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Newsletter for NASAR K9 Handlers

CANINE FINDS

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Canine Committee

How can we help you?

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The K9 Committee meets monthly via conference call. If you have suggestions or input please let one of us know so we can bring it up at our meeting.

Canine Certification Program (CCP) find the most current CCP [here](#).

The NASAR Canine Committee is grateful for the continuing support of our canine conferences and workshops by grants from AKC CAR. Information on the AKC CAR programs can be found at www.akccar.org.

AKC CAR operates the largest recovery center in the US. They offer free lifetime enrollments for all working K-9s. Contact [Lisa Davis](#) at 919.816.3524 for additional information.

Cover Photo: K9 Cara owned by Tiffanie Turner, NASAR Disaster HRD Type II and NASAR Land HRD Type "Other".



From the Canine Committee Chair

Dear NASAR SAR Dog Community,

It has been a very busy past few months for the NASAR Canine Committee. We held a successful regional workshop in AZ and a successful pre-conference workshop and Canine Track during the conference in Myrtle Beach, SC. It was particularly exciting in Myrtle Beach to hear the Board of Directors announce the reduction in certification fees to \$30.00 for NASAR members. This will put certification costs within reach of more handlers.

We are already working on next year's pre-conference and conference. I am pleased to announce that we have arranged for Michael Ellis of the Michael Ellis School for Dog Trainers to instruct a two day pre-conference workshop on motivating dogs. Michael is an internationally renowned dog trainer and teacher with 30 years of experience in the competitive dog sports. He has taught extensively to a very diverse group of trainers, from competitive sport trainers, police departments, and the US military, to search and rescue groups, service dog agencies, and pet dog trainers. Michael's clear, concise, and patient style has made him one of the most popular coaches of trainers in the country. We are currently looking for grants to help defray the cost for this workshop and hope to be able to offer it at a greatly reduced price. Although the number of handler/dog teams will be limited, the number of observers will be unlimited.

We are also working on a Canine Disaster Responder certification and training opportunity to be held in Utah in September. NASAR, Idaho Search and Rescue Dogs, and Utah Search Dogs are all contributing funds for this workshop so registration fees for this workshop will be minimal.

NASAR will also be assisting Texas State University's Forensic Program in again providing an opportunity for canine handlers and their dogs to train at the "body farm" in Texas. There is information on this training opportunity elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Canine Committee is working hard to continue to provide training and certification opportunities for the NASAR Canine Community. If you have suggestions or would like to sponsor a regional workshop, please feel free to contact me at sardogs@nasar.org or contact any member of the Canine Committee.

Ann Christensen

NASAR SAR Dog Committee Chair





Kathy Holbert

2013 Conference Summary

NASAR's 2013 National Search and Rescue Pre-Conference Workshop and Conference was held May 28 through June 1, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

Kathy Holbert of West Virginia taught the Pre-Conference Workshop on "Training the Trailing Dog". Kathy worked with each attendee on improving their skills in urban trailing using motivational training methods. Teams improved their starts, turns, and hard surface tracking abilities.



Rex Stockham

The Canine Track of the Conference had a number of great presentations. Thursday afternoon and Friday morning consisted of two presentations by FBI Supervisory Special Agent Rex Stockham, and two presentations by FBI Forensic Canine Operations Specialist Craig Schultz. SSA Stockham discussed the FBI's reward based trailing dog training and also the forensic canine program search strategies utilized by the FBI. Craig Schultz covered utilizing a model approach to solving K-9 performance regression and discussed ways to model training plans to correct deficiencies in K-9 performance. He also discussed the importance of establishing a solid foundation in working dogs.



Craig Schultz

Sue Stejskal gave several presentations based on her book *Death, Decomposition, and Detector Dogs: From Science to Scene*. She discussed the decomposition process and aspects of the scent picture found in decomposition.

Ann Christensen, NASAR Canine Committee Chair, gave a presentation on starting a cadaver dog and another on selecting a working partner.

Kenneth B. Chiacchia compared air-scent dog and grid team search effectiveness with sweep width during his presentation and Kimberly Kelly gave a well-received presentation on understanding and managing the search for missing Alzheimer and dementia subjects.



Sue Stejskal



Ken Chiacchia



Kim Kelly



NASAR K9 Regional Workshop held in Flagstaff, Arizona



Mary Walker and K9 Jasper with the subject at the end of their successful Area 1 Certification .



K9 Rowan owned by Tiffanie Turner. NASAR Disaster HRD Type II and NASAR Land HRD Type III.



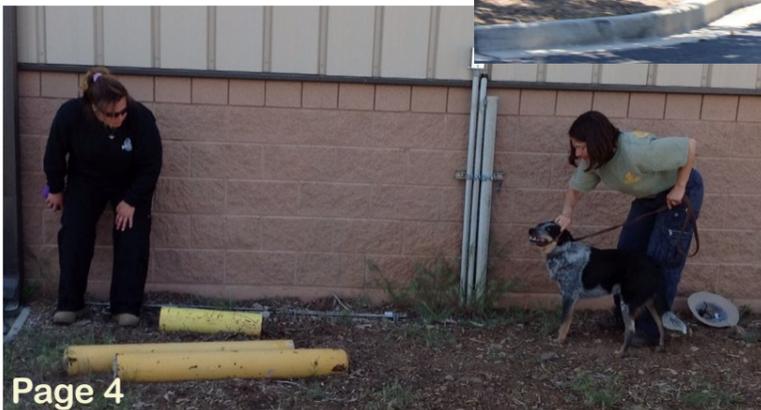
Willow Raven and K9 Tigger during Helicopter training.



K9 Teams doing some desensitizing with a helicopter.



Above: Fred Halley and K9 Compass working a track.



At Left: Willow Raven and K9 Bandit doing HRD pinpointing training with Tiffanie Turner.

See story on the next page.



NASAR K9 Regional Workshop held in Flagstaff, Arizona

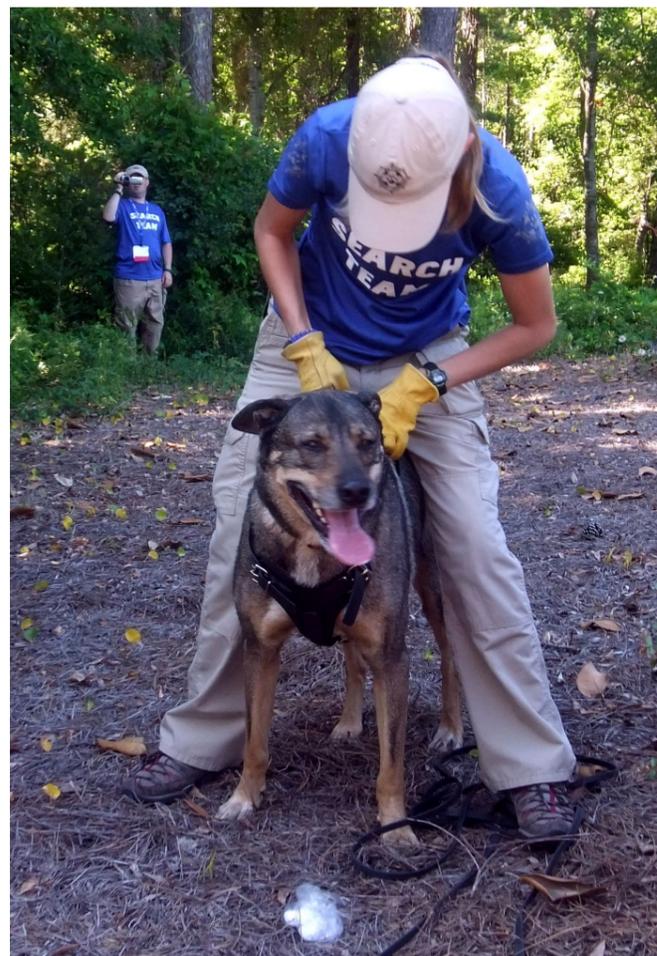
By Cindy McArthur

On May 1-5, 2013, NASAR, in conjunction with Coconino County Sheriff's SAR K9 Team, co-sponsored a Regional Workshop in Flagstaff, AZ. The goal was to provide both classroom and field training opportunities with quality instructors in addition to NASAR K9 certifications. When all was said and done (6) NASAR Area I, II and III certifications and (7) HRD Type III, IV and OTHER were accomplished by the attending K9 teams who traveled from New Mexico, Colorado, Texas and Arizona.

Ben Alexander and Tiffanie Turner taught a Human Remains Detection course with classroom instruction and discussion on reward systems and their importance to your K9's overall performance. The instructors focused on common areas of need such as reinforcement system foundation work, building commitment to odor and striving for a more solid final response. The course objectives were individualized for each K9 team during a subsequent field exercise with the goal being improved overall performance and remedial training, if necessary.

The Area class, taught by Bryce Berry, utilized classroom instruction and discussion on scent theory with different terrain, temperature and wind patterns. During class the topics covered were short runaways, K9 behavior changes, Clicker, Treat, Toy and or praise/play reward systems. There was also discussion around training to build endurance for long searches. Bryce also taught a Night Navigation by the stars field practical which was very well received.

The Arizona Department of Public Safety flew in an Air Rescue Helicopter and the Pilot and Co-Pilot provided instruction to help the attending K9 Teams be more prepared in the event of the need to be deployed by air ship on an actual mission. The K9 teams were able to witness the landing of the ship and approach it to help desensitize their K9s to the noise and rotor wash.



Kristin Smaltz and K9 Phoenix harnessing up before running a track.

Just the Facts



Cindy McArthur and K9 Inspector Gadget

**Start planning for
next year's
FACTS Seminar
March 7-9, 2014**



Marijke Barnson and K9 Java from Canada

March 15-17, 2013 marked the first FACTS Human Remains Detection K9 Training Seminar at the Forensic Anthropology Center at Texas State (FACTS), San Marcos, Texas. This pilot seminar was conducted in cooperation with the National Association for Search and Rescue and Cen-Tex Search and Rescue. Twenty nationally certified teams from across the U.S. were invited to participate in the pilot seminar. Instructors were Ann Christensen, Bill Dotson, Ben Alexander and Tiffanie Turner. Cen-Tex members provided assistance to the FACTS staff and graduate students and escort of K9 teams during training within the facility.

Instruction included introduction to full sets of human remains in varying degrees of decomposition, as well as buried skeletal remains. Two full training days were spent within the FACTS facility resulting in each K9 team having multiple opportunities for odor association with reward. Photos from the pilot seminar are on the following page and additional photos may be viewed [here](#).

This training opportunity was well received by the participants. Thanks to the professional behavior of the K9 teams that attended, a fall seminar has been scheduled for November 15-17, 2013 (see Page 9). **On behalf of the HRD K9 community I would like to extend our sincerest thanks for this outstanding opportunity to Dr. Wescott and Texas State!**

Inquiries regarding K9 training opportunities may be made to Ben Alexander, FACTS K9 Training Coordinator at Michael-b-alexander@tamu.edu or by calling 979-739-8353.

General information on FACTS can be found [here](#). The Forensic Anthropology Center at Texas State (FACTS) mission is to advance forensic science and anthropology through world-class education, research, and outreach. FACTS provides a unique environment to meet the training needs of investigative units and to conduct innovative, creative, and interdisciplinary research that advances forensic anthropological knowledge, theory, and methods.

Thanks again to the teams who made this seminar a great success and here's to many more successful seminars for our SAR community!

Ben Alexander

Requirements:

- All participants must be credentialed dogs with a recognized national agency.

Tuition:

-\$395/participant; cash, check, or credit card
-A light breakfast and lunch are included with tuition
-Tuition does not cover the cost of travel or accommodation.

Registration:

Pay by credit card at <http://www.txstate.edu/anthropology/facts/workshops>

If paying with a credit card, you must contact FACTS@txstate.edu before payment

For assistance with payment please contact Sophia
P: (512) 245-1900

For more detailed information on the course content you may contact Ben Alexander
P: (979) 739-8353
E: Michael-b-alexander@tamu.edu



TEXAS STATE[®]

FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY CENTER

Workshop Announcement:

Human Detection K9 Training Seminar

Texas State is pleased to offer a valuable and unique training opportunity to the dedicated volunteers in search and recovery efforts. Three days of field and classroom training will be conducted on the Freeman Ranch outside of San Marcos, TX. Training will include exposure to full sets of human remains, both surface and buried, in varying stages of decomposition. Instructor to student ratio will be kept to seven students to one instructor. Instructors are nationally certified, recognized, and experienced in human remains detection missions in disasters, wilderness, criminal investigations and drowning recoveries.

The instructors are Ann Christensen, Bill Dotson, Ben Alexander and Tiffanie Turner. Students will rotate through stations on the FACTS facility. All dogs must work on a long line.

Dates: November 15-17, 2013

Times: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location:

Texas State University
Freeman Ranch
2101 Freeman Ranch Road
San Marcos, TX 78666

Questions? Please contact...

Ben Alexander at txmalexander@yahoo.com

Visit <http://txstate.edu/anthropology/facts/workshops.html> for more details.

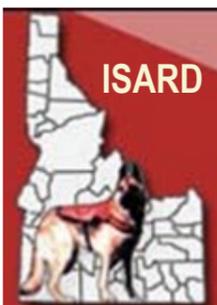


**Canine Disaster
Responder Workshop
September 20-22, 2013
Ogden, Utah**



The National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR), Idaho Search and Rescue Dogs (ISARD), and Utah Search Dogs are sponsoring a certification and training workshop for all levels of Canine Disaster Responders. Workshop will be held in the Ogden Utah area September 20-22, 2013.

Because the above organizations are funding much of the cost, fees for attending will be \$50.00 for handler/canine teams and \$25 for observers. Those attempting NASAR certification will be charged the new lower certification fee of \$30.00 per test.



Greg Strickland, canine handler with the Miami Dade Task Force, and NASAR Canine Committee Chair Ann Christensen will be conducting the tests and providing training.

There will be a limited number of testing slots available based on receipt of application and fees. For more information or to receive an application, email Ann Christensen isard@isard.org or sardogs@nasar.org