

# 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



<http://thailanddoghandlers.com> - "Old D&P"

(08/15/2014)

**OVER EIGHT YEARS OF SUPPORTING OUR K-9 TROOPS!**  
**MORE THAN 400 MILITARY WORKING DOG TEAMS SUPPORTED!**  
**112 Deployed Military Working Dog Kennels Supported**  
**More than \$93,319.00 of supplies shipped down range!**

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

Hello everyone! We are currently supporting six (6) kennels and twenty (20) deployed Air Force, Army, and Navy teams as of August 15, 2014. August 2014 brings us to eight years and eleven 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 Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar; Ali Al Salem Air Base and Ali Al Salem MWD Hub, Kuwait; Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates (UAE); An Undisclosed Location in Southwest Asia, and Soto Cano, Honduras. We have three (3) new pups to introduce this month.

### Pups arriving in the AOR

**MWD HUB/Ali Al Salem, Kuwait:** TSgt Heath Hinton, Liaison Non-Commissioned Officer, 628<sup>th</sup> SFS, Joint Base Charleston, South Carolina. This is TSgt Hinton's second tour with OD&P and he is supported by Jim Stastny (Korat).

**Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar:** TSgt Gary Smith, Kennel Master, deployed from the 72<sup>nd</sup> SFS, Tinker AFB, Oklahoma. This TSgt Smith's second tour with OD&P and he is supported by Ernest Childers (Udorn).

SSgt Sean Schwartz & MWD Robby are deployed from the 87<sup>th</sup> SFS, Jt. Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey. The team is supported by Bill Cummings (U-Tapao).

### Pups heading home from the AOR

**Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar:** MSgt James Chenoweth, Kennel Master, is heading back to the San Francisco area and Travis AFB, California.

**Ali Al Salem, Kuwait:** MSgt Ben Jones, Kennel Master, is heading for the beaches at Eglin AFB, Florida.

SSgt Dylan Finch & MWD Egon should be home and going through the SMSgt Pete Piazza Gate 31 at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma.

**379<sup>th</sup> ESFS - Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar**  
**386<sup>th</sup> ESFS - Ali Al Salem - "The Rock", Kuwait**



**U.S Air Force Staff Sgt. Jesse Galvan, 386th Expeditionary Security Forces Squadron military working dog handler, poses with his dog, Ritz. Galvan has been partnered with Ritz for two and a half years and deployed twice with her. He is deployed from 72<sup>nd</sup> SFS, Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. Jim Cox (Bien Hoa) supports this deployed MWD team. (USAF photo by SSgt Jeremy Bowcock)**



**SSgt Jesse Galvan, take an early morning run with his dog, Ritz. (USAF photo by SSgt Jeremy Bowcock)**  
**"Being a dog handler is a rewarding experience that has brought me countless opportunities, such as traveling around the world and the opportunity to protect the president and the vice president of the United States," said Galvan who deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from Tinker Air Force Base, Oklahoma. "The most important and rewarding part of my job is being able to work alongside my military working dog, Ritz. She is a constant reminder of the reason I do what I do."**

**"She provides me with the comfort and motivation to perform my job to the best of my abilities," said the Defender. MWD Ritz is one of the reasons the personnel of this installation can feel safe to come and go as they please. She provides that first line of defense and is a psychological deterrent that ensures the safety of all U.S. and joint coalition forces, he explains. To view the entire article, go to:**

**<http://www.386aew.afcent.af.mil/news/story.asp?id=123418026>**

## Undisclosed Location – Southwest Asia



**Under the seat and on top of the break table – MWD OOpey is all over the place and he’s having a great time during a break in training.**



**OK – Who’s going to rub belly? Who, Who – I deserve it?**

**SSgt Nicholas Fletcher and MWD OOpey are deployed from the 633<sup>rd</sup> SFS, Langley AFB, Virginia and Tommy Gannon (NKP) supports them. SSgt Nicholas Fletcher and MWD OOpey are “Forward Deployed” at this time and should be returning to his “home station” in the near future. Just like all of the troops in our program – they go wherever they are needed when they are needed!**

## 380<sup>th</sup> ESFS - Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates (UAE)



SSgt Sean McKenna explains the training exercise. On the left, SSgt McKenna (AKA “Crash Dummy #1”) sets up the exercise with SSgt Hall & MWD VVladimire. End result – or “This is your brain on MWD”! SSgt Sean McKenna is deployed from Davis-Monthan AFB and is supported by Davis Priest (Korat).



Victim #1 got “smoked” by MWD Mushe – SSgt McKenna’s partner. No shots – only teeth were fired!



VVladimire gets another one! “Hey – These guys volunteered for this “\$%\*(^@!”

## Alpha Dog Coin and Certificate Presentation



Major Jay Agnew, Commander, presents TSgt Justin Kitts with “Alpha Dog” Certificate and Coin #10 from Old Dawgs & Pups on August 2, 2014 at the United States Air Force Academy, Colorado. TSgt Kitts has deployed with Old Dawgs and Pups during his tours at 455<sup>th</sup> ESFS, Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan in 2009 with his canine partner Mayo (K198) and again in 2010 at FOB Wilson, Afghanistan with his canine partner Dyngo (L606) where they were assigned to the 101<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> BCT, 1-75 Cavalry, HHT. The team completed 63 combat missions during their deployment. TSgt Kitts was awarded the Bronze Star Medal, with “V” (Combat Distinguishing Device), for his service to his country. TSgt Kitts was supported by Phil Carroll (Takhli/NKP) and Patsy Perrotto (NKP) during his deployments. Congratulations TSgt Justin Kitts from all of us at OD&P. Job well done!

## Other News concerning OD&P Graduates



Congratulations to SSgt (Select) Candice Colburn on her recent promotion! Candice sent us these great photographs and also advised us she is now assigned to the 802<sup>nd</sup> SFS, Lackland AFB, Texas. She was supported by Steve and Lise Gattis during her 2012 tour at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar.

## Other News concerning OD&P Graduates – Continued

### 2014 Honorable Mention - Airman of the Year

**Tech. Sgt. Rafael Rhodes – 99<sup>th</sup> Ground Combat Training School Operations  
Division Creech Air Force Base, Nevada**



**Assignment:** Combat training instructor at Creech Air Force Base, Nevada. Rhodes works and trains with units to prepare for deployment, which includes his primary duty to train deploying military working dogs and MWD teams. He was previously at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas, between 2008 and March 2014.

**Personal:** A Miami native, Rhodes enlisted in 2004 and enjoys “the typical guy stuff — weightlifting, movies, hanging out with friends.” Rhodes is the father of a 3-year-old boy. Rhodes, a security forces airman and dog handler, was on his third deployment in four years when the convoy he was leading began taking small arms fire Aug. 9, 2013. In the chaos, a man waiting to detonate an IED ran from the scene, an indication of potential explosives in the area. Rhodes and his dog Nero were hit, but the two swept the high-risk area for more IEDs before returning to his mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle to administer first aid to the unconscious vehicle gunner who also was wounded. For his actions that day, he was awarded the Purple Heart and Air Force Combat Action Medal. Rhodes sustained a concussion and ankle injury, and Nero’s eardrums were perforated. The Air Force Combat Action Medal cites Rhodes’ bravery in directly engaging the enemy while his life was at risk of grave danger. “I’m glad I was able to impact the mission and help others’ lives as far as coming home,” Rhodes told Air Force Times. “And while I’m a general combat instructor, the most fulfilling part is teaching these individuals to come home in one piece.”

Rhodes deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, between July and December 2013. He led more than 150 outside-the-wire security patrols 8 miles outside base, and, often with Nero, searched more than 30,000 vehicles and 250 tons of cargo. Maj. Sarah Babbitt, Rhodes’ former 7th Security Forces Squadron commander, wrote in nominating Rhodes for 2014 Airman of the Year that he is “highly deserving of recognition” — for actions on the battlefield and back home at Dyess Air Force Base, Texas. Rhodes was a first responder in the widely publicized case of 22-month-old Tamryn Klapheke, who died of starvation in her on base home while her father was deployed. Rhodes ensured the safety of the other two Klapheke children, Babbitt wrote. “At the time this happened, my boy was 2, and I grew to appreciate my family life so much more because of everything that I saw and everything that happened,” Rhodes said

Rhodes left Dyess for his new job as a combat instructor at Creech Air Force Base, Nevada, in March, where he is passing on to trainees his lessons from the battlefield and his six years as a dog handler. “Whenever we’re able to train, whether it be a dog team or just security forces members ... teaching the old dogs some different tricks or teaching the new kids something they’ve never learned and see them advancing and doing well is very fulfilling,” Rhodes said. He said he’s ready to deploy “wherever the Air Force needs me to be, and I’m looking forward to the next time I get the chance.” Rhodes would like to volunteer in his free time, possibly as a little league football coach in Las Vegas. He said he one-day hopes to coach high school football and be a role model for kids. Please join Military Times as we salute Tech. Sgt. Rafael Rhodes as the 2014 Air Force Times Airman of the Year. Kelly Bateman supported TSgt Rhodes during his tour at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan in 2013 – Congratulations Rafael!

## Other News concerning OD&P Graduates – Continued



On his recent trip to San Antonio, Texas, Doc Hodges (Ubon/Korat) had the great pleasure of finally meeting and spending time with TSgt George Shepherd of the 341<sup>st</sup> Training Squadron, JBSA. Doc supported TSgt Shepherd during his 2011 tour at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan. TSgt Shepherd and his MWD partner, Aris, were deployed from the 35<sup>th</sup> SFS, Misawa Air Base, Japan. Word has it that the two had a great time visiting and catching up. This is exactly what Old Dawgs & Pups is all about!

### **New “Dawg handler” just arrived!**

It is our pleasure to announce the arrival of our newest “Dawg handler” who entered our world in July 2014. She is Connor Leigh, the daughter of Brandi and Chris. Conner weighted in at seven pounds, and was 21 beautiful inches long. Brandi Dati was deployed with OD&P three times and has been sponsored by Mike Diercks during each of her deployments at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar in 2009, 2010, and an “Undisclosed Location – Southwest Asia” in 2012.

Brandi has separated from the USAF and is enrolled in college in the fall of this year; she tells us that “Life is good”, congratulations Brandi and Chris - You guys sure did GOOD!



## **Military Working Dog Olix (N152) - September 2007 - June 2014**

By SSgt James Worley (Beale AFB, California)

MWD Olix was my first working dog as a handler for the United States Air Force. It was October 2009 when I arrived to Mountain Home AFB I was informed that MWD Olix was going to be my new partner. Due to some complications from his gastropexy he had been unable to work for the few months leading up to our meeting so like any 2-year-old dog he was full of energy! During our time together we completed both a POTUS and two VPOTUS Secret Service support and missions before being deployed to Camp Sather Iraq in September of 2010.

Upon returning from Camp Sather in February 2011 I was told that after just a short year and a half together that Olix and I would have to be separated due to me being selected for a deployment to Osan Air Base, Korea. After the deployment, I stayed in contact with friends from Mountain Home AFB and to check on how up on Olix was doing. Then in October 2012 I received a call that no one wants to get, I was informed that Olix had been diagnosed with cancer. By September of 2013 Olix had already gone through the initial round of chemo, which sent the cancer into remission, and he was ready to be adopted.

Unfortunately another deployment would keep me from being able to take him home. A good friend and previous Olix handler, Scott Menadue, was able to work a deal with another handler in the Mountain Home kennels to be able to foster Olix until I returned from my deployment and was able to pick up Olix to start his retirement with our family.

Just before I was set to come home from deployment, I was advised that Olix's cancer had returned; the recommendation was another round of chemo. Olix started his second round and initially he responded well. I was finally able to make the drive from Beale AFB to Mountain Home AFB in the beginning of May to be reunited with my old friend. Once he came home it was clear that even despite his illness and chemo treatments he was still the same happy go lucky goofy dog he had always been. He lived with us as a one of the family for almost forty short days before the cancer became too much for him. During that time he was given free reign of the house to use couches and beds as he pleased. In his final week we decided to take him to my hometown to have some fun, we played in the ocean and ran the banks of the river I grew up swimming and fishing.



Left – Olix at the beach at Crescent City, California. Right – Olix, Cael, and James enjoy the pier! These photographs were taken as the “family spent their final days together” enjoying each other. SSgt James Worley told us that these were very, very cherished days at his hometown with “his dog”!

**Military Working Dog Olix (N152) - September 2007 - June 2014  
Continued**



**Olix and James play a lot of “fetch” and spent lots of time together in the final days**



**“Surfer Dude” Olix at Ocean World – Crescent Beach California – Yes, he was COOL!**

**On June 26<sup>th</sup> we loaded up in the car to make the drive to the vet I had been dreading. I thanked Olix for everything he had taught me during our time together and being the best partner a handler could ask for.**

**I would like to say thank you to a few people who without their helping me, adopting Olix would not have been possible. SrA Scott Menadue for keeping me informed every step of the way on the situation and soliciting for a foster home for Olix until I returned. And Tyjuan Lynn for providing Olix that temporary home, taking him to his medical appoints and taking care of him until I returned from a down range assignment. I would also like to thank Bill Cummings and the Old Dawgs & Program for helping organize a fundraiser that completely offset the cost of Olix’s medical treatments. The support we received far exceeded anything I could have ever imagined and for that I am eternally thankful.**

**Old Dawgs & Pups would like to also thank everyone who so generously contributed to offset the medical expenses for this dog team – YOU GUYS ARE AWESOME! There just isn’t anything better than a Dog Handler – young or old. This team represents what our program is all about; we have each other’s back!**

## **Military Working Dog Team Support Association – NASCAR Care Package Shipped Down Range**



**Above: Top Left: In the days and weeks before the NASCAR Packing Event, stacks of boxes filled with items for the care packages were delivered to Dixie Whitman's house, included in the care packages were (from Top): Tony Stewart Foundation dog toys; Tony Stewart Foundation hats; NASCAR Illustrated magazines; National Geographic Magazines—copies of the June issue, featuring War Dogs were donated by National Geographic; KONG Traxx, donated by Animal Hospital of Thousand Oaks, and by Matthew's Mis- sions; NASCAR flags, donated by Dick Baumer; and checkered flag bandanas donated and made by Jan Slotar, Jodi Slotar and Courtney Slotar.**

**Included in the NASCAR themed care packages were: (Right from Top) Bumble Bars; TurboPup; Stur water enhancers; Gold Bond Medicated Foot and Body Powder; Beef flavored car cookies custom designed, baked and donated by D.O.G. Bak- ery; Crunchy Puffs—Alaskan White Fish; Earth Bath Pet Wipes donated by Nosework Trial; Scott's BBQ Sauce.**



**Once again, this fantastic organization came through with FANTASTIC care packages for our OD&P Troops - Thank you Dixie Whitman and everyone at MWD TSA for supporting our deployed troops!**

## Feed the Dawgs Project 2014 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 Dogs. We feed steak barbecues to active military dog handlers in all branches of United States service as they return from or "ship out" for "deployment" to the front lines on the War on Terror.

2014 brings new adventures for *Feed the Dawgs* – They are expanding to **THREE** regions! Here are the contacts for the regions – if you are interested in participating in an event – just ping the POC and they will put you to work and make sure you share some quality time with the TROOPS!

**Southwest Dawgs (CA, AZ, NV, & TX)**

Jon Hemp - [jmhemp@feedthedawgs.com](mailto:jmhemp@feedthedawgs.com)  
<http://thedawgsproject.com>

**Rocky Mountain Dawgs (CO, NM, MO, & TX)**

Kevin Sonka - [kevinsonka@comcast.net](mailto:kevinsonka@comcast.net)  
<http://www.rockymountaindawgsproject.org>

**Northwest Dawgs Project (NV, UT, ID, & WA)**

Frank Wehner – [nwdawgs@fcwehner.com](mailto:nwdawgs@fcwehner.com)  
<http://northwestdawgsproject.com>

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 2014 – Get Involved!

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

23 August	Joint San Diego Regional Feed Event (Miramar/MCRD/Navy San Diego), CA
27 September	USMC SSgt Christopher Diaz Memorial, El Paso, TX
27 September	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Christopher Diaz Memorial Feed The Dawgs Event, El Paso, TX
28 September	2 <sup>nd</sup> Annual Christopher Diaz Memorial Iron Dog Competition, El Paso, TX

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

At the time of this report we have **20** members of the “Old Dawgs & Pups” program actively supporting **20** handlers assigned to six (6) kennels in Southwest Asia.

Our K-9 Supply program has been coordinated and funded by the “Old Dawgs & Pups” program volunteers. The supporters are members of the VSPA, VDHA, and friends of K-9. A total of 2,149 pieces of equipment has been delivered to our K-9 troops serving in the AOR from August 15, 2005 to August 15, 2014. “Old Dawgs & Friends” have supported **112** kennels and **409** K-9 personnel via our program. For additional information on the program please go to:

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

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

We have purchased and shipped **\$26,885.00** worth of supplies to **112** kennels solely via your personal donations. Including the Leatherman corporate and other noted major donations, our program has supplied at total of **\$93,319.00** to deployed Military Working Dog teams. Please note that this total does not reflect all of the “care packages” that have been sent directly by team sponsors and other organizations that we have been so fortunate to be involved with for this program.

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

(For a complete list of supplies shipped contact Bill Cummings)

- 312 Leatherman “Surge” Tools (145 donated by Leatherman)
  - \* The Leatherman “Surge”/MUTS/Flashlights/Knives/Toys donation is valued at **\$63,014.00**
- 287 Thailand Challenge Coins (Donated & Purchased)
- 266 Thailand Historical Base Patches
- 163 \* Leatherman Serac S3 Flashlights
- 133 Guardian Pet Beds (Pet Edge)
- 102 Alpha Dog Challenge Coins
- 79 \* Leatherman MUT Tools
- 75 \* Leatherman Knives (Models: e33T, e55, e55B, e33L)
- 56 Kongs (Assorted sizes)
- 55 \* Leatherman Wave Dog Toys
- 54 Retractable Leashes (Pet Edge)
- 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 donated)
- 24 Kygen 2-In-1 Food/Water Bowls
- 24 Rolls 26”x78” 20% Dark Limo Window Tint (Checker Auto Supply)
- 20 160 oz Stainless Steel Bowls (Pet Edge)
- 19 VSPA Challenge Coins (Donated & Purchased)
- 16 Cooling Vests & Extra Cooling Packs (**Helping Udders – Value \$3,420.00**)
- 16 Coastal Medium Firm Shedding Blades
- 16 Classis 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
- 10 Heavy Duty Handled Pails – 9 Quart (Pet Edge)
- 10 Stainless Steel – 3 Quart Dura-weight Bowls (Pet Edge)
- 10 Helping Udders Reward Toys (Helping Udders)
- 9 Hose Nozzles
- 8 K-9 Bluelight Supplement (2 pounds)
- 8 Cooling Wraps (Roshgo Corporation)
- 8 Cooldanna Cooling Mats (Roshgo Corporation)
- 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)
- 6 20”/12” (3 each) Heavy Duty Cleaning Brushes
- 4 Carabiners
- 4 5” 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

- 2 130-Foot Enclosed Hose Reels**
- 2 \* Leatherman EOD MUT Tools**
- 1 Large Patrol Harness**
- 1 Medium Patrol Harness**
- 1 Case Toilet Paper (30 Rolls)**
- 1 Case Drink Mixes & Snacks**
- 1 Syntek Hidden Sleeve (Ray Allen)**
- 1 Armor Carrier Shoulder Pads**
- 1 Molle Dump Pouch**