



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB®



IN SESSION

AKC'S CONGRESSIONAL NEWSLETTER

The American Kennel Club's Newsletter for Members of Congress and their Staff

PERSPECTIVES

Recently the American Kennel Club® honored five exceptional dogs and their owners for their service to society. The AKC® Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence (ACE) are awarded at the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship each year in December (See page 4 for more information.) The ACE awards honor dogs that serve in the areas of Law Enforcement, Search and Rescue, Service, Exemplary Companion and Therapy.

These five dogs are remarkable for their accomplishments and service, but they share the same strong bonds that other owners and their dogs share. The bond between dogs and their owners often defies explanation and from time in memorial we have cherished their loyalty and companionship.

Perhaps no dogs are more cherished than those that belong to our military families. Well-behaved family pets bring constancy and comfort when a family member is deployed overseas. In a world where families are regularly transferred, family dogs help service members, their spouses and their children adjust to new circumstances and provide security and constancy.

In the issue analysis on page 6, we look at the disturbing problem of inconsistent dog breed-specific ownership policies across military bases and services. Despite recent base realignment and joint basing initiatives, there is no consistent service-wide policy on dog

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Congressional Canine Spotlight- Senator Scott Brown, “Snuggles” and “Koda”

In each issue of In Session, the AKC profiles a dog-loving member of the Capitol community. This issue features Senator Scott Brown (Massachusetts).



PHOTO COURTESY OFFICE OF SENATOR SCOTT BROWN

Senator Scott Brown (MA) with his Yorkshire Terrier “Koda”.

A typical day on Capitol Hill brings a share of challenges: navigating political waters, developing public policies, handling delicate negotiations, and even photographing a stubborn Shih Tzu, as members of Senator Scott Brown’s office recently discovered.

Unlike the family’s extroverted Yorkshire Terrier, the 11-year-old Shih Tzu named “Snuggles” had little interest in getting his picture taken by staff for this article – regardless of whether he was wandering through the offices or being held by the Senator. “[Snuggles] is the only one in the family who is camera shy and afraid of large groups,” the Senator from Massachusetts explained.

“...He is more comfortable staying around the house.”

The same cannot be said of Koda. This 4-year-old Yorkshire Terrier, purchased from a breeder in Plymouth, MA, was named after a character in the Walt Disney movie *Brother Bear*. He is described by the Senator as “loving, playful and relentless”. Even as a puppy he boldly approached some large dogs – including a St. Bernard – “and started scrapping with them”, despite the fact that he was only about nine inches tall at the time!

These two distinct personalities, both named by the Senator’s daughter Arianna, are “very much a part of our

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(Continued from page 1)

ownership. As a result, when military families are transferred, a patchwork of inconsistent breed bans on military installations or in privatized housing forces responsible owners of well-behaved dogs of certain breeds to either give up a pet, or to seek much more expensive private housing options.

The AKC works extensively in opposition to breed ban policies and recognizes that breed bans are not only ineffective in addressing dangerous dog problems, but also fail to addressing the underlying problem of irresponsible dog ownership. In this issue, we join with members of the House and Senate in supporting a review of military installation housing policy (see letter, page 8) that would allow owners of any breed of dog to keep their dog on base or privatized housing if they can demonstrate the dog's good behavior and/or temperament. We hope you will agree that our brave servicemen and women and their families deserve no less.

All the best,

Sheila Goffe
Director of Government Relations
shg@akc.org

AKC Government Relations Department

(919) 816-3720

doglaw@akc.org

www.akc.org/canine_legislation



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

AKC MISSION STATEMENT

The AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.

Continued from page 1, "Congressional Canine Spotlight - Senator Scott Brown"

family," Brown said. Most days they will accompany the Senator to work, they sit next to the family at home every night, are in family pictures, parades, and even provide companionship during the stresses of election night.



PHOTO COURTESY OFFICE OF SENATOR SCOTT BROWN

Senator Brown with Koda and camera-shy Snuggles.

Dogs have been an integral part of the Senator's life since childhood. "I had a collie named Yancy when I was a little kid," he explained. "Yancy was always by my side, but

"Congressional offices are always fast-paced, and the stress levels can sometimes run high, but no matter what's happening, Snuggles and Koda never seem to lose their cool."

my parents split up and I wasn't able to keep him, which was obviously pretty tough."

Senator Brown later learned that a dog's loyalty goes beyond years of separation. "About fifteen years later, I was able to find and visit Yancy while he was on his last leg. It was really special - he hopped up and came right over to me as if no time had passed."

Brown's career in public service has taught him first-hand about other ways dogs benefit the lives of Americans. As a 31-year member of the Massachusetts Army National Guard

and now as a member of the Senate Armed Services, Homeland Security and Veterans' Affairs Committees, Senator Brown works to highlight the significant role dogs can play in the lives of troops returning from active duty.

Shortly after taking office, the Senator met Chris Goehner and his service dog Pele. Goehner had served two tours in Iraq as a combat medic and suffered from severe post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Pele, who has been invaluable to Goehner in dealing with the challenges associated with PTSD, was trained through the Puppies Behind Bars® Dog Tags Program. This private, non-profit program, Brown says, is "a very successful initiative in which inmates help train service dogs for explosive detection, and in the case of Chris and other wounded veterans, to care for the special needs of those with PTSD."

Senator Brown is enthusiastic in his description of numerous benefits these service dogs provide to veterans. "These amazing dogs learn to read emotions; they can sense panic attacks, dislodge a soldier from a flashback and even dial 9-1-1 when necessary. Additionally they bring these ailing soldiers a sense of optimism and restore their sense of purpose."

From the loyalty of a childhood pet Collie to the companionship of a Shih Tzu and Yorkshire Terrier today, Brown can personally attest to the benefits a dog can provide to daily life.

"[The dogs] spend most work days in my Capitol Hill office," Senator Brown explained. "They are part of the team and lift the spirits of everyone here. Congressional offices are always fast-paced, and the stress levels can sometimes run high, but no matter what's happening, Snuggles and Koda never seem to lose their cool."

He also offers this advice for those wanting to be responsible dog owners: "You must plan around their needs and remember that dogs aren't self-sufficient," the Senator said. "Whenever we plan our days and weeks, we're always taking into consideration the needs of the dogs."

DID YOU KNOW?

- The word "Shih Tzu" means "lion", and the breed has been a prized house pet for over 1,000 years, including for most of the Ming Dynasty.
- Yorkshire Terriers were originally used in the 19th Century to catch rats in clothing mills before becoming companion pets to wealthy European families.
- In 2010, both the Yorkshire Terrier and the Shih Tzu made the top 10 list of most popular breeds registered by the American Kennel Club. The Yorkshire Terrier was the third most popular, and the Shih Tzu was number 10. For more information on breed popularity, visit akc.org/reg and click on "Registration Statistics"

The American Kennel Club® and its affiliates do so many things for dogs everywhere.

KENNEL INSPECTION

We inspect thousands of kennels every year to ensure the safety and welfare of dogs.



LOST DOG RECOVERY

We offer recovery services 24/7, 365 days-a-year, and have reunited over 400,000 lost dogs with their families.



HEALTH RESEARCH

We have donated \$20 million to fund sound scientific research to prevent, treat and cure canine disease.



SEARCH AND RESCUE

We have donated over \$3 million to Canine Search & Rescue and pet-related disaster relief & preparedness efforts.

The American Kennel Club, working with its affiliates, is the only not-for-profit registry devoted to the health and well-being of dogs. We have allocated over \$30 million to fund programs for the betterment of dogs everywhere.



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®**

WE'RE MORE THAN CHAMPION DOGS,
WE'RE THE DOG'S CHAMPION

Five Canine Heroes Honored With AKC® Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence (ACE)

The AKC® Humane Fund recently announced the winners of the 12th annual *AKC Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence (ACE)*, which commemorates five loyal, hard-working dogs that have made significant contributions to their communities in each of the following five categories: Exemplary Companion Dog, Law Enforcement, Search and Rescue, Service and Therapy.

"The AKC Humane Fund Awards for Canine Excellence celebrate what dogs contribute to our lives and these five exceptional recipients exemplify the selfless service canines perform for us everyday," said AKC Spokesperson Lisa Peterson.

All the ACE recipients received \$1,000 and an engraved Sterling silver medallion presented at the AKC/Eukanuba National Championship in Orlando, Florida on December 17, 2011. Each winner was also honored at local events.

This year's ACE winners include:



COURTESY BLAKE OVARD

Exemplary Companion Dog: "Tugg," a Bull Terrier owned by Blake & Kim Ovard of Cleburne, TX

When he was four months of age, "Tugg" was found beside a road, wrapped in a blanket, barely alive and suffering from numerous infections. His adoptive owners, both animal control officers, started a Facebook page to report on Tugg's progress. Today, the Bull Terrier has more than 9,300 fans around the world. Tugg's fame has helped him raise money for an array of charitable causes, including animal rescue and the Susan G. Komen Foundation. As a certified therapy dog, Tugg makes school visits where he helps raise children's self-esteem with his "You are great just the way you are" program.

Law Enforcement Dog: "Blue," a German Shepherd Dog owned by Suffolk County Police Department and handled by John Mallia of Yaphank, NY

On December 11, 2010, John and Blue were requested to search for a missing woman in the Gilgo Beach area of Long Island, NY. They ended up locating a different woman's remains in an area covered with dense brush and later unexpectedly found three additional sets of human remains, all of which were believed to be victims of the same



COURTESY SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

serial killer. Just one week later, the team recovered the remains of another person in an unrelated case, helping to bring closure to a victim's family.

Search and Rescue Dog: "Hunter" owned by Fire Captain Billy Monahan of Tehachapi, CA

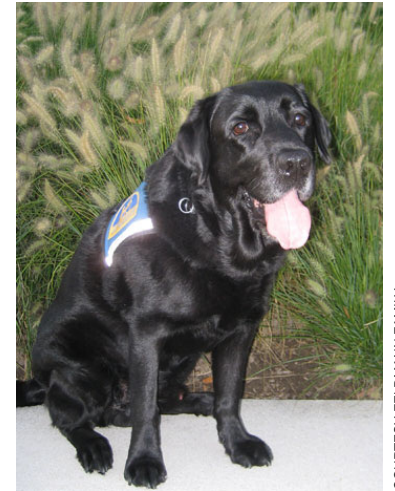
Hunter and Captain Monahan were deployed to Haiti after the country's January 2010 earthquake. During his time there, Hunter detected and alerted to live human scent while searching the debris of a four-story collapsed building. As a result of his efforts, rescuers were able to pull three girls, still alive, from the rubble. Hunter was also called on after the Japanese earthquake and tsunami in March 2011 and worked through aftershocks, tsunami warnings, freezing temperatures and snow. In 2010, Hunter was awarded the Firefighter of the Year award by the Los Angeles County Fire Department, becoming the first ever non-human recipient.



COURTESY BILLY MONAHAN

Service Dog: "Bingo," a Labrador Retriever owned by Konrad Feldmann of Liberty Township, OH

"Bingo" acts as a service dog for Konrad, who has cerebral palsy. Since being paired with Bingo, Konrad has experienced a far more inclusive and welcoming attitude in his school and community. Whether it's a walk in the neighborhood or attendance at a high school football game, the team elicits a multitude of greetings from the many new friends Konrad has met through his canine partner.



COURTESY FELDMANN FAMILY

The team has also facilitated a presentation in a special needs classroom and taken part in a ribbon cutting ceremony for an accessible playground.



COURTESY TRICIA BAKER

Therapy Dog: "Miki," a Pomeranian owned by Tricia Baker of Plainsboro, NJ

In 2009, Tricia Baker's son Kenny took his own life after years of struggling with depression and anxiety disorder. Therapy Dog Miki has been instrumental in the Baker family's recovery. After Kenny's death, Tricia and her family created the organization A.I.R. (Attitudes in Reverse), whose theme is "Mental illness is like air. Just because you don't see it, doesn't mean it isn't there. It is all around us." Tricia makes presentations about mental health and suicide prevention where people pet and hug Miki as they open up about their personal journeys with similar issues. Miki also helps raise awareness by walking for the National Alliance on Mental Illness and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

For more photos and stories about the 2011 AKC Humane Fund ACE recipients and honorable mentions visit:

<http://www.akc.org/news/ace/2011/honorees.cfm>

From AKC.org



Issue Analysis: The Challenge of Military Breed-Specific Policies

The lives of United States service members and their families can be filled with uncertainty and strain. It is not uncommon for service members to be frequently transferred from base to base, and the companionship of a family dog can help ease the transition – especially for children.

As one woman who grew up in military housing explained, “Dogs are important to the psyche of any child in a stress-filled home, but especially to the ones that move a lot or whose parents are gone for 18 months at a time.”

Unfortunately, some military personnel and their families living on base or in privatized housing today face an additional difficult and painful dilemma when transferred if they are forced to relinquish a beloved family pet to comply with a different base’s dog breed restrictions and bans.

The Challenge of Inconsistent Policies

Policies regulating privately-owned dogs on military bases or privatized housing can vary among military branches and even bases. Many U.S. Army installations, including Fort Hood and Fort Riley, as well as the Army’s Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) Privatization Program, have instituted bans on certain breeds based on a purported reputation for aggressive behavior. Targeted breeds include “pit bulls” (defined as American Staffordshire Bull Terriers or Staffordshire Bull Terriers), Rottweilers, Doberman Pinschers, and Chow Chows.

The U.S. Marine Corps bans certain breeds as well (including “full or mixed breeds of Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, and canid/wolf hybrids”). In this case there is a grandfather period through September 30, 2012, for dogs already



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“Stubby” is considered a World War I hero for services ranging from alerting his infantry to a pending attack, to locating missing soldiers and even capturing an enemy spy. He now has his own display in the National Museum of American History. His exact breed/mix of breeds is unknown, but he may have been at least part American Staffordshire Terrier, a breed now restricted or banned on many military bases.

“Dogs are important to the psyche of any child in a stress-filled home, but especially to the ones that move a lot or whose parents are gone for 18 months at a time.”

owned, so long as they pass a nationally-recognized good temperament/behavior test.

The U.S. Air Force allows their base commanders to make the ultimate decision on which breeds are banned, so the list can vary from base to base. For example, Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota bans pit bulls, Rottweilers and Dobermans, whereas Lackland Air Force Base in Texas expands this list to include Akitas, Chow Chows, American Staffordshire Terriers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers and wolf hybrids.

This lack of consistent policy leads to confusion and enforcement challenges above and beyond the inherent problems in enforcing breed-specific policies. Furthermore, it is not uncommon for service members and their families to be posted at a joint-base housing complex,

or be assigned a post with another service. The variations in policies could mean that a dog may be permitted at one base, but not at another. As a result, families may be forced to give up their well-behaved family dog, or choose a different breed when moving to a new base simply because of the way the breed is profiled.

In one instance, a couple entitled to live in on-base housing at Naval Station Great Lakes in Illinois had to choose more expensive private housing because of the base’s breed-specific policies.

Their German Shepherd had recently passed away and they wanted to purchase another one, but the breed was prohibited in the base’s military housing. “No

amount of obedience training, etc. [made] a difference,” the wife explained. “A banned breed is a banned breed, no matter what.” The couple moved to off-base housing and purchased a German Shepherd named Saxon, who resides with them to this day. Ironically, the

couple now lives near a military base in Hawaii, which does permit the ownership of this breed.

The Inherent Flaw of Breed-Specific Policies

Breed-specific policies were established in the service to address concerns about dangerous dogs on base and in privatized housing. However, breed-specific policies create extra burdens on enforcement officers and families and don’t solve the underlying issue of irresponsible dog ownership.

Banning a specific breed punishes responsible dog owners who have well-trained dogs of that breed, while ignoring irresponsible dog owners who may simply obtain a different dog. If a dog not on the base’s restricted breed list harms

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someone, then those drafting housing policies are left with the dilemma of whether or not to add that breed to a list of banned breeds. Moreover, for breed-specific laws to be effective, enforcement and military veterinary officers need to become breed identification experts in order to determine whether or not specific dogs fall under the restriction policies.

Better Alternatives

The AKC believes a better solution is to hold *all* dog owners accountable for their pet's behavior regardless of the breed of dog they choose to own. AKC supports strict enforcement of animal control policies (such as leash

laws), guidelines that clearly define dangerous behavior in *all* dogs, and appropriate penalties for irresponsible dog ownership – the heart of the dangerous dog issue.

A 2009 study published in *Journal of Animal and Veterinary Advances* stated that the time an owner spends caring for and training



STAFFORDSHIRE BULL TERRIER – ©AKC

“Proper education, socialization and training will help teach better dog ownership, and ultimately contribute to the overall goal of protecting the safety and welfare of service members and their families.”

a dog is directly related to a dog's behavior¹. Proper education, socialization and training will help teach better dog ownership, and ultimately contribute to the overall goal of protecting the safety and welfare of the service members and their families.

The AKC and our over 5,000 clubs in all 50 states have numerous resources available to help all dog owners learn to properly care for, train, and socialize their pets. These resources include educational programs that teach children about responsible pet ownership and how to “be a dog listener” and act appropriately around dogs. The AKC's Canine Good Citizen® (CGC) program helps dog owners learn the basics of training and responsible ownership. At the end of the training, the dogs must pass a 10-step evaluation test, which includes such criteria as appropriately accepting a friendly stranger and walking through a

crowd. Over 40,000 dogs across the United States receive CGC certification each year. Currently the USMC requires a test such as CGC for dogs of targeted breeds that are currently included under the corps' grandfather clause.

The most effective solution is to develop standard, consistent policies for all dog owners, regardless of breed. Focusing on strong enforcement of general dangerous dog policies and public education will prove a much more effective and efficient solution to protecting the safety of military personnel and

their families – all while ensuring they are not forced to give up a beloved family pet that, as the U.S. Marine Corps ani-

mal control policy affirms, “provides a real and tangible benefit and contributes to the quality of life for resident families.”²

¹ “Factors Linked to Dominance Aggression in Dogs”, *Journal of Animal and Veterinary Advances* 8(2): 336-342, 2009.

² Marine Corps Order P11000.22, Chapter 5, Paragraph 5002.



ROTTWEILER – ISABELLE FRANCAIS FOR AKC

The American Kennel Club® has joined with Congressman Walter Jones (NC-3) and Tom Rooney (FL-16) in support of a review of existing dangerous dog policies on military bases and privatized housing. See page 8 for a copy of the letter on this issue the congressmen recently submitted Secretary McHugh of the United States Army.

We invite you to support these efforts as well. For more information about this issue or AKC's educational programs, contact AKC's Government Relations Department at dog_law@akc.org.

WALTER B. JONES
3D DISTRICT, NORTH CAROLINA

ROOM 2333
RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
TELEPHONE: (202) 225-3415

COMMITTEES:
COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES

DISTRICT OFFICE:
1105-C CORPORATE DRIVE
GREENVILLE, NC 27858
(252) 931-1003
(800) 351-1697

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3303

December 14, 2011

The Honorable John McHugh
Secretary of the United States Army
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary McHugh:

We write you today regarding Department of Defense policies governing private pet ownership by military personnel and their families, specifically dogs, at U. S. military installations and in privatized military housing.

We understand that across our military there is no consistent policy with respect to the issue of dangerous dogs and regulation of privately-owned dogs on military installations or in privatized military housing. Many of these policies ban specific breeds of dogs based on their purported reputation for aggressive behavior, rather than evaluating the behavior of an individual dog owned by a military family. Further, we understand that even the specific breeds of dogs banned varies from installation to installation, sometimes forcing military families to give up their family pet when they move to a base where that breed of dog is banned.

U. S. Army installations including Ft. Hood and Ft. Riley and the Army's Residential Communities Initiative (RCI) Privatization Program, have instituted policies that prohibit the ownership of certain breeds of dogs based on their reputation for aggressive behavior. Breeds banned in RCI housing include "Pit Bulls (American Staffordshire Bull Terriers or English Staffordshire Bull Terriers), Rottweilers, Doberman Pinschers, Chows and wolf hybrids." Ellsworth AF Base in South Dakota bans Pit bulls, Rottweilers and Dobermans. Lackland AF Base in Texas bans Akitas, Chows, Doberman Pinschers, Pit Bulls, Rottweilers, American Staffordshire Terriers, Staffordshire Bull Terriers and wolf hybrids. The US Marine Corps also has a breed-specific ban policy (Marine Corps Order P11000.22 Ch 6) that bans Pit Bulls, Rottweilers and canid/wolf hybrids. However, the Marine Corps Policy provides a waiver and grandfather clause for currently-owned dogs.

While we share the DOD's concern regarding private ownership of dangerous dogs by military personnel, banning or declaring a dog inherently dangerous based on breed or physical appearance unfairly punishes responsible military dog-owning families. We believe that singling out specific breeds of dogs as inherently vicious or dangerous or banning them only shifts the responsibility from the dog owner, where it belongs, to dog, and does not address the underlying issue of irresponsible ownership. Several studies, including a September 2000 study published

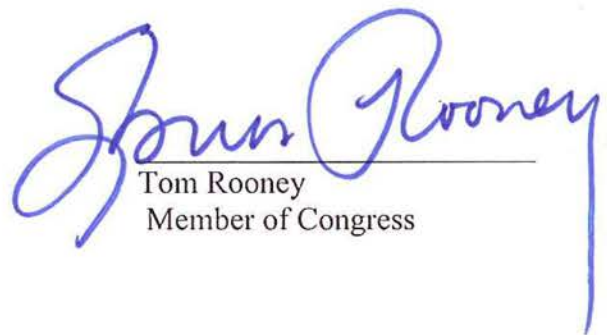
in *the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, have concluded that breed-specific regulations are not an effective means of regulating dangerous dogs.

We would like to request that you direct the U. S. Army Veterinary Service, as the Department of Defense Executive Agent for Veterinary Service, review dog ownership policies throughout the services and provide their opinion as to whether DOD dangerous dog policy should be based on the individual behavior of dogs or on specific breeds. We hope this review of DOD private dog ownership policies will result in the establishment of a uniform policy governing private ownership of dogs that supports the well-being of service families, addresses the issue of dangerous dogs, and does not ban or declare any specific breeds of dogs as inherently dangerous, but instead establishes measurable, objective criteria for declaring a dog dangerous based on that dog's behavior and actions.

We all agree that responsibly-owned, well-socialized family pets are beneficial to the overall morale and well-being of service members and their families. We look forward to your response and the opinion of the U. S. Army Veterinary Service regarding this matter.

Sincerely,


Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress


Tom Rooney
Member of Congress

The American Kennel Club Honors a Different Breed of Veteran

The American Kennel Club® (AKC) celebrates the breeds most commonly used to defend and protect the United States alongside our dedicated service men and women.

An estimated 600 dogs currently serve the U.S. Military in Afghanistan and Iraq and while German Shepherd Dogs are often used, other notable breeds include the Airedale Terrier used in several wars as a dependable dispatch bearer, and the Belgian Malinois, the breed speculated to have assisted Seal Team 6 in taking down Osama Bin Laden.

"The AKC salutes the contributions dogs have made in protecting our nation...", said AKC Meet the Breeds spokesperson Gina DiNardo. "From detecting bombs to search and rescue these breeds show courage and dedication as they work alongside their human counterparts."

While there are numerous breeds used by the U.S. Military, some of the most popular include:



AIREDALE TERRIER © AKC/MARY BLOOM

Airedale Terrier – The undisputed "King of Terriers," the Airedale Terrier is the largest and hardiest of the terriers. They have a sweet disposition, but training is a must for these quick learners who can get bored easily. Airedale Terriers have been used in several wars as messengers because of their ability to fearlessly deliver information even after becoming injured.

For more information visit the Airedale Terrier Club of America at: www.Airedale.org



BELGIAN MALINOIS © AKC/MARY BLOOM

Belgian Malinois – The Belgian Malinois is a confident breed that loves its family and is naturally protective of its owners without being overly aggressive. This breed is intelligent and happiest with regular activity and a job to do, excelling as a police and military working dog. In fact, when properly outfitted with flotation vests, this breed and others serving in the military can participate in jumps from helicopters into the water.

For more information visit the American Belgian Malinois Club at: www.malinoisclub.com



DOBERMAN PINSCHER © AKC/MARY BLOOM

Doberman Pinscher – Known to be energetic, affectionate, obedient and loyal, the Doberman Pinscher has proved itself as friend and guardian. The breed is in high demand as a police and military dog due to its intelligence and ability to absorb and retain training. During the 1940's 25 Marine War Dogs - mostly Doberman Pinschers - gave their lives liberating Guam.

For more information visit the Doberman Pinscher Club of America at: www.dpca.org



GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG © AKC/MARY BLOOM

German Shepherd Dog – Consistently one of the United States' most popular breeds according to AKC® Registration Statistics, the German Shepherd Dog is energetic, fun-loving and a loyal family pet. They require regular exercise and their intelligence, high trainability and loyalty have made them a popular choice for police and military work. German Shepherds like other military breeds are used for their strong sense of smell which is estimated to be 40 times greater than that of a human.

For more information visit the German Shepherd Dog Club of America at: www.gsdca.org



SIBERIAN HUSKY © AKC/MARY BLOOM

Siberian Husky – Bred in Northeast Asia as a sled dog, the Siberian Husky is known for its amazing endurance and willingness to work. Its agreeable and outgoing temperament makes it a great all-around dog. The breed served in the Army's Arctic Search and Rescue Unit during World War II.

For more information visit the Siberian Husky Club of America, Inc. at: www.shca.org

Article from AKC.org