



PawPrint

Newsletter of the New Zealand USAR Search Dog Association



Vol #18 May 2008

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- Upcoming events
- May CREP report
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May Basic CREP Report

A Basic CREP was held in Christchurch, 10-11 May 2008. Assessors for this evaluation were:

Paul George (NZ Police)

Head Assessor

Linda Pike

Civilian Assessor

Jenny Waters (Vet) Element 5 Assessor

The following teams were assessed and certified:

Brenda Woolley and Keepa

Linda Pike and Easy

Graham Joseph and Tala

Congratulations to the handlers and dogs on their success.

2008 Event Calendar

July 24/25:

National Training Weekend and AGM, Christchurch

October 18/19:

CREP, Christchurch

Nominations for 08/09

Management Committee: Due to Melody Callahan by 28 June, including supporting signatures. If you are unsure if someone is eligible, please email Melody for confirmation.

President's Word

By now all of you have been briefed on the new direction that the SDA will be taking in the form of the National Training Programme to ensure we reach our prime objective of producing quality dogs and handlers for USAR events.

Most of your dogs will have undergone the canine screening process and I'm sure will come out the other side none for the worst. At this early stage aspects of the NTP may seem daunting, however please be reassured that overall this is the best outcome for the continued progress of USAR dogs and the SDA.

A number of activities have occurred around the country over the last few months.

- In March I attended the NZ Service Dog Forum in Auckland as the SDA representative. This was a good opportunity to network with other service dog organizations such as Police, MAF, Customs, Guide Dogs to name a few. One of the more interesting issues raised was that all of the service dog groups find it difficult to access dogs that have the right attributes and traits for that particular organizations requirements. It's good to know that USAR dogs are not alone in that respect.
- The central region held a very successful training weekend according to all reports.
- Brenda Woolley and Janelle Mackie presented a well-received session on use of USAR Dogs (complete with live demo) for the Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council (AFFAC) conference held in Christchurch earlier in the year.
- May CREP results. Congratulations to those who either passed Basic Certification or Recertified Basic.

I want to single out Graham Joseph and his dog Tala for the fantastic result in recertification as a team. Considering not even a year has passed since Graham's 'tipping off' his motorbike it's true testament to his determination to get the job done. There is the obvious bond between handler and dog, but as I know Graham would agree, the coming together of the Christchurch group as a team in the true sense of the word ensured a successful outcome for both Graham and Tala. Well done.

For those that don't already know Sue Chesterfield made the hard decision to retire Nugget from operational 'duty'. Sue and Nugget were operational for a total of 5 years attached to Task Force 1; as well operational air scenting for Land SAR for a number of years. Thanks to you both for all your input over the years and enjoy your swims and relaxing in the sun Nugget.

I hope to see as many of you as possible in July in Christchurch for our AGM and a hard few days of dog training, loads of fun and hopefully some well earned liquid refreshments.

Brendon Irwin

Search: online and people

A story in late 2007 examined how this connection is growing. Google, a search engine best known for finding information online, but sometimes the Internet search leader also works behind the scenes to look for missing people like renowned aviator Steve Fossett.

The Mountain View, California-based company has emerged as a potentially useful resource for search-and-rescue teams because of its connections to the dozens of contractors that provide satellite imagery for its popular Google Earth software.





Training workshop highlights new canine capabilities

Reprinted here with permission from the 24seven magazine of FESA in Western Australia.

Australia has adopted the New Zealand model for Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) canine competency and NZ chief Canine Evaluator Brenda Woolley recently visited Western Australia to facilitate a specialised training workshop.

Held in Margaret River and also at FESA's Forrestfield Training Centre, the nine-day course involved Brenda critiquing work performed by the eight participating dog and handler teams. She also provided expert practical advice on the program which focuses on training canines to locate humans trapped in the rubble of collapsed buildings.

Canine Liaison Officer Peter Sutton, who organised the workshop, said having the flexibility of a course conducted over nine days gave people with work commitments the option of attending at a time that suited them.

"The extended workshop duration allowed Brenda the opportunity to work individually with the dogs and handlers at various times," he said.

"We were given an overview of what's involved in the USAR canine program, then an assessment of the suitability and training progress of the dogs this involved an evaluation of their individual

skills in rescue work, demonstrated obedience, agility, barking alert, direction and navigation on rubble piles.

"Towards the end of the course a night workshop was undertaken, which proved interesting. It exposed the dogs to a set of conditions where they were overwhelmingly reliant on scent, and gave the handlers a different range of circumstances to master. We have since added night work to our training program.

A highlight of Brenda's visit was the accreditation of local USAR Labradoodle/Retriever 'Reg' and handler Lynne Finch, for achieving the advanced national standard for 'Operational Disaster Dog'.

Peter said canines awarded this credential distinguish themselves by their ability to concentrate on rescue work, despite a myriad of distractions such as food, noise, movement, crowds, flashing lights, smoke and other scents.

"This milestone has never before been achieved in Australia and was entirely due to the work of a dedicated and committed team," he said.

"Thanks to Lynn and Reg and those supporting them, we now have a canine team capable of locating trapped conscious or unconscious victims in any USAR disaster situation.

"This will do wonders for the overall development of a canine capability, not

only in Western Australia, but the whole nation."

Peter added that feedback from Brenda had been positive.

"It's pleasing that Brenda believes the teams are definitely moving along the correct path. Continued work with the dogs at different levels will cement fundamental skills needed to reach the assessable level," he said.

"Brenda was impressed with the support given to the WA USAR Canine Team and in particular assistance received from State Emergency Service units in Margaret River and Rockingham. She hopes to return again in 2009 to further evaluate the USAR canine capability in this state."

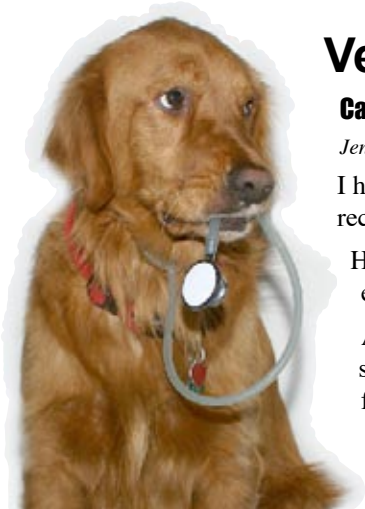
USAR Taskforce Leader Rik Lieftink reinforced Peter's comments and praised his dedication to the program.

"Peter has done a great job facilitating team training throughout the year, as well as coordinating arrangements for the NZ visitors and organised venues and assessment," Rik Said.

"I would also like to highlight the dedication and consistency of Mike Rooke, the team's original USAR canine handler. He continues to support and provide an invaluable service to the Taskforce, in addition to being a wonderful mentor for all the dog handlers. Mike is also busy training his new dog to be part of the team."

This year's National Training Weekend is just around the corner. A few images from the 2007 weekend....





Vet Voice...

Canine First Aid Kit

Jenny Waters

I have been asked by some of the SDA members to recommend a basic personal canine First Aid kit.

Here are my ideas (based on basic principles and not expecting any “advanced” skills).

As a general rule, if there is a wound that may require suturing, please do not put any “stuff” into it, just flush with saline and bandage. Creams, powders etc can delay healing.

- Scissors – curved blunt-nosed are best
- Tweezers – for foreign bodies and bee stings
- Dressings – non-adherent eg paraffin gauze, Telfa pads etc
- Gauze swabs – for cleaning and for bandaging
- Gauze bandage – for holding dressings in place (also for a quick improvised muzzle if necessary)
- Conforming bandage – eg Vetrap, Coflex etc
- Elastoplast- type bandage (sticky)
- Cottonwool – for padded bandages; better to use swabs to clean wounds as there is less risk of leaving bits behind
- Saline – the plastic ampoules – for flushing wounds (and eyes and noses...)
- Superglue – for minor pad lacerations
- Antiseptic solution – dilute iodine, chlorhexidine or Savlon, although copious flushing with saline is probably as good. (Some are available in handy ampoules. DO NOT put into ears)
- Antiseptic creams – for minor wounds only (that don't require stitching)
- Rectal thermometer
- Disposable gloves



Websites that might be of interest:

On-line forum where you can chat to other handlers. You can talk about training, equipment or take up the invitation to visit Western Australia.

<http://forum.k9-sar.com/index.php>

Amazing new facility planned in Santa Paula California for disaster dogs.

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m4PRN/is_2008_May_19/ai_n25435143

Taking the Dogs to the Office

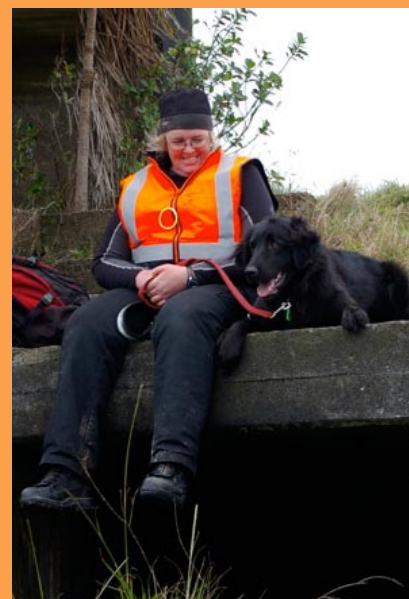
notes from Jim Stuart-Black

A half day of the USAR meeting consisted of a visit to see the USAR Search Dogs Janelle Mackie and Brenda Woolley, from the Christchurch team, provided a brief overview on the USAR Search Dog Association which was formed in 2003 to progress the development of a strong USAR search dog capability for New Zealand.

Members were then taken to the training ground where several dogs demonstrated their skills through makeshift destruction sites. Members were able to participate in directing the dogs to undertake searches.

The dogs ranged in advanced and basic training and evaluations are undertaken by Civilian Assessors and New Zealand Police Dog Section evaluators.

These dogs range in breed and many of the existing USAR dogs have come from dog shelters. It is estimated that only about 10% of dogs have the attributes required to become a successful USAR dog. It is also important that handlers be able to undertake basic training to ensure that they are both safe and useful in an unstable USAR environment. In New Zealand USAR Search Dog handlers are all volunteers.



Janelle and Cairo take a break from some tunnel work.

