



Kennel Talk

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Kennel Talk is an award-winning, free, digital publication of MWDTSA. Support MWDTSA 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 Maryland, West Virginia, and Virginia, onto Japan, Germany, Southwest Asia and Vietnam, and back again to Maryland.

Our parting shot is from Southwest Asia.

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

MWDTSA Co-Sponsors K9 Competition

Story by Brad Cohick



Iron Dog Competition at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. May 16, 2017.
(U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Valentina Lopez)

President John F. Kennedy established Police Week in 1962 and designated May 15 of Police Week as Peace Officers Memorial Day. In observance of these, MWDTSA co-sponsored a regional K9 Competition held by the MWD kennels at Joint Base Andrews (JBA) in Prince George's County Maryland on May 15th and 16th, 2017.

The competition is organized and run by USAF SSgt Monica Rodriguez, a MWD handler based at JBA. When asked to describe the competition,

SSgt Rodriguez said, "The competition allows military and local law enforcement K-9 handlers to display their working dogs' skills through courses that test speed, power and teamwork."

This is the second year that this competition has been held at the base and SSgt Rodriguez has organized and overseen it both years. "I started this tradition because I wanted to give back to the families of the fallen police officers and this year we accomplished that

Competition continued on page 2

Competition continued from page 1



Above left: The prize table with trophies and MWDTSA swag. (Photo by Brad Cohick)



Above: Our banner proudly displayed at the K9 event. (Photo by Brad Cohick)

by raising \$200 dollars for the National Peace Keepers Association," said Rodriguez.

Day one of the competition consisted of patrol activities in which a tactical obedience course was designed to showcase and test a dog team's ability to accomplish field-critical tasks, as well as the K9s' obedience. The patrol scenarios were time-based and separated into four categories: handler protection; the K9s' ability to stand off a fleeing suspect; off-leash obedience; and barriers and testing the K9s' confidence by having a decoy challenge the dog to see if it would back down.

The second day consisted of narcotics and explosives detection and an Iron Dog competition. Day one, nine dog teams competed and day two had fifteen teams. Participants in this year's competition came from the Department of Defense, the Defense Intelligence Agency, the U.S. Army, the U.S. Air Force, local police departments, and Amtrak. The competition is open to all MWD and police K9 teams, regardless of location.

As co-sponsors of this event, MWDTSA provided t-shirts, water bottles, and other MWDTSA swag to all participants.

Below: A military working dog rests during the 2017 National Police Week K-9 Competition. (USAF photo by A1C Valentina Lopez)



Volunteers Brad Cohick and Ashley Gene Dunkle attended the event on behalf of MWDTSA. Other sponsors of this event included RexSpecs, Noble Pet Company, Bowser Beer and Project Paws Alive. Also in attendance was Allison Mercer, Executive Director of Dogs On Deployment. MWDTSA looks forward to sponsoring and attending next year's event!

MWDs honor Police Week 2017 worldwide



A 374th Security Forces Squadron K-9 unit takes down a handler acting as a decoy suspect during a Police Week K-9 Unit tactical obstacle course competition, May 19, 2017, at Yokota Air Base, Japan. The K-9 Unit tactical obstacle course consisted of barriers, simulated wounded, low-crawl, decoy suspect takedown and clearing a vehicle of suspects. (U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Donald Hudson)



U.S. Staff Sgt. Tyler Catey, 52nd Security Forces Squadron military working dog trainer, is taken down by a Luxembourg Police working dog during a National Police Week law enforcement display at Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, May 16, 2017. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Dawn M. Weber)



Staff Sgt. Jordan Caldwell, 341st Security Forces Squadron military working dog trainer, performs a K-9 demonstration for Air Force ROTC cadets during National Police Week, May 17, 2017, at Malmstrom Air Force Base, Montana. Security forces visited Chief Joseph Elementary School and various locations across base to provide demonstrations of K-9 capabilities. (U.S. Air Force photo/Airman 1st Class Daniel Brosam)



Senior Airman Sara Yandell, a military working dog handler with the 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, salutes the kennel display at the opening ceremony for 2017 Police Week at an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia, May 14, 2017. The empty kennel has long been a symbol of solace in the military working dog community. The kennel is empty; he is gone but not forgotten. (U.S. Air Force photo/TSgt Jonathan Hehnly)

Police Week continued from page 3



Military Working Dog Arko helps his handler, Staff Sgt. Michael Castilleja, 96th Security Forces Squadron, put the "bad guy" on the ground during a demonstration for Eglin Elementary School kids May 18 at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. The event was in celebration of National Police Week. More than 100 children watched the demonstration. (U.S. Air Force photo/Samuel King Jr.)



A 99th Security Forces Squadron K-9 handler and his dog participate in a ruck march during National Police Week on Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, May 16, 2017. The annual National Police Week was held from May 15 to 19 to honor fallen law enforcement officers and recognize those who serve today. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Kevin Tanenbaum)



TTyrant, military working dog, leaps through a vehicle window to bite Staff Sgt. Alex Romero from the 332nd Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, during a MWD demonstration, as one of the events held to celebrate National Police Week, May 18, 2017, in Southwest Asia. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Samuel O'Brien)



Szultan, 628th Security Forces Squadron military working dog, poses before a training session at Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina, May 16, 2017. Szultan took part in a K-9 training exercise during a security forces exposition for Police Week. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Christian Sullivan)

Candy Crusher Packing Party

Story and photos by Nikki Rohrig

On Armed Forces Day, our nation celebrates America's active duty military members. MWDTSA commemorated the occasion by doing what we do best—making care packages! On May 20, volunteers packed almost 200 boxes for deployed MWD teams.

These care packages were a year in the making, all because one new toy caught my eye: the JW Pets Megalast Bear, a squeaker toy shaped like a giant gummy bear. We are always on the lookout for sturdy toys for our MWDs, so I was eager to test the Megalast Bear against those strong jaws. Much to my surprise, all five of the test toys survived unscathed! So, with a gummy bear toy headlining these care packages, it seemed appropriate to theme them around candy. Furthermore, the MWD teams will be receiving the boxes in June, which is National Candy Month. Can you say "meant to be?"

Planning this round of packages was a lot of fun. We requested donations from dozens of candy companies and other dog-related businesses. I would like to thank all of the wonderful donors who contributed: D.O.G. Bakery, Duke Cannon, Ford Gum, Gaspari, Lenny & Larry's, Mammoth Pet Products, Mariani, NutriSource, PowerBar, Prima Pets, Quest, RexSpecs, Smarties, Tootsie Roll, WarHeads, Working Dog Magazine and Zuke's. And a special thanks to Doc Spartan and Oral IV, both owned by veterans who didn't hesitate to help their brethren. Our boxes were made possible by the incredible generosity of these companies, and we encourage you to support them, just as they support MWDTSA.

In addition to the donations we received, MWDTSA also purchased items for these boxes: tactical



Volunteers gathered at the West Virginia home of MWDTSA President Nikki Rohrig on Armed Forces Day to pack the 2nd Quarter boxes, which were all about candy.

patches, blender bottles, and hats. The tactical patch was created by our volunteer graphic designers, Christa Ursini and Danielle Livoti, specifically for the Candy Crusher theme. The blender bottles and hat feature our MWDTSA logo. While the candy theme was fun to plan, we made sure our boxes also included practical items, including thermometers and collapsible water bowls.

During summertime deployments, a handler must monitor his partner's temperature while out on patrol. So, MWDTSA sends thermometers in our care packages once a year to ensure that handlers always have this crucial item. This year, we purchased thermometers thanks to a grant from The Petco Foundation. Proper hydration is another vital component for keeping MWDs cool, so collapsible water bowls are another necessity. Thank you to Prima Pets for donating their silicone bowls. Every time we include these bowls in our boxes, handlers are immediately grateful for this simple, but essential item.

Candy Crusher Packing continued on page 6

Candy Crusher Packing continued from page 5

Time flies when you're securing donations, and before we knew it, pack day was upon us! Each packing event begins with hours of behind-the-scenes work before the packers even arrive. Excess packaging is removed, items are organized, and the garage is transformed into an assembly line. As always, our amazing volunteers brought their A-game. In under two hours, they packed, taped, and stacked almost 200 care packages. The postal service then picked them up to start their journey across the world.

Now comes the hard part: waiting for pictures! As an all-volunteer organization, no one at MWDTSA receives a salary. Instead, we are paid in smiles and tail wags from the MWD teams we are honored to support.

As one handler said of our care packages, "being away from home is hard, but it's little things like this that help being away. You guys are awesome!" That's all the paycheck we need.

Below: All of the goodies pulled together for the Special Operations Boxes.



Above: In keeping with the Candy theme, packing coordinator, Nikki Rohrig, served a scrumptious and eye-popping Candy Crusher Cake to her volunteers.

Below: Keeping the fun in functional, MWDTSA volunteers have a great time pulling boxes together. Approximately 200 themed care packages go out each quarter.





Donor Spotlight

Thanks to our great donors

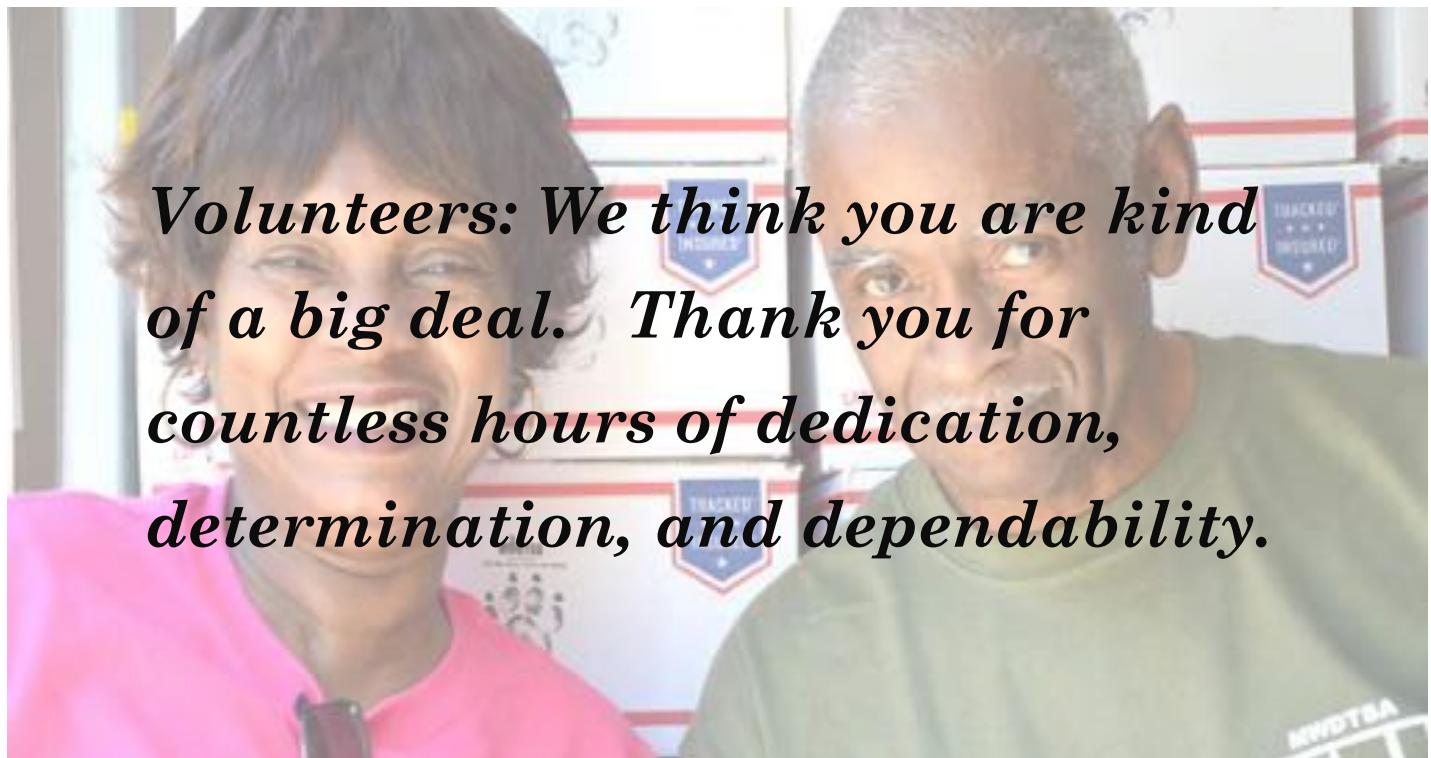
MWDTSA relies on the generosity of our donors, without whom we would be unable to complete our missions and prepare care packages. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the following companies and individuals who gave recent donations:

I. T. Aditi
Al Asad "Dogpound" Dog Handlers Al Asad, Iraq
Allergen, Inc.
Randy and Cindy Albert
Asbury Class—Bethany United Methodist Church Smyrna, Georgia
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Bluto
Stanton Bost
Jon K. Carlson
Diana Dietrich
Christopher Dukas
Mary Gilson

Elizabeth Greenberg
Frank Griffith
KLN Family Brands
Pamela Kendrick
Mr. and Mrs. John Kinahan
Glonar Lee
Rachel Matz and son
Francis Murch
Linda Ockuly
Andy and Mary Jo Paterno
Bobbie Sales
Irene Schneider
Robert Schnell
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Slater
Richard Snyder
Christa Ursini
Peter Vairo
The Wild Foundation

Perham, Minnesota

Boulder, Colorado



Candy Crusher Boxes

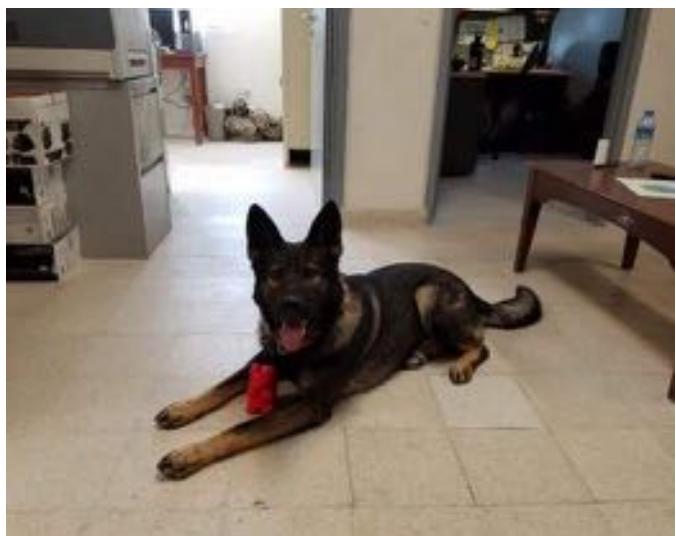
Crunchy, chewy and colorful items make their way to our teams



Photos courtesy of dog handlers

Without the generous support of these amazing companies, our care packages would not be possible: Tootsie Roll, Smarties, Ford Gum, Impact Confections, Duke Cannon, Mariani, Oral IV, PowerBar, Quest Nutrition, Doc Spartan, Lenny & Larry's, Gaspari, Mammoth Pets, Prima Pets, D.O.G. Bakery, Zuke's, NutriSource, Groom Ninja, and to wrap it all up, Nashville Wraps.

In addition to these companies, dozens of individual supporters donated items from our Amazon Wish List.

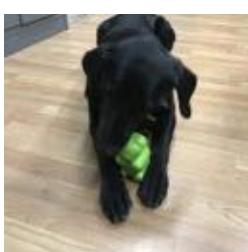
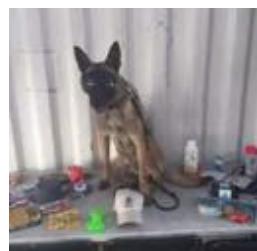


Package photos continued from page 8



This page showcases a variety of dog teams sharing photos of their care package items.

To admire some of the great photos on the left, enlarge your view to 400% and enjoy the smiles.

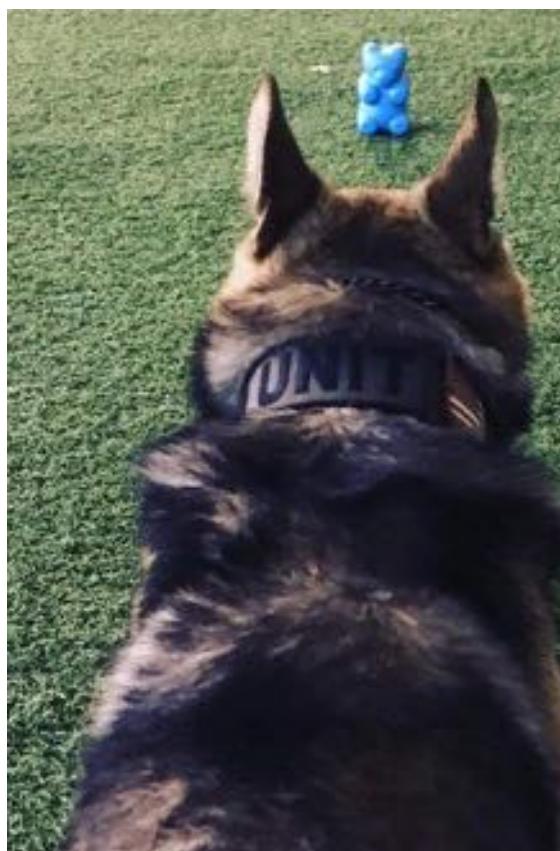
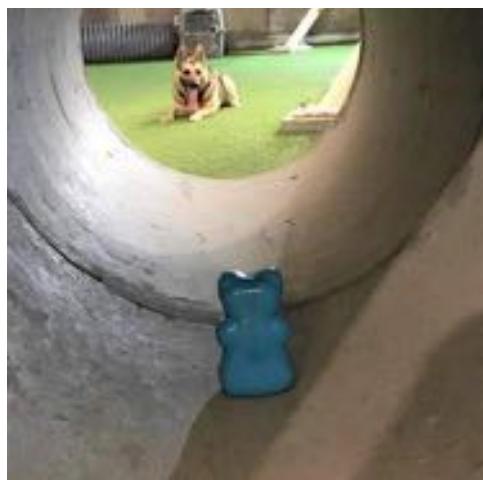


Package photos continued on page 10

Package photos continued from page 9

The dogs enjoyed their new toys and grooming supplies.

Thank you, Groom Ninja.



MWDTSA Conducts Base Visit to Quantico Marine Corps Base (MCB)

By Brad Cohick

Quantico MCB is home to two very important Military Working Dog (MWD) kennels. While the two kennels may be housed on the same base, their roles and responsibilities are different, with one kennel having responsibility for Quantico MCB MWD Operations, and the other kennel with responsibility for MWD Operations associated with the Presidential Helicopter, Marine One.



CPL Jordan Spears and MWD Rolf. (Photo by Stephanie Cohick)

On June 17th, 2017, MWDTSA volunteers Brad and Stephanie Cohick, and Alex Pugh, conducted a base visit to these kennels to show both ends of the leash, handler and K9, that they have support and appreciation from across the country for the work they do. Also attending this visit: Mr. William Childress, Program Manager for the USMC MWD Program at the Pentagon.

The visit began with an introductory tour of the kennel shared by the two groups of MWD teams, followed by a series of demonstrations. We began with a look at various tools and gear used by MWD handlers during training and real-world operations. An overview of the gear was provided and a demonstration on basic obedience was given by three different teams. It is important to note that obedience is the foundation for all of the training a MWD will undergo over the course of its service.

Next, a brief demonstration and explanation of basic detection was given by two teams and we were able to watch the dogs give an alert once a detection was made. Finally, a demonstration of the various phases of a MWD bite and pursuit was given. Several MWD Teams participated in this demonstration and we were all impressed with the professionalism and

outstanding performance of these bite and pursuit phases by warriors on both ends of the leash.

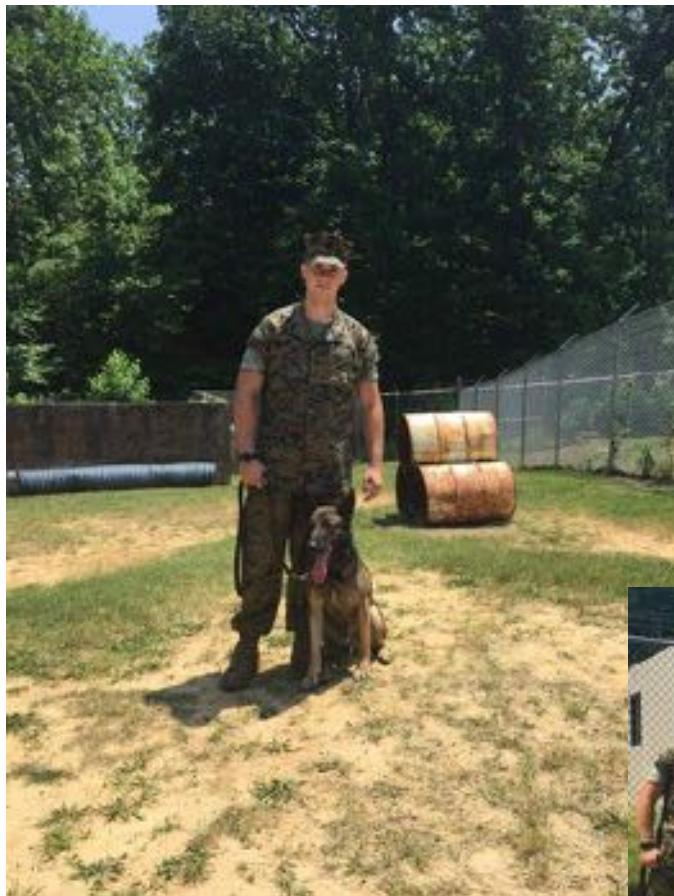
After the demonstrations were over, we escaped the afternoon sun and sat down for lunch and conversation about the MWDs. It is always a pleasure to sit down with the men and women who are wearing the uniform and serving their country, and that afternoon was no exception. Mr. Childress was able to pro-

vide some interesting insight into the USMC MWD Program, and the handlers were all very willing to share information about their dogs, where they were from, and how they came to be a handler.

Overall, it was a fantastic visit and we were honored to provide the handlers and dogs with a little bit of MWDTSA swag, including KONGS, KONG Biscuit Balls, and Chuck it Launchers and balls for each MWD as well as T-shirts, mugs, patches and other goodies for the handlers. MWDTSA also provided the kennels with a new Keurig coffee machine and coffee. We hope that they will enjoy all of these things as they go about doing their mission-critical work in support and defense of our great nation.

I would like to give special thanks to Mr. William Childress, USMC MWD Program Manager, and the following MWD Teams that hosted us today: SSGT Joseph Boucher, Kennel Master; SGT Jacob Saucedo and MWD Csoki; SGT Raegan Martin and MWD Eelogs; CPL Jordan Spears and MWD Rolf; and CPL Chase McConnell and MWD Ory.

Quantico continued from page 11



Left: Another Quantico team, CPL Chase McConnell and MWD ORY. (Photo by Stephanie Cohick)



Left: Standing from left to right:
SGT Jacob Saucedo, SSGT Joseph Boucher (Kennel Master), Mr. William Childress (USMC MWD PMO), CPL Jordan Spears, CPL Chase McConnell, and SGT Raegan Martin.
(Photo by Stephanie Cohick)

Rick Julian Air Force K9 Cop — Part 2

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

This is the second part of a three-part biographical portrait of Richard "Rick" Julian.

When we last saw Rick Julian, K9 handler extraordinaire, he was touring the country in an effort to recruit dogs for the war in Vietnam. Rick eventually returned to his instructor duties, but something had changed. After seven years at Lackland AFB in Texas, Rick craved a change of scenery. His wish was granted when an instructor slot opened up at Showa Dog Training School in Japan.

MWD training at Showa differed from stateside protocols. At Lackland, instructors paired untrained dogs with green handlers and taught them the foundation of their jobs over three months, giving the new teams time to bond. At Showa, Rick had to adapt to a faster pace necessitated by an intensifying conflict. Japanese civilians were employed to pre-train the working dogs. Seasoned handlers who lost a dog in Vietnam or Thailand were sent to Showa for new partners, with whom they were matched based on personality and work ethic. The process was so efficient that the new teams needed only two weeks to bond before heading to the front lines.

Rick recalls many happy times at Showa, but none bring a smile to his face like his two-week training at Kunsan AB in South Korea. An officer suggested that Rick attend one of the Friday night soirees. "Something special happens," he told Rick, without offering details. Kunsan is an isolated base, and even in 2017 offers little in the way of activities. So Rick jumped at the chance for some fun and hit the bar, where he witnessed something he'll never forget. In walked a hulking Army soldier with a chicken tethered to a leash. The soldier and his chicken danced for about twenty minutes, then left together as if it was totally normal.



S. SGT. JULIAN
ASST. INSTR. SUPER

Above: An official DoD identification photo taken when Rick was a Staff Sergeant working in the instructors' ranks.

Below: C-Note 2B08 was one of many dogs trained at Showa. After his training and a couple of weeks with his new handler, he headed to the conflict in Vietnam or Thailand as a Sentry Dog, walking post with a handler in an effort to keep base assets and personnel safe.



Rick Julian continued on page 14

Rick Julian continued from page 13



Left: Sgt. Rhea Davis doing a little training at the PACAF Military Dog Training Center at Showa Air Force Base, Japan. Dogs trained at this center were pre-trained by Japanese civilian trainers and then were paired up with seasoned handlers from the Southeast Asian Theatre of Operations if illness, death, or disability caused their dog to no longer be certifiable as a working dog.

The process became so streamlined that quite often it only took two weeks of training together at Showa to make a team operational.

As with all things military, it is often just a matter of time before you run into a buddy again on a later assignment. The reconnection happened at Cam Rahn Bay for the two trainers: Rick and Rhea Davis.

Following his work in Showa, Rick returned to the States as a security policeman at Ellsworth AFB. Once again, management quickly recognized their new TSgt's leadership skills and named Rick the kennel master. Ellsworth AFB is located in South Dakota, a land with only three months: July, August, and winter. So Rick had to hit the ground running with his new command before the deep freeze set in. The dark, frigid months took a toll on Rick, who was again ready for a new challenge. It came with a promotion to flight chief for security forces. Rick was now in charge of four flights of security forces, encompassing both K9 and regular security police.

Just as Rick was settling into his new supervisory role, deployment called. In October 1970, Rick said good by to Nancy and their four children, Robert, Carol, Jeff, and Laura and was shipped over 8,000 miles to Cam Rahn AFB in Vietnam. At that time, Cam Rahn Bay was one of the busiest military installations in the world, with one of the finest deep water ports in southeast Asia just a few miles south. The base served as one of three Asian hubs for incoming military personnel.

During the Vietnam War, young servicemen often had more responsibility than in today's military. The best among them were tasked with managing vast resources based on their prior experience and success. So it's no surprise that Rick was quickly identified as a dog man. As he was making the difficult adjustment from the frozen tundra to the blistering heat of the tropics, Rick was named kennel master, where he oversaw a one-hundred-run kennel for the 483rd Security Police Squadron at Cam Rahn Bay. This facility boasted the largest MWD kennel in the world. It was on this spit of land in the South China Sea that Rick faced his greatest challenges and made his fondest memories.

Check out the next issue of *KennelTalk* for Rick's Vietnam tour and the conclusion of his illustrious career.

The unbroken bond: Military working dogs defend coalition, secure base borderline

Story by Tech. Sgt. Andy Kin

One of the most crucial MWD missions in a deployed environment is explosive detection. Despite modern advances of metal detectors and blast-protected vehicles, dogs are the irreplaceable first line of defense with their expert sense of smell, while their mere presence brings a psychological deterrent to the enemy.

The real story of the contributions these four-legged Airmen make, however, is invisible: A powerful bond between canine and handler grows stronger with every interaction in order to provide safety and security for thousands of lives day in and day out.

Senior Airmen Carlton Isaacson and Omar Araujo are military working dog handlers assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, deployed to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

For the past two years, Isaacson has partnered with an 8-year-old German shepherd named Egon, while Araujo has been joined by German shepherd Syrius for more than a year.

In the unusual human and animal duos, attention to detail, care, trust and communication are the keys to mission success, Isaacson said. "Being a canine handler is an around the clock job," he said. "Off-duty time is commonly spent training,



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Carlton Isaacson, a military working dog handler assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, and his partner Egon, patrol the flight line in Southwest Asia on May 23, 2017. Isaacson and Egon have been partners for two years now and are deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Military working dogs are the first line of defense when it comes to explosive detection and provide security sweeps throughout the installation. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech Sgt. Andy M. Kin)

cleaning kennels or taking our dogs to the vet for routine appointments or emergencies."

The bond between dog and handler isn't always immediate, however. Repetition and effort close the gap between the partners, but it's the long hours and determination that solidify the emotional bond they build. Dogs get extremely attached to their handlers, so when a new handler is assigned to them, they both have to adjust old tendencies and habits from previous partners.

"Egon can be extremely stubborn at times; when we were first assigned together I had to make every move with extreme caution," Isaacson said. "One of the requirements to become a certified dog team is for a handler to be able to carry the

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Unbroken bond continued from page 15

dog and Egon wasn't having it. After many long days and different types of training, the bond between us could never be stronger and I can carry him for miles now."

Locking in that trust is a huge part of what MWD handlers have to work toward when first introduced to their dog. Hours, days, weeks, and months are spent trying to become a close-knit team.

Once built, the bond is difficult to break. When Aruajo first met Syrius, it was with his old handler and the connection between the two made for a slow transition between handlers.

"Every time she left the room, Syrius would sit and stare through the door, waiting for his best friend to come through the door again," Aruajo added. "That's what I wanted and that's what I continue to strive for every day with Syrius."

Handlers have to find ways to build relationships and trust with the dogs as they become partnered together. It's an ongoing task to maintain the bond between the two.

"What I enjoyed most were those quiet moments when all the training was done for the day and after a long walk I could just sit in Syrius's kennel for hours while he relaxed and napped," said Aruajo. "I would listen to music, read books or even watch movies until he knew I was the last person he saw at night and the first every morning."

There's no book telling you how to build this bond with your dog," he continued. "A lot of it is a feeling out process, some days we gained a lot of ground and others we went backwards, but I was confident in our partnership."



Above: U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Carlton Isaacson, a military working dog handler assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron fastens the leash on his military working dog Egon, prior to patrols.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy M. Kin)



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Omar Araujo, a military working dog handler and his partner Syrius, a military working dog assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, search vehicles prior to entering the base. Araujo and Syrius have been partners for about a year now and are deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy M. Kin)

Unbroken bond continued from page 16

Communication is important in any relationship but it's lifesaving in combat zones. Not being able to verbally communicate with their partners, dog handlers have to become cognizant of every move and reaction their canines give them to effectively work as a cohesive unit. Learning each other's temperament and personality play a huge role in the relationship between dog and handler.

"You have to be able to read your dog in any situation, knowing what kind of mood your dog is in before and after work," Araujo said. "Like people, they have bad days and if you're unable to recognize that you can be endangering his wellbeing and the team's effectiveness. The more we're together, the more I learn about Syrius, like his behavior, his breathing, heart rate and his working and resting body temperatures."

MWD handlers also go through an extensive week-long class on veterinary care for real-world incidents to help care for and minimize damage to their dog. They schedule and take their canines to veterinary check-ups and administer medicine when needed. Not only do they take care of an Air Force asset, but also their four-legged wingman. "Being a handler is challenging, but I can honestly say that I love every minute of it," Isaacson said. "This has been one of the most rewarding positions I've had in my Air Force career."

At the end of the day, I'm going to transition back into normal security forces operations, but I'm confident that our dogs will be taken care of by some of the hardest working defenders in the Air Force."



Above: Senior Airman Carlton Isaacson plays with Egon after an obstacle course training session. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ramon A. Adelan)



Above: Egon, 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog, searches a vehicle. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ramon A. Adelan)

Unbroken bond continued from page 17

Right: Egon, 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog, rests after an obstacle course training exercise May 23, 2017, at the 407th Air Expeditionary Group in Southwest Asia. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ramon A. Adelan)



Left: Syrius, a military working dog assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, jumps up and hugs his handler U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Omar Araujo in Southwest Asia. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy M. Kin)

Right: Egon, 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog, stops after being commanded during an obstacle course training exercise May 23, 2017, at the 407th Air Expeditionary Group in Southwest Asia. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Ramon A. Adelan)



In honor of Terry Strickland & his fellow handlers who served in Vietnam

Terry Strickland was a Vietnam veteran and a friend of MWDTSA, who preserved his memories of Vietnam by writing poetry. Here is one of our favorites, presented in his memory.

Purpose

By Terry Strickland

I cried today and, I know, I'll cry again,
For the loss of a friend and what could have been.
Seeing his name carved so beautifully in marble of black,
Memories of pain and despair came rushing back.

His name carried me away to another time and ugly place.
I heard his voice, I saw the agony upon his paled face.
I smelled the cordite and the blood draining his life.
I felt the anger, the fear, and futility of war's strife.
Again I held him close as the light faded from his eyes.
My heart broke anew as my mouth formed wordless
goodbyes.

Today he answered my haunting question of why him and not me;
With calm and knowing response, "It was simply meant to be."
His reflections emptying my soul of years of pain and sorrow.
For his gift to me was purpose and a better tomorrow.
That through his death my life changed and began totally anew,
The kindled respect for life and resultant happiness steadily grew.



In memory of James "Terry" Strickland

May 27, 1947–May 5, 2012

Sit. Stay. Support.

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Kennel Talk is the proud recipient of multiple
 GSDCA Special Newsletter Awards!



Parting Shot

Southwest Asia



U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Carlton Isaacson, a military working dog handler assigned to the 407th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron, and his partner Egon, patrol the flightline in Southwest Asia on May 23, 2017. Isaacson and Egon have been partners for two years now and are deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve. Military working dogs are the first line of defense when it comes to explosive detection and provide security sweeps throughout the installation. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Andy M. Kin)



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!

We invite you to join the ever-growing MWDTSA family!

To learn, volunteer, engage or subscribe, click [here](http://mwdtsa.org/about/links/) for info:

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