

IN THIS EDITION:

- **From the President**
- **Operational Assessments May 2013**
- **Operational Teams**
- **72 Hour Exercise**
- **Vets Corner**
- **Meet the new Recruits**
- **What's coming Up**

From The President . . .

Its almost that time of year again with the AGM set for the end of August. Rochelle will be emailing out further information about the AGM and elections shortly.

Brenda, Janelle and I recently took part in the 72 hour exercise held in Palmerston North along with Lois and Anne and with Malcolm and Donna also completing the support course. I think we were all expecting snow, wind, rain and hail but for once Palmerston North decide to put on warm sunny days.

At the last committee meeting it was agreed that a review of the Strategic plan would take place, with the goal of having it ready for the AGM. It was discussed that Christchurch would become the "Training Centre" for USAR dogs in New Zealand and the number and style of training weekends would change, the exact look of this certainly hasn't been confirmed and I will be looking for comment from you all over the coming few weeks.

Finally I was contacted by Monique Masoe from Aviation Security inviting a couple of handlers to attend their "How Dogs Work" workshop. Janelle and I attended this two day course which was held at Christchurch Airport. The content was certainly very useful and some of the techniques used I will defiantly be using in training my own dogs. Janelle and I are going to put together a presentation for the Christchurch team for the start of September with the view of doing the same thing for the North Island teams.

Tim Drennan
NZ USAR Search Dog Association
President



OPERATIONAL ASSESSMENTS – MAY 2013

Operational assessments were held on the weekend of the 11-12th May in Christchurch.

The Advanced assessments were held on 3 sites: The first pile was a limited search with 3 subjects held at the Fulton- Hogan site on Pound road. The second pile was at Isaacs on McLean's Island road and this one was Full Access with 1 subject, and the third pile took place at the Smith Cranes site on Johns Road and this was the High Point and Perimeter search that had 2 subjects to find. The operational assessment was held on the Sunday on a different pile at the Fulton Hogan site. This pile had 3 subjects on which the dogs were to find.

The Southern Task Force had made a couple of large sturdy boxes to use as hides, in which the subject/s (even though lying down), had lots of room and with enough mats and blankets, they were comfortable to be in. These boxes had air holes cut out in the sides and were very well buried in the rubble and wood of the High point/Perimeter pile. These boxes are also able to be used as bark boxes and many thanks to the TF guys who made these for us.

A special thanks to Tony West and Ralph Moore who came out on the Friday to help us build the four structurally sound new hides for the large concrete piles at Fulton Hogan. It is important to make the subjects safe, secure and comfortable as on assessment days they can be in these hides for up to a couple of hours. The distractions used this year were "hot" clothes/ a roast dinner/ loud music/ and on the last pile a hazardous area.



Janelle with Cairo



It was great to have Paul George back this year after he accepted the position of a Civilian Assessor. Paul had been our Police Assessor since USAR operational assessments first began, but eighteen months ago had retired from the Police Force to start a new business. Colin Howard is now our Police assessor and as such, takes on the role as Chief Evaluator, and we are hoping to have him support us for many years to come.

The assessment weekends involve most of SDA, particularly the team hosting them and much time is spent many weeks before-hand on the planning stages: notifications, flight/vehicles/accommodation: subjects sourcing, site/pile preparation, safety overview, gift buying etc, and then on the day when it all comes together there is the forward parties/backward parties, lunch and refreshment organisers, safety officers, camera/video workers.

Everyone has a main job to do to make the assessments go as smoothly as possible, especially in relation to the teams going for the assessment and the subjects that make themselves available to be very well hidden under rubble for the search dogs to find.

Thanks to everyone that was involved (and let's do it all again in October!).



Brenda with Keepa, Paul George and Colin Howard



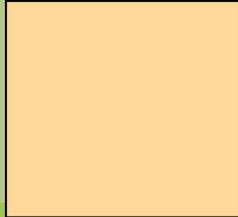
"On to it"



The Civilian Assessor (Linda) accessing

Meet 4 New Southern Recruits

Jason Notman



I am a handler in training with the NZ USAR Search Dog Association. I currently work for the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) looking after compliance in the Residential Red Zone in Christchurch.

I have a dog named Storm who is an 8 month old Black Lab X male that I picked up from the pound.

Storm is not in the training program yet, however he is showing the right attitude and drive to shortly start his training phase and I hope to have him tested within the next month or so, to get him in the program.

Lisamarie Clarke



I own a Model Agency and freelance as a Stylist and Makeup Artist, and also squeeze in a part time job as an Earthquake Recovery Co-ordinator in my community.

My free time is spent volunteering for Red Cross as part of their Disaster Welfare Support team where I have gained some valuable skills. My Red Cross training lead me to try out with the USAR Search Dog team and I am now starting the beginnings of training with Scout, who is almost ready to sit her initial test to enter the training program.

I picked up Scout from the pound when she was just 3 months old. She is curious, loves climbing over things and running across rubble piles, and although she is generally calm and considered in her approach, she certainly keeps me on my toes. The blend of search and rescue work,

working with animals and being able to rescue a dog from the pound is a perfect fit for me.

I also love to get out on my motorbike and hit the dirt tracks or spend time on the beach with

Mark Chin



I grew up in Idaho in the USA and studied mechanical engineering. I realised early on that the 9-to-5 grind wasn't for me so most of my jobs have been things I've really enjoyed doing while travelling the world.

My first step was New Zealand for a year and I completed a Graduate Certificate in Antarctic Studies at Canterbury. I then lived in Zambia, Africa for three years while in the US Peace Corps. I was stationed in a remote village, had no electricity or running water and was involved in a sustainable fish farming project. I really enjoyed this experience as I prefer to live simply with not many people around.

Following Africa I needed a complete change so I then spent five years living in Alaska and Norway training and racing sled dogs. I completed in a number of sled dog races in Norway, including Finnmark, which is the longest sled dog race in Europe (1,000 km).

My partner and I moved to NZ three years ago with two retired sled dogs. We lived in Nelson for a while and have been in Christchurch since September 2012. While in Nelson, I was part of Nelson/Tasman Response team RT2. I am currently working as a manager for a boarding kennel.

I joined the Southern Search Dog training team in October 2012 and acquired Laika in March this year. Laika is a collie/lab cross from the pound. She is nearly one and is rambunctious, determined and has the necessary drive to be a good search dog. She has passed her initial assessment and is in the national training programme. I am looking forward to learning alongside Laika as we progress toward operational status.

Carol Ewington



I have been living in Christchurch since I was 7 years old.

I have enjoyed travelling, spending five years on my OE working in the UK and travelling Europe, Western Canada and America. Seven and a half years ago I gained my Diploma in Therapeutic Massage and have been a self employed therapist since then, as well as working casually as a medical secretary at Christchurch Hospital.

Stella is a Staffie-X, about six months old. She was taken to the pound where Brenda's eagle eye saw the potential in her for a search dog. She is very high energy - we walk/play for three hours every day. Currently we are going to obedience training and in a couple of months Stella will be eligible to be assessed for her suitability for the USAR Dog training program.

72 Hour Exercise

USAR 72 hour exercise – Palmerston North, May 2013

72 hours doesn't actually sound that long....really it doesn't, but with potential for little sleep, challenging scenarios and inclement weather it was with some anticipation that Tim and I with Cairo, Meg and Boo on board, headed to Palmerston North in mid-May. While we had both done the 72 hour exercise before, you just never quite know what to expect in Palmerston North.

The 72 hour exercise is that last activity for the USAR technicians undertaking their three week training course and a support course is run the weekend immediately before the exercise begins. Brenda and her dogs had headed up early to help with the support course and Malcolm and Donna were support course participants. It is important to remember that dog handlers are key support personnel when not doing search work.

It took quite a bit to work out when the last exercise was held which Tim and I had done – I think we got agreement it was four years ago....cripes so much has happened since then!

The exercise started on Monday at about lunchtime and we all got stuck in helping pack up the cache, and then move to Longburn and set up the Base of Operations as well as start operations at the site. A big change from previous years was to have the Base of Operations (BoO) including the cache was quite separate from the operational site. This was seen to be more realistic and with this set up the Base of Operations could support several sites. What this did mean was that you did not get to know the technicians nearly as well as previously but this has been identified and can be worked on.

The other significant change was the trial of individual sleeping tents- this was just fantastic! Donna and I were on Bravo watch that did midnight- midday and I decided not to go to bed until 3-4pm. Having this flexibility was just great and you could read, listen to music, write reports, all without worrying about disturbing anyone.



Over the 72 hours we did a whole range of stuff including search work (occasionally set up as part of the exercise, but mainly set up with Brenda who did part of each shift), cache support, generator re-fueling, cleaning at the base and just basically mucking in doing anything and everything that needed doing.



Looks like Donna's on
Rubbish duties



Rather than talk about every search and activity we did I want to highlight a few key learning points for me.

There is always more to learn:

1. I need to again work on my packing list - I have quite a good one for training weekends but 72 hour exercise is more like deployment and my list is a bit lacking - subsequently I ended up taking too much stuff! Adding to my packing quagmire I sent a bag up early with Brenda and without good list ended up duplicating - much to the amusement of everyone I ended up without about 8 different bedding options for Cairo and five pairs of gloves!
2. EVERY time you go to bed, lay your clothes out for the next day. I did this every time except the last day when I stupidly assumed we would not be doing any more searching- sure enough "up you get, needed for search ASAP"
3. I needed to measure out 24 hours of food for Cairo. Because of our shift system I ended up feeding him his main meal just before I went to bed late afternoon thinking that was closest to when he is normally fed, and then ended up giving him small meal when we started shift. I think was close to his normal 24 hour consumption but just not sure. Could have been easily fixed with some better planning.
4. Need to make sure have working and sleeping bedding for Cairo – basically leave nice clean set for when off shift - had this, but was good reminder.
5. Wish I had packed a small dog brush - Cairo got really dusty on one search and would have been good to be able to brush it out.
6. Now that I know we are probably going to be in small tents a few more items to consider adding to my packing list - small alarm that is not my cellphone (had mine on silent when sleeping due to work calls, etc), small light that can hang from roof of tent (Malcolm wants fairy lights but that would just be silly!), a book. Had iPod with headphones which was great.
7. Need to sort my long-line and long-line work. I have a great strong long line which I have with me all the time for walking Cairo in less secure parks etc. I had put a couple of knots in it to make it easier for everyday use. When we did a great scenario, he ended up searching on a long-line for best part of 30 minutes, but these knots got caught a few times - need to leave a line for search work, and not use my everyday line. I also need to do a bit more work on using a long-line.....got myself in a bit of a tangle a few times!

Overall: a good week away. A special thanks to Anne and Lois for coming and helping....they kept getting lost though - silly billies!

Janelle Mackie

Brenda Janelle Tim (Southern) Malcolm and Donna (Northern)



'Friendship isn't about whom you have known the longest... It's about who came and never left your side.'

Unknown



From the National Trainer



The question most new time handlers will ask themselves when looking for their first dog in which to train for USAR is “Do I want to get a pup or a young dog”

Let’s talk about both of these groups with the “pups” group (aged 12 weeks to 7 months) and the “young dog” group (aged 8 months to 2 years).

PUPS:

Some pups can show at a very early age all the signs that a handler would be looking for in a future search dog: outgoing/confident/good play drive/sociability/unafraid of new situations and stimuli, and which all looks great but experience has shown that 90% of these pups will lose this drive within the next few months.

Saying this, some pups can be worth taking the *risk*....that they will *still* have these goods in this extremely changeable time up to *young dog* status.

Handlers must be aware to prepare themselves for the fact that a lot of pups can lose this initial drive within this short time-frame. This can occur by just a natural genetic make-up of how that pup is going to grow up, through no fault of the handler or environment. In other cases, some pups won’t get the necessary stimuli needed or get too much as new handlers go into “*training*” mode way too early.

To minimise the risk of doing too little or too much with a pup once it arrives in its new home, my most important saying to all new handlers is to just “*let the pup....be a pup*”.

Let the pup play naturally, whether it wants to chase a toy and retrieve it...or look for a toy you have put under a cushion, or take a toy from you to shake and tug...this all must be a natural game that is short and sweet and not a training regime where you have to force the pup in any way to play “*your game*”.

The major work to do with the pup at this early age is socialisation, socialisation and more socialisation. Other people, other dogs: different environments, different experiences. This is where you need to think outside the square: walking the city streets, noises/at night/lights/shadows/forests/beaches/workplaces/yards/farms/puppy training classes/general obedience (toilet training, sit, down, waits/recalls) and the list goes on and on.

Young Dogs:

In my opinion, this is the best option in looking for a search dog with the natural ability and drive which will be needed for USAR. At this “*prime time*” age, between 8 months and 2 years of age, basically “*what you see.....is what you get*”.

With the young dog already at the age it can be tested for its initial assessment into the USAR search dog programme, it can be determined quickly the amount of play/prey/hunt drive it naturally has.

A dog of this age has already experienced some life, may already be street wise, may have been bored/frustrated/lonely, and will excel in a life that has work, reward and a partnership that it may not have experienced before.

The only downside on starting with a young dog is that they may come with some *baggage*, i.e. have had a frightening experience or a natural fear in its earlier life which comes out later in training. This could be seen when a dog has to run over rubble/slippery floors/dark confined spaces/be picked up and handled by different people/be social able with other dogs or animals.

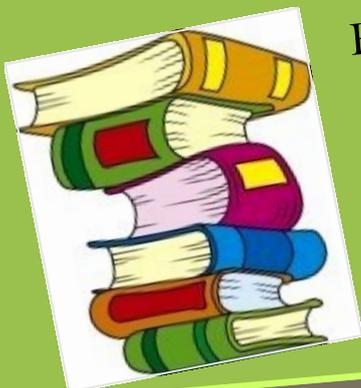
Most times this can be worked through and/or managed, especially if the young dog has very high drive, but at times there will be obstacles that cannot be overcome and the young dog will have to exit the program.

Handlers must realise that it takes a special type and drive of dog to make it through to operational status, and important to realise that they have not failed if a pup or young dog doesn’t make it, but that they have learnt and experienced many lessons through having them.

Current Operational Teams - May 2013

Handler	Canine	City	Certification Date	Operational Level	Task Force
Linda Pike	Buk	Christchurch	26 November 2011	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Boss	Christchurch	5 May 2012	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Easy	Christchurch	14 May 2011	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Keepa	Christchurch	11 May 2013	Advanced	NZTF-2
Brenda Woolley	Luna	Christchurch	24 November 2012	VRD certification	NZTF2
Tim Drennan	Boo!	Christchurch	5 May 2012	Advanced	NZTF-2
Tim Drennan	Meg	Christchurch	24 November 2012	VRD Certification	NZTF2
Janelle Mackie	Cairo	Christchurch	11 May 2013	Advanced	NZTF-2
Malcolm Percy	Sarge	Auckland	12 May 2013	Operational	NZTF-3
Ben Moore	Rookie	Christchurch	12 May 2013	Operational	NZTF-2

Please remember to
make use of our Library.



Reference books etc
can be ordered
through our
Website.



The Editor would like to thank everybody
who has contributed articles and photos
to date, this has been a great help and
much appreciated, please continue to
contribute as this is your newsletter.



VET CORNER

A regular column by
Jenny Waters, USAR Vet Evaluator

Pesky Parasites

All of the dogs in the National Training Programme are given worm and flea treatments every three months (thanks to a very generous donation from BECA).



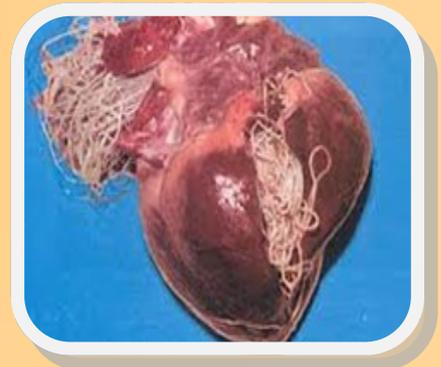
Why do we do this?

Firstly: For the sake of the dogs.



Internal and external parasite infections are common, and without regular treatment, parasite burdens can become high enough to cause health problems, even in otherwise healthy adult dogs. (In puppies, a tragically large number of deaths are directly caused by worms.)

Internal parasites can cause loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea, weight loss, anaemia and a pot-bellied appearance. (This last symptom can also be caused by too much beer, but this is not a common problem in dogs...) The culprits are roundworms and tapeworms, and less commonly, hookworms and whipworms.



At this point, I'd like you all to drop to your knees and give thanks to whatever higher power you believe in, that we don't have heartworm in New Zealand (yet).

The most common external parasite is the flea. Annoying for dogs that get bitten, a misery for dogs that are allergic and also the way some tapeworms are spread between dogs.

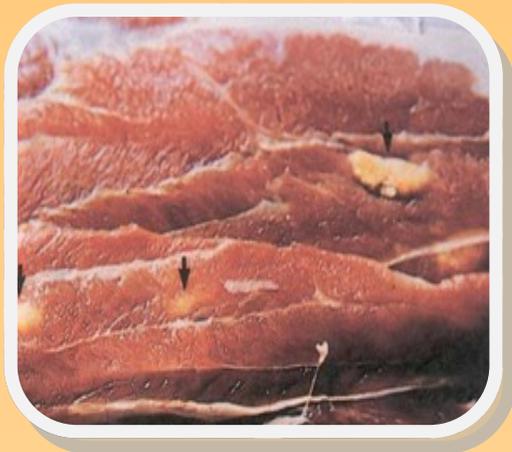


The other far less common external parasite is the tick – the NZ cattle tick. Which doesn't spread any diseases, just sucks blood. [We don't have paralysis ticks or brown ticks here – can you say "*hallelujah*"]

Roundworm eggs can hatch in the human stomach and the larvae travel through and cause damage to organs such as the liver and the eye (most commonly in young children).



Hookworm larvae can travel under the skin of humans, causing a nasty itchy skin condition.



Tapeworms have wonderfully complicated lifestyles, involving several hosts. Two, involving dogs and sheep, are very significant in New Zealand.

The hydatids tapeworm is carried by dogs that have eaten infected sheep offal, and the sheep are infected by eating dog's faeces. When humans are infected (from dog faeces) the cysts that form (or the surgery to remove them) can be life-threatening. Historically this was a huge problem in New Zealand, but a compulsory dog dosing scheme, along with legislation to ensure sheep offal is cooked before feeding to dogs, has meant this disease is thought to be eradicated.



Sheep measles, however, is still a problem – not to human health, but to our economy. This is another tapeworm carried by dogs, which are infected by eating untreated (cooked or frozen) sheep meat. The tapeworm forms unsightly cysts in sheep carcasses, so the meat is downgraded.

To be a good dog-owning citizen:

Worm your dog regularly with an effective broad-spectrum product

Pick up dog faeces

Don't feed untreated sheep (or goat) meat to your dog.

The third reason applies to operational dogs that may be deployed overseas. A documented history of regular internal and external parasite treatment will make it much easier for these dogs to fulfil the export and import requirements needed. Just as importantly, they will be protected against many of the parasite-transmitted diseases found outside our borders.





What's Coming Up

June	PAWPRINT
13/14 July	Progress Checks Central (Christchurch)
18 July	MANCOM Meeting
TBC	Foundation Weekend
July	Notice of AGM & Voting Forms to be sent out
1 August	Voting Forms to be returned by 4 pm
28 August	AGM
Sept	PAWPRINT

Send us your feedback
or do you have something to share
Email: beattie.rochelle@gmail.com



The NZ USAR Search Dog Association would like to acknowledge the
on going Support of the following businesses.

