

Dog Talk

The official *unofficial* newsletter for FEMA dog handlers

July 2002 - Volume 5, Number 3

FROM THE EDITOR

In lieu of a "From the Editor" column, I have opted to publish this letter I received from a Search Dog instead:

WE NEED TO TALK...

My fellow canines, I just returned from a Type I test in Colorado. I realize we are limited by the abilities and understanding of our human partners, but I saw some things we need to discuss.

This business of running all over the pile after you have found the victim has gotten out of hand. Some call it "shopping the pile." I call it leaving the victim, something that is totally unacceptable. It may be okay when your human partner is merely taking a test and knows there are a certain number of possible victims and no more. But what about reality? What about the entirely different scent picture we will face then? Even those of us with "bombproof" alerts and experience with cadaver and multiple, real-life distractions may find it difficult to pinpoint that spark of life from the live victim. How will our handlers and those counting on us ever know unless we tell them plainly and repeatedly?

And speaking of distractions, I watched 18 handlers send their dogs to look for people on the limited access pile. Only one of them allowed his dog to relieve himself before starting on his mission. Many of them jumped their dogs straight from an air-conditioned vehicle to the rubble pile. How real is THAT? Nevertheless, practically all of my fellow canines left the job, Our Job, to relieve themselves and check out who had been there before. Does that sound like search drive? If it were your handler's best friend or grandson under that rubble, would you want to be caught smelling what Gus had for breakfast?

About directability, didn't your handler teach you anything but a ball diamond pattern in an open field? Surely after you passed your Basic test (and hopefully before!) you learned to take direction anywhere any time, didn't you?

And what is this issue of handler dependence? We are Search Dogs, not Toy Poodles! Why do some of you feel if you can't find a victim in the first 20 feet of a pile you must return and check on your handler? Are you afraid they're going to get in that air-conditioned car and leave? Oh, I know, I know. It can be very confusing when you go on an out-of-sight search and it takes longer than 20 seconds and you return to ask, "Duh, what was I out here for?" only to be called off the pile and praised and maybe even get a game of tug before being sent again. Talk about confusing!

It occurs to me I may be sounding a little critical. I also saw some wonderful, dedicated searching in Colorado, the kind that only us canines can do. I was inspired and encouraged by some teams. Years ago I had a sticker on my crate. It said, "Live to Search...Search to Save Lives." Maybe we should all be reminded of the importance of our mission.

Finally, I have not had a flawless record in re-certifying, but if you have taken the Type I multiple times without passing, perhaps you should do what you know in your heart is right...get your handler in a quiet place and tell him or her, "We need to talk..."

Submitted by K9 Ditto, NETF-1

Other News:

Quantum Trading Cards makes personalized color trading cards for law enforcement, fire prevention, working K-9's. The cards have a four color image on the front with detailed educational information on the back. Recently we completed a 50 card commemorative collector set, "WORLD FAMOUS K-9 HEROES, SEARCH AND RESCUE OF THE OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING." This set honors the brave efforts of the K-9's and their Handlers that responded to this tragic event. The set is endorsed by The Oklahoma City National Memorial. \$14.95 plus 3.00 s/h.

Quantum would like to extend an invitation and special pricing to the working canines and Handlers that were responded in the 9/11 terrorist attack. Our special price for 1000 cards is \$132.00 (includes s/h). Normal price for 1000 is \$156.00 plus 7.50 s/h. Cards may be ordered through our website www.quantumtradingcards.com or Quantum Trading Cards, P.O. Box 6786, Edmond, Ok. 73083. phone # 405 235-0500. e-mail may be sent to rdozier1@cox.net. New orders will be considered for the next set "9/11, SEARCH AND RESCUE OF THE WORLD TRADE CENTER AND PENTAGON".

Are you golden??

Kate Jones, California Rescue Dog Association, is doing an article for Golden Retriever magazine and is interested in hearing from people who worked Goldies at the World Trade Center or the Pentagon. She would like to know something about their breeding lines as well. If you worked a Golden at the WTC or Pentagon and are interested, you can contact Kate at: Kate.Jones@hrs.co.santa-clara.ca.us

Quips & Quotes:

If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went."

* Will Rogers

"The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue."

* Anonymous

Internet Interests:

While the dogs are licking their feet, go to:

1. List of task force contact <http://www.fema.gov/usr/usrtask.htm>
2. List of task force web sites <http://www.fema.gov/usr/tasklist.htm>
3. Click here: FLAGCARD for 9/11 info

[Return to top of page](#)

TEST INFORMATION

September 28 - 29, 2002 Beverly, MASS Type II Testing

The fee for our test will be \$75.00 which includes all meals except for Saturday night's dinner. There will be a cookout Friday night as a welcome. (Coffee, bagels, box lunch, fruit, water, etc. available)

Transportation will be provided at the site of the test.

Contact Mark Dawson for further information:

Home (203) 629-2557 Work (203) 622-8087 Pager (860) 504-0295 Cell (203) 253-4795

Fax (203) 862-8913 Email MWDRescue503@worldnet.att.net

October 18 - 20, 2002 Miami, FL Type II Testing

Contact Mike Forsythe for further information at 561.262.6724 or via email at sar911@bellsouth.net

TENTATIVE in the fall ??? Fairfax, Virginia Type II

California Test Schedule:

August 17-18, San Diego area, deadline for applications is July 8.

November 16-17, Riverside, CA area, deadline for applications is October 7.

Applications, with a \$25 testing fee attached can be sent to: Lynne Engelbert, 19327 Northampton Dr., Saratoga, CA 95070-3330. Checks should be made out to: National Disaster Search Dog Foundation or NDSDF with CSSWG Account indicated on the "memo" line.

CA and re-certifying (CA & out-of-state) teams have priority with out-of-state testing teams welcome to fill remaining slots, if available.

For information on California tests, contact: Lynne Engelbert

FAX (650) 604-7051 or (650) 604-0994

Work - (650) 604-3112

Home - (408) 257-1784

The National Certification List of FEMA Certified Disaster Canine Search Teams is provided by Lynne Engelbert. (Lynne's e-mail: lengelbert@mail.arc.nasa.gov) It is available on this web page. To view it click here.

[Return to top of page](#)

KUDOS TO.....

The National Certification List of FEMA Certified Disaster Canine Search Teams is provided by Lynne Engelbert. (Lynne's e-mail: lengelbert@mail.arc.nasa.gov) It's [available on this web site](#).

DOGTALK is pleased to announce that the following Canine Search Teams have recently gained certification (or re-certification) as FEMA US&R Type I or Type II Canine Search Specialists:

Miami, FL Results - April 2002

Type II Certified: Joe Clawson & "Abby" (MDTF-1), Kristian Catapano & "Fancy" (FLTF-1), Cathy Schiltz & "Malachi" (MOTF-1) and Marshia Hall & "Shade" (FLTF-2)

Sun Valley, CA Results - May 2002

Type I Certified: Sergio Morariu & "Tammy" (CA-OES), Brian Marshall & "Ross" (CA-OES) & Carol Herse & "Tekka" (CA-OES)

Type II Certified: Deleta Jones & "Tanny" (CA-OES)

Boulder, CO Results - May 2002

Type II Certified: Roxanne LaGreca & "Sky" (CO-TF1)

Denver, CO Results - June 2002

Type I Certified: Mary Berry & "Dusty" (NMTF-1), Steve Howard & "Odie" (COTF-1), Kim Lark and "Sage" (NMTF-1), Elena Lopez de Mesa & "Tea" (FLTF-1) and Karen VanBrunt & "Dragon" (WATF-1)

[Return to top of page](#)

UPCOMING SEMINAR:

K-9 Down - Are You Prepared?

Immediate Care of the Injured Dog for Emergency Service Personnel

July 27-28,2002 - Gainesville, FL

For information: Go to www.doce-conferences.ufl.edu/k9

[Return to top of page](#)

ROTATIONAL SCHEDULE

Are your bags packed????

"First Out" (after the 3 closest teams..) on the US&R rotational schedule are:

August - INTF-1, MDTF-1 and CATF

September - MOTF-1, FLTF-2 and CATF

October - TXTF-1, OHTF-1 and CATF

November - UTTF-1, NYTF-1 and CATF

December - AZTF-1, FLTF-1 and CATF

The Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Task Force is currently accepting applications for the position of K-9 Search Specialist. In addition to an application packet, persons wishing to be considered for these open positions MUST live within a reasonable driving distance of Harrisburg, PA and MUST participate in a K-9 Team evaluation on Saturday Sept. 8th, 2001.

The evaluation for which applicants will be tested is the FEMA TYPE II CANINE EVALUATION. The evaluation will be administered through Task Force personnel with FEMA qualified evaluators.

Application packets can be obtained through the Task Force Office at the following address:

Pennsylvania Urban Search and Rescue Task Force

c/o FEMA

PO Box 3321

Harrisburg, PA 17105-3321

Attn.: Program Manager

Or via the Internet at: mpeterson@state.pa.us

FEMA K9 SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

We are six again! Chris Selfridge (STM PATF1) has been appointed to fill the East Coast Region C slot vacated by Pat Hawn last summer. Please direct any and all controversial issues or impossible questions to Chris in the future. [See the page on this web site for a list of committee members.](#)

Seriously, we have discussed some sensitive issues in the past couple of months since the last Dog Talk. New policies have emerged as a result of these recent conference calls:

SHADOWS: Prospective evaluators must receive the scope of training needed to judge a broad spectrum of dogs, handlers and different situations. To meet this end, a shadow experience should include at least 5 testing K9 teams. Every attempt should be made to enforce this policy, allowing for the fact that due to last minute drop-outs, the shadow evaluator may find himself testing less than 5 teams. Nevertheless, the prospective evaluator must complete at least 2 shadow experiences and shadow evaluate a minimum of 10 testing teams.

AGGRESSION: After much discussion, the general consensus of the Subcommittee, with input from above (the SWG and FEMA), was to leave the aggression policy as presently stated in the CSSCP. To attempt to further clarify "aggression" or the "aggression policy" was counter-productive. Every Task Force is ultimately responsible for the teams it deploys. The TFL's need to be familiar with the guidelines as stated in the CSSCP by which to discipline and judge their canine teams at all times.

BITCHES in SEASON: Due to the investment made by the handler and/or the TF, the majority of the committee felt that the team should be allowed to test if they could be reasonably accommodated without affecting other testing teams. Obviously, this would be difficult in the Type II test. The Evaluators will have the final word. The testing handler will be expected to use good judgment, understanding that if the timing is close, he will be taking a risk.

CODE OF ETHICS: Some things should never have to be said--like "NO CHEATING!" But some recent evaluations have revealed some less than ethical behavior exhibited by some handlers. This will not be tolerated and, in the future, any ethically questionable behavior will result in the team being removed from the evaluation, at the minimum.

WAGS to the NEW EVALUATORS--Chic Gerlach (STM FLTF1) Type II Evaluator. John Dean (TXTF1) and Darren Brobowsky (CA) Type I Evaluators. We welcome them all to the Evaluator Cadre!

Teresa MacPherson

Secretary, FEMA Canine Sub-Group
6-24-02

Please forward any news, scheduled events, letters to the editor, or other info you want disseminated via DOG TALK, the underground canine newsletter to Anne Trout at amccurdy@clarian.org or via fax (317) 962-7549.

FEMA Canine Sub-Committee