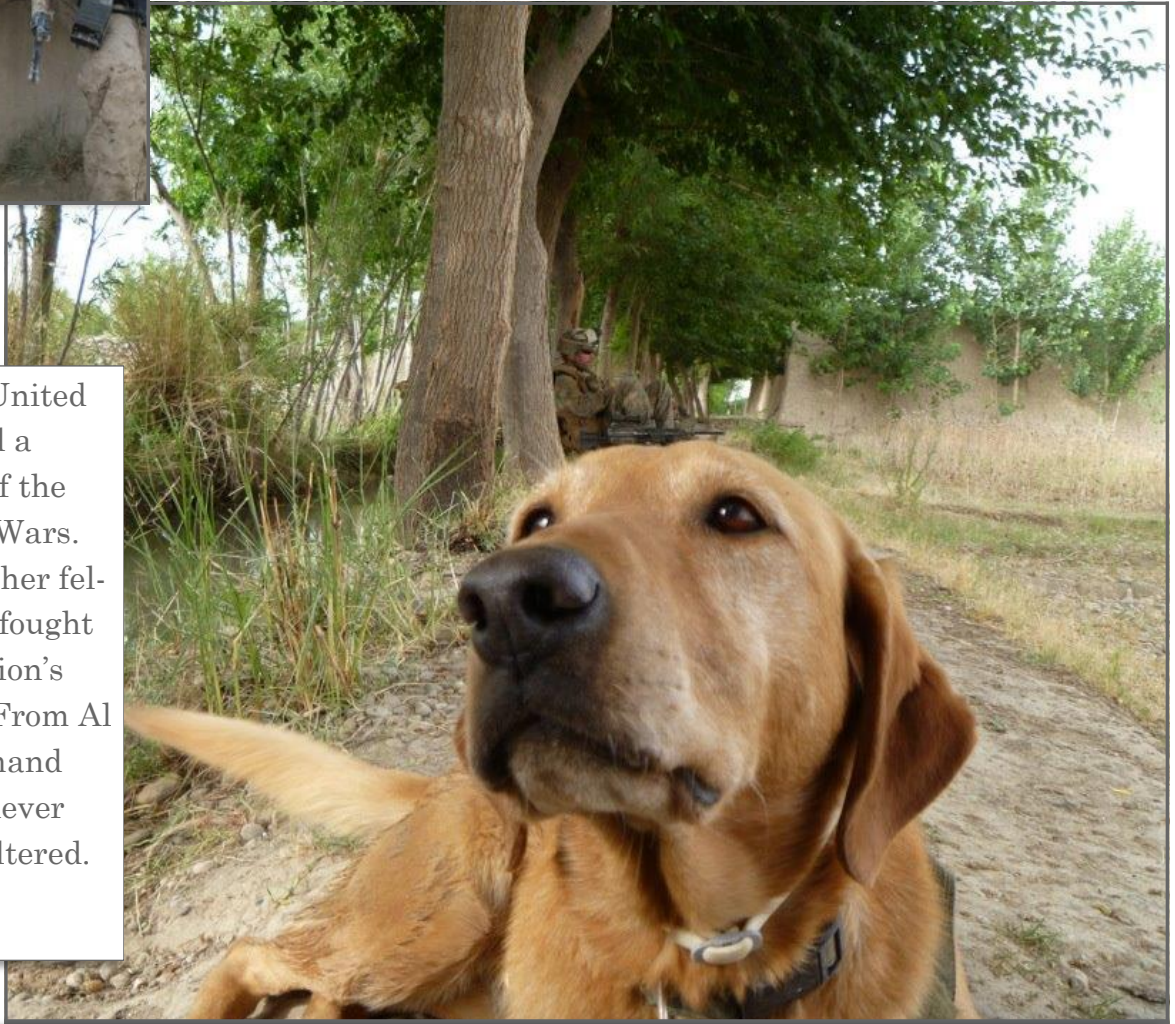
~~ Dixie Whitman, MWDTSA Co-Founder



A MEMORIAL TO LUCY, A COMBAT TRACKER DOG EXTRAORDINARE.

Story and photos courtesy of A.J. Nieto

Lucy J427 was a United States Marine and a Combat Veteran of the Afghan and Iraqi Wars. Side by side, with her fellow Marines, she fought in some of our nation's bloodiest battles. From Al Anbar to the Helmand River Valley she never complained nor faltered.



A message from her handler, AJ about her transition to his family dog during retirement: "Lucy had eyes that would melt your heart and a presence that would warm the soul. She was Shantel, Emilia, and Lily's dog. For my wife, Shantel, she was forever present from the kitchen to the shower; Lucy waited patiently. To my daughters, she became Emilia's dress up partner and Lily's partner-in-crime. Combat Tracking Dog Lucy J427, was my partner, my confidant and my very best friend. But most importantly, she was our family's dog, our family's partner, our family's confidant, and our family's very best friend.....
"Semper Fidelis. Fair Winds and Following Seas."

Sit. Stay. Support.

MWD TSA

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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!

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Parting Shot

A U.S. Marine Corps military working dog with Marine Helicopter Squadron One (HMX-1) sits on an airfield in San Juan, Puerto Rico, Sept. 30, 2017. Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 252 assisted HMX-1 by transporting equipment to Puerto Rico in preparation for President Donald J. Trump's upcoming visit. (U.S. Marine Corps photo by Lance Cpl. Cody J. Ohira)

Puerto Rico

