



# The Paw Print

The Voice of the Military Working Dog Heritage Museum  
& Handler Center



Volume 2 Issue 12

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## Special points of interest:

- Take the opportunity to listen to the riveting interview of Terry Strickland.
- A Scout Dog Grants Himself A Three-Day Pass.

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## A Year-End Message From the President



PETERSON SPACE FORCE BASE, Colo. – Staff Sgt. Konnor Torkelson, 21st Security Forces Squadron Military Working Dog Handler, plays with MWD Brick. Torkelson said he feels his job is important because he has the opportunity to witness MWD's deterrent and detection capabilities. This portrait is part of a series that highlights the many different Airmen that support the space mission. (US Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Andrew Bertain)

Happy Holidays, everyone!

On behalf of our Board, I thank our readers, donors, handlers, and devoted volunteers for a fantastic year. We could not have moved our mission forward without each of you.

Please allow me to share some of our fantastic successes this year.

We have acquired astonishing pieces of US Military K9 history, many donated to

the organization. These artifacts help tell the history of America's Military Working Dog community which we generously share with the public at events, via our website, and through our communications. We are succeeding at everything we had hoped to do by this point in our organization's young life, yet, we have so much more to accomplish in the coming year.

I urgently ask for your support and donations in several areas.

When dealing with historical pieces, time is always of the essence, as more and more history is lost to future generations when artifacts become discarded or misunderstood. Our mission demands that Military Working Dog Heritage Museum seek critical, authentic K9-related items to collect, protect, and exhibit America's MWD

## From the President's Desk



President, Albert Johnson



*And Hanukkah, too!*



history. We have scratched the surface with our current collection. Still, so much history out there remains undiscovered. If you or someone you know has any military working dog team gear, uniforms, photographs, or literature, please consider donating or bringing them to our attention.

Another critical need is donations of the monetary kind. Preserving the artifacts we maintain, attending K9 events, and tackling the goal of building a physical museum take investments in time and money.

Please consider a donation right now. Click on [this link!](https://mwdheritagemuseum.org/donate/)

[mwdheritagemuseum.org/donate/](https://mwdheritagemuseum.org/donate/)

We have had many firsts this year. We held our introductory Fort Benning event, which was an incredible experience for us. We had a massive outpouring of support from our Vietnam veterans, and the Working Dog Kennels at Ft. Benning and Ft. Rucker. Unfortunately, we did have to say goodbye to a legend in the handler community, SFC (Ret.) Jesse Mendez. Still, we did get the opportunity for a large group of veterans to show him appreciation and love at our event three weeks before he left us to meet his K9 partners at the Rainbow Bridge.

Let me share a few words about this month's Paw Print. Please check out the ad on page 9 for a few of our store items—just in time holiday giving. The handler in your life will absolutely appreciate them.

This newsletter will also give you a sneak peek at tactical combat casualty care training. This training is critical for the safety and welfare of every dog team. Without training evolutions like these, dogs like Lucca would not have survived battlefield wounds. I always took these classes seriously when I was a handler in the Marine Corps because the last thing I wanted was for my partner, Johnny, to die when it was something that I could have prevented. Most handlers polled would feel the same way.

We wish a Happy Birthday to the youngest branch of service, the United States Space Force. While they were the butt of many jokes about Star Trek and aliens early on, their dog handlers have achieved successes like handlers before them. They produce the ever-ready security teams that the US Military Working Dog Teams are known to create. The Guardians may be the smallest branch, but they are mighty in spirit.

Lastly, who doesn't like a Christmas full of hope? Check out David Adams'

look back on a Vietnam Christmas show for the ages.

This story reminds everyone that the most challenging time of year to be deployed and away from your family is the holiday season, so we want to take this time to remember everyone deployed. When I reflect on my time overseas for the holidays, I recall how we were lucky to have a great bunch of dog handlers to keep each other's spirits up. My fellow handlers on that deployment, members of the US Army engineer SSD program, were some of the finest handlers with whom I ever worked. If it weren't for them playing Christmas pranks, bantering with me, and making me feel at home on Camp Slayer, the deployments would have been much less tolerable. One thing people forget about deployments is that just because you are out there doesn't mean you have to be miserable; the camaraderie carried us just as much as our training did.

In closing, another heartfelt thank you to everyone. With your help, we will continue to do bigger and better things this next year. Won't you join us on this magnificent journey?

Happy Holidays to all, and **K9 leads the way.**

*Albert Johnson*



## Celebrating the United States Space Force

by Sherri Swanson

On December 20, 2019, the US Space Force became the Military's newest service branch 73 years after the Air Force. The United States Space Force, with 8,400 personnel, remains our smallest armed service. A bipartisan bill created it with the knowledge it would remain a small organization. So please don't count on it resembling the Air Force or the Army in size.

The Members of the Space Force are called "Guardians." The motto of Space Force is Semper Supra, or "Always Above." The government created the Space Force to address space's growing importance for military operations and everyday life.

Like the US Marine Corps, which falls under the Department of the Navy, the Space Force reports under the Department of the Air Force. Air Force Gen-

eral John W. "Jay" Raymond became the first Chief of Space Operations. The Space Force maintains the Military's competitive edge in space with the specialized technological development of next-generation space-based systems and is the world's only independent space force.

The US Space Force dates to the Cold War. General Bernard Schriever established the Western Development Division in 1945 as the first dedicated space organization. This enterprise created the first space-focused group in the US Armed Forces and still exists today as the Space Force's Space and Missile Systems Center.

Happy 3rd Birthday to the US military's youngest branch, and congratulations to all the new and incoming Guardians of the Space Force. Semper Supra!



Airman 1st Class Christopher Cimino and Staff Sgt. Ethan Marquis, 45th Security Forces Squadron military working dog handlers, train Turbo, in controlled-aggression at Patrick Space Force Base, Fla. Handlers use this training to help MWDs practice detaining suspects trying to evade Security Forces. (US Space Force Photo by Airman 1st Class Samuel Becker)



Staff Sgt. Anna Barry with MWD Cspisz and Staff Sgt. Andrew Lord with MWD Hugo, guard and secure the base perimeter at Vandenberg Space Force Base. (US Space Force photo by Airman 1st Class Rocio Romo)



US Air Force Col. Shay Warakomski, Peterson-Schriever Garrison commander, presents US Air Force Military Working Dog Rudy, 21st Security Forces Squadron MWD, with the "Very Best Boy" award at Peterson Space Force Base, Colorado, Mar. 11, 2022. Rudy honorably served six years defending our base, participating in six secret service missions. (US Space Force photo by Airman 1st Class Aliviah Williams)

## Tactical Combat Casualty Care Training Benefits ALL Warriors

by Mark Hybers

Tactical Combat Casualty Care training is not unique to the active-duty nurses and medical technicians from the 72nd Medical Group; however, what is unique is training in Canine Tactical Combat Casualty Care Training.

In early November, technicians and nurses received cTCCC training from a veterinary medical officer and a veterinary technician from the Tinker Air Force Base Veterinary Treatment Facility.

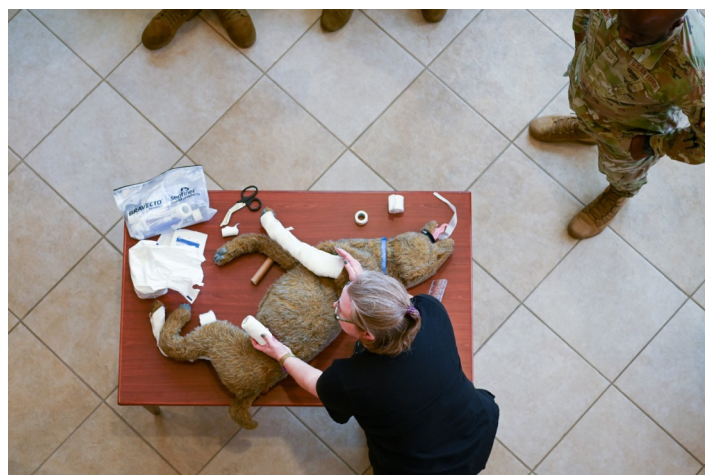
“One of our Medical Technicians’ Comprehensive Medical Readiness Program requirements is clinical management of the military working dog, said 72nd MDG Chief Nurse, Lt. Col. Andrea Whitney. “In contingency situations where veterinary staff may not be available or the MWD handler is unable to provide emergency medical care, Air Force medics and nurses receive the training to provide that care.”

The training consisted of two stations: station one was working with Critical Care Jerry on bandaging various locations and injuries and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Station two



Above: Tactical Combat Casualty Care training is not unique to the medical nurses and technicians from the 72nd Medical Group however, what is unique is training in Canine Tactical Combat Casualty Care Training. Waiting for their time to participate are dog handler, SrA Jasmin Ramirez and her partner, MWD This. This' name is pronounced Dees. (Photo by Mark Hybers, 72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs.)

was working with the Diesel Advanced Canine Medical Trainer, better known as Diesel Dog. This dog allowed the teams to train on tracheal intubation, tracheotomy, intravenous catheter placement, and needle decompression. “Those are emergency procedures that can help save a dog’s life after common combat injuries such as explosions, gunshots, and other penetrating wounds such as shrapnel,” said



Above: Training on patient “Critical Care Jerry” included bandaging and CPR. (Photo by Mark Hybers, 72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs.)



Tinker VTF, Dr. Heather Cameron, Veterinary Medical Officer.

Diesel Dog is a full-body simulator that simulates breathing (adjustable from slow to panting), bleeding, palpable pulses, and audio (barking or whimpering). Diesel Dog is engineered as a complete emergency room veterinary training manikin. It simulates trauma and features jugular and vascular access.

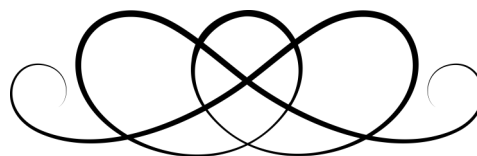
Also brought into the training was a military working dog, This (pronounced Dees) and his handler, Senior Airman Jasmin Ramirez from the 72nd Security Forces

Squadron. Specialist Baldemar Gonzalez, veterinary technician with the Tinker VTF demonstrated landmarks on This' leg and where to insert an intravenous catheter. The students did not actually insert the catheter into This' leg, but instead practiced inserting catheters on a gauze roll that was made to simulate a canine leg.

This and Ramirez were also on hand at the training to help technicians and nurses get a better understanding of what the military working dogs and their handlers do.



Above: Participants practice on another training "device" - Diesel Advanced Canine Medical Trainer "Diesel Dog." This training allows experience in doing tracheal intubation, tracheotomy, intravenous catheter placement and more. (Photo by Mark Hybers, 72nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs.)



## Terry Strickland: An Interview



James "Terry" Strickland, on left, served as an Air Force dog handler during the Vietnam War.

In 2010 8th grader Claire Steinman was given a class assignment to video interview a veteran and write an essay from that interview. Her subject was USAF K-9 handler James "Terry" Strickland, with the 388th Security Police Sq at Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base from 1969 - 1970.

We are delighted to be able to share this video with everyone.

Please follow the link below to the interview, edited by David Adams. It is housed on our You Tube channel.

Click on [Terry Strickland Interview](#).

## Camp Hale: Designated National Monument

by Dixie Whitman

The peaks and valleys within this monument forged the elite soldiers of the famed 10th Mountain Division—the Army's first and only mountain infantry division. The 10th Mountain Division helped free Europe from the grip of Nazi control in World War II.

At its height, Camp Hale sprawled across nearly 1,500 acres and contained 1,000 buildings, including 245 barracks that could house more than 15,000 soldiers, as well as parade grounds, recreation areas, gunnery ranges, a combat range, ski hills, stockade, motor pool, rail yards, and an extensive road and bridge network.

The 10th Mountain Division, the 38th Regimental Combat Team, the 99th Infantry Battalion, and others trained in mountain and winter warfare techniques, including mountain climbing, alpine and Nordic skiing, cold-weather survival, and various weapons and ordnance deployment. In the late 1950s, the Central Intelligence Agency trained various special mission teams at Camp Hale, including nearly 170 Tibetans for operations in China against the communist government. (*Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Camp Hale National Monument.*)

However, of most importance to MWD enthusiasts is the rich history that in-

cludes training military working dogs during WWII.

At that time, a military plan to invade Nazi-held Norway emerged. To supply invasion troops and extract wounded soldiers from such terrain would require sled teams. Camp Hale's geography, weather, and altitude created a winning hand at the table, and it became home to dog sled training to prepare for the invasion.

The military shipped malamutes and huskies from east coast sled dog kennels to Camp Hale. However, because those breeds had not gained tremendous popularity and remained a rarity, the military imported additional dogs from the Alaskan territory and Canada.

The new leader of the sled dog pack, Stuart Mace, proved an unlikely choice. As a botanist and a conscientious objector with no dog experience, 2nd Lt Mace had numerous challenges. His management and people skills, however, overcame obstacles. His experienced mushers from Alaska molded fast, efficient, and effective teams using redesigned dog sleds.

Because the invasion of Norway never happened, the kennels at Camp Hale closed down. The dog teams were sent to other locations, mainly Camp Rimini, Montana, to consolidate the sled dogs in one place.



Above: Sled dog teams were trained at Camp Hale. Photo courtesy the National Archives.



Above and below: The Eagle River valley is the location of Camp Hale in the White River National Forest, Colorado. Photo credits: Dixie Whitman



Above: Little remains of the original Camp Hale. These bunkers were used for target practice. Photo: Highsmith, Carol N. <https://lcn.joc.gov/2017885338>



## Santi's Influence

by Michael Hurder

About two-thirds of the way through Scout Dog Handler training on Fort Benning, we had a three-day field exercise, including my first Huey ride. Our training mission, with an infantry platoon led by an OCS (Officer Candidate School) student, familiarized our K9 partners and us with the night shift. Lady's happiness at flying in the chopper became readily apparent with her nose hanging out in the slipstream. I held onto a floor cleat for dear life. The pilot enjoyed himself, terrorizing all the first-timers he would be shutting around that day. When we finally landed at an LZ, and six newbies fell out the doors, the grin on his face said it all. About five minutes into the flight, I wished I had a camera.

Lady was an incredibly smart K9 and had a great way with people. She and the Cadre at Fort Benning taught me everything I needed to know to pass the course. Still, I needed an extra boost from my brother Santi to get through night training. I was failing the exercise miserably. As usual, Santi took on the role of my teammate for this exer-

cise. Our partners, Rebel and Lady, got along great, a rarity for that big black beastie of his, so we were paired up frequently.

This exercise started with an OCS trainee learning the ropes at Fort Benning. Starting the evolution with my very first helicopter ride was exciting. I didn't want to get off when they dropped us into a "hot LZ." After digging in and setting our perimeter, they called for the K9 teams to perform a sweep with a newbie LT leading. Those first patrols came off with the expected fubars and redos while everyone, including the K9 units, learned the ropes of patrolling. Mostly they were prepping the new officers to work with K9 teams. By that time, it was evident how much impact the MWD teams had in Nam saving lives. Those were great training exercises, and I learned a lot.

The real test for me came during the night training evolution. The conditions sucked. Little did I know how close to the real thing the rain in Georgia was to what we would run into a few months down the road in a faraway miasma known as the



"Nam." The Cadre was always happy to remind us of how "good" we had it here.

Always trying to get past my angst, Santi once again prodded me along. "We'll walk through it together, Shorty. No sweat, huh? Patrolling is what we were made for, man. I did it. You can do it. Let's go before the rain gets any worse. I can hear Rebel starting to bitch back at the trucks, man."

It was almost too noisy from the downpour to even hear Santi, let alone see what I was doing, but we kept our heads to-

gether and whispered because we knew the Cadre were spread out in the woods to catch noisy teams and fail them on the spot for this evolution. Of course, that meant a do-over, and the more times you had to do it, the harder they made the next run to pass. The next thing you knew, it was dawn, and you'd been at it for over 8 hours, and you still hadn't caught the sapper.

"I guess," I sulked. "Still, they could have picked a better night, you know. One with a moon or something? This crap is

worse than dark. I can't even see her ears, man. How am I gonna call her alerts if I can't even see her? And it's November. I'm freezing!"

This exercise set up a critical stage in our training—man-hunting. The scenario: your partner alerts on personnel, usually a scent alert, hopefully, or you failed before you got started. You then prosecute the sign to terminate successfully or capture the threat. Leading up to this night, the Cadre set the trails up intentionally, working with Mother Nature; good weather, a stiff breeze blowing in the team's face, and simple terrain to cover. Once you got through that, they got serious. The truth is, in real-life scenarios, the enemy isn't stupid and isn't going to put himself in a position that would make it easy for us to find him. They understand the conceptual differences of being either the hunter or the hunted and how such factors as rain and wind direction can affect both sides of that relationship.

Anyway, we were now well past the easy training. This evolution emu-

lated the real thing. This night, I was on my third pass. Lady and I have died both previous times, thanks to my inability to pick up on her alerts at night. This failure, perhaps the first indication that I had a night vision problem, foretold of other vision issues.

Santi and his Partner Rebel made it through in one pass. We had worked the scenario to the point where we knew we should be getting hits, yet I hadn't picked up on anything out of the ordinary from my partner.

"Hahaha. Shorty, you're a trip man." Santi whispered. "What, you want to paint orange stripes on Lady's ears? Come on, man. Tighten up on the leash a bit. When she finds something, you'll feel it. No slack. Feel her doing her job and then do yours. Better to guess and be wrong than miss entirely and die again. Come on now. I'm cold, I'm wet, and I need to hit the head in the worst way. Let's get this over with. Roger"

"Roger that!" I replied with something less than hardy enthusiasm.

Santi played Shotgun/RTO (Radio Tele-

phone Operator) for me. When I gave him the go, Santi radioed, "Team two to Tower, we are Oscar Mike, over."

"Team two, Tower copies. Acknowledge you are on your third, I repeat, third run, over."

"Jerks!" I said.

"Shut up, Shorty" "Team two, Tower. Roger that. The third time's a charm. Team two, Out."

Then Santi repeated, "Jerks. Let's show them what you're made of, man. Come on."

I made it through on the next pass using Santi's simple suggestion to maintain a better "connection" with my partner no matter the environment. Unfortunately, this time they had thrown me a curve, too. They placed the "enemy" so that Lady wouldn't find him until we were past him on the trail because the wind was coming up from behind us at 5 o'clock.

As soon as Lady "found" him, she oddly turned into the scent cone, which nearly turned her around to face me; it was almost effortless as I felt the slack come out of the

leash and then felt it coming back towards me. It was as if she was getting tired of this stuff, too, and she went the extra mile to turn into the alert for me. This entire night was a lesson learned that served me well over the next several months because all of my patrolling took place at night. That wasn't the only time Santi's guidance brought me through. He was there for me again and again.

A few months later, in Nam, Santi and I had a row resulting in me proudly turning my back on him. Two weeks later, unconscious, I left Nam on a medivac flight. I never got to say goodbye to anyone, let alone Prince or my brother, Santi.

A month later, Santi aspired in his bunk. I don't know how to pay him back for all he did. I put my dime down when I visited his grave in Santa Rosa. It isn't enough.





## Scout Dog Takes Three-Day Leave

*Military Working Dog Heritage Museum is now the caretaker of the 47th IPSD's website. For years this website, faithfully and thoughtfully updated by Jonathan Wahl, has shared the history of the Army's 47th Infantry Platoon Scout Dogs and Handlers.*

*We are delighted to include a photo of one of their dogs and his unusual story. This is a reprint from a military publication dated June 11, 1969.*

Camp Eagle, Vietnam

A German Shepherd from the 47th Scout Dog Platoon reappeared near Fire Base Bastogne after being lost in the jungle for three days.

"Sarge and I were working with Alpha Co, 1st Bn, 502d Inf. Near Fire Base Veghel," recalled his handler Sp4 Ronnie McCrary. "We were on a small hill when he alerted to something in the stream at the bottom of the

slope. I didn't have a leash on him, and he took off down the stream."

When McCrary reached the bottom of the hill, Sarge was gone.

"I called and called," the Huntsville, Ala. Native recalled, "but he didn't come back. It was like he'd vanished."

There was nothing the disheartened McCrary could do.

"I just stayed with A Co. and came back into Fire Base Birmingham with them two days later. From there, I went back to (LZ) Sally. We figured Sarge was gone for good." McCrary said.

"I was sent back out the next day. I didn't have a dog, so they had me walk slack for a new handler. I was gone close to a week,



From the 47th IPSD Archives

**Left: Sarge X052, one of the Scout Dogs from the 47th IPSD gave himself a three-day pass.**

**Photo: Courtesy the 47th IPSD website.**

and boy, was I surprised when I came back," he said.

"Sarge was waiting for me."

"It turned out that the morning I went back to the field, Sarge turned up outside the gate at Bastogne, barking his head off. They let him in and then sent him to the 58th Scout Dog Platoon at

Camp Evans," explained McCrary. "They knew we had a dog missing, so they called us."

"I played with him when I got back, and there was a whole lot of kidding around," he said. "The guys looked at a map and decided that Sarge was on his way back to Sally but hit Bastogne first."

**Check Out Our T-shirts, Challenge Coins, and other Holiday Gifts Found At:**  
[www.mwdheritagemuseum.org](http://www.mwdheritagemuseum.org) **Order early to receive for the holidays.**





## Space Force Dogs and Handlers

Photos by DoD Photographers





## Christmas Hope

by David Adams

Christmas 1969 would become memorable for me. Not because of great family memories around a hearth decorated with stockings hung with care, but the opposite. Halfway around the world and assigned to the 388th Security Police Squadron's K9 Section at Korat Royal Thai Air Force Base, I lay in a US Army Hospital bed at adjoining Camp Friendship.

A cyst on my tailbone, which first reared itself while in Security Police school, had flared up for the third time. This literal pain in the butt interfered with walking and safely handling my sentry dog, Rex 7A98. The military would not have been an option if the enlistment physician had discovered this condition during my physical. The Army doctors felt it was time for a longer-term solution, surgical removal.

So, I recuperated without family and could not spend the holiday with my fellow handlers. I did, however, share a room with two Army enlistees. One, like me, was somewhat ambulatory. The other had borrowed a local Thai's 90cc motorcycle and managed to wrap it around a telephone

pole. He had one leg in traction with steel pins and clamps that resembled medieval torture devices holding it together and suspended from an overhead frame.

However, there was an upside. Usually, all Security Police and Army MPs pulled full alert duty when Bob Hope came for his Christmas tour. Our hospital sat squarely opposite the soccer field that served as his venue. Being in good enough physical shape to walk across the road, I sat in the front rows on the right side of the stage reserved for patients.

On the evening of the show, we were not about to leave our disabled roommate alone. Fortunately, the ward's head nurse, a Major, was off duty. We were all sure that Ken Kesey must have based his character Nurse Ratched in his novel *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* on that Major. So, with the help of a kindly orderly, we wheeled our buddy's bed out of the hospital and bumped him across the street. We could lift the bed over the curb but couldn't carry it across the grass. Pushing him over the uneven ground



Entertainer Bob Hope and songstress/actress Connie Stevens performed together to entertain troops at many bases over the years. Our board member, David Adams, enjoyed Hope's Christmas show in Thailand in 1969.

Photo: Courtesy of the National Archives. This photo by: PH2 Jeff Elliott.

caused his leg to swing like a trapeze artist until we got him situated one row back from the stage. He couldn't handle a small motorcycle, but he did the Army proud. We never heard a peep while wheeling him over the lumpy ground.

The incredible show made us forget about where we were. It included many of the usual cast; Les Brown and his Band of Renown and the Goldiggers. The headliners that year were Ursula Andress, Johnny Bench, and Teresa Graves from *Laugh-In*. The real treat was Neil Armstrong, who became the first man to step foot on the moon just six months earlier. He was touring to encourage

everyone to use the GI bill to get an education, and he took questions.

The show's closing number was Connie Stevens singing "Silent Night," to which we all joined our voices. Halfway through the song, a six-sortie flight of F4 Phantoms took off two at a time. Their screaming roar nearly drowned out the singing, and as they climbed up for their mission, the red flames from their afterburners signaled that the night wouldn't be quite so silent somewhere on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. Watching the flight crews disappear into the night, I hoped they all made it back to share future holidays with their families.



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From the Team at MWDHM...

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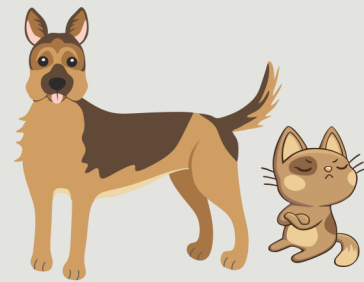
Share your copy of  
our newsletter.

## Important dates with Trooper and Scout

**March 12, 2023 K9 Veterans Day Ceremony**  
**American Legion Post #166, 201 S. Water Street East,  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538 1:30-3:00 PM**

**March 13, 2023— Dedication of the Coast Guard K9  
Memorial— Coast Guard Base Alameda. California. Open  
to the public. For more information, click [here](#)**

**July 17, 2023 – 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dedication of the War  
Dog Memorial at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville.**



## Historic Pooch Pic of the Month



**Left: Two members of the 38th ISDP at Camp Carson: Pvt Wallace Huelster giving an injection to a scout dog, assisted by Pvt. Gammon. The 38th ISDP received a Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation for service from 26 October 53 to 15 January 54.**

**Thanks to Sandra Fickbohm for sharing this image.**

**Credit: US Army photo by Corporal Schoncite.**

"The appearance of US Department of Defense (DoD) visual information does not imply or constitute DoD endorsement."