

THAILAND DOG HANDLERS

USAF Dog Handlers Who Defended Front-Line Combat Air Bases In Thailand Throughout The Vietnam War

OLD DAWGS and PUPS

Dog Handlers of the Vietnam War Supporting US Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan

Sponsored by Thailand Dog Handlers at combat Air Bases during the Vietnam War



(12/15/11)

OVER SIX YEARS OF SUPPORTING OUR K-9 TROOPS!

More than \$67,000 of supplies shipped down range!

<http://www.war-stories.com/odap/ws-odap-index.asp>

Hello everyone! We are currently supporting 10 (ten) kennels and eighteen (18) deployed Air Force, Army, and Navy teams as of December 15, 2011. December 2011 brings us to six years and three month of operation for our “Old Dawgs & Pups” program. Once again, I’d just like to say thank you to all of you that have supported our awesome programs and especially our troops and their canine partners deployed down range.

Area of Operation Status - K-9 Teams Arriving/Departing

We are currently supporting troops at Sather Air Base (BIAP) Iraq; Bagram Air Base, FOB Lagman, FOB Shank, FOB Howz-E-Madad, Kandahar Air Base, Camp Arena, Heart, and FOB Salerno, Afghanistan; Ali Al Salem, Kuwait, and Manis Air Base, Kyrgyzstan. We have four (4) new Pups to introduce this month.

Pups heading home from the AOR

Ali Al Salem, Kuwait: SrA Melissa Schmalhorst & MWD Glen will be heading home before our next newsletter hits the stands. They will be heading to Fairchild AFB, Washington in the world.

FOB Lagman, Afghanistan: SSgt Martin Ratkowski & MWD Tosca should be basking in the sunshine in northern California as they head for Beale AFB, California.

Sather Air Base, Iraq: Prior to the end of the year, our entire crew from Sather will be heading stateside as the “war wraps up in Iraq”. TSgt Louis Smith, Kennel Master, will be heading for Beale AFB, California.

TSgt Kurt Lugar, Trainer, will be back in the desert at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona. But at least they shouldn’t be shooting at him in this desert!

SSgt Erick Martinez & MWD Argo II should be breathing the cool, clean air at Hill AFB, Utah.

SSgt Kyle Majorana & MWD Heros will also be heading back to Hill AFB, Utah – man, that sure is going to help that stateside kennel on manpower!

Pups arriving in the AOR

Kandahar Air Base, Afghanistan: SSgt Jennifer Franco & MWD Cora deployed from the 1st Special Operations Security Forces Squadron, Hurlburt Field, Florida. This team is supported by Steve & Lise Gattis (CRB).

Pups arriving in the AOR - Continued

Manis Air Base, Kyrgyzstan: SSgt Mary Boyer & MWD Tomy, deployed from Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. This team is supported by Steve & Lise Gattis (CRB).

Camp Arena, Heart, Afghanistan: SSgt Steven Bruner & MWD Chrach deployed from the 56th Security Forces Squadron, Arizona. Both Steven and Chrach have deployed with OD&P previously. This team is supported by Jon Hemp (TSN).

FOB Salerno, Afghanistan: SSgt Aaron Escalante & MWD Mushe deployed from the 355th SFS, Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona. This team is supported by Bill Cummings (U-Tapao).

TSgt Kurt Lugar's homecoming in Tucson, Arizona



Bill Cummings had the pleasure to welcome home TSgt Kurt Lugar as he arrived at Tucson International Airport on December 2, 2011. Of course Janelle Lugar, his wife, had the “first crack” at the Tech Sergeant as he came down the arrival ramp. It was a wonderful homecoming as the K-9 section at Davis-Monthan AFB and other Security Forces troops welcomed Kurt home from Sather Air Base, Iraq. Kurt was supported by Dave Broeker (U-Tapao) during his tour.

Edwards Air Force Base says goodbye to Military Working Dog Eddy (E049)

MWD Eddy (E049) was laid to rest at a memorial service at Edwards AFB, California. Eddy was partnered with SSgt Jason Fields while deployed at the 407th ESFS, Ali Air Base, Iraq February 2006 – Supported by Phil Carroll & Don Graham. Eddy was also partnered with SrA Eric Vega while deployed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, February 2009 – Supported by Jon Hemp. (Information and Photographs were obtained via the Edwards AFB website - Credit to Kate Blais 95th Air Base Wing Public Affairs Edwards AFB and Feed the Dawgs Website)

After 11 years of military service, Eddy, a German Shepherd and former 95th Security Forces Squadron military working dog, is remembered during a memorial service at the MWD kennels on base. Eddy not only conducted patrols on base with his handlers, but also deployed to the Middle East multiple times and participated in over 300 combat missions. (U.S. Air Force photo by Kate Blais)



Because of poor health and medical conditions that had become untreatable, Eddy had to be euthanized, said Army Capt. Allison Schroder, Edwards Veterinary Treatment Facility, officer in charge. A memorial service was held on November 30, 2011, outside of the MWD kennels on base. With the playing of taps, Eddy's years of service to the U.S. Air Force was remembered.

Eddy served 11 years in the Air Force. Eddy deployed to the Middle East five times, twice to Kuwait and three times to Iraq from 2003 to 2009. "Ever loyal, ever faithful," said Maj. Brian Clouse, 95th Air Base Wing chaplain, of the dogs during his opening invocation.

FOB Lagman, Afghanistan

We just received this message and photographs from “Team Tosca” - SSgt Martin Ratkowski & MWD Tosca. The team is supported by Bill Gunter (NKP).

Dear K9 Dawgs,

“Thank you for the Leatherman and patch/coin! I have been out this past month to a Combat Outpost for most of it along with other missions. So October was a crazy month. We're trying to get a lot done since the winter months are upon us here in Afghanistan! I have been photographed and put onto other websites and news when I was out in October. So I've been a little excited about that and now I owe my K-9 comrades a case of beer for being publicized! You can be sure that I'll enjoy some with them!! But Tosca and I are in good spirits and thank you guys for your support.”

“Here are some more photos of Team Tosca!! The Leatherman (MUT) is a fantastic tool for OTW!!! Showed it to some of the infantry guys and they wanted to trade some things for it but nope!! Can't do it because I needed it!! The knife is good and sharp, the tools and uses are fantastic and good for when I was out there and had to clean my gun because of mud and dirt!!! Plus I used it for around just about everything around here! Thank you!!



Some things never change – we still put hats on dogs – and they still look cool!

FOB Shank, Afghanistan



MWD Bruno enjoys the “comforts of home” in the top photograph. Nice bed and nice comforter. The lower left photograph shows what happens when a MWD gets a little “bored with his surroundings”. The lower right photograph shows where a MWD who has destroyed his “comforts of home” bed and comforter. Looks like “Snoop Dog” Bruno is spending some time on the top of his kennel now! From what we understand – Bruno is now IN THE DOG HOUSE!

MWD Bruno is assigned to SSgt Ian Porter, deployed from Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona, and they are supported by Ernie Childers (Udorn)

455th ESFS - Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan



Left: SSgt Jonathan Torocaloyeropoulos & MWD Ajax, deployed from the 4th SFS, Seymour-Johnson AFB, North Carolina, take a break during their patrol “OTW” of Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan.

Right: OK – We all know that dogs love helicopters – Ajax is no exception – We heard he called “Shotgun”!

This team is supported by John & Joan Smith (U-Tapao) and Dixie Whitman (FoK). Take note of the over watch for the team that is in the left of the photograph.



SSgt Manuel Rodriguez dismounts his vehicle during staging or a patrol. Looks like he’s ready to get going in this photo! On patrol OTW near Bagram Air Base, SSgt Rodriguez and MWD Figo check out the local terrain during a recent patrol.

SSgt Rodriguez and Figo are deployed from Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona and they are supported by Scotty Baker (Safeside).

455th ESFS - Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan – Continued

TSgt Tom Henzl was once again our OD&P “Front Man” as he presented our signature gifts to the new handlers at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. Our first time deplorers received their Leatherman Surge and Serac S3 flashlight, Thailand Handler Patch and Coin, and other gifts from our Logistic Department (that’s Phil Carroll). Thanks again TSgt Henzl – Great job!



SSgt John Makripodis & MWD Carlos, deployed from the 4th SFS, Seymour-Johnson AFB, North Carolina, strike a pose with their gifts!



SSgt Jonathan Torocaloyeropoulos & MWD Ajax, deployed from the 4th SFS, Seymour-Johnson AFB, North Carolina, show off their gifts during a break at Bagram. Both teams are supported by John and Joan Smith (U-Tapao) and Dixie Whitman (FoK).

376th AEW/ESFS – Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan

SSgt Mary Boyer & MWD Tomy – Welcome to OD&P!



Top Left - SSgt Boyer & MWD Tomy prepare themselves for the ride from Kuwait to Manas.

Top Right – MWD Tomy and his BFF Turbo kept each other entertained during the flight. Turbo is a SSD assigned to an Army handler. It's always great to have a traveling partner!



SSgt Boyer recently sent us these photographs to introduce herself and MWD Tomy.

Bottom Left – Tomy getting “a little more comfortable at work (not sure why he looks so mean, reportedly, he’s happy to be at Manas)

Bottom Right – Military Working Dog “Warning Sign” at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan. It sure looks Russian to me?

Thanks to SSgt Ted Carlson of the 824th Base Defense Squadron, Moody AFB, Georgia, we were able to contact and then pair up SSgt Mary Boyer & MWD Tomy from the 627th SFS, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington. The team is supported by Steve and Lise Gattis (CRB).

Other News concerning OD&P Graduates
Security Forces Director visits Luke AFB, Arizona



SSgt Jessie Keller, General Jimmy E. McMillian – Director of Security Forces, SSgt Justin Kitts, and SSgt Lindsay Thompson

During General McMillian’s tour of bases in the southwest he took the time to meet with the MWD handlers at Luke AFB, Arizona. The General is very hands on and insists on meeting with his troops. The General was photographed with the handlers that recently returned from down range where he was “debriefed” on their missions, living conditions, and many other subjects. Many of us have met General McMillian and he is the type of officer that we would have loved to have served with in our era.

Did you notice the VSPA flag in the background? It was presented to the 56th SFS during the 2009 VSPA reunion at Luke AFB, Arizona. The flag was donated by Bill Harris and was carried in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand.

MWD Dutchy (C207) Retires



It's Official! MWD Dutchy has retired to Fort Living Room and has been adopted by SSgtTed Carlson. Dutch and SSgt Carlson were paired with Dixie Whiteman (FoK) and Greg Gines (Ubon) in 2009 when they were deployed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Ted tells us that "Dutchy has been loving life as a house dog. He is so much happier there, and I am too having him around all of the time. Of course, he has just about every dog toy you can imagine spread all over the house".

Thank you Ted for giving this veteran a wonderful new life after his service to our country!



I guess we know who's couch this is now?

Holiday Packages to the Troop

Veterans Groups Supporting Old Dawgs & Pups



Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6441 – Oldham-Cummings Post - Wimberley, Texas

Once again the VFW Post in Wimberley, Texas is supporting our “Pups” through the efforts of Kelly Bateman, Meta Wilson, and all of our veteran friends at the post. Through their efforts, monthly packages are being sent to SSgt Ian Porter (FOB Shank, Afghanistan), SSgt Jennifer Franco (Kandahar Air Field, Afghanistan) and SSgt Phillip Kittelson (FOB Howe-Z-Madad, Afghanistan). It’s always nice to receive packages from home – and it’s especially nice to receive packages from veterans back home “who have been there and done that”!

Those Texans – there are just hard to beat!!! Kelly – Please express our appreciation to the post.



VFW Post 7539, Bloomingdale, Illinois pitches in for OD&P

Since 9/11, VFW Post 7539, Bloomingdale, IL, has been sending an average of from 50-75 packages per month to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. About 3 years ago I located some USAF dog handlers serving and since then have been sending packages with "dog treats" to that special breed of serviceman. We are a small post, but do a lot. We have been an All State Post for two years in a row and in 2009/2010 achieved the status of All American Post (one of only 6 in the state of Illinois). I am proud to say that for those years, I was commander of the post.

We are able to send out as many packages as we do through donations and cooperation from local churches. Joe Palmer (Binh Thuy K-9 '68) is spearheading the effort to take care of the troops at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. Way to go Joe and please thank everyone at the post for their efforts on behalf of our pups.



MWD TSA *Military Working Dog Team Support Association, Inc.*

A tax-exempt organization under IRS code section 501(c)(3). All donations are tax-deductible.

Once again, thank you to Dixie Whitman and everyone associated with the Military Working Dog Team Support Association who sent holiday packages down range to support our deployed troops. We all know what it’s like to be deployed during these holidays and I think our supports shared their holidays with our MWD teams that are deployed – Happy Holidays!

They have sent packages to ALL of our troops at seven different locations in southwest Asia!

Feed the Dawgs – Luke AFB, Arizona – November 19, 2011



The final Feed the Dawgs event was held at Luke AFB, Arizona on November 19, 2011 and it was a roaring success. Nearly 100 people attended the event. Jon Hemp, Ken Neal and all of the “Dawg Team” just did a fantastic job at Luke and all year at the events.

It was great to have our Old Dawgs” and our “Pups” get together at Luke AFB for this event.

Left to Right: Ken Neal (Ubon/Udorn), SSgt Jessie Keller & MWD Oscar, Bill Cummings (U-Tapao), Jon Hemp (Tan Son Nhut), TSgt John Pillarella, SSgt Kyle Alltop, kneeling in the front row are TSgt Gabe Bravo, and SSgt Justin Kitts.

SSgt Keller (FOB ASC-2 Afghanistan) was supported by Ken Neal and Lise & Steve Gattis; TSgt Pillarella (Camp Cropper, Iraq) was supported by Bill Cummings; SSgt Kitts (Bagram & FOB Wilson, Afghanistan) was supported by Patsy Perrotto. SSgt Alltop (Ali Al Salem, Kuwait) was supported by Bob Curnick. TSgt Bravo (Sather (BIAP) Air Base, Iraq) was supported by Phil Carroll. Jon Hemp has supported SSgt Steve Bruner (Manas Air Base, Kyrgystan and Camp Arena, Herat Providence, Afghanistan).

In addition, SSgt Phil Kittelson is currently deployed to Howe-Z-Madad, Afghanistan and is currently supported by Phil Carroll. SSgt Kittelson was supported by Dale & Debbie Burton during his deployment to Camp Cropper in 2009. SSgt James Worley was supported by Bob Citrano and Ernie Childers during his deployment to Sather Air Base, Iraq in 2010.

Congratulations also go out to TSgt Justin Kitts, who was promoted on December 1, 2011 and to TSgt Gabe Bravo who has replace TSgt John Pillarella as the Kennel Master at Luke.

Here's this month's update on the K-9 Supply Program

At the time of this report we have **18** members of the "Old Dawgs & Pups" program actively supporting **18** handlers assigned to ten (10) kennels in Southwest Asia.

Our K-9 Supply program has been coordinated and funded by the "Old Dawgs & Pups". The supporters are members of the VSPA, VDHA, and friends of K-9. A total of **1,462** pieces of equipment has been delivered to our K-9 troops serving in the AOR from August 21, 2005 to December 15, 2011. Over **358** "Old Dawgs and Friends" have supported **75** kennels and **292** K-9 personnel via our program. For additional information on the program please go to:

http://www.pbase.com/635thk9/old_dawgs

Please review the photos, press releases, and more about our ongoing programs.

We have purchased and shipped **\$19,129.00** of supplies for the **75** kennels solely via your personal donations. Including the Leatherman corporate and Helping Udders donations, the total is **\$67,019.00!**

Please note that this figure does not include all the goodies some of you have sent directly, or which came from other organizations we've been involved with but who shipped their donations independently. WAY TO GO K-9 SUPPLY!

List of Supplies Shipped by Old Dawgs & Pups

- 267 Leatherman "Surge" Tools (166 Donated by Leatherman) *
* The Leatherman "Surge"/Muts/Flashlights/Knives donation is valued at approximately **\$44,470.00**
- 183 Thailand Challenge Coins (Donated & Purchased)
- 163 * Leatherman Serac S3 Leatherman Flashlights
- 125 Thailand Historical Base Patches
- 92 Guardian Pet Beds (Pet Edge)
- 75 * Leatherman Knives (Models: c33T, e55, e55B, e33L)
- 52 Kongs (Assorted sizes)
- 40 Sponges
- 40 Cleaning/Scouring Pads
- 40 PSI Water Holes (Dressler's)
- 33 Kygen Port-A-Bowls (Dressler's)
- 25 Doggles (10 Pairs were donated)
- 24 Kygen 2-In-1 Food/Water Bowls (Dressler's)
- 24 Rolls 26"x78" 20% Dark Limo Window Tint (Checker Auto Supply)
- 19 VSPA Challenge Coins (Donated & Purchased)
- 16 Cooling Vests & Extra Cooling Packs (**Helping Udders - Valued at \$3,420.00**)
- 16 Coastal Medium Firm Shedding Blades (Dressler's)
- 16 Classic Long Tooth Undercoat rakes (Dressler's)
- 15 Classic HG Food Dishes (Dressler's)
- 12 Coastal Large Slickers (Dressler's)
- 12 Retractable Leashes (Pet Edge)
- 12 Flat Sided Stainless Steel Water Pails (Pet Edge)
- 12 Bucket Clips (Pet Edge)
- 12 Heavy Guard Handled Water Pails (Dressler's)
- 10 * Leatherman MUT Tools
- 10 Muzzles (Dressler's)
- 10 Heavy Duty Handled Pails - 9 Qt. - (Pet Edge)
- 10 Stainless Steel - 3 Qt Dura-weight Bowls (Pet Edge)

- 10 **Helping Udder Reward Toys (Helping Udders)**
- 9 **Hose Nozzles**
- 8 **K9 Bluelight Supplement (2 pound bags) (Dressler's)**
- 8 **Cooling Wraps (Roshgo Corp)**
- 8 **Cooldanna Cooling Mats (Roshgo Corp)**
- 8 **Sets of Flood Light Bulbs**
- 8 **24" Heavy Duty Floor Squeegees**
- 7 **Digital Thermometers**
- 6 **Set of four Ruff Wear Bark'n Boots Grip Trex (Ray Allen)**
- 6 **Retractable Leashes (Dresslers)**
- 4 **Carabiners**
- 3 **100 Foot Water Hoses**
- 3 **20" Heavy Duty Cleaning Brushes**
- 3 **12" Heavy Duty Cleaning Brushes**
- 3 **5" Heavy Duty Cleaning Brushes**
- 3 **Ceremonial K-9 Badges (Memorial)**
- 2 **Hose Reels - Wheels**
- 2 **50 Foot Water Hoses**
- 2 **Spray Bottles & Sprayers**
- 2 **150 Foot Enclosed Hose Reels**
- 2 *** Leatherman EOD MUT Tools**
- 1 **Large Patrol Harness**
- 1 **Medium Patrol Harness**
- 1 **Drink Mixes & Snacks (Large Box)**
- 1 **Case Toilet Paper (30 Rolls)**
- 1 **Syntek Hidden Sleeve (Ray Allen)**