



DOG TALK

The official *unofficial* newsletter for FEMA dog handlers

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The Last Type II

CATF-3 was honored to host the final Type II certification opportunity. Despite multiple deployments overloading every phase of the TF program, every applicant that wanted to attend was accommodated. The 16 teams who attended clearly demonstrated that we now have national understanding of the basic elements that are expected of a disaster dog team. The short December days forced us to spread the evaluation over two days and in the end we had these eight teams as our last Type II teams. Congratulations to them and to all the teams who have brought this program up to the quality that we now enjoy.

Pat Grant, DVM
Canine Coordinator CATF3



Howdy!



Texas Task Force One is hosting our second annual Open Training for FEMA Canine Search Specialists at Disaster City, College Station, TX on March 4th and 5th. All FEMA handlers, either certified or in training, are invited (must be a current member of a FEMA task force). You will have the opportunity to train at our custom built rubble sites (three), specialized collapsed building props, simulated passenger train wreck, agility station and directional field. We are providing the training site, support (water, crates at each station, shelter), and TX-TF1 handler assistants. You provide yourself (travel/vehicle/lodging expenses are yours), your dog, safety gear (safety toed boots, helmets,

gloves, knee pads, eye protection, long sleeves) training plan and the willingness to work with other teams from around the country. We will limit the number of visiting canine teams to 30 to ensure that all have enough training opportunities.

We will have a briefing and planning meeting at 2000 hrs on Friday night, March 3rd, at a conference room at the Marriot Courtyard Hotel. Training will start at Disaster City at 0800 on Saturday, March 4th. We will provide a boxed lunch Saturday and Sunday at the cost of \$5.50 per person per day for a total of \$11.00 (please bring your money to the meeting Friday night). There are maps on the TEEX website for directions to Disaster City <http://teexweb.tamu.edu/maps.cfm> (download the Bryan/College Station area map and the Brayton Fire Field map). We'll train until dark both Saturday and Sunday so you should plan to depart either Sunday evening or Monday morning. You can fly into Easterwood Airport in College Station from connecting flights from Houston or Dallas. Be aware that these are small commuter jets and can only accommodate a few dogs in cabin. You can also fly into George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston and drive to College Station from there (takes about 2 hrs). We have hotel rooms reserved at the Marriot Courtyard, College Station:

Marriot Courtyard Hotel Information
Phone: 979-695-8111.
Event: K-9 Open Training
Group Code: FMKC
Rate: \$69.00
Expires: Please book by Feb. 14



There are alternate hotels to stay in, if you prefer.

Please confirm your training slot by emailing Susann Brown at susann@susannbrown.com or Jim Yeager at jim.yeager@teexmail.tamu.edu. Include your dog's name and current training level, your training level if different from the dog's level (evaluator, Type I or II handler), yes or no for boxed lunches, and your Task Force affiliation. We'll divide up into groups for the weekend so if you prefer to work with certain people, let us know.

We hope to see you in Texas in March!

Susann Brown
Search Team Manager
TX-TF1

Good Job California!

I was deployed to Hurricane Katrina with CA-TF5 as one of the four Type I K-9 teams. I had trained with two of them quite a bit while I lived in California (Marc Valentine and Su Vodrazka-Anderson), but had never met the third (Steve Pendergrass). I was glad to be part of a very good team. Concerned about the dogs, the mission, our team, and our Task Force, with a selflessness that comes from people with their hearts in the right place.

I feel the mission demonstrates that the sharing of dog teams is applicable and desirable to bring the best dog teams to a life and death situation. It only requires that the host Task force has a team effort attitude and trust in the certification process. Terry Scottt was our Search Team Manager, and gets points for being involved, concerned, helpful, professional, and effective. The balance of the Search Team (Roy, Shawn, & Doug) were great also, always there for us.

While California has almost a third of the Task Forces, they only deployed certified dogs. Leaving behind a Type I handler with a new dog that was to test the next month (broke my heart Russell). They would rather deploy short a team than use a resource of unknown ability. I applaud their integrity.

Having been part of two Task Forces from different regions over the last 12 years, I have had a chance to compare the different cultures, but there are vastly more similarities than differences. We all have political, financial, ignorance, and integrity issues to deal with. There will always be those who set the high bar and those who struggle with the low bar. We can learn a great deal from working with other Task Forces about how they train and work as a team. But, this event once again demonstrates that some of the best people in the world are often right in front of you.

Thank You,
 Tony Zintsmaster
 IN-TF1 K9 Search Specialist

2006 K9 Evaluation Schedule

| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec |
|------|--|--|--|--|--|--|------|------|--|--|--|
| None | FL-TF1 Canine Eval Eval Grp 1 | CA-TF7 Canine Eval Eval Grp 2 | MA-TF1 Canine Eval Eval Grp 3 | CO-TF1 Canine Eval Eval Grp 4 | CA-TF1 Canine Prep Eval Grp 5 | WA-TF1 Canine Eval Eval Grp 6 | None | None | TX-TF1 Canine Eval Eval Grp 7 | TN-TF1 Canine Eval Eval Grp 8 | FL-TF2 Canine Prep Eval Grp 9 |
| | 18-19 Feb | 25-26 Mar | 29-30 Apr | 20-21 May | 10-11 Jun | 15-16 Jul | | | 21-22 Oct | 4-5 Nov | 9-10 Dec |

In passing...

Zeke

2001 – 11/22/05

Owned/handled by Robert Milner II and Robert Milner III, TN-TF1



Shown here at Hurricane Katrina

Barking Logan Star

by Rose DeLuca

As I read the messages of all the wonderful dogs that pass with tears in my eyes, I used to think someday I too would be doing this for my partner Logan who was getting up in age and not well. All too quickly that time has come.

Logan passed away peacefully in her sleep on December 27th. She was 11 ½ years old. She was diagnosed with a tumor in late October. Fortunately she was good up until the end and opened Christmas presents and helped at the barn Christmas day (her retirement hobby was herding chickens with that hawk like stare). Her last and final gift to us was to spare us making that difficult decision we knew we would be facing.

I think of all the things I would like to say about her and her accomplishments and our life together through good and bad times. I think how to sum up a lifetime of memories; and decided I just can't. I hope those of you who knew her will remember her intensity for life and work, and those who don't, will listen to a story about her. She was one of the old timers from back in the days of the 15 second rule and one victim find who overcame a perfect wilderness barking recall to stay and bark on the pile. Gone now to search and bark and play with many of the great partners and friends who have gone before. I'm sure she is annoying them all with her barking now. (But hey, at least she didn't bark while she was searching!) Swift journey my friend.....



*Logan & Bear WTC
9/12/01*

Logan posing for the camera 12/17/05



New Orleans Deployment

What I Learned in New Orleans

1. *Every minute given to you is a gift.*
2. *Simple gratitude is a gift powerful enough to overcome any adversity.*

Gifts for which I am grateful:

*Being alive
Being alive and vertical
Being alive and vertical and strong
Clean drinking water
Electricity
PortaPotties -- big gift
Flush toilets -- Huge Gift
People who work tirelessly without complaint
People who will risk their life for you.*

What Delta Learned in New Orleans

1. *A Chinook helicopter hovering overhead means the tent will soon disappear – crouch low in your crate and hang on!*
2. *I do not produce Astro poop or Astro pee -- the real grass is outside.*
3. *When another dog barks while everyone is sleeping, you must lay perfectly still with your eyes closed. If you can, snore softly. They kill dogs who bark while everyone's sleeping.*
4. *The back seat of a crew cab is comfortable, but you can catch big air in the back seat of a van.*
5. *I will agree to sleep on the van floor only if I get part of your MRE.*
6. *I'd rather work than sit.*
7. *Toto was right "there's no place like home."*

Bonnie Schriener and Delta (Type I advanced)
Canine Search Specialist
Colorado Task Force 1 DHS/FEMA
Urban Search and Rescue
Deployed to Hurricane Katrina 8/30-9/9/2005

A message from Search & Rescue Assist, Inc.

For those who have never heard of us, Search & Rescue Assist is a non-profit charity started in 2000 to help offset the expenses associated with training Disaster K9's. The idea came to me after years of substandard Task Force support for the K9's. Over the years our capabilities have slowly grown. I was supposed to attend the October training in Colorado but due to the hurricanes I had to cancel the trip. As Ann Wichmann mentioned we were hoping to offer some support to those who attended that training. If you incurred expenses that were not reimbursed in any way by your Task Force, please get in touch with me. This offer is open to FEMA handlers and other USAR First Responders who train to the current standard as set forth by the working committee. I can be reached via email at K9SARainc@aol.com and welcome all requests. I cannot promise to what extent we will help but we'll do our best. Stay tuned for the news of the completion of a Type I training / testing site in Baltimore, Maryland which we hope to have completed in early '06.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year!
Sam Balsam
CEO - SARA inc
K9 Specialist MD-TF1
Firefighter / Paramedic, Anne Arundel County FD
www.SearchAndRescueAssist.com

☆☆☆☆ Kudos to.....☆☆☆☆

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 II Canine Search Specialists:

☆☆ Beverly, Mass Results – November, 2005

Type I Certified: Sam Balsam & Daros (MD-TF1), Michael Berry & Pierce (MD-TF1), Mark Dawson and Elvis (MA-TF1), Roseann DeLuca & Faza (PA-TF1), Seth Peacock & Pupdog (CO-TF1), Kevin Racette & Uber (MA-TF1) and Sara Winger & Sammy (MA-TF1)

Type II Certified: Michael Blaylock & Ginger (CO-TF1), Robert Chandler & Shady (TN-TF1), Elizabeth Chaney & Harpo (VA-TF1), Roxanne Dunn & Chili (CO-TF1), Kim Lark and Boot (NM-TF1), Sue McManus & Ty (TN-TF1), Julie Noyes & Didja (CO-TF1), Roger Picard & Cinder (FL-TF2), Athena Robbins & Gator (OH-TF1) and Ellen Scheffler & Guy (CO-TF1)

San Jose, CA Results – December, 2005

Type I Certified: Rick Cox & Mocha (WA-TF1), Sharon Gattas & Aubrey (CA-TF6), Sheila McKee & Guinness (CA-TF6), Jeff Place & Zach (CA-TF4), Steve Swaney & Sherman (CA-TF8) and Sally Timms & Echo (CA-TF6)

Menlo Park, CA Results – December, 2005

Type II Certified: Monica Barger & Conto (NE-TF1), Carol Carlucci & Sonny (CA-TF6), Tom Carney & Gypsy (CA-TF3), Ricky Hutcheson & Rex (TN-TF1), Bill Monahan & Hunter (CA-TF2), Athena Robbins & Frietag (OH-TF1), Elaine Sawtell & Kachi (NE-TF1) and Gerri Schmutz & Sizzle (CA-TF4)

**Forgot your pooch at
Christmas????
Get him one of these....
<http://bigdogbeds.com/>**

Please forward any news, scheduled events, letters to the editor, or other info you want disseminated via **DOGTALK**, the underground canine newsletter to Anne McCurdy:
amccurdy@clarian.org