

# 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



(11/15/2013)

**OVER EIGHT YEARS OF SUPPORTING OUR K-9 TROOPS!**  
**MORE THAN 380 MILITARY WORKING DOG TEAMS SUPPORTED!**  
***104 Deployed Military Working Dog Kennels Supported***  
**More than \$86,785.00 of supplies shipped down range!**  
<http://www.war-stories.com/odap/ws-odap-index.htm>

Hello everyone! We are currently supporting five (5) kennels and twenty-six (26) deployed Air Force, Army, and Navy teams as of November 15, 2013. November 2013 brings us to eight years and two months 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 Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan; Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar; Ali Al Salem, Kuwait; Al Dhafra, United Arab Emirates (UAE); An Undisclosed Location – Southwest Asia. We have four (4) new pups to introduce this month.

### **Pups heading home from the AOR**

**Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan:** SSgt Justin Gatti & MWD Rambo should be spending the holidays back at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia. No Snow for them!

**Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar:** SSgt Stephen Salassi & MWD Amor are packing to head back to western shores of the Chesapeake Bay and Joint Base Andrews, Maryland.

SSgt Dominic LaForest & MWD Vanda should be pulling chocks and heading back to Vandenberg AFB, in sunny California.

SSgt Aaron Escalante & MWD Mushe are now back in the beautiful Sonoran desert at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.

**Ali Al Salem, Kuwait:** SSgt Bryan Debetsky & MWD VVience should be back at Joint Base San Antonio, Texas enjoying the great Texas weather.

SSgt Bernardo Cortes & MWD Rambo are now back safe and sound at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.

SSgt Joel Congdon & MWD Digi is “pulling chocks” and heading back to the western shore of Maryland to Joint Base Andrews.

## **Pups arriving in the AOR**

**Ali Al Salem, Kuwait:** SSgt Nathan Parks & MWD Astov are deployed from the 11<sup>th</sup> SFG, Joint Base Andrews, Maryland and they are supported by Doc Hodges (Ubon/Korat).

SrA Angela Jones & MWD Chester are deployed from the 99<sup>th</sup> SFS, Nellis AFB, Nevada and they are supported by Steve and Lise Gattis (CRB).

SSgt Dwight Veon & MWD Buli are deployed from the 72<sup>nd</sup> SFS, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma and they are supported by Bob Sullivan (Phu Cat).

**Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates (UAE):** SSgt James Worley, Kennel Master, deployed from the 9<sup>th</sup> SFS, Beale AFB, California and he is supported by Rich Vivio (U-Tapao). This is SSgt Worley's second tour with OD&P.

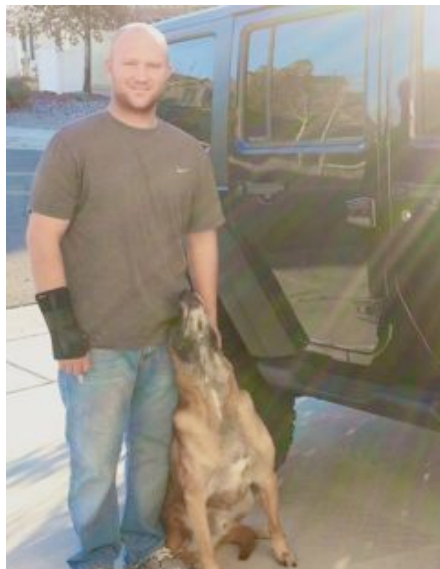
## **455<sup>th</sup> ESFS Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan**

### **Medical update on SSgt Daniel Wilson and MWD Dan**

By now I'm sure that most of you have read about SSgt Daniel Wilson being injured during an OTW operation near Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan in early October. Without publishing any OPSEC information, SSgt Wilson was injured while protecting his K-9 partner, MWD Dan. SSgt Wilson threw himself in the path of a motorcyclist traveling approximately 50 MPH to save the life of MWD Dan.

SSgt Wilson was transported to Landstuhl Regional Medical Center, Germany for recovery. His injuries included a broken arm and damage to his ACL/MCL in one of his legs. He was then transported to San Antonio, for treatment. MWD Dan was about to accompany him to Texas and after treatment; SSgt Wilson was able to go to the airport to ship MWD Dan back to Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.

After follow up treatment, SSgt Wilson was transported home to Kirtland and is under going extensive rehab on his legs and arms. Every attempt is being made to avoid surgery on his leg. Both Dan and Dan are in great spirits and expect to resume their duties. SSgt Wilson will reassume his duties as the Trainer at Kirtland and MWD Dan will continue his career with a new handler. SSgt Wilson and MWD Dan were supported by Ernest Childers (Udorn). We'd also like to thank Trainer, SSgt Paris Carman (Davis-Monthan AFB), for all of his help to keep us in the loop concerning the injuries to this dog team. Teamwork – you just can't beat it!



**Above Left - SSgt Dan Wilson and retired MWD Rico (13 Years YOUNG) recuperating at home!  
Above Right – SSgt Dan Wilson and MWD Rico (E184) deployed at FOB Warrior, January 2009.**

## 455<sup>th</sup> ESFS Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan – Continued



Colonel Glen Christensen, 455<sup>th</sup> EBDG (Expeditionary Base Defense Group) Commander, presents SSgt Rafael Rhodes with his Purple Heart Citation at a ceremony at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. SSgt Rhodes was WIA on 10 August 2013 during an IED attack on their MRAP. MWD Nero was also injured and both have recovered from their wounds. They are deployed from the 7<sup>th</sup> SFS, Dyess AFB, Texas and they are supported by Kelly Bateman (Ubon).



SSgt Rafael Rhodes and MWD Nero join other members that were also presented Purple Heart medals for other attacks and engagements at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan.

**386<sup>th</sup> ESFS Ali Al Salem, Kuwait**



**SSgt Ashley Wendler & MWD Nira are deployed out of the 86<sup>th</sup> SFS, Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Rumor control has it that Nira is “very high energy” and it was hard to catch her for this photo. Nira is three years and always ready to work – The team is supported by Bill & Janice Cummings (U-Tapao).**



**Think Nira will work for this reward? OH YES!**

## 386<sup>th</sup> ESFS Ali Al Salem, Kuwait – Continued



It's a great homecoming, as SSgt Bernardo Cortes is greeted by his son, Sean and the rest of his family upon his arrival at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. There are plenty of smiles to go around at this arrival!

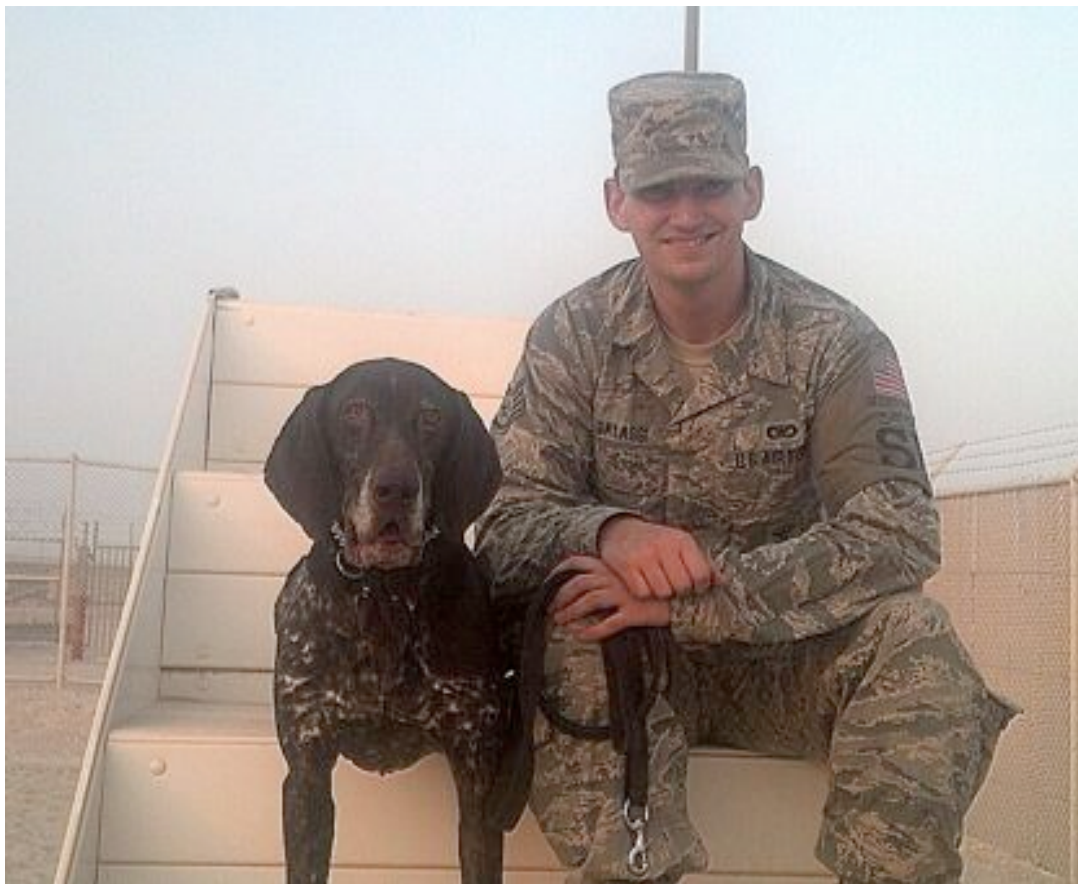


SSgt Dwight Veon & MWD Buli just arrived at Ali Al Salem. The team is deployed from the 72<sup>nd</sup> SFS Squadron, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, and they are supported by Bob Sullivan (Phu Cat). The photograph was taken during their pre-deployment training at a Regional Training Center (RTC).

## 379<sup>th</sup> ESFS – Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar



OK – Mushe got the word from SSgt Aaron Escalante that they were heading home! As you can see from above, Mushe was pretty excited. On the left he reacts to the news, in the center he makes sure he has most of his equipment, and finally on the right – he’s ready to go – “Where do I sit on the way home Aaron?” - “I’m ready to fly now boss”! The team is now back at Davis-Monthan AFB, Arizona.



MWD Amor and SSgt Stephen Salassi finished up some of their final training before heading back to Joint Base Andrews, Maryland. Thanks Sarge for being our “POC” at the “Deid” – You did a great job!

Can you believe that face – We’re talking about Amor! Something tells us that there is a lot of fun in this dog! We’re going to miss you both – thanks for being part of our OD&P family.

## Undisclosed Location Southwest Asia



### Kanjer takes the room!

OK – what’s going on in here? Did someone say “tricks for treats”? GTG!



There’s nothing better than a little work or a full tummy! As you can see MWD Tanjer knows quite a bit about “Situational Awareness” according to SSgt Jeremy Rice. The team is deployed from the 96<sup>th</sup> SFS, Eglin AFB, Florida, and they are supported by Ernest Childers (Udorn).

## Other News concerning OD&P Graduates



SrA Jared Phillips and his sponsor, Doc Hodges (Ubon/Korat), had the opportunity to get together while Jared was home on leave following his tour at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar. SrA Phillips is home based at the 28<sup>th</sup> SFS, Ellsworth AFB, South Dakota. The “team” took time to have lunch in Danville, Kentucky and shared some great stories. Looks like smiles all around – this is what makes our Old Dawgs & Pups program so special!

**Thank you – MWD TSA**



**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.

<http://www.mwdtsa.org>

Once again, we'd like to extend a VERY BIG THANK YOU to Dixie Whitman and everyone associated with the Military Working Dog Team Support Association who have sent MWD TSA “signature” holiday packages down range to support our deployed troops. We all know what it's like to be deployed and care packages from the states sure make your day! Thanks again to everyone at MWD TSA. Coffee shipments are arriving down range as we speak – thanks to the Rogers family also.



## **Feed the Dawgs Project 2013 Schedule**

<http://www.thedawgsproject.com>



The *Feed the Dawgs* Project is a culmination of United States Military Vietnam Veterans, Active Duty Military Working Dog Personnel, and patriotic citizens joining together to support and recognize the dedication and patriotism of today's Military Working Dog Teams around the globe. The United States Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, and Navy deploy Military Working. They feed steak barbecues to active military dog handlers and their family and friends from all branches of United States service as they return from or "ship out" for "deployment" to the front lines on the War on Terror.

If you are interested in assisting in one of the projects or need more information about "*Feed the Dawgs*" please contact Jon Hemp at [jmhemp@feedthedawgs.com](mailto:jmhemp@feedthedawgs.com)

Here is the Feed the Dawgs upcoming schedule for 2013 – Get Involved!

**You can view photos from all of our events on Facebook at "The Dawgs Project"**

23 November Naval Base Ventura County (NBVC), CA (Final Event of 2013)

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

At the time of this report we have **21** members of the "Old Dawgs & Pups" program actively supporting **26** handlers assigned to five (5) 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 1,939 pieces of equipment has been delivered to our K-9 troops serving in the AOR from August 21, 2005 to November 15, 2013. "Old Dawgs and Friends" have supported 104 kennels and **384** K-9 personnel via our program. For additional information on the program please go to:

[http://www.pbase.com/635thk9/old\\_dawgs](http://www.pbase.com/635thk9/old_dawgs)

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

We have purchased and shipped **\$24,846.00** of supplies for the **104** kennels solely via your personal donations. Including the Leatherman corporate and Helping Udders donations, the total is **\$86,785.00**.

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.

### **List of Supplies Shipped by Old Dawgs & Pups**

- 312 Leatherman “Surge” Tools (145) Donated by Leatherman)
  - \* The Leatherman “Surge”/Muts/Flashlights/Knives/Toys donation is valued at approximately **\$58,519.00**
- 266 Thailand Challenge Coins (Donated & Purchased)
- 205 Thailand Historical Base Patches
- 163 \* Leatherman Serac S3 Leatherman Flashlights
- 102 Guardian Pet Beds (Pet Edge)
- 102 Alpha Dog Challenge Coins
- 75 \* Leatherman Knives (Models: c33T, e55, e55B, e33L)
- 56 Kongs (Assorted sizes)
- 54 \* Leatherman MUT Tools
- 50 \* Leatherman M5 LED Lenser Flashlights
- 46 Sponges
- 44 PSI Water Holes
- 40 Cleaning/Scouring Pads
- 33 Kygen Port-A-Bowls
- 31 Doggles (10 Pairs were donated)
- 30 \* Leatherman Wave Toys
- 24 Kygen 2-In-1 Food/Water Bowls
- 24 Rolls 26”x78” 20% Dark Limo Window Tint (Checker Auto Supply)
- 19 VSPA Challenge Coins (Donated & Purchased)
- 22 Retractable Leashes (Pet Edge)
- 16 Cooling Vests & Extra Cooling 3acks (**Helping Udders -Value \$3,420.00**)
- 16 Coastal Medium Firm Shedding Blades
- 16 Classic Long Tooth Undercoat rakes
- 15 Classic HG Food Dishes
- 12 Coastal Large Slickers
- 12 Flat Sided Stainless Steel Water Pails (Pet Edge)
- 12 Bucket Clips (Pet Edge)
- 12 Heavy Guard Handled Water Pails
- 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 lb)
- 8 Cooling Wraps (Roshgo Corp)
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- 8 Cooldanna Cooling Mats (Roshgo Corp)
- 8 Sets of Flood Light Bulbs
- 8 24” Heavy Duty Floor Squeegees
- 7 Digital Thermometers
- 7 Sets Ruff Wear Bark’n Boots Trex (Ray Allen & Ruff Wear)
- 7 Retractable Leashes
- 4 Carabiners
- 4 5” Heavy Duty Cleaning Brushes
- 6 20”/12” (3 each) Heavy Duty Cleaning Brushes
- 3 100 Foot Water Hoses
- 3 Ceremonial K-9 Badges (Memorial)
- 2 Hose Reels – Wheeled Cart
- 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)