



JUNE 2014

## From The President

The first Emergency Veterinary Care course was held at Massey University earlier this month. The course was developed with the assistance of Massey University and Centre for Service and Working Dog Health, course content was provided by the United States Department of Defence. Six USAR medics and four of our handlers attended. I think all involved would agree that it was a success. The intention is to continue to run this course going forward although no dates have been set for any future courses.

*I would also like to remind everyone of the upcoming AGM which is being held on the 20th August. Nominations forms will be sent out shortly and I would encourage everyone to consider who they would like to see on the committee for 2014/15.*

Over the last few weeks Jason has been working on a funding application, if approved, the funds will be used to purchase PPE for all handlers and some basic PPE for anyone coming along to help out at training sessions.

**Tim Drennan – President**

# National Training Weekend – 2014

Plans needed to be changed at the last minute as Christchurch had a record amount of rainfall and serious flooding in the few days previous to this year's NTW. At the eleventh hour though, the rain stopped, the water receded and the sun came out, so most of the scheduled program was able to re-established, with only a few minor changes of sites and times.

The Friday morning had us meeting at the Task Force rooms with a briefing for the weekend and then after being divided into three groups we had a round robin of searching within the fire tower, the USAR rooms and the old Woolston fire service accommodation block. My team started with a bark-box (in a pipe), and a small outside search, then a two subject search (callouts) in the dark tower which finished with a dog lift down in harness from the 2<sup>nd</sup> story. The USAR rooms were searched on searching harness and long line for two subjects, and finally another two subjects to find in the accommodation block.

We had a cuppa then enjoyed a classroom session as Janelle talked about her trip to Disaster City in Texas and the plans for the future of the Search Dog Foundation Training Centre in California.

After lunch, we headed off to Isaacs quarry site for a rubble pile session in which we all did a test type pile and some subject callouts in hides for the younger dogs. We ended up back at the pound for some pizza and a discussion chaired by Tim (President) over the Questionnaire survey that went out to all SDA members.

Paul George and Jenny came down for the Sat and Sun sessions. Saturday morning at 0800 had us at the old police station in Hereford Street (the first time we had used this building). Here we had a series of round robins through 3 search type areas and a veterinary session (up on the 9<sup>th</sup> floor).

Two of the search areas had a number of floors in which there were subjects to find, and one area was in the basement of the old cell block (the noise distraction here being Elvis Presley singing Jailhouse Rock!).

A late lunch was had at Reality Bites Function-hall (great venue and great food provided).

Off again to Isaacs to search an interesting scenario. There were two subjects put into the same hide and another subject into a pipe that was within 5 metres of that hide. The operational dogs went over the pile to indicate on the two sources of scent. After all dogs had been through, one of the two subjects were taken out of the hide and the subject in the pipe. The same dogs went over the same search to see if they would indicate on the hide the subject was in again and to make sure they did not indicate on the residue scent of the subject taken from the pipe. The younger dogs did runaways and some pop-ups on the pile to finish off a busy day.

We all went out for dinner that night at the Ferrymead Speights Restaurant.

Sunday morning we went to work in the red zone housing area. While Brenda and Paul George worked with the younger teams with some search exercises in a few houses, the operational dogs did a "long distance" search. This is to simulate a tornado disaster in which there would be a large area to search in a "hasty style" ie to cover a lot of ground in a short time. The objective was to walk along the road and allow the dog to range freely into the different sections to see if and when they picked up human scent which would end in an indication, so the handler could investigate. We had an extensive vet session with Jenny when we went over our dog's temperature, pulse and respiration. Doing this in teams of two made us aware of not just our own dog but also getting up close and personal with another.

We finished the NTW with a debriefing of the weekend after lunch back at Function-all.

It was a great weekend with heaps of good training-

**Carol Ewington**



Janelle & Cairo—Old Police Station



Tim & Boo—Building Search



Picture caption



Brenda Rewarding Keepa



Tim with Alfie



Lois & Hurley searching at Isaac's



Buk finding subject in pipe

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES

## – Northern & Central Regional Training Weekends 2014

“People love dogs. You can never go wrong adding a dog to the story.”

– Jim Butcher, *White Night*

This year I took the opportunity to go to both the Northern (in Hamilton) & Central (in Palmerston North) Regional Training weekends.

As it was my first experience of air travel with a dog I had a lot to learn; what to pack and what not to; loading a dog onto a luggage trolley, then what to do with the luggage!; getting a rental van only to discover as I limped through the airport car park the indicators are the window wipers, the ignition turns itself off & on & the inside is so highly polished that your feet slip off the pedals & the dog & luggage are slip sliding all over the place in the back! I learnt that airport staff are very helpful when you ask & long line dog leads are very good for securing the dog crate in the back of the van! (Thanks for that tip Tim). Stella travelled without a whimper but was very happy to get out of her crate & stretch her legs at the end of each flight.

### Hamilton 22<sup>nd</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup> March

Attendees: Donna/Jet; Lois/Hurley; Anne; Clare & John; Tim/Boo; Ben/Rookie; Carol/Stella

Tim, Ben & I drove from Auckland airport to Hamilton arriving about 6pm at the **Lakepoint Motel** – they were very welcoming of us & our dogs. Our request to rearrange the accommodation so as to let Clare & John have a room to themselves (that’s the romance bit of the story LOL) was met without fuss or added cost – thank you. This was a beautiful spot right across the road from the lake area & walking distance into town. Once everyone had arrived we all went out for burgers & fries then settled into our rooms for the night after walking & settling the dogs. I was exhausted already!

Saturday we were all up early & headed to Donnas house. Donna had set up an amazing agility course around her yard – go girl power! Hurley & Jet completed the agility component of their operational assessments. Out came the morning tea – it was amazing with sausage rolls, cakes & biscuits all home made – I had heard about the Central Teams’ baking but it surpassed all expectations. Thanks heaps Anne & Lois. Also thumbs up to Clare who brought home made choc chip cookies setting herself a precedent! Well satiated (I could barely get back in the van) we moved on to Horotui Freezing works for building searches. Donna had a trailer with all the equipment to set up bark boxes & directions. After Hurly and Lois completed an exceptional directional assessment all the dogs did a bark box exercise. Some of the site was still operational - good training for the dogs & handlers working around real distractions. An upper story search exercise had us climbing several flights of steel stairs enter the top floor where there was a rabbit warren of rooms. In another part of the building Tim set up a search and educated us through how to divide and complete a search room by room when it is unknown what lies beyond the next doorway or hole in the wall.

After lunch at a local mall it was on to Watson Davies Rubble Pile for a yard and rubble search. This was a great site with lots of potential places to put subjects – piles of bark, machinery, scrub, buildings, small rubble pile. It was very hot by now and the wise amongst us had packed sunscreen! We were dreaming about ice blocks haha. The rubble search came up with a mixed bag of results. The yard search was interesting with dogs alerting on scent pooling on the concrete back wall of a structure where the subject was on the other side.

This was a full day of searching and we all went back to the accommodation with a lot to think about regarding handler and dog performance. We walked into town for dinner – once again I was exhausted and nearly fell asleep in my plate! For me it was more the “mental” exhaustion rather than the physical.

Sunday came around and we got up, packed up and went for coffee before heading to our last training site at DT McDonalds. This had lots of hide opportunities and my only regret is that we did not have as much time to spend there as Tim, Ben and myself had to leave to drive back to Auckland. We did “fun” training with runaways and searches in straw bales and diggers as the dogs were definitely very tired and we wanted them to finish with a fun session.

The last of the baking came out – I swear those containers had an endless supply of baking in them!

Donna did a stupendous job of arranging accommodation for the visiting handlers, organising sites to train, providing equipment to use for agility/bark boxes & sourcing new victims for the dogs to find. A big ask for one person to organise;

well done Donna and thank you for all your efforts making it an enjoyable weekend. Thanks to all who came to participate enabling a varied training weekend.

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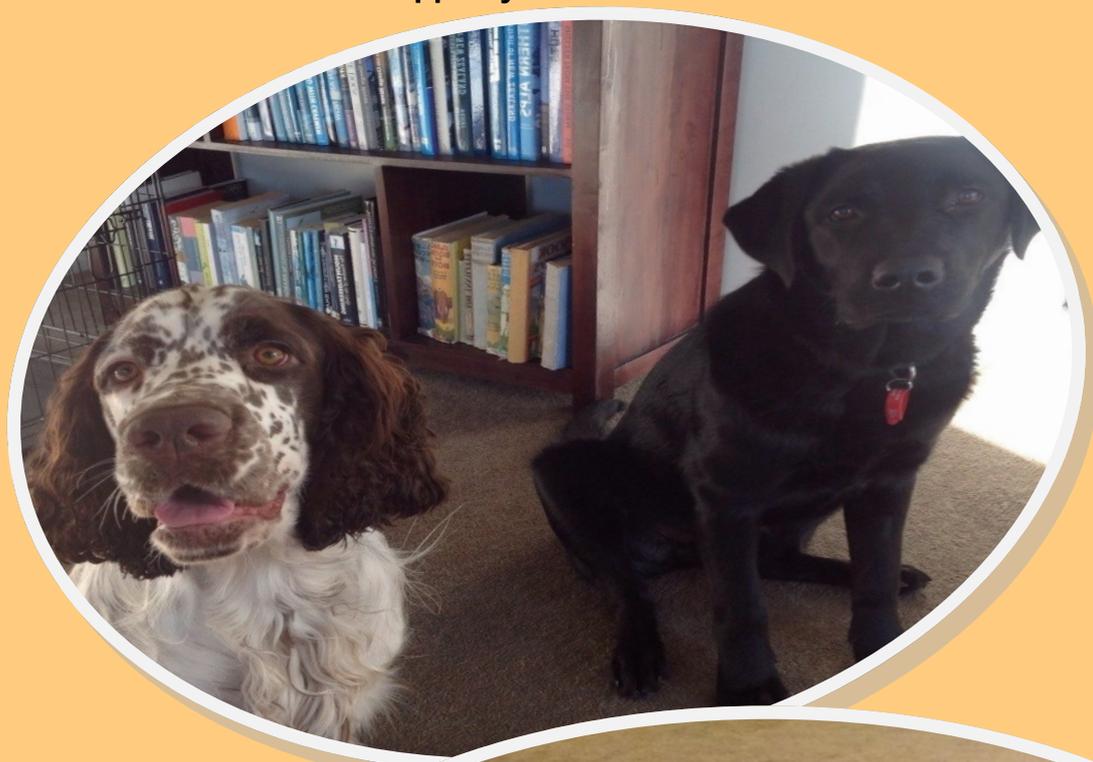
## The latest recruit into the Search Dog Program

Monty was unsettled for the first couple of weeks as he wasn't sure how long he would be staying with us but it hasn't taken him long to settle in. He gets along very well with our springer spaniel Millie; a high-drive puppy and a mental spanner make an interesting combination!

Monty's cheeky nature has become obvious over the last couple of weeks as he has become more comfortable around us and his new home. We have to hide his toys really well because it doesn't take him long to sniff them out.

He is picking up new skills really quickly and is developing a very good bark.

**- John Appleby**



**A very laid back Monty or is he just worn out?**

# A TALE OF TWO CITIES *Con'd*

## Palmerston North 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup> April

Attendees: Lois/Hurley; Anne; Clare & John; Donna/Jet; Brenda/Boss; Linda/Buk; Mark/Laika; Carol/Stella

Brenda, Linda, Mark & I flew with our dogs up to Wellington. Children at the airports were fascinated watching at all the dogs in the crates being wheeled along on the luggage trolleys. Many of them came up with their parents to have a look and ask questions. From Wellington we drove up to Palmerston North, with a brief stop in Otaki (reconnaissance for the shopping trip home!) and a late lunch.

On arrival at **Holiday Park** in Palmerston North we were given two large cabins which were warm and comfortable with good shower and cooking facilities. Donna, Lois & Anne were in one cabin and us southerners in the other. It was a privilege to be able to stay here as it is not usual policy for them to allow dogs – and there is a wonderful park and walkway that went for miles to exercise our dog's right behind the campground along the river side.

Saturday we met up with Clare and John & Clare's brother (who was a subject for us). We headed to the Higgins Rubble Pile for searches and runaways amongst the scrub and rubble pile. Anne & Lois had large plastic barrels which we used as hides for the subjects and they worked extremely well. The site was "working" so plenty of distractions around for the dogs in the form of people dumping rubble and trucks driving around. A short tea break here and the famous baking came out (I think I managed a piece of everything!)

Longburn Meatworks was the next site. Most of the others had been here before and Linda had a technical search she wanted to try out here. As with every site we first did a reconnaissance to check out hazards and see what we had to "play" with. Brenda & Linda ran an outside search exercise first. We then used a basement room to run a difficult search in a pitch dark environment – I was surprised there were no bats! The handlers had to get their dogs down an old wooden conveyer, and then get them to search a huge room which handlers could not go into until the dog had a find – an exercise in getting your dog to go where you want it to by voice control alone. Linda's search was next. Walls had been demolished leaving only a large concrete floor. Subjects were hidden below this concrete floor which had drain pipe sized holes drilled in parts of the floor. The dogs had to pinpoint and alert at the hole (there were several) that the strongest scent was coming from! It was an awesome sight watching the dogs working the scent. A very different and technical search scenario. We finished with "pass the dog" where the handler lifted their dog and passed them on to another person who passed the dog down the human line and back up to the handler at the end. Some of the looks on the dogs faces were priceless – dignified it was not. A quick round of emergency stops finished the day up for us.

Sunday we packed up our gear and left the Holiday Park to go to the old Massey accommodation building where we had to do a bit of a tidy up as a group of vandals had gone in and broken a lot of glass and mirrors. This site had a lot of dormitory type rooms where three subjects were hidden, one in quite a tricky area. We learnt how a handler can "walk over" the scent area and push the dog out of an area a subject is hidden. Another fun search to end the day on the outside perimeter of the building. Debrief with a warm cuppa and the rest of the home baking to finish off – definitely diet time when I get home! All packed we said our goodbyes and headed for home.

Anne and Lois you were superb hosts. The weekend was well organised and we had some excellent training sites to utilise. Thank you to everyone who attended. I hope to be back North very soon for another training experience.

**What else I learnt:**

Training weekends are just that - TRAINING. Searches may not always “go to plan” or be perfectly executed by our dogs but that is what training is for – to identify what is working well and what areas need work or rethinking, taking this forward for future training sessions. Don’t be so hard on yourself. Training is never repetitive; there is always something to learn. Learn from each other - I encourage everyone to share their training experiences – good & bad. Our dogs know our moods! At training focus needs to be on fun & energy, putting aside outside issues. Handlers, drink more fluid during training, preferably in the form of water, to keep hydrated and the brain functioning.

“Dogs are great. Bad dogs, if you can really call them that, are perhaps the greatest of them all.” -  
Marley & Me

- Carol Ewington



- Unknown



# VET CORNER

A regular column by  
Jenny Waters, USAR Vet Evaluator

## Too Hot To Handle...

Hyperthermia, or heatstroke, is a serious risk to search dogs.

Hyperthermia means “high temperature”, and it happens when the dog gets too hot – from fever, from the environmental conditions, or from exertion. The condition can progress rapidly, and is potentially fatal. Early recognition of symptoms and starting treatment before transport to a vet clinic will greatly increase the chances of a dog surviving.

Dogs don't sweat like humans, and control their body temperature by panting, resting and seeking a cooler environment. If they can't, hyperthermia results and leads to damage (sometimes irreversible) to internal organs.

### **Warning signs:**

- Excessive panting
- Drooling
- Rapid heart rate (>120 per minute)
- Rectal temperature >40°C
- Dark red mucous membranes
- Disorientation or incoordination
- Bloody diarrhoea
- Vomiting

Collapse, seizures and death may follow.

### **Treatment:**

Use cool or tepid water to wet the coat, then encourage evaporation with moving air.

Improvise fans using towels, floor mats from vehicles, clip boards etc, or put the dog in the cab of the vehicle and turn on the air-conditioning.

Avoid using ice-cold water, as this will make the blood vessels in the skin constrict and reduce heat transfer from the dog to the environment. It may also make the dog shiver, which generates more heat.

Similarly, placing wet towels or clothing over the dog will also prevent heat loss.

Ice packs can be used in the groin, armpit or under the neck where the large blood vessels are close to the surface.

IV fluids should be started if possible.

Monitor rectal temperature frequently, and stop the cooling treatment once the temperature drops below 40°C.

Transport to a vet clinic as quickly as possible. Even if the dog seems to be recovering, it should be monitored closely for several days, as delayed signs of organ damage may arise.

### **Prevention:**

Hydration is the most important factor. Encourage your dog to drink frequently, and ensure there is plenty of good quality water available. (Don't forget to drink plenty yourself – you're working in the same environment.)

Unlike humans who sweat out electrolytes, dogs lose heat by water evaporation from the respiratory tract. Supplementing electrolytes may raise the blood levels of sodium, potassium and chlorine above normal. Healthy dogs can excrete these through the kidneys, but if kidney function is damaged by heat stroke, these abnormally high levels can be dangerous. (Supplementing dogs that drool a lot may be worthwhile, as electrolytes are lost in saliva.)

Using subcutaneous fluids to prevent heat stroke is questionable. The volumes needed are large and would probably be uncomfortable for the dog. There is also a risk of introducing infection. Ensuring adequate drinking is preferable. If fluid therapy is necessary to treat dehydration or heat stroke, the IV route should be used.

In a hot environment, wet the coat with a spray bottle or a squirty drink bottle before, during and after exercise.

Provide adequate shade (preferably with some source of air flow) during rest periods.

Allow long rest periods, to let the body temperature return to normal (at least 40 minutes, but the hotter the environment, the longer the rest period needs to be).

One US study found that 50% of heat stroke patients died, and that those that survived had all been cooled by their owners and transported to a vet clinic within 90 minutes of seeing clinical signs.

Always be aware of the possibility of hyperthermia, and be watchful for early signs. If in doubt, take your dog's temperature!

**- Jenny**

## Current Operational Teams - May 2014

Handler	Canine	City	Operational Level
Linda Pike	Buk	Christchurch	Advanced
Brenda Woolley	Boss	Christchurch	Advanced
Brenda Woolley	Keepa	Christchurch	Advanced
Brenda Woolley	Luna	Christchurch	VRD Certification
Tim Drennan	Boo!	Christchurch	Advanced
Janelle Mackie	Cairo	Christchurch	Advanced
Ben Moore	Rookie	Christchurch	Operational
Donna Thomas	Jet	Auckland	Operational
Lois Blackmore	Hurley	Central	Operational



**For the cat lovers**

# Advanced Operational Assessments

**T**hree teams, Brenda and Boss, Tim and Boo, and Ben and Rookie were scheduled to sit their Advanced Operational Assessments.

However, on the morning of the assessments we learned of the exciting news that only 2 teams would be tested today due to the impending (and what turned out to be extremely sudden) arrival of Ben's baby girl!

The first rubble pile was the smaller pile at Isaacs and it was full access. It was a busy day with trucks working hard at the rubble site and even working on the pile we were using! They were well away from our buried subjects of course! Brenda arrived first and we put our vehicles in 4WD to get through the flooding to the pile. Brenda and Boss breezed through, Boss ignored food distractions and found his 2 subjects, as did Tim and Boo, and we left for the next site.

Carol, Mark and Janelle made up the forward party, making hides and hiding subjects, while Jason and Lisa were the back party, safely getting subjects out and making sure no one was left behind.

The second rubble pile was in a field of grass at another location and also contained 2 subjects. One was buried deep into what seemed to be the trunk of a tree and the other under a horizontal slab of concrete. The hides were well disguised and very innovative with more food distractions placed on the pile. Once again, the handlers and dogs did a great job and we all left for the next site.

The last pile was at Owaka, and when we arrived we realised one of the hides had been destroyed, so Mark and Carol quickly set about rebuilding it. There was a loud music distraction and the dogs were not bothered at all, as you would expect. They easily found their next 2 subjects and passed their Advanced Operational Assessments.

Thanks to Graham for videoing the assessments and to Jenny and Colin, and of course Cairo who happily took up the role of test dog.

- Lisa-Marie Clarke





## What's Coming Up

20 August	AGM
6/7 September	Southern Regionals
12-14 September	Mock Assessments & Exercise Central
27/28 September	Central Regionals—Palmerston North
18/19 October	Assessment - Christchurch
1/2 November	Foundation Weekend
22/23 November	Northern Regionals



Send us your feedback  
or do you have something to share  
Email: [beattie.rochelle@gmail.com](mailto:beattie.rochelle@gmail.com)

The NZ USAR Search Dog Association would like to acknowledge the on going Support of the following businesses.

