



DOGMAN

A Brotherhood of All Combat Veteran Dog Handlers



VIETNAM DOG HANDLER ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 30 - NUMBER 1 - MARCH 2023

Remembering Fred Dorr, Past President and Friend

Editor's Note: Several people wanted to contribute:

By Vernon Anderson

VDHA Secretary

I was saddened to receive a phone call advising me of the passing of Past President Henry Fred Dorr on 11 Dec 2022. Fred was President when I became Secretary. I had the opportunity to attend and represent VDHA at his viewing and funeral last December.

Upon arriving in Victoria, TX, I located the chapel and went in to find Maria. When I touched her shoulder, she looked up with a surprised and excited look and immediately grabbed me. Holding very tight, all she could do was cry and continually expressed, "thank you, thank you for coming."

I was privileged to sit with family next to Maria during the viewing services and at times I would put my arm around her hugging her when she cried and again continuing to express her happiness to VDHA for coming.

Monday, I again met up with the family at the church. Fred's casket was in the vestibule for viewing before services. The service started with casket being brought into the church and placed at the front of the altar.

After the service the casket and attendees were escorted out of the church where a Color



Fred Dorr with a few of his board members at the 2008 Orlando Reunion dinner. (Pictured left to right) Ernie Ayala, Sgt-at-Arms; John Dupla, VP Trackers; Randy Kimler, former president & Membership chair; Bob Palochik, Treasurer and Fred Dorr, President.

Guard Funeral team from the Victoria American Legion was waiting to do Military Honors to Fred.

The flag was folded and presented to Maria (in tears) followed by a 7 man rifle team firing 3 volleys and Taps being played.

After cremation, Fred will be interned in San Antonio Texas at the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Upon my departure, Maria expressed her and families gratitude for VDHA attending his funeral. Fred is now with his dog Sarge 9X07 – Both on the "Rainbow Bridge".

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From the president

By John R. Harvey
VDHA President

It is with reflection and sorrow that I must report to the VDHA family that our past-president Fred Dorr has passed away after a courageous battle with cancer. Our sincerest condolences go out to his wife Maria and family.

Fred was a Marine Corps Scout Dog Handler. He loved the Marine Corps and his Dogs. He arrived in Vietnam during the fall of 1969. As his Platoon Sergeant, I had the responsibility of putting Fred thru his in-country training. I pulled out my "green book," the one where I kept notes on the performance of the new guys.

Fred had been assigned one of the larger shepherds, his name was Sarge. My notes indicate that Fred and Sarge were a good match "both being large in stature." They were one of the first teams from his class to bond and be ready for the bush. As most of you know, most of us spent very little time in the rear. When I was in, Fred was out, when I was out, Fred was in. It left very little time to get to know each other while in-country.

Fred was wounded on December 7, 1969 while in Quang Nam Province. As I began to write this eulogy, the song by the Byrd's, Turn! Turn! Turn! began to play on Alexa. The lyrics to the song come from Ecclesiastes 3:1 "For everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven".

Fred passed on December 11, 2022. When I first learned of Fred's passing, I reached out to members for any stories they might have. I am going to paraphrase one response that I received from the wife of a Marine dog handler. "He was a past president, and we hope that he will be acknowledged for what he did. Once he extended himself and drove in the rain to meet us in San Antonio. He then drove us to Lackland to visit the monument and kennels. We didn't know him before and were always grateful for his kind generosity that day. He lived in Yoakum, TX and drove all the way in the pouring rain. He also gave my husband a picture of him and his dog from the National Archives."

In spite of Fred's sometimes tough exterior, the consensus is that he had a very big, kind and gentle heart. Rest in peace Fred. I am sure that Sarge and all the other K-9 companions you have had over the years were there at the bridge to greet you.

Reunion 2024: The date for our next reunion has been designated sometime in late April or early May 2024. The leading suggested location is currently Reno,

Nevada. Hotels will generally not commit more than one year out. We will begin to look for venues beginning in May. The location has not been cast in stone. If any member has a viable alternative that they would like taken under consideration please reach out to your board members.

VDHA: Welcome to Facebook

By Jim Stiles
VDHA Facebook Administrator
ATTENTION MEMBERS!!!

I am the administrator for the VDHA Facebook group and I invite you to join us over there if you haven't already. It's a great place to stay informed and stay in contact with our brothers and their families.

Here are some instructions on how to join the Facebook group. If you aren't familiar with or, for some reason, don't like Facebook, don't worry. You can still get on it and create an account and set your privacy settings as strong as allowed and join only our group. That way, you shouldn't have to put up with much or any of the garbage that's on Facebook. If you do get some, just block them and you won't have to see them again. It's simple to do, feel free to get with me if you have any problems and I'll be glad to help you through it.

1. First of all, you need to go to Facebook on your computer at Facebook.com. You can also download the Facebook app to your phone if you don't already have it.

2. Log in or create an account, then go to the Groups section and either search for Vietnam Dog Handler Association or use the direct link below. When you get there, just click on "Join" and answer a couple of questions. That's it. Once I approve you, you'll be a member of the group with full access. Here is the direct link: https://www.facebook.com/groups/vdha.us/?ref=share_group_link.

The questions are needed in order to help keep the scammers out. I look forward to seeing you there. Remember if you have problems just reach out to me and I'll help anyway I can. Email me at jimstiles7413@gmail.com or once you install the Facebook app you can message me on there, just click on my profile picture and then click on "Message". I'll reply as quickly as I can.

New VP of Thailand Dog Handlers Units

At Dave Broeker's request, the VDHA board has approved appointment of John Homa as VP of Thailand Dog Handlers Units.

John has worked closely with Dave the past number of years on fundraiser projects and has recently assumed the oversight of the Thailand Dog Handlers Website along with David Adams.

John stated that he is honored to both take over for Dave and support the Thailand Dog Handlers Unit Directors and Handlers, in any way he can, as well as the VDHA.



BX News

After a good 2022, the BX is selling again this year. Several items in our inventory have been hot sellers. The Challenge Coin continues to be one of our best sellers, as are the black hats and shirts. The VDHA lapel pin has always been popular and has recently seen competition from the K9 pin.



25th Anniversary Dedication: War Dog Memorial at the University of Tennessee

*By John Homa
VDHA Vice President of
Thailand Dog Handlers*

You're Invited: July 15, 2023 to the University of Tennessee in Knoxville for the re-dedication of the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine War Dog Memorial. It is hosted by the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine (UTCVM) and the Military Working Dog Heritage Museum and Handler Center, (MWDHM). This year is the 25th Anniversary of the memorial on site at UTCVM. The Memorial is a replica of the Marine Memorial on Guam designed by Susan Bahary.

It starts at 10 a.m. The agenda includes speakers, wreath ceremony, 21-gun salute, law enforcement K-9 units, refreshments, and a few local vendors. For directions to UTCVM please click: [UTCVM](#). More details to follow.

The Military Working Dog Heritage Museum has secured a block of rooms at the Holiday Inn-Knoxville West at Cedar Bluff for \$119.00 a night with full breakfast for the nights of July 14 and 15. The MWDHM will host a hospitality room with drinks and snacks on Friday, July 14. There will be a Pizza Fundraiser the evening of the

14th in the hospitality room with MWDHM Sales of Challenge Coins, T-Shirts, Patches, Books, etc. We also hope to have a few raffle items. You are welcome to wear camo jackets, vests, ball caps, berets etc. to the events.

Follow the below link to reserve your hotel room. Directly click the link or, hover over the link and do ctrl+click on the link. Once at the site be sure to enter the dates you wish to book. For questions email events@mwdhm.org with your phone number. Hotel Link: [UT / Military Working Dog Heritage Museum Event](#). We hope to see you there.

VP Report: Dog Park Dedicated to All War Dogs

By Ernie Ayala
VDHA Vice President

On January 20, I was home enjoying a cool Friday afternoon when I got a call from none other than Jeffrey Bennett, Executive producer of *War Dogs The Movie* (documentary, 2000) and our benefactor of both the Riverside March Air Base War Dog Memorial and the Ft. Benning, Georgia War Dog Memorial.

He asked if I knew about the War Dogs Memorial Dog Park having its grand opening the next day. I said hadn't a clue and neither I, nor the VDHA Board, knew anything about it. He was quite ticked-off he never received an invite and that we were also never notified that this park was being erected. He then emailed me a copy of a community invitation that the grand opening was to take place the next day at 10 a.m.

I told him I would be there to check it out by myself and give him a report in a few days. I did arrive a little early and the first two people I saw were Air Force Vietnam Dog Handlers. One was John Hemp of "Feed the Dogs" fame, whom I hadn't seen in almost ten years.

I used to go to all the barbecues in various military installations throughout the Southwest (from-Lemoore, Naval Air Base, CA where I was on the grill in 110 degree sunshine and no shade, to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base near Tucson, AZ, where I was being drenched in a torrential rain with no shelter as I barbecued steaks, hamburgers and hotdogs. Just about the time I finished, the kennel sergeant in charge brought out the panchos for the cooks and wives who were also serving and working in food preparation.)

I finally met with the people in charge and they were delighted to meet with me as I represented the granddaddy of all military K9 organizations. They were not very organized "hence the invites we never got and lack of any news coverage.

Riverside city councilman Charles Conder was there along with several other dignitaries I did not get to meet. They also had a nice big table of coffee, water, soft drinks and snacks but I never got to that. I was asked if I could lead the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance before program began, but they were having trouble deciding when to start and it was already 10:30.

The park was the idea of several Iraq-Afghanistan dog handlers who worked tirelessly to make this day happen. The VDHA wasn't entirely forgotten as one of the plaques was dedicated to the dogs and handlers who served in Vietnam.

The park area reserved for bigger dogs was about the size of two football fields and the area for the smaller dogs

was one football field also.

There were eight plaques in total, with describing the roles of war dogs in each war or conflict beginning with WWI. There was also one dedicated to women dog handlers in the military. The park covered about five acres of land just East of the Riverside Memorial Cemetery and March Air Force Base. The park also features a spacious parking lot, a perimeter trail, pathways and native paintings.



One of the eight photo plaques erected at the new War Dogs Memorial Park in Riverside, CA.

Dogman

Dogman is published quarterly by the Vietnam Dog Handler Association, Inc. Members and their families are encouraged to submit articles, letters, photos, etc.

Letters and stories are subject to editing. Email all submissions to Dogman@VDHA.us or mail to Steve Lemish, Dogman Editor, 105 W. "F" Street, Suite 206, San Diego, CA 92101 (include a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want them returned).

VDHA is a nonprofit corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(19). Contributions are tax deductible. IRS tax ID number #33-0690480.

Remembering Fred Dorr, Past President and Friend

*By Bob Palochik
VDHA Treasurer*

Fred was the Marine's Marine. He was a friend, father, husband, grandfather, Marine, but most of all he was the President of the Vietnam Dog Handler Association.

His leadership and foresight brought our organization leaps and bounds forward. Our current VDHA website is a direct result of Fred. He instructed Dave Broeker, VDHA Web Master, and me, telling us to research and update the archaic website we had at that time. Through his vigilance and computer contacts, Dave was able to make a new website, that was both current and up to date. Fred also instructed us to spend whatever we needed to make this new website, and we did.

We now have a fantastic website, and we update it whenever we are instructed and informed at a very reasonable cost.

We thank you Fred Dorr, for being our leader and keeping this organization's members strong and informed. May God Bless you and keep looking down and watching over us. Semper Fi.



*By John Langley
VDHA Member*

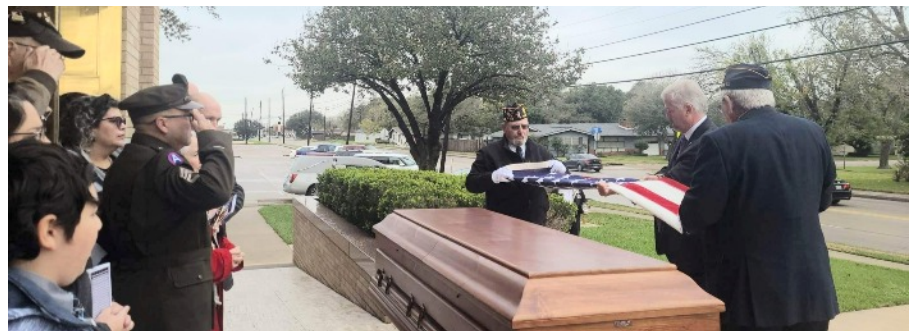
Fred Dorr was a devoted and loyal Marine Corps Scout Dog Handler. While VDHA president, Fred attended many veteran events while representing the VDHA. Fred was instrumental in helping establish the National War Dog Memorial located at Lackland AFB. He also maintained a close relationship with the dog training squadron which was located at Lackland AFB. Many dogs were considered unqualified for military service and were placed with Veterans with the help of Fred. Visitors to the National War Dog Memorial were often given a tour of the base and area by Fred. The VDHA has lost a great asset with Fred's passing.

*By Ernie Ayala
VDHA Vice President*

With the passing of our former President Fred Dorr I am reminded of our 2006 VDHA Reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. I had just won an election for Sgt at Arms and attended my first board meeting. He welcomed me with open arms and made me feel comfortable.

He faced a real hard time as president by having to settle the donations that came in from the War Dog national press coverage, documentary movie and opening of two War Dog monuments.

He resolved this issue and put it behind us by moving ahead with the goals and objectives of the VDHA.



The Tip of the Spear; A War Dog Story

Editor's Note: This is the seventh installment of a multi-part story. It details his journey from college to Vietnam and his dog Skipper (X268). In this episode, he meets his scout dog Skipper.

*By Vernon J. Roman
Scout Dog Handler*

This may be where I offend some of you. When you're playing football, and miss your block, and the opposing team blows past you to scores six points ...that's a screw up. When you do not read an alert correctly, or at all, or your dog just does not do its job, the results are probably not going to be good. At best, you're injured or majorly shook up. At worst, you and a lot of others are dead...that's a major F up.

About 350 dogs were killed along with 263 handlers. If you were one of those dog handlers that were at the bottom of the tier, or had a dog at the bottom of the tier or worse, chances are your name is now on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in DC.

When I was told that the dog I would have passed on to me would have had four prior handlers, counting the current one, I was confident that I would be getting a good dog. I assumed that the other three handlers had survived and made it back to the states.

Doing some quick math, figuring an average tour being 12 months, that would mean Skipper had to have arrived in country around 1964-65 at the start of the conflict.

Dogs first came to Vietnam in 1965 as a test. The Viet Cong had successfully attacked Da Nang Air Base on July 1, 1965. Forty dog teams were then deployed

to Vietnam for a four month test period, with teams placed on the perimeter in front of machine gun towers/bunkers. The detection of intruders resulted in a rapid deployment of reinforcements. The test was successful, and those handlers returned to the US while the dogs were reassigned to new handlers. The potential of the dog teams had now been realized.

Once settled in to the camp, it was time to meet
Continued on Page 7.

The US War Dogs Association
INVITES YOU TO A
K9 Veterans Day Celebration

USWDA has the pleasure of inviting you to a special ceremony to celebrate the service and sacrifice of our military K-9 community.

The event will provide a time to reflect, recognize and celebrate the incredible role of our military working dog teams, past, present and future, as well as offer an opportunity to catch up with colleagues, friends and family from across all branches of service.

Ceremony Information:

Venue: US Navy Memorial Plaza,
701 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004-2608, USA

Date: Saturday March 11, 2023

Time: 12:00 – 16:30

Itinerary:

12:00 – Ceremony area opens
13:00 – Ceremony starts
14:00 – Ceremony closes.
Drinks and refreshments served inside the US Navy Museum
16:30 – Event closes

If you would be interested in attending, please contact the team at

RSVP@uswardogs.org to register your interest.

Vietnam Dog Handler Association Officers

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DEADLINE

ARTICLES FOR
THE JUNE
ISSUE MUST BE
SUBMITTED BY

May 23

The Tip of the Spear; A War Dog Story

Continued from Page 6.

my partner. I was positioned at the lower end of our compound. Skipper and his old handler, along with the head Vet Tech, were at the other end of the compound in front of the clubhouse. The old handler knelt down and said his good bye to Skipper.

From that point on, he was under orders not to go near Skipper again. The handler gave the leash to the Vet Tech, who then walked Skipper down to the opposite end of the compound where I was waiting. What happened next was truly remarkable. Skipper gave himself over to me immediately. He accepted me as his new handler. At once, he gave me his complete loyalty. We were immediately a solid team. He knew he could count on me, and I knew I could count on him. I was getting a very high quality dog, and fortunately, he was getting a high quality handler. There is no doubt in my mind that for the next nine months, the strongest/best dog team operating in I Corps, was Skipper and myself.

There is nothing like having an extremely well-trained dog to partner with. It was very apparent that Skipper, from the very onset, just wanted to please and did not hesitate to respond to a command. I did test his limits during a break on a training/getting-to-know-you run. While sitting in the middle of a small creek, I gave him the command to go down, and down he went, right under the water, and, then came up, of course, to shake the water off and get a ton of praise and petting.

Skipper was a nice sized German shepherd and was the color of burnt red. He was boarder line skinny, which made it easier to deal with the severe heat. I knew from the onset that this was the one time that bonding with a dog was not just for having a pet at home, but that the stakes were very high. I intended to make sure he stayed totally committed to me.

Knowing that I might be going home and that he probably would not be going home, I had to, from the start, have a mind set that insulated my emotions from the inevitable separation. I had to remember that he was not a pet but a soldier. For decades, I have wrestled with guilt feelings about being able to detach myself from Skipper and keep him in the category of a tool I had to use. If push came to shove, and a mistake was made in the field, I wanted it to be the dog that ended up dead, not the handler or anyone else.

So, right from the start, when we were at our base camp on down time, I made it a point to have Skipper with me. We would bum around the camp area together or walk the bunker line. Ever so often, I would have

him run the dog obstacle course which we had fun doing. Unlike some, Skipper was a very happy and friendly dog. As long as you looked like an American soldier, you were in no danger of getting a nip. Not true with some of the other dogs that would bite you just to bite you.

It was not unusual to see Skipper at or in my hooch, or visiting the clubhouse or whatever. I spent as much time as possible with him. In the field, we were so tight that he would fight for a share of the rubber mattress that I slept on.

Getting ready to go to the field was a major project. Every dog handler had to carry enough food and water

Continued on Page 8.

Treasurer's Report

CHECKING	\$35,527.99
SAVINGS	<u>5,071.75</u>
TOTAL	\$40,599.74

REMINDERS and INFORMATION:

Checks are always to be made payable to VDHA no matter if the funds are for dues or merchandise. Our bank will not accept third party checks.

PayPal payments for dues and/or merchandise purchases must be made from your personal PayPal account. Dues: PayPal payments are to be sent to vdhapaypal@vdha.us. Merchandise: PayPal payments are to be sent to merchandisepaypal@vdha.us.

Remember, if paying for merchandise through your PayPal account, your completed order form must be emailed to our BX Manager, Mike Hurder, at bxmgr@vdha.us for completion.

The Tip of the Spear; A War Dog Story

Continued from Page 7.

for yourself and the dog. When we went to the field, we were 100% self-sufficient. A handler would carry five cans of dog food and (I do not remember for sure) three Gaines burgers for each day. I carried 10 canteens of water to make sure there was enough water for the dog.

For myself, we started out carrying C-rations. Later on, we received and were able to carry Lurps, which is a dried meal and very easy to carry. To eat, you just heat some water, pour it on, and you have a hot meal in less than a couple of minutes. I carried ten of those meals.

In addition, I would need my poncho liner, rubber mattress, four tent pegs, and a special little gun holder that allowed me to stand my M-16 on the ground like a machine gun. That was much better than letting it lie on the ground.

On those occasions when food was delivered out to the field, Skipper always got to share in those meals. There was also the required steel pot that I quit taking to the field because it was just too hot to deal with, as was the very heavy flak jackets we had available. I wore just a boony hat and never took a flak jacket to the field.

I also had an ammo belt with approximately eight holders which held 4 clips of 20 rounds each in them, which would be 32 clips. I also had two wrap-around-your-body ammo carriers that gave me another 30 or so clips, taking me up into the 60 clip area. It sounds like a lot of ammo, but, in a fire fight, that could be gone very quickly.

My biggest equipment concern was making sure the clips and my weapon were kept as clean as possible. The last thing I needed was a jammed M-16 due to dirt. As it was, the M-16 had a reputation of jamming easily while the AK-47 could be dropped in mud and still fire. The AK could also take our ammo as well as their own. On the other hand, our M-16 could only fire our own ammo.

Needless to say, dog handlers carried a lot of weight in the field. It was amazing to me how easily our bodies adapted to all that weight with the heat, while you were hoofing over some very challenging terrain. At the same time, you had to stay very alert to everything around you. Being tired and non-attentive just was not an option.

Continued in the next issue.

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c/o Randy Kimler
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Port Neches, TX 77651-4302

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Upcoming Events

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| March 11, 2023: | K9 Veterans Day Celebration

US Navy Memorial Plaza

Washington, D.C.

12:00 - 4:30 p.m. |
| 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 15, 2023: | 25th Anniversary
Dedication of the War Dog
Memorial at the University of
Tennessee in Knoxville.
(See page 3) |