God Bless America! Our Troops! Our War Dogs!

They left the states on October 14, 2005 for Baghdad. The handlers and their K-9 Bomb Sniffing Dogs To stand up for those who died 9/11 And to stand up for our country. *Freedom isn’t free.*

It was a grueling trip from San Antonio to the East Coast, then a stop near Paris, France to refuel; and then on to the final stretch to Baghdad, Iraq. When they reached their final destination, the K-9 handlers/trainers were tired (to say the least). Among this group of handlers was our own Dennis Blocker, who rescued many German Shepherd Dogs from San Antonio Animal Care Services in the past.

Dennis actually rescued one German Shepherd Dog that was already in the Gas Chamber with the gas turned on. Talk about being on Death Row! Dennis and several other K-9 handlers from Global Training Academy escorted 25-30 Explosive K-9s or “Bomb Dogs” on the trip into the war zone. There were several dog breeds: Belgium Malinois, German Shepherd, and a few Labrador Retrievers.

Upon arriving at Camp Striker, the dogs and handlers spent the first two days settling in. The dogs were unloaded into huge air-conditioned tents, taken out and walked, given fresh bottled water and made certain they were all in good spirits. “Trust me, the K-9s were all very happy to stretch ... and we were also,” said Dennis. Dennis said the K-9 handlers he worked with were all dog lovers big time and he loved working with them. Their first priority was the dogs, not themselves! Dennis says they made sure the dogs were happy and then the handlers were happy, which results in a perfect “Working Dog” relationship.

Two days after arrival, they were loaded on trucks and convoyed to another area of Camp Striker to await transport led by the U.S. Military under darkness. They traveled a route with Apache Helicopter air cover that was claimed to be “the most dangerous six miles in the world.” The helicopter flew directly over their 45 minute route of travel. Eight military Humvees proceeded along the route loaded to the hilt for enemy action. Everyone wore helmets and armored vests, including the K-9 handlers. Fortunately not one shot was fired.

(Continued on page 8)
RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERS ALLIANCE

"An Animal Welfare Organization, promoting a positive image of pet ownership and demonstrating the important role animals play in our lives!"

From the Executive Director’s Desk
By Mary Beth Duerler

RPOA has been blessed the past year and we appreciate your support which makes all things possible. We continue to grow but we’re only as strong as our membership — you!

Due to constantly increasing demands for our services, our Education and Rescue Coordinator Rusty Wagner’s position at the office must be made full time this year. We’ll need more financial support to do so.

Rusty is in the office weekdays from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. now and answers our Pet Assistance Hotline (Dial PET-CARE). She receives at least 30 phone calls per day and sometimes more, depending on scheduled events in the area.

Our PET-CARE Hotline is the only one in the US. The city of San Antonio’s “311” Service Center is now referring callers with animal problems to our PET-CARE phone number.

Rusty is also the “tie that binds” and keeps our volunteers heading in the right direction! We maintain an office in San Antonio and have an annual budget of $32,000 which barely covers administrative costs. All the rest of us are volunteers who donate their time and expenses.

The last two years have been déjà vu for RPOA!

RPOA founders met on San Antonio City Hall steps in 1991 opposing the same “Animal Rights” proposals that we are facing now in spite of the fact that they were proven failures ten years ago.

Kim Sturla with Fund for Animals had just made a whirlwind tour of all major Texas cities promoting Mandatory Spay/Neuter and Breeder Permits which ultimately didn’t pass anywhere.

RPOA spoke at many city council meetings and told city officials about San Francisco’s SPCA, which had just won a national award for new proactive innovative programs with SF Animal Control but we were ignored.

So we went out and did the programs ourselves! We organized our Pet Education, Assistance & Rescue (PEAR) Program. It was painfully obvious that the city of San Antonio had very serious animal problems and did not have a clue as to what to do about them.

Richard Avanzino, San Francisco SPCA (CA) administrator, didn’t believe in legislation as a solution — not even licensing cats. Avanzino moved on to head Maddie’s Fund which strives to make the entire country “No Kill,” which means no “adoptable” animals killed.

“A 5 Year Plan for a No Kill Community in 2012” is approved by San Antonio City Council and San Antonio animal groups form a new coalition!

The past two years have seen a resurrection of the “Animal Rights” Agenda for Mandatory Spay/Neuter and Breeder Permits in San Antonio. There have been so many meetings and public hearings held by the City and Animal Care Services Advisory Board over the past two years that we’ve lost count. Surely it must have set a national record.

The “5 Year Plan for a No Kill Community in 2012” was approved by City Council August 31, 2006 and is overall an excellent document, including many suggestions and programs RPOA recommended and is already doing.

However there are a few glaring omissions: 1) Not one word is included on enforcement of existing ordinances, especially the Leash Law. 2) Not one word is included about the public health and safety of San Antonio residents in the mission statement.

There were two items included which RPOA vehemently opposed: “Mandatory Spay/Neuter” of Pets and “Breeder Permits” (always written to be difficult or impossible to obtain - subject to zoning restrictions) and a “Bill of Rights” for San Antonio animals. Mandatory Spay/Neuter laws require door-to-door enforcement.

With your help, we were able to get “Establish a Bill of Rights for Animals in San Antonio” in the Plan changed to: “Establish Community Animal Care Standards.” How this will differ from the Animal Cruelty law, we don’t know.

We were able to get: “Adopt Spay/Neuter Ordinance and Breeder Permit” (to be implemented in Year One) changed to: “Consider adoption of spay/neuter ordinance and breeder’s permit” postponed to Year 2.

Year 2 objectives state in more detail:
A. “Based on Year One strategic plan performance, implement appropriate approach to spay/neuter and breeders.”
B. “Based on Year One strategic plan performance, implement appropriate approach to spay/neuter and breeders.”
C. “Spay/neuter all animals that ACS has contact with.”
E. Breeder’s permits:
   1) Research best practices for breeders and
   2) Implement fee to cover cost City incurs for breeders.

   Year One ends October 1, 2007 (city’s fiscal year).

So obviously this battle still rages. The "Animal Rights" mantra remains at the forefront: “Don’t breed, don’t buy ... while shelter animals die.” That would mean never breed.

(Continued on page 7)
From the Executive Director’s Desk
By Mary Beth Duernel

RPOA has been blessed the past year and we appreciate your support which makes all things possible. We continue to grow but we’re only as strong as our membership — you!

Due to constantly increasing demands for our services, our Education and Rescue Coordinator Rusty Wagner’s position at the office must be made full time this year. We'll need more financial support to do so.

Rusty is in the office weekdays from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. now and answers our Pet Assistance Hotline (Dial PET-CARE). She receives at least 30 phone calls per day and sometimes more, depending on scheduled events in the area.

Our PET-CARE Hotline is the only one in the US. The city of San Antonio’s “311” Service Center is now referring callers with animal problems to our PET-CARE phone number.

Rusty is also the “tie that binds” and keeps our volunteers heading in the right direction! We maintain an office in San Antonio and have an annual budget of $32,000 which barely covers administrative costs. All the rest of us are volunteers who donate their time and expenses.

The last two years have been déjà vu for RPOA!

RPOA founders met on San Antonio City Hall steps in 1991 opposing the same “Animal Rights” proposals that we are facing now in spite of the fact that they were proven failures ten years ago.

Kim Sturila with Fund for Animals had just made a whirlwind tour of all major Texas cities promoting Mandatory Spay/Neuter and Breeder Permits which ultimately didn’t pass anywhere.

RPOA spoke at many city council meetings and told city officials about San Francisco’s SPCA, which had just won a national award for new proactive innovative programs with SF Animal Control but we were ignored.

So we went out and did the programs ourselves! We organized our Pet Education, Assistance & Rescue (PEAR) Program. It was painfully obvious that the city of San Antonio had very serious animal problems and did not have a clue as to what to do about them.

Richard Avanzino, San Francisco SPCA (CA) administrator, didn’t believe in legislation as a solution — not even licensing cats. Avanzino moved on to head Maddie’s Fund which strives to make the entire country “No Kill,” which means no “adoptable” animals killed.

“A 5 Year Plan for a No Kill Community in 2012” is approved by San Antonio City Council and San Antonio animal groups form a new coalition!

The past two years have seen a resurrection of the “Animal Rights” Agenda for Mandatory Spay/Neuter and Breeder Permits in San Antonio. There have been so many meetings and public hearings held by the City and Animal Care Services Advisory Board over the past two years that we’ve lost count. Surely it must have set a national record.

The “5 Year Plan for a No Kill Community in 2012” was approved by City Council August 31, 2006 and is overall an excellent document, including many suggestions and programs RPOA recommended and is already doing.

However there are a few glaring omissions: 1) Not one word is included on enforcement of existing ordinances, especially the Leash Law. 2) Not one word is included about the public health and safety of San Antonio residents in the mission statement.

There were two items included which RPOA vehemently opposed: “Mandatory Spay/Neuter” of Pets and “Breeder Permits” (always written to be difficult or impossible to obtain - subject to zoning restrictions) and a “Bill of Rights” for San Antonio animals. Mandatory Spay/Neuter laws require door-to-door enforcement.

With your help, we were able to get “Establish a Bill of Rights for Animals in San Antonio” in the Plan changed to: “Establish Community Animal Care Standards.” How this will differ from the Animal Cruelty law, we don’t know.

We were able to get: “Adopt Spay/Neuter Ordinance and Breeder’s Permit” (to be implemented in Year One) changed to: “Consider adoption of spay/neuter ordinance and breeder’s permit” postponed to Year 2.

Year 2 objectives state in more detail:
B. “Based on Year One strategic plan performance, implement appropriate approach to spay/neuter and breeders.”
C. “Spay/neuter all animals that ACS has contact with.”
E. Breeder’s permits:
1) Research best practices for breeders and
2) Implement fee to cover cost City incurs for breeders.
Year One ends October 1, 2007 (city’s fiscal year).

So obviously this battle still rages. The “Animal Rights” mantra remains at the forefront: “Don’t breed, don’t buy ... while shelter animals die.” That would mean never breed.

(Continued on page 7)
Rescue, Adoption & Education Program for Purebreds & Mixed Breeds
An “all species” rescue program!

Responsible Pet Owners Alliance
An American Kennel Club State Federation
All Species Rescue, Adoption & Breed/Species
Education Program

NETWORKING THE STATE
OF TEXAS!
Rescue Committee Co-Chairmen:
Juan Vasquez: VUNVEQ@aol.com
Lynnne Bunten: kachina@texas.net

BO/CLAY: By Daphne Branzell, Scottie Rescue
The first we heard about the Scottie we came to
know as “Bo” was on September 14th, 2005. We re-
ceived a telephone call from Prima Mosi with PAWS
of Austin. Prima was en route from Louisiana with a con-
voy loaded with dogs that had been rescued from tempo-
rary shelters set up in the New Orleans area after Hurri-
cane Katrina devastated that area.

Prima reported that she had a Scottish Terrier in
bad shape and asked if we could take him. We agreed
and collected him when the convoy arrived in San Antonio,
late that night. The only information the rescuers could
provide us was that “Bo” had been left behind in his home
with several other dogs when the owner evacuated. A
neighbor broke in, rescued the dogs and took them to the
shelter.

“Bo” had hundreds of ticks and related skin prob-
lems. Sadly there was a very large growth on his back
which looked ominous. We took care of the ticks and
cleaned him up. The vet did a blood profile that didn’t
really tell us anything and aspirating the growth didn’t give
us any information either. “Bo” stayed with us for a few
days and then moved up IH 35 to stay with Carole Owen
as “Bo” was an intact male. The dogs at Camp Branzell
were all boys and Carole had female Scotties. “Bo” was
pretty lively initially at Carole’s house but it soon became
obvious that this boy was very sick and going downhill
rapidly. The growth was a mystery and was growing
daily. The end came quickly and he was helped over the
Rainbow Bridge.

This sweet boy captured all our hearts. He could
be saved from hurricane Katrina but could not be saved
from his tumor. Carole’s veterinarian autopsied “Bo,” as
we wanted to be able to tell the owner, if we found him,
what had killed his dog. The answer was hemangiosar-
coma. This blood borne malignancy had spread into
“Bo’s” heart, spleen, liver, spinal cord, everywhere that his
blood flowed.

“Bo” was cremated in hopes we might eventually
return his ashes to his owner. All the time that “Bo” was
with us, Scottish Terrier Club of America Rescue Coordi-
nator Pat Gruda (along with Carole and Daphne) were all
searching every web page and following every lead to find
his owner. In the aftermath of Katrina, it was very difficult
to find any information at all. We would think we had a
lead and it would end at a vet clinic that had washed
away in the flood. A name that kept cropping up proved
to be the wrong person and we wasted much time trying
to locate that person.

Ironically, “Bo’s” owner was found the day after he
died. “Bo’s” real name was “Cassius Clay” and he was
seven years old. His owner said that “Clay” loved to go
fishing and asked that his ashes be put out over wa-
ter. “Clay” went fishing one last time on Lake Belton.

BEFORE

AFTER
Pet Education Program: Adults & Children

"The best way to predict the future is to create it!"

Pet Assistance Hotline!
Call our office (Dial PET-CARE) for information and assistance with any animal problem.

---

2006 Adult Education Booths Held:

February 26: "Pets For Life" Health Fair (with City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services)
March 8 - March 12: Alamo City Cluster of Dog Shows
April 2: "Pets For Life" Health Fair (with City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services)
April 22: Alamo Exhibition Bird Club "Fiesta" Bird Mart
April 30: 3rd Annual RPOA Rescuers Conference
June 4: "Pets For Life" Health Fair (with City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services)
July 26-30: River City Cluster of Dog Shows
August 13: "Pets For Life" Health Fair (with City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services)
September 9: Annual San Antonio Neighborhood Associations Conference
September 17: "Responsible Pet Ownership Day" (with City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services)
September 23: Alamo Exhibition Bird Club Show
October 15: "Pets For Life" Health Fair (with City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services)
October 21 & 22: Alamo City Cat Club Show
November 4: Eyes of Texas Cat Club (Austin)

---

Children’s Education

Presentations were made to the elementary schools below, which are located in the areas of the city where the most animals are picked up by Animal Care Services:

June 7: Presenters were Linda Weniger and Mary Bengel. A 4 week Summer enrichment program for Kindergarten thru 6th Grade Students at J.T. Brackenridge Elementary, 1214 Guadalupe St. Students had to write about what they learned on owning a pet, how to care for a pet, and what the word “responsible” means.

Students cared for animals in the room all week (rabbit, hamsters, gerbils, mice, rats, snake, fish, frogs, turtles) and learned about their care.

Mary spoke about Rabies, city pet licenses, microchips, pet care and the responsibility of owning a pet, etc. Mary also showed students how to train a pet — that pets are intelligent animals and able to learn.

The entire student body of the elementary schools below received presentations by Juan Vasquez, Julie Reis, Irma Bice (Rob Cary Pet Resort), Rick & Candi White, Walt Hagen & Anh, Mary Ann Michaud, Barbara Ross, Frances Eisenlohr, Shelley Lewis, Bill Jeffery and Mike McGee.

The sessions are broken down by ages and run all day, beginning at 8:00 or 9:00 AM until 3:00 PM. Pets are taken for the children to observe and they’re taught how to approach a dog to prevent being bitten.

August 28: Sarah King Elementary, 1001 Ceralvo
November 9: Encino Park Elementary, 2550 Encino Rio
November 16: Forbes Elementary, 2630 Sally Gay
November 30: H. B. Gonzales Elementary, 2803 Castrovile Rd.

The counselor from Gonzales Elementary called the RPOA office and said the presenters did a wonderful job and they want us to come back next year. He said the First and Fifth Grades were especially attentive and that those are the hardest ages to interest.

---

PETTING DOGS AND PRESENTERS NEEDED!
Anyone wishing to volunteer, call the RPOA office (822-6763). "Qualified" dogs are needed as petting dogs (CGC, AKC/UKC titles, Therapy Dogs). Owners of petting dogs don’t have to be presenters. There is a mentoring period for new presenters.
“Animal Rights” Legislation targets Texas cities

It has been intense for the past six years with every city and state in the country writing new anti-pet legislation — yet none enforce their existing Leash Law! Breed Specific Laws are being proposed everywhere. Texas has a state law prohibiting them but each legislative session, we can expect an attempt to repeal it. The 80th Legislative Session now convened will be no different. There appears to be no let up in sight. Most of the ordinances are copied from other localities (originating in California) and are “Animal Rights” inspired, proven failures from 10 years ago.

“Animal Rights” activists can be identified by the type of legislation they propose:

1) Pet “Guardian” word instead of Pet “Owner;”
2) Mandatory Spay/Neuter for all pets;
3) Breeder Permits (designed to end all breeding, statistics prove breeders won’t buy them);
4) Mandatory microchips;
5) Differential pet license fees (statistics prove pet owners won’t buy higher unaltered pet licenses);
6) Breeder Permit number published in classified ads;
7) Door-to-door enforcement of ordinances;
8) Some “Animal Rights” activists support breed bans and some don’t. These positions seem to be changing for the better lately with humane societies opposing breed bans.

Court cases are pending in California state and federal courts regarding all of the above filed by American Canine Foundation, who succeeded in getting the long standing Ohio state “pit bull” breed ban overturned.

Rico Grande Kennel Club in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the Louisville Kennel Club in Louisville, Kentucky, have cases pending in the courts regarding ordinances recently passed with these provisions.

Assisting RPOA, AKC & UKC kennel clubs, breed clubs, other species pet clubs and pet owners oppose this same legislation in Texas are members of the national groups: the American Kennel Club, United Kennel Club, the Cat Fanciers’ Association, The International Cat Association, National Animal Interest Alliance, American Dog Owners Association and many others.

Corpus Christi, Texas

After a two year battle, ordinance revisions were finally approved in November 2004. The Corpus Christi Kennel Club led our efforts and defeated Breeder Permits and Mandatory Spay/Neuter. Afterward “Animal Rights” Activists put a petition before City Council to force reconsideration. The Animal Control Advisory Committee voted not to recommend the petition to city council and subsequently it was not approved by city council.

One RPOA member succeeded in blocking the reappointments of two “Animal Rights” Activists to their animal advisory committee.

El Paso, Texas

Onate Trail Dog Fanciers Association and The International Cat Association fought a two year battle with RPOA assistance, but we lost this one. El Paso has been our only loss in Texas. In December of 2005, El Paso City council passed a very restrictive ordinance that will just mean more pets will be confiscated and killed while doing nothing to address their stray animal problem. We had the support of the local newspaper but it wasn’t enough.

The objectionable provisions are:
1) Canvassing pet owners’ private homes (going door-to-door) to assure compliance with new regulations;
2) Mandatory microchip of all dogs, cats and ferrets; and
3) Breeder $75 Litter Permit.

Austin, Texas

The Austin Kennel Club led local efforts, assisted by Eyes of Texas Cat Club, The International Cat Association, and Travis County Kennel Club in yet another two year battle opposing Mandatory Spay/Neuter of all dogs and cats and Breeder Permits.

After a year of wrangling, the Austin Animal Advisory Commission (primarily animal rightists) approved an ordinance for Mandatory Spay/Neuter of all pets and Breeder Permits with six pages of multiple unenforceable stipulations in May, 2005.

However the proposal was not supported by city staff and the Advisory Commission was unable to find a city council member who would sponsor it.

Eventually in May, 2006 (a year later!), City Council accepted staff recommendations for ordinance changes, all of them acceptable to RPOA except for a “mandatory sterilization upon second impoundment” provision.

This will not lower the number of dogs impounded and killed at the Austin animal control facility (Towne Lake Animal Center) and is the camel’s nose under the tent for the “Animal Rights” Brigade and their agenda.

San Antonio, Texas

San Antonio is in the process of revising their Chapter 5 Animal Code. Mary Beth Duerler, RPOA Executive Director, is serving on a subcommittee of the Animal Care Services (ACS) Advisory Board working on the ordinance rewrite.

City Council is scheduled to approve the ordinance revisions this Spring. RPOA has worked diligently to provide information and accurate statistics to city officials and the ACS Advisory Board members. Incentives being used in other cities to encourage spay/neuter of pets have proven to be more successful than “mandatory” directives. RPOA will be serving on the committee with representatives from all the local animal groups.
(Continued from page 3)

Meetings held to form a coalition of animal groups supporting the Community’s “No Kill” Strategic Plan

Two meetings have been held to organize a coalition of animal organizations in the San Antonio area. The stated objective of these meetings is "to establish a working structure for the coalition so that the group can actively support the Community's "No Kill" Strategic Plan through spay/neuter, bilingual education, adoption and collaboration/cooperation." Meetings will be held monthly.

The name chosen for the Coalition is "Alamo Area Partners for Animal Welfare." At one point, the second meeting bogged down on discussion of "structure and voting rights." The animal groups with the most money would have more votes more power as originally proposed.

Opposition was also expressed regarding meeting locations, that they should be on "neutral" premises, not all at one animal shelter. Jef Hale, Animal Care Services director, suggested we just work on collaborating on upcoming events for now. So discussion shifted to working together on three upcoming events with the organizational details left hanging for the next meeting.

---

**Responsible Pet Ownership Day**

The Third Annual RPOA “Responsible Pet Ownership Day” was held September 17, 2006, in conjunction with the American Kennel Club.

Co-sponsors were City of San Antonio, Animal Care Services, H-E-B, San Antonio Express-News, KTSA Talk Radio, PETCO, Banfield Hospitals, Fifi & Fidos Pet Boutique, Pet Butler, Just Dogs! Gourmet, Rob Cary Pet Resort and Lucy’s Doggie Day Care.

Juan Vasquez coordinated the very successful event with pets lined up until 5 p.m. for low cost vaccinations and microchips by Proctor Mobile Veterinary Clinic.

**Events included**
- A Parade of Rescue Dogs
- Conformation Fun Match, Rally Obedience, AKC Canine Good Citizen (CGC) tests
- A performance by Joyce Morgan Dog Training Center’s Dance Team

**Food was provided** by the San Antonio Ferret Association. Free goodie bags were given to the first 200 pet owners; with hourly door prizes; raffle for two $100 H-E-B gift cards and pre-screening for Therapy Dogs Inc.

---

**“Pets For Life” Health Fairs**

- **April 2, 2006:** “Pets For Life” Health Fair
  - Co-sponsors: City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services at Miller’s Pond Park
- **June 4, 2006:** “Pets For Life” Health Fair
  - Co-sponsors: City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services at Copernicus Park
- **August 13, 2006:** “Pets For Life” Health Fair
  - Co-sponsors: City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services at Miller’s Pond Park
- **October 15, 2006:** “Pets For Life” Health Fair
  - Co-sponsors: City of San Antonio and Animal Care Services at Comanche Park

---

**“Pets For Life” Health Fairs**

*Pets For Life* Health Fairs are held in the areas of the city where the most animals are impounded by Animal Care Services and offer low cost pet vaccinations, microchips, free dog training and problem solving, $5 pet licenses, and pet educational flyers on many topics.

**To volunteer, call our office (210) 822-6763**

---

**THE 2006 SCHEDULE WAS:**

- **February 26, 2006:** “Pets For Life” Health Fair
  - Co-sponsors: City of San Antonio, Animal Care Services, Beacon Hill Neighborhood Association on Woodlawn St.
With the dogs removed, clean out their kennel daily as no K-9 handler was to depart leaving a dirty kennel. Wash the dog's water bucket and hang upside down to air dry.

Cleaning standards for the dog kennels were high priority and were monitored to guard against any type of health threat for the dogs.

In addition to the handlers keeping an eye out for anyone not conforming with the standards, there was a "kennel master" and the Army colonel (their assigned veterinarian) taking care of all medical needs.

The veterinarian and his staff visited the kennels to monitor compliance with the highest standards.

And it's off to work they go ... Once the kennels were cleaned for the day, they were driven to the assigned Check Point. Arriving there, the dog and his crate would be lifted off the trailer and placed in the appropriate place for duty that day with their handler.

This day would be spent searching between 900-1200 vehicles per shift — divided up between four K-9 handlers and their dogs for a 12 hour shift. They also checked bags and boxes being brought into the area.

Dennis and his team members worked in the "Red Zone" for the first five months in Baghdad. These were all Iraqi people being searched on their way to work forming the new Iraqi government.

The K-9's day could be a hot one or cool one, depending on the time of the year.

Some days vehicles were searched for bombs or explosives when the temperatures would be 144° F or as
WAR DOGS

cold as 32°F with the wind blowing — down to a wind chill of 25°F. Sometimes a sandstorm would blow in while standing there and the K-9s would don their "Doggie Sun Glasses" to keep the sand out of their eyes, making them real cool dudes.

The temperature could go from 100°F to 79°F in 15 minutes from a sandstorm that was so thick it would block out the afternoon sun, making it appear to be midnight.

Two hours later the sandstorm would blow through, the sun would come out again and the temps went back up. Dennis said it was very unusual and that he had never seen anything like it before.

"Laky" was on his first tour in a "War Zone" and served his country with great honor; finding 16 explosives one day, more than likely saving the lives of two Americans who were not even aware they were handling explosives.

While taking "Laky" out for a relaxing walk one day, Dennis came upon two Americans crouched behind a vehicle with a rusted metal box.

One American had a hammer and screwdriver in his hand and was trying to crack a sealed rusty seam. When Dennis asked what they were doing, they told him it just may have gold inside it.

Dennis told them that wasn’t wise as everyone had been briefed not to pick up anything on the roads. While Dennis was talking, the American continued to hammer until he made a small hole in the box with the screwdriver.

Dennis told them it could be explosives of some sort. The American asked if his dog was a bomb dog and he said yes. So then he asked if Dennis would check to make sure it wasn’t explosives.

Dennis asked them to step away and approached the box from downwind. "Laky" got his nose above the box and sniffed; then went into a "hard sit" position which told Dennis this was definitely an explosive device.

Dennis advised them to call EOD and left. They said they would and later told him it was checked and turned out to contain 16 Mortar Fuse Charges which were very explosive. Insurgents had buried ammo and explosives to be unearthed later to be used against the Americans and their allies.

There was always the grim reminder of their mission with the normal noise of "war" ever so present. Through it all the dogs and handlers searched through heat, cold, rain, mud and sandstorms inclusive of the elements of war.

"Toris" has retired from service to his country during three wars and at Ground Zero ("9/11") for four months to become a lap dog for the Blocker family. "Toris" is adjusting to his new life very well and is a true War Hero.

Many thanks to Mr. Jim Parks, founder and director of Global Training Academy in Somerset, Texas, for providing these very special dogs that served our country so well. God bless America, our Troops and our War Dogs. We wish them all a safe and speedy return home.

Memoriam

In loving memory of Kermit Dishl
from daughter Sherrie Shirky

In loving memory of
Bob Martin and Estela Martinez
from Rob Cary Pet Resort

Seeing-eye dogs enjoy college campus life

Glassboro, New Jersey (AP)

The youngest students at Rowan University enjoy all the aspects of campus life — including classes and dorm rooms — without the term papers.

For a third year, Rowan students are raising puppies destined to become seeing-eye dogs. College life allows the dogs to spend virtually every moment getting accustomed to being around people. Their student trainers take them almost everywhere they go, even to basketball games, where the canines get court-side seats.

"Bringing the dogs to Rowan was the idea of George Brelsford, the school’s dean of students, and his wife. The two had been raising seeing-eye dogs themselves and thought students would enjoy the experience.

"The campus is really a small city. We have trucks and bulldozers that go by. We have social events," Brelsford said.

The hardest part of the program for students has been parting with the canines when they leave for their guide-dog training.

"It’s like he’s going off to college. He’s going to be great," Lauren Lee said.

RPOA E-Mail Lists

TX RPOA E-News: our electronic newsletter
To stay informed, subscribe to our TX-RPOA E-News. Send a message to rpoa@texas.net with "Subscribe" as the subject. This is a low volume, announcement-only list, no more than one message per day (if that many).

RPOArescue: E-List for Texas all-species rescuers to work together and network the state. This is also low volume, with rescuers doing home checks for each other in other cities, arranging transportation for a rescued dog to a new forever home, and helping each other in many other ways. To subscribe, send an e-mail to: RPOArescue-subscribe@yahoo-groups.com to automatically start the process.
The "Animal Rights" Scam

"Animal rights groups profess to work for improved animal treatment while their ultimate goal is to abolish the following: 1) the breeding and owning of pets; 2) the use of animals in biomedical research; 3) the raising of farm animals for food, clothing, and by-products such as insulin; 4) the use of animals in education and entertainment including zoos, aquariums, circuses and rodeos; and 5) all forms of hunting (including field trial competition), trapping and fishing." Source: Daniel Oliver "Animal Rights, The Inhumane Crusade"

From the mouths of “animal rights” leaders

Gary Francione and Tom Regan: "A Movement’s Means Create Its Ends," Animals’ Agenda
"There are fundamental and profound differences between the philosophy of animal welfare and that of animal rights... Thus welfare reforms, by their very nature, can only serve to retard the pace at which animal rights goals are achieved."

Tom Regan: The Philosophy of Animal Rights, Culture and Animals Foundation
"It is not larger, cleaner cages that justice demands... But empty cages."
"In a perfect world, we would not keep animals for our benefit, including pets."

Wayne Pacelle: (President of the Humane Society of the United States, former Executive Director of Fund for Animals)
"We have no ethical obligation to preserve the different breeds of livestock produced through selective breeding. One generation and out. We have no problem with the extinction of domestic animals. They are creations of human selective breeding." Wayne Pacelle, Senior VP of Humane Society of the US, formerly of Friends of Animals and Fund for Animals; Animal People, May, 1993

Ingrid Newkirk: National Director of PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals)
"For one thing we would no longer allow breeding. People could not create different breeds. If people had companion animals in their homes, these animals would have to be refugees from the animal shelter and the streets... But as the surplus of cats and dogs declined, eventually companion animals would be phased out and we would return to a more symbiotic relationship - enjoyment at a distance." Harper’s Forum Book, Jack Hitt, ed., 1989, p. 223

Donate your money to local organizations who work hands-on with animals every day instead of national animal organizations that have been infiltrated and taken over by animal rightists. Humane Society of the United States operates no shelters.
PET'S Act signed into law
(Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act)

Circle of Caring
By Christine McEntyre
and Elaine Acker

In 2005, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita illustrated something that animal rescue personnel have known for years: the vast majority of animal owners consider their pets "family" and will repeatedly endanger themselves and/or first responders to rescue their pets in an emergency.

During a disaster, pet owners often refuse to evacuate dangerous areas without their pets, and it is unknown how many people died in Louisiana and Mississippi during Hurricane Katrina because they refused to leave their pets behind.

Haunting images of people and animals stranded on rooftops or in hot attics have left an indelible impression on the American psyche, and are leading, finally, to changes to the strict "no pets" policy that resulted in the deaths of tens of thousands of companion animals.

Bipartisan proposals in the wake of the 2005 hurricanes included the Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act), which was signed into law by the President on October 6, 2006.

The PETS Act asks local and state emergency preparedness authorities to include in their evacuation plans how they will accommodate household pets and service animals in case of emergency or disaster.

Local and state authorities will submit these plans in order to qualify for grants from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. While it is still unclear exactly what assistance may be provided for preparedness programs, humane organizations hope that FEMA will now support states and local communities in developing disaster plans to accommodate people with pets and service animals and authorize federal funds to help create pet-friendly emergency shelter facilities.

Most of all, the PETS Act makes it possible for animal welfare organizations to take a more active role in disaster response in partnership with local communities, and respond in an official capacity.

Several states already have disaster teams in place through State Animal Response (or Resource) Teams, known as SARTs, including Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Texas.

The Texas SART (TXSART), is a public-private collaboration managed by the Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation.

The Texas Animal Health Commission, along with the Governor's Division of Emergency Management, the ASPCA, the Humane Society of the United States, Pets America and other organizations have become partners in what they feel is an essential program.

"Pets America is honored to have an opportunity to serve on the steering committee of TXSART," said Susan Culp, DVM and Pets America board member. "The partners launched this effort in January, and we're seeing unprecedented cooperation among state and local governmental agencies, humane organizations, and industry. We believe the momentum we've built can change emergency management practices in Texas and beyond."

Pets America occupies a specific niche in disaster response. The nonprofit, emergency management organization works directly with veterinarians, delivering educational programs that help ensure that pets are included in family emergency plans.

The group also trains volunteers to staff pet-friendly evacuation shelters adjacent to emergency shelters for the pet owners, consults with cities and counties on how to include animals in emergency management plans, and promotes collaboration among agencies to ensure that mutual aid agreements allow pets to be evacuated with their families. "Last year, we developed a model response plan with detailed protocols that can be used in partner cities across Texas," says Culp.

"Soon, we'll make this model available to planning teams nationally. Emergency management for pets is serious business, because we know without a doubt that if you don't plan for pets, people will die."

TXSART and other SART organizations rely on a grassroots system of County (or Community) Animal Response Teams, or CARTs. Texas' Kerr County is one of the first communities in the state to assemble its members and complete training in Mitigation, Education, Preparedness, Search and Rescue, Response, Recovery, Temporary Sheltering, Animal Handling, and Emergency First Aid.

Christine McEntyre created and directs the Kerr County CART (Companion Animal Rescue & Response Team) that currently consists of 24 volunteers who have personally paid for personal safety gear and animal handling equipment. They are currently seeking funding for educational materials and for volunteer training and supplies.

Several members of the Kerr County CART worked in Louisiana after the disasters and know firsthand how important it will be to have trained, certified teams available to work in the field during future disasters.


Christine McEntyre is director of Diamond Dachshund Rescue of Texas and member of Pets America.

Elaine Acker is CEO of Pets America.
RPOA's Guardian Angels

**Platinum Angels: $5,000 donation or more**
- Tom F. McNeil
- Smothers Foundation

**Golden Angels: $1,000 donation or more**
- Rob Cary Pet Resort
- Victoria Dog Obedience Club

**Silver Angels: $500 donation or more**
- Mary Bengel...in memory of my rescue OTCH MUFFIE U-CD 1985-1997
- Brazoria Kennel Club
- Eyes of Texas Cat Club
- Longview Kennel Club
- James & Janet McDaniel
- Sheila Newland
- Jeanne Wahrenbrock

**Bronze Angels: $250 donation or more**
- Baytown Kennel Club
- Big Spring Kennel Club
- German Shepherd Dog Club of Austin
- Scottish Terrier Rescue Southern California
- Houston Cat Club
- Lone Star Pet Supply
- Mary Hemby
- San Antonio Kennel Club
- Steven Williams, Tresors Blancs Bichons/Rescue
- Texas Scottie Rescue
- Patte Titus
- Rick & Candi White