

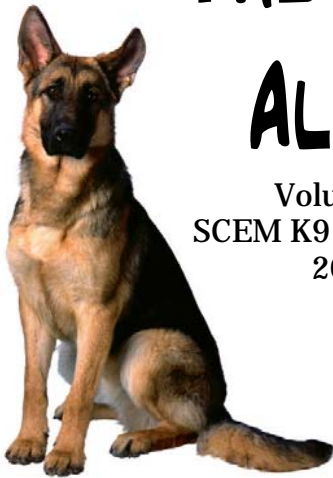
Sedgwick County Emergency Management

K9 SEARCH TEAM

We provide **SEARCH DOGS** to Law Enforcement and Fire Rescue Agencies in Sedgwick County and surrounding areas – at **NO COST** to the agency or families involved!

THE BARK ALERT

Volume 9
SCEM K9 Newsletter
2009



Volunteers on Call 24/7-365!





From the Chief...

COMMITMENT

As with many volunteer organizations, members of SCEMK9 are called on to demonstrate commitment to their team and to the task at hand. How does that commitment manifest in members and the community?

This work is a commitment, a promise to serve a purpose greater than ourselves. It is easy to look at the hours we spend in scheduled and unscheduled training, at the cost of the specialized equipment needed for this work, and at the amount of time this takes away from family and other activities. These are the sacrifices necessary in the personal

commitment we make to work to find individuals who are missing. This commitment is what it takes to keep ourselves and our dogs proficient in the work that we do. We do this while knowing that our efforts can take us to locations or environments that pose a risk to our safety or the safety of our dogs. This commitment cannot be forced; it is a choice that is made willingly.

There are a number of qualities that must be and are demonstrated by members of the team as evidence of our commitment. There is the individual **responsibility** that you assume to be sure that you and your dog are fully ready to meet the challenge of any request for our services. We must work to not just maintain the lowest acceptable skill level, but constantly work to improve our ability to respond effectively and professionally. Team members must show a **loyalty** to the team and the principles of service that we represent. If we put our individual needs before the needs of the team and the community, our ability to fulfill our role is diminished. The efforts of the team will always be stronger than those of an individual.

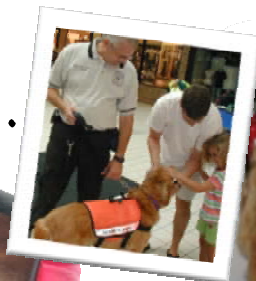
Doing this work also represents a **promise**. It is a promise to the community, our team, and ourselves that we will do all that we can to carry out our role successfully. That promise means making our training and response a priority in our lives, at a different level than a social group that gets together because they like dogs might. It is a promise to respect that higher call of service. Likewise, this commitment is seen in the **dedication** that team members have to train and respond when needed. This year we have spent many hours walking through fields and woods, in the bitter cold as well as the heat, to provide support to other emergency responders. The superior ability of the dogs in finding scent of a person can provide leads or confirmation of search results, covering greater area and in greater detail than a single individual. That is the work we do and the commitment we serve.

This past year we have welcomed new members as well as said goodbye to members who have moved on. We appreciate the commitment of each person as well as the support given to them by family and friends. We could not do this without the support of all.

Tom Pletcher
Chief, SCEMK9 Team



In Memory...



This year was full of successes as well as challenges, but one of the most difficult was saying goodbye to my partner on the team, **Molly**. Even now, writing this brings back thoughts of joy as well as sadness as I think of her life.

Now, many, many people have experienced the loss of their dog and I hope that no one's experience is lessened by these remembrances of Molly. We each have lost a part of ourselves when we lose our "partner" and I hope to honor all of the pets or team members who have gone before us by remembering the partner I knew best.



My wife and I got Molly just a few months after we lost our previous golden due to natural causes. We weren't planning on getting another dog so soon, but Molly introduced herself by coming over and laying her head on my shoe. As you might imagine, that was the start of a very strong bond. For those that knew Molly, you also know that was probably one of the few times that she was still. We discovered quickly that she needed a "job" and chose to become involved in search and rescue work. She had a very strong drive and picked up the task very quickly. She showed a fullness of life that made every person her "new best friend" and she loved to go to work. As soon as she saw the uniform come on, she wouldn't leave my side lest she be left behind. She had this vertical leap that she could do, almost as though she was so excited that she didn't know what to do with herself. She could also wait (mostly patiently) in the back of the car while training was set up or other members were running their problems, but she always showed her excitement and eagerness to try to "find Fred", the term we used for locating human remains. Even after extended searches, there were only a few times that I saw her lay down, tired from the experience and she certainly never stayed down for long.

This fall, most likely following exposure during training, Molly developed leptospirosis. In her case, unfortunately, it progressed quickly to the point that her kidneys essentially stopped working before the cause of her illness could be determined or the treatments became effective. Our veterinarian was open and honest from the beginning and tried everything possible to keep her hanging on. In spite of how she felt, Molly still showed us that bounce in her step and her eagerness to be with us when we visited her during her treatment. After too short of a time, it became clear that there would be no recovery and we had to let her go. At only six years old, it was too soon.

(continued on next page)

My wife and I are thankful for her for the life of joy that Molly gave us and for her life of service to others. We thank our veterinarian and the people at K-State for their efforts to save her, and for their expressions of deep compassion and support. We also thank the members of SCEMK9, Sedgwick County Emergency Management, and all of those who offered kind words and other gestures of support. We miss her always, but cherish the memories of her time with us, at home, at training, doing public relations events, and on searches.

*May you continue to treasure your partners,
past and current as well!*

Tom



Why Do We Train Dogs For Search and Rescue?

It has been documented that under ideal conditions, one well trained dog team can be effective as 50-100 ground searchers.

How Do Search Dogs Smell a Lost Person?

*A dog's sense of smell is many, many times better than a person's sense of smell. Dogs have up to about 220 million scent cells, compared to about 5 million in humans. 12% of a dog's brain is dedicated to scent! Scent can be found in the oils of sweat or even residue from the digestive or respiratory systems which is shed through exhaled breath. Humans also shed scent from skin cells that slough off at a rate of approximately **40,000 per minute** - whether the person is alive or dead, buried or underwater. This scent travels on air currents from the human outward in the shape of a cone. If the person is still, the dog uses the air currents to pick up the scent and follow it to the source. If the person is moving, the dog follows the rafts as they land on the ground and form a trail.*



The job of search and rescue dogs is to find the lost person as quickly as possible or to determine that the person is not in the area being searched.

Amazing characteristics of a dogs nose...

Odor Lock

In the human being, the brain decreases or eliminates the stimulus of smell to the brain after about ten to fifteen minutes. If you walk into a room that smells strongly of bleach, after a few minutes you do not smell it anymore, regardless of whether it is present for five minutes or five years. Dogs do not do this.

Direction Location

A dog's brain is able to discern which nostril has the greatest concentration of odor. If the greater amount of odor is in the dog's left nostril it knows that whatever it is searching for is off to its left, and visa versa. When the amount of odor is balanced in both nostrils then the animal knows that whatever it is searching for is in front of it.

Odor Layering

When one first goes into the kitchen and someone is cooking chili, they can smell the chili. When the canine goes into the kitchen; it can smell the hamburger, the beans, the tomatoes, the seasonings, etc. The dog can break the chili into individual layers. This is probably why narcotics dogs are not fooled by coffee grounds or other destructors. As long as the odor is present, the dog smells it.

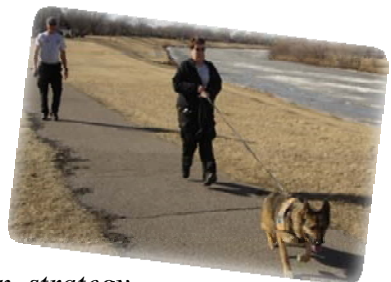
How does scent behave?

Though scent theory is just that, a theory, experience shows that it behaves similar to smoke, snow or a dust cloud following the human body's motion. Scent is believed to spread anywhere from 10' to 100' in diameter, or more on a windy day.

Gravity does not affect scent the same way as dust however, in that it will rise when the air is warmer and settle once the air cools down. Scent is easily carried by wind & water and tends to rise and float in water (salt or fresh).

What does the handler do?

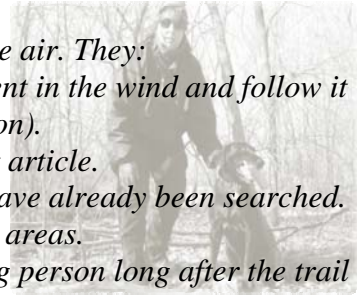
The handler's job is to make sure the dog has the best chance to follow the scent to find the lost person. The handler must use their knowledge of air currents, scent theory, weather and terrain to plan strategy and maximize the abilities of the dog.



What is the difference between an air-scenting dog and a tracking/trailing dog?

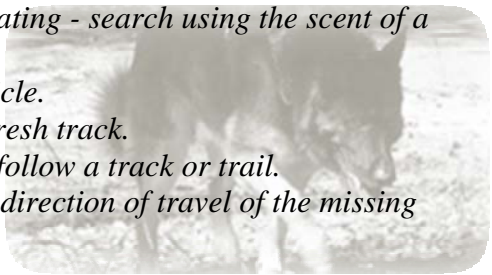
Air-scenting dogs follow scent in the air. They:

- *Seek out the generic human scent in the wind and follow it to the source (the missing person).*
- *Search without needing a scent article.*
- *Are able to search areas that have already been searched.*
- *Work off leash and cover large areas.*
- *Are able to search for a missing person long after the trail is cold.*



Some searchers train their dogs to track or trail. Tracking dogs generally follow scent on the ground. They:

- *Are scent discriminating - search using the scent of a specific person.*
- *Require a scent article.*
- *Perform best with fresh track.*
- *Work on leash and follow a track or trail.*
- *Help determine the direction of travel of the missing person.*



What kind of dogs are good for SAR?

Search dogs usually come from herding breeds (German Shepherd Dogs, Border Collies, etc.) and working dog stock (Labs, Golden Retrievers, Dobermans, Rottweiler's, etc.). Our K9s run the range from a variety of pure breeds to mixed breeds, in a variety of sizes. The important thing is that they have a high play drive, a high prey drive, good endurance, a strong desire to please their handler, and a high intelligence. SAR dogs also need to be non-aggressive to people and to other dogs.





Scott Rolik - Officer

Scott has a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering from University of Michigan, and has been with The Boeing Company for 28 years.

Adult CPR/First Aid/AED Certified.

FEMA NIMS Courses:

ICS-100-Introduction to the Incident Command System

ICS - 200-ICS for Single Resource & Individual Action Incidents

ICS-700 –Nat. Incident Mgmt System

ISC-800 -National Response Framework:

An Introduction

FCC Amateur Technician License.

Scott has experience training dogs

for AKC CGC, AKC Companion Dog , TDI.

K-9 SHADRACH:

Basset Hound in training for Human Remains Detection. CGC certified.



Kelly Chandler - Officer

Kelly has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Human Resource Mgmt from Friends University, and is employed by Spirit AeroSystems. She has been there for 11 years. Her current position is Facilities, Building Maintenance & Site Services Senior Manager.

Adult CPR-First Aid/K9 First Aid. CERT Certified.

FEMA NIMS Courses:

ICS-100-Introduction to the Incident Command System

ICS - 200-ICS for Single Resource & Individual Action Incidents

ICS-700 –Nat. Incident Mgmt System

ISC-800 -National Response Framework: An Introduction

K-9 PEPPER:

German Shepherd Dog, Certified in Area/Wilderness Search (Day- Night)



Mark Handzo - Officer (On Leave)

Mark is a paramedic who has been employed by Sedgwick County EMS since 1992, and is a valuable part of the team. He spent 5 years in the United States Air Force, and is currently on leave as the SCEMK9 Medical Officer.

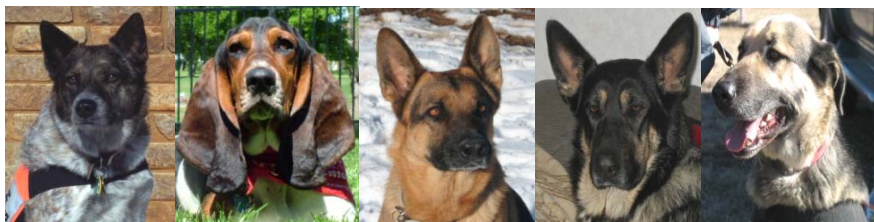
K-9 SADIE:

Viszla. Trailing dog. CGC certified.

K-9 JAKE:

Bldg Search/ Disaster, HRD, CGC Certified. Jake is a Golden Retriever mix who was adopted from the Kansas Humane Society in June 2001.

THE DOGS OF SCEM K-9



K9: KENZIE Certified	K9: SHADRACH	K9: REUBEN Certified	K9: PEPPER Certified	K9: ALVIN Certified
Human Remains Det.	Human Remains Det.	Area Search	Area Search	Area Search
8 years old	6 years old	6 years old	5 years old	8 years
Handler: Matt Kuestersteffen	Handler: Scott Rolik	Handler: Terrie Clark	Handler: Kelly Chandler	Handler: Robyn Roberts

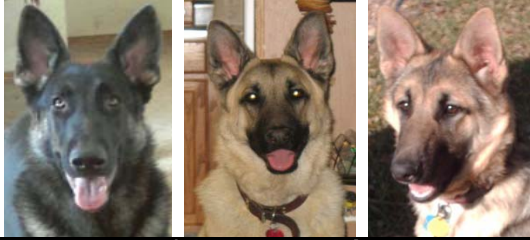


K9: SAMSON Certified	K9: RANGER Certified	K9: ABBY Certified	K9: SUNNY Certified	K9: FOXY
Area Search	Area Search	Area Search	Area Search	Trailing
9 years old	6 years old	6 years old	5 years old	6 years old
Handler: Debbie McCurry	Handler: Robert Tucker	Handler: Julie Smith	Handler: Kathy Diers	Handler: Alaine Kuestersteffen



K9: SAMSON Certified	K9: HANNA	K9: MOLSON	K9: RAVEN
Trailing	Trailing	Trailing	Trailing
5 years old	6 years old	2 years old	5 years old
Handler: Cynthia Weesner	Handler: Terrie Clark	Handlers: Chuck & Em Morris	Handlers: Chuck & Em Morris

NEW DOGS IN TRAINING



K9: MARLEY	K9: SHORTY	K9: LIBERTY
Trailing	HRD	TBD
18 Months Old	18 Months Old	6 Months Old
Handler: Julie Smith	Handler: Kelly Chandler	Handlers: Mike & Regina Teer

DOGS with Handlers on Leave of Absence



K9: JAKE	K9: SADIE	K9: JAKE	K9: ZEKE
On Leave	On Leave	On Leave	On Leave
HRD	Trailing	Area Search	Trailing
9 years old	6 years old	6 years old	2 years old
Handler: Mark Handzo	Handler: Mark Handzo	Handler: Jim Griffin	Handler: Jennifer Winter

SUPPORT PERSONNEL



Bryan Griffin & Chuck Loper



Tammy Hammond, Secretary

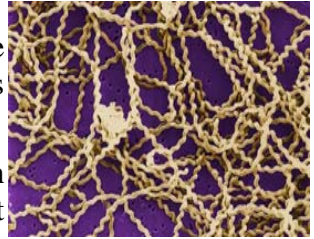


*Interesting Pet Health News from the University of Guelph:
Ontario Veterinary College*

Canine LEPTO: It's that time of year again

September 9, 2009

Cases of Lepto (leptospirosis) are on the rise and the cool damp fall weather provides a great environment for lepto bacteria.



Prevention of lepto in dogs, as with most diseases, is preferred to trying to treat sick animals. The best way to avoid the bacterium is to **keep your dog out of areas where infected wildlife may urinate frequently**, particularly out in the bush. But of course, skunks and raccoons can be found as close as the backyard as well, so even in the city, the risk isn't zero.

If your dog goes frequently into the bush and is at increased risk for Leptospirosis, **hopefully you've already discussed vaccination with your veterinarian.** While the vaccine available doesn't protect against all types of Lepto, it does help protect against the most common ones.

What Dogs should be vaccinated for Lepto?

- ☞ Dogs that go hunting.
- ☞ Dogs that go to dog parks or hiking.
- ☞ Dogs that are boarded regularly.
- ☞ Dogs that attend doggie daycare regularly.
- ☞ Dogs that take trips to the south regularly.
- ☞ Dogs that may contact urine from wild animals or other pets.

Pets and H1N1

October 23, 2009

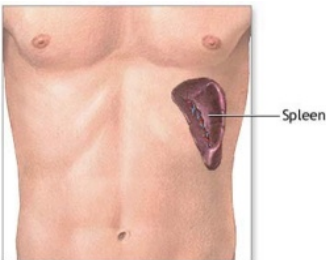
The recent discovery of H1N1 influenza in a pet ferret has led to another round of concern about the potential impact of H1N1 on pets and pets as a source of human infection. Finding H1N1 in a ferret is not particularly surprising, considering ferrets are susceptible to various (including human) influenza viruses. **We shouldn't**



dismiss the potential that certain pets could become infected by this virus or transmit it, but the overall risks are presumed to be very low. There have obviously been many, many cases of H1N1 influenza in pet owners, yet there is just this one report in a pet (although it's certainly possible that other pets have been infected but not diagnosed). Ferrets may be the biggest concern. Pet birds and pot-bellied pigs may also be at higher risk considering this virus can clearly infect pigs and birds. Cats are probably a bigger concern than dogs because of what we know about cats' susceptibility to H5N1 (avian) influenza.

No spleen + dog bite = beware

October 26, 2009



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People that have had their spleens removed or who have non-functional spleens are at much greater risk for various infections. **No one should be allowed to leave a hospital after having their spleen removed without a letter saying, among other things, if you are bitten by a dog, get thee to a physician (pronto)!** If you don't

have a functioning spleen, make sure you know the risks and how to protect your health. Here's some general advice for **individuals who don't have a working spleen:**

- **Talk to your physician** or an infectious disease specialist about the risks associated with animal contact (including pets).
- In general, **you do not need to give up your pets**. The risk of infection may be increased, but the risks can be minimized in most situations, and the risks are often outweighed by the beneficial aspects of pet ownership.
- Be wary of any possible exposure to an infectious disease, and be diligent about infection control precautions. If you are **bitten by an animal (of any kind)**, see a doctor as soon as possible.
- **Make sure your pets do not touch any open wounds you may have**. In particular, do not let a dog lick skin that is damaged in any way. Since *Capnocytophaga* is commonly carried in the mouths of healthy dogs, licking in general should be discouraged.
- **Don't feed your pet raw meat or raw treats**, because this increases the risk exposure to *Salmonella* from your pet's stool.

Oprah's Parvo Pups

Posted on May 15, 2009

A couple of months back, Oprah adopted two cocker spaniel **puppies from a shelter in Chicago**. Unfortunately, within two weeks they both came down with the parvovirus infection and had to be hospitalized. I'm sure both dogs received top-of-the-line care with no expense spared, but even so one of the puppies died. The other puppy came very close to dying as well, but happily she apparently has now recovered completely and is doing just fine (or quite likely better than fine, considering who her new owner is!).



This brings up a few interesting points to ponder:

Young animals, particularly from shelters, are **higher risk in terms of the infectious diseases** they can carry and transmit. That doesn't mean they shouldn't be adopted, but it does mean taking some extra precautions for the first several weeks they're in their new home. These include being very diligent about **controlling stool contamination** of any kind (which can be easier said than done during the house-training phase), **preventing contact with high-risk individuals** (e.g. young children, the elderly, anyone with a weakened immune system) and **lots of hand washing** on the part of everyone involved with the puppy (or kitten!).

Parvo is a very serious disease in puppies, yet people sometimes become a little complacent about vaccinating for parvo and other puppyhood diseases. Remember, though, that the reason parvo has become so much less common than it used to be is largely because of widespread and effective vaccination. **The virus is still out there**, and if we become lax in our infection control practices - including decreasing exposure of puppies to the stool of other dogs, as well as vaccination - it's waiting in the wings for its opportunity to move in. Even with the very best care the infection can still be fatal. Parvoviruses are quite species specific, so thankfully **people cannot get parvovirus from dogs**.



Callouts & Training Hours for 2009

Training - 1,500.25 Hours
Official Callouts - 378 Hours
Other Team Activities - 304 Hours



A special **THANKS** to the Sedgwick Co. Fire District Technical Rescue Unit from Station 37 and Andale Station 31 --- who came and suited up to help the K9 Team train by burying down in the wheat at the Garden Plain elevator!



Amber gets "found" by Hanna (left) and Foxy (right).

Members of Cub Scout Pack 585 from Church of the Resurrection in Bel Aire came out to observe and work with the dogs.



Things To Remember When A Search Dog Is Needed

Proper knowledge at the scene can make the Canine Team more effective. A few simple procedures will assist the handler and the dog.

- **Call At Once, NOT As a Last Resort.**

Time can be extremely important. If in doubt, go ahead and call. It is better to call us and not need us than to need us and not call.

- **Secure The Scene.**

Protect any areas that may contain scent from unnecessary contamination. Keep people out.

- **Avoid Driving/Parking Vehicles Near The Search Area.**

Exhaust fumes kill scent.

- **Have All Available Information Ready For the Handler.**

This may include a description of the person, description of footwear & other clothing, medical information, point last seen and any other information which might be helpful.

- **Have an Officer or Someone Who Is Familiar with the Area Available To Assist The Handler(s).**

Selection And Collection Of Scent Articles Is Best Left To The Canine Handler

If it is necessary to collect scent articles prior to the team's arrival:

- **Use Instruments Or Gloved Hands.**
- **Place Items In Plastic Or Paper Bags And Seal.**

-----Cut on dotted line and keep near your phone -----



SCEM K9

Sedgwick County Emergency Mgmt
K9 Search & Rescue Team



TEAMS ARE ON CALL 24/7-365

In Sedgwick County call 911

Outside Sedgwick County call (316) 290-1000

No agency or community is ever charged for services provided by SCEM K9