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From The President ...

I can see there has been a lot of effort put into this edition of Pawprint, great articles over the last three months from a number of different SDA events and from a number of different perspectives.

There is not much more I can add to this edition so I will keep this brief.

The committee will be holding a face to face meeting in Christchurch in the new year, I deferred this meeting until we were able to have had a catch up with some key Fire Service staff an update will be sent out at that stage.

Congratulations to two new operational teams, Lois Blackmore and Hurley (Central) and Donna Thomas and Jet (Northern) — well done.

After a busy year I hope you all have a very Merry Xmas and are all looking forward to the New Year. Enjoy and keep safe.

Tim Drennan
NZ USAR Search Dog Association
President



Southern Regional Training Weekend

22nd/23rd June 2013

The Southern Regional Weekend looked to be a wet winter one with snow forecast for the Saturday, however we arrived to very heavy showers instead.

We started off at Sockburn and did yard searches for all the new dogs that have recently joined the training program. This was their first actual search for a subject (had previously done runaways and callouts in various locations). They had a few minute search down the yard and when they hit the last corner, they were into a strong wind carrying the subjects scent. Laika, Zoe, Jock and Alfie all alerted well when they located their subject.

Then we had the Operational handlers and dogs do their yard searches with a subject hiding in one of the sheds down the last side of the yard.

The second exercise involved taking all the dogs to the pancake in the smoke-filled pumphouse. Although the smoke machine was working overtime, at least it was a place for us to retreat to out of the weather.

The object of this exercise was to get the dogs alerting on a subject in a confined area. The dogs began searching downstairs and then came up through the pancake. It was also the first time the young dogs had been through the pancake. All the dogs did exceptionally well and there was a huge amount of praise to be heard from the pancake. Meanwhile, in the yard Meg was working well to find the VR sources.

Janelle left to set up her subjects for Antonio Hall while the rest of the team recharged with coffees (Yes, we brought J one). Antonio Hall was a great location, very realistic and the perfect environment to remind us of what we would most likely discover in a real search and rescue deployment. Thanks to Robert for giving up his time to take us through the building and to the subjects, who did a great job in hiding for the dogs.

We began the building search with Operational dogs, then the young dogs (yet to join the program) were allowed a walk through. They loved it and were ready for action! We then had 3 subjects hiding with a mixture of popups and callouts for the dogs that had just entered the national training program.

They did well and delivered great barks to alert the handlers. As we had used 2 wings for the two groups, we then swapped wings and worked in a different area for the second round.

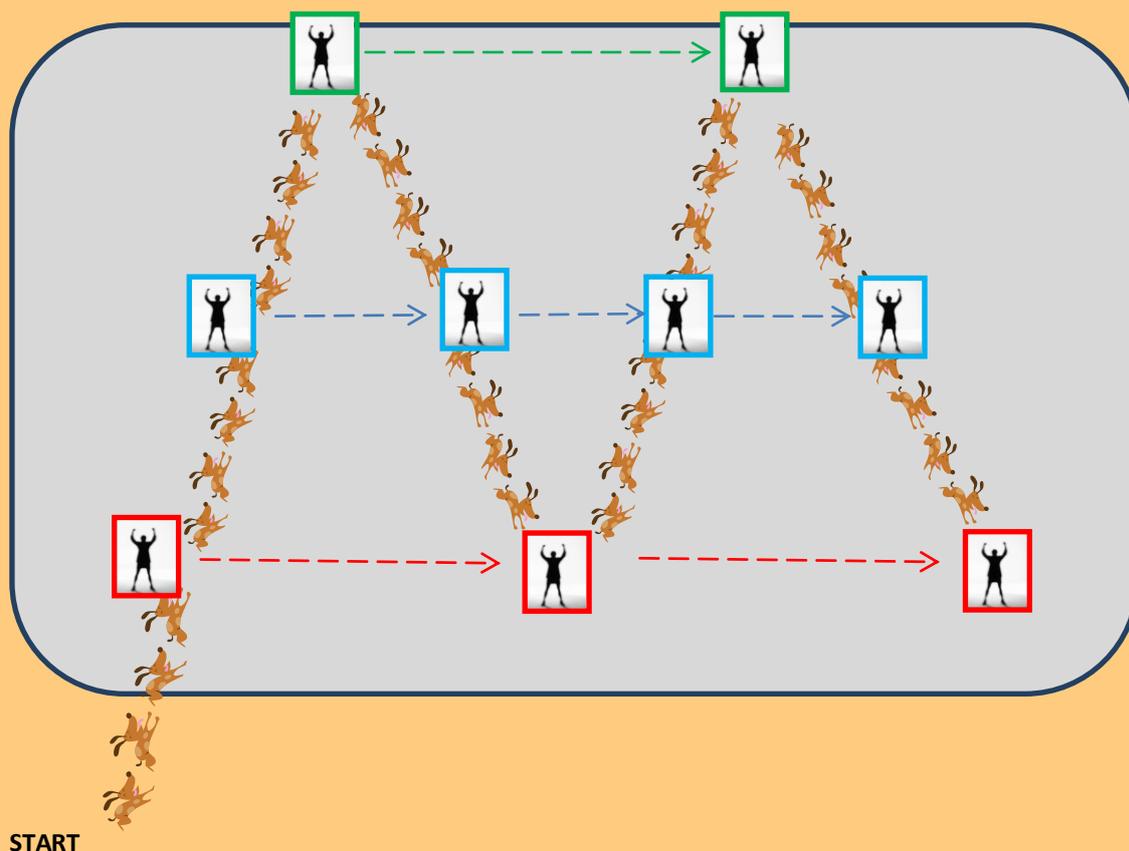
Meg had an on harness/long line search for 3 VR sources located in the kitchen/dining area of the building, and she performed very well.

The pouring rain wasn't letting up, so we all welcomed Janelle's pumpkin and leek and potato soup for what was a late lunch. We wound up the day with a quick runaway outside to see where the very young dogs were at. It was good to see that not even Janelle's fabulous soup could distract them as they ran straight passed it to get to their toy!.

The Sunday saw us all at the Fulton Hogan site on Pound Road. We did some long subject runaways, in which the subjects had to bring the dogs back to the handlers. Then we did a J-Zee....a training game made up by Janelle in which the dogs have a series of pop-ups over the rubble as the subjects move across the rubble in formation after rewarding. Great fun, check out the diagram for a better explanation!

We ended the regional weekend at Raeward for coffee and lunch.

Lisa Clarke



Hi All

I would like to acknowledge the hard work that clearly went into the organisation of our southern regional training weekend (28/29 Sept) and give a big thanks to all those people who were involved.

I gained a tremendous amount out of the weekend.

I also enjoyed the opportunity to have Lois, Donna and Ann with us, giving the dogs an opportunity to find new and play with new "victims".

Much appreciated and a big thank you.

Carol Ewington

Central Regional Training Weekend

7th-8th September 2013

Well, here we are again, back in Palmerston North for our regional training weekend with Brenda and Linda. We used the same sites as usual: Rubble at Higgins – even bigger and with new professionally built hides courtesy of the TF Central guys, with guidance from Brenda and myself a few weeks previously.

Longburn: we were unable to use the old freezing works because of demolition work and asbestos, but the building we had was 3 levels plus a basement. Excellent.

Kimberley: 90 acres of old empty buildings. What more could you ask for? Unfortunately this might be the last time we are able to use this site as it is going up for tender.

So, we had 4 handlers and 4 dogs – Brenda/Jock, Linda/Buk, Anne/Jake and Lois/Hurley. Excellent for Anne and myself, because it was one on one.

Sat 7th – Early start for Brenda, Linda and Lois. By 7:45 we were at the rubble checking out our BRAND NEW HIDES. How exciting for Anne and myself, after 5 years of girlie built hides, we now have real “Bob the Builder” ones. Thanks again to the Central Task Force Guys!

8:30am, Anne met all the subjects at the 4 Square shop down the road - we had 3 new subjects from RT4 Palmerston North (thanks for coming folks), plus our regular ladies from Wanganui (Sue and Julieanne), who had very obligingly agreed to help us the whole weekend.

By 9am the subjects were in the hides, observers/distractions in place and camera ready to roll.

Linda and Buk were up first. This was Buk’s first outing over rubble after his August break. What a gem of a dog, straight in, bang, bang, bang. No hesitation.

Anne and Jake were next. Unfortunately Anne had seriously injured her knee the previous week and was in extreme pain the whole weekend. What a gusty lady tho, she still managed to clamber up, over and down after Jake and between them they found 3 subjects.

Hurley and myself were next – what fun. I have PC6 under my belt so no immediate pressure, just fun and experience until the biggie in October.

Smoko time, so we hauled the subjects out of their holes. No complaints from them so hopefully they will be back another day. Maybe if we promise more choc fudge and mud cake for smoko??

Then we had pop-ups among the old logs in the yard.



Lunch, then We used the RT4 members (gave them a taste of what is to come). They were great with the dogs and came out of their pozzies wearing big grins!

Before the RT4 guys left, we used them for a "Rent a Crowd" for Anne and Jake PC6 heelwork. No problems. Goodbye then to RT4 – will see you again SOON!.



Well done boys (dogs).

Back to work – each of the dogs had two people to find on the rubble. Jock was a great dog.

I suggested that he moved as graceful as a ballerina over the pile (not sure if that went down well or not). He has a HUGE bark, which doesn't seem to go with his sleek physique, and throws his head up to get even more volume.



On to Longburn where we spent the afternoon doing various pop-ups and searches, finishing up the day with a barkbox type callout search and a rather high metal ladder climb, attached to the outside of the building.

Roast dinners for tea, then Anne and myself were

shown video clips of us and our dogs working that morning on the rubble. What a great learning tool that video camera is.

10pm – last doggie twinkle for the day, then BED!

Sun 8th – another early rise to pack up and be at Kimberley by 9am to meet a potential new handler. On the way, we realised that the first America's Cup race was on the radio so that was a very exciting drive.

Kimberley is a good place to train for building searched. Unlimited supply. Our first search was a building of 47 rooms – I know this because I mapped and counted every single one of them. Of course, the subject was in the 47th room!

A quick cuppa, more fudge and onto next buildings. We kept this up until noon incorporating some limited

access for the handlers and some areas where subjects were up very high.

By then, I think handlers and subjects had had enough, dogs still seemed pretty keen tho, which is a good sign I guess. Mind you, our boys were VERY QUIET on the way home.

Another very successful and enjoyable training weekend. Thanks again to Brenda and Linda for your company, patience and expertise. We are always learning. Thanks to our wonderful subjects/video takers and camera shooters, Sue and Julieanne from Wanganui.

Until next time.....

Lois Blackmore



New Equipment for Agility Yard.

Thanks to the Southern Task Force for their help and support in making some new agility/bark box equipment over the last year. Special thanks to Tony West, Nick Down and Andy McEwen for their many hours down at the base and for transporting it all to the agility yard. We now have 2 new bark boxes, a couple of A frames, some stands, a wobbly bridge and a new see-saw.

We also have a couple of large wooden boxes (painted concrete grey), that we are able to transport to sites and bury as subject hides, used for the first time in last May assessments, and also on a training day at Isaacs before the winter break. They are roomy and very comfortable (once mats and blankets go in) for our subjects, and have plenty of large air holes down the sides for letting air in and scent out. These boxes can also be used as bark boxes or for use within a barrel field.

Also made were our new directional tables (7 in all) to replace the old and worn out cotton reels. The Southern Search dog team painted the equipment, and with a spruce up of some of the old equipment, the agility yard is looking much more professional for the training of elements: Agility, Directional and Bark boxes.

Linda Pike



Foundation Weekend 14th -15th September 2013

Metro Place Christchurch

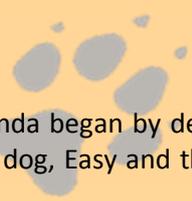
This is run for new handlers and new dogs to the training programme and is coordinated by the National Trainer, Brenda Woolley. The objective is to relay information regarding basic obedience, agility, directions, medical care for dogs, to provide training tools/ advice for USAR search dog training, an overview of search principles for buildings and a pile of rubble (collapsed building) and how scent “acts” in these different search scenarios. This year was a two day “course” packed full of information, advice and practical training for our young new dogs & handlers.

ourselves, with each getting one-on-one instruction with Brenda. Some of us were quicker at learning the lessons than others, which I’m sure the photos will attest to!

This set the scene for the day - Brenda demonstrated directionals with Easy then we all took our dogs to Brenda to demonstrate with and then have a go ourselves.



Foundation training notes were provided on arrival and are proving to be a fantastic resource for referring back to. There was also a “pressie” pack which included a clicker & doggie poo bags leading one to wonder what to expect for the weekend! After a brief outline of the course Brenda gave an interesting theoretical introduction to training a USAR search dog. After morning tea we soon launched into practical training.



Brenda began by demonstrating basic obedience with her dog, Easy and then we got our dogs and had a go





The agility yard was next, where Easy was just showing off!! It wasn't easy following in his footsteps but we had to show Brenda what we could achieve with our pups. Brenda took each of our dogs through various aspects of walking, waiting, turning on a plank then showed each of us how to get our dogs to safely and confidently climb a ladder.



Sunday we met at Fulton Hogan Quarry. The day started with a set of runaways to excite the dogs.

Then new handlers were asked to work out how we would search a zone of rubble with our dogs. We had to then relay that to Brenda without hearing what the previous handler had said. A good learning curve! Then each new dog had a go at a call out over an area of rubble. It was interesting to watch Stella as she can certainly run over the rubble for fun, but adding the stress of having to do a search, and actually tug at a toy on the rubble was a different story. She definitely was not as confident in this circumstance and the exercise gave me a benchmark of where she is at on the rubble.

I asked each of the new handlers what they got most out of the weekend; interestingly each person commented on a different aspect of the course. From my perspective the whole weekend was hugely beneficial moving forward with training Stella. I now feel more confident with my dog training and am much clearer as to what is expected. I will be keeping in mind especially "have a plan for each training" and "have a back-up plan" if the first one doesn't work; stop if it doesn't work and don't get frustrated or push. Tomorrow is another day. Finish on a positive aspect no matter what.

Thank you, Brenda, for your commitment, time and energy. Thank you to Janelle, Linda, Tim, Ben for your gems of expert advice - I was listening. Also to Janelle for giving us a lesson on the making of polar fleece tug toys.

Thanks to Rochelle for arranging and bringing a yummy and filling luncheon for us.



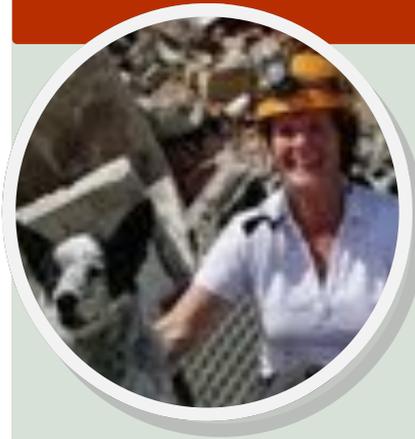
Attendees:

Jason & Storm; Lisa & Scout; Mark & Laika; Carol & Stella; Tim & Alfie

Janelle; Linda; Ben.

By Carol Ewington

From the National Trainer



National Trainer visit to UK Detection Dog Training Groups

In June this year, I decided to fund myself a trip to the UK to meet and observe some well-known dog trainers/groups, mainly to keep up with what was new within the UK area of training detection dogs and to see if our dogs are still on the right track and if they compare well with the UK USAR

live find and VR dogs.

The first visit was with Mick Swindell who specialises in VR/Water Search/DNA for metals and Bats! (dead ones). A small type of bat is a protected species in the UK and the conservation department need to know how many of these bats are dying from flying into these giant wind turbines, so Mike trains up the dogs to detect the deceased bats and then trains the conservation staff to work them.



I watched a training session that involved a new trainer (who had no previous dog experience) and an operational handler that was back for some extra training. It was interesting to see that these dogs are sent home with the handlers after only one week's training together!

Next, was a trainer, David Jones (from Chester) who owns the Dog Detection Training Centre. He is a Drug/Bomb dog specialist and sends trained dogs all over the world.

These kennels were a great set-up and I was able to watch a springer spaniel and a Labrador in training. David says that every USAR team needs a small dog, one that is comfortable in going into small voids, pancakes.

A couple of days later I went down to Wales to meet another David Jones who owned and was the lead dog trainer for the International Rescue Training Centre. He was very good and also very helpful. He trains handlers from all over the world on his courses.

They have a great training area which is indoors and has a unit along a wall that the dogs can walk along (mesh), stairs and slides that have compartments underneath that the subjects can go into.

The objective is the dog alerts over the subject while standing on the mesh walkway.



He also said that small dogs were very useful. The best USAR dog he had ever trained was a Border terrier cross. He pierced the dog's ear to put a small mike on it so when the dog searched down in small voids he had sound recording back to him. A most helpful team and I had a great time there. They have offered to set up courses for us if we manage to get back next year.

I was also an observer of a USAR assessment in Waddington, Leicester where two dog teams were going for assessment. One, a new handler certifying with an operational dog, (whose handler was retiring), and the other, a more experienced handler with a new dog to certify.

Chris, (who came over to NZ for the earthquake deployment) was one of the assessors plus a police dog handler. The rubble pile was very realistic, having building structures/ damaged cars and a mixture of concrete and wood.

The dogs wear a harness with bells when searching, the reason given, is so the handlers can hear where they are. A couple of interesting things on this assessment was on one of the piles they are given a hazard area, and if their dogs enter it, they will not pass the assessment. Also, at any time during the assessment they will have to do an emergency stop.



IRTCW

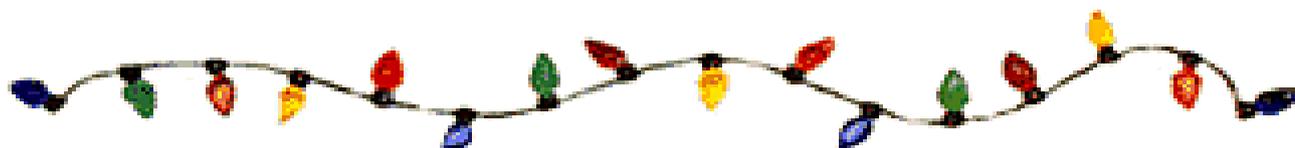


International Rescue Training Centre Wales

The last place to visit was Merseyside in Liverpool where I meet Andy (Task Force personnel) and Joanne, one of the dog handlers. They have a small purpose built rubble pile at the fire service. They work a lot in Water search and offered to take me for a ride in their hovercraft next time I visit.

This trip was useful in keeping international relationships going with other trainers and groups. By the end of the UK visit, I am pleased to say that the operational live find and VR dogs in NZ are to a very high standard and are comparable to others within the UK.

Brenda Woolley



VET CORNER



A regular column by
Jenny Waters, USAR Vet Evaluator



SOUTHERN REGIONAL TRAINING WEEKEND: SEPTEMBER 2013

Our second regional training weekend of the year saw us on the Saturday morning back at Antonio Hall in Riccarton. The difference in this one was the number of dogs...17! in all.

With the new young southern dogs now in the program and Lois, Anne and Donna with their dogs down from the North Island to get some rubble/mock assessment work, it was almost like a mini national training weekend.

With the two wings of Antonio Hall (and some extra corridors not used earlier in the year) we could have 2-3 teams working at the same time. The Southern group got some new subjects in the Central and Northern girls. This was especially good for the young dogs having totally new people, and ones which are expert subjects. Then our group did the same for their dogs. Most dogs went through an exercise in which they were to search an empty wing (full of residual scent) and work their dog to clear it using directional control and good coverage and then go to the next wing in which there were subjects to find.

The very young dogs of Scout, Storm and Stella did runaways and pop-outs and in their last exercise, showed some superb work in independently sniffing out a runaway that had hidden in a room off a long corridor.

After a break for lunch, there were two presentations. The first (from our National Trainer Brenda), who talked about her trip to some of the detection dog training groups in the UK. (see the NT article).

Then Janelle and Tim presented a talk from the AVSEC Course they had attended earlier in the year about positive reinforcement training using the marker system. There was a practical element to this in which a handler would demonstrate by using a clicker how to move a person to perform a required activity that was not known to this person. This is how I ended up sitting in a cardboard box in the corner of the room from listening and responding to Donna's clicker.

We finished up the day with a small area barrel field in which the dogs were to find subjects within a jumble of boxes/barrels that also contained food/clothing and VR sources.

The next day we went to the Isaacs rubble pile to do some mock assessment type searches for the dogs going for the upcoming assessment and some rubble training for the others. Was an interesting session, where one hide showed a harder find for most dogs, even the advanced ones took a little longer than usual to commit completely to the scent. Then another hide on a different exercise had dogs going straight past and even over, without even looking like they had even a whiff of scent.

Brings us back to the reality that sometimes it just doesn't go "perfectly", but the clue is, if more than one dog does the same thing, then there usually is a reason, even though we may only surmise what it

It was a full on weekend with lots of learning done. Thanks for all the teamwork and many thanks to Robert for the use of Antonio Hall, our 3 subjects (Doug, Andrew and Murray) for hiding Sunday at the rubble, and Max for use of our purpose built Isaacs site.

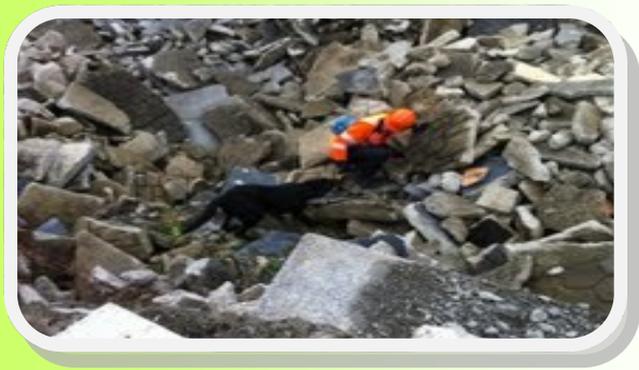
Linda Pike.



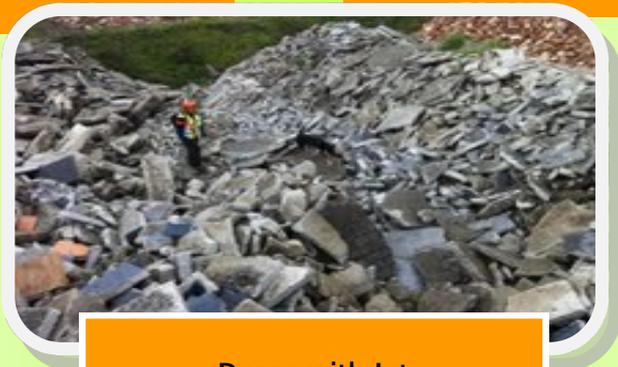
Linda just about to sit in her carton after being "clicked" into position.



Jake has found his subject and letting everybody know.



Lois with Hurley



Donna with Jet

Current Operational Teams - October 2013

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

For re-certification January 2014

Brenda Woolley	Luna	Christchurch	VRD certification
Tim Drennan	Meg	Christchurch	VRD Certification

Easy	Christchurch	Retired 31/10/2013
<p><i>Thank you Easy for your many years of service with the Search Dog Association.</i></p> <p><i>Enjoy your retirement</i></p> 		



What's Coming Up

Dec Pawprint & Xmas Break

5th Feb 2014 Face to Face Meeting

Send us your feedback
or do you have something to share
Email: beattie.rochelle@gmail.com



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

