

# Penn Vet Working Dog Center

Volume 2, Issue 1

March 2012

## Special points of interest:

- Call for Proposals
- ACVO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam
- Fit to Work Seminar
- Working K9 Handler Academy

## Inside this issue:

[Impacts on Therapy Dog](#) 2

[Q & A](#) 2

[Dr. Otto Receives Honor](#) 2

[ACVO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam](#) 3

[Fit to Work](#) 3

[Hero Dog Award Nominees](#) 3

[Working K9 Handler Academy](#) 4

## 2013 Working Dog Conference: Call for Proposals - OPEN!

Event Date: April 8-11, 2013  
Event Location: Purina Event Center, St. Louis Missouri

Submission Deadline: May 1, 2012, Midnight EST  
Notification Date: June 1, 2012

Click [here](#) to submit proposal.

The 2013 Penn Vet Working Dog Conference is dedicated to exploring the many different dynamics of training the working dog team (both the dog and the handler!)

Detection, service, guide, and performance dog teams will be in attendance.

This unique conference will combine current scientific findings with the expertise of master trainers to offer a comprehensive experience targeted to

help handlers maximize their effectiveness.

The goal of this conference is to provide handlers with tools to improve their understanding of how humans and dogs learn and to translate that into improved performance of the team.

We are inviting proposals in the following categories:

- General dog training to build focus, distance work, impulse control, problem solving, drive
- Handler learning challenges/solving problems
- Dog learning challenges/solving problems
- Team dynamics –the human team and the human/dog team
- Task specific training (e.g. Odor detection training, bite work, guide work)
- Handler & Canine selection
- Handler fitness
- Learning theories and their



- application to the working dog teams
- Evaluation of training practices and efficiency
- Canine fitness and conditioning

Visit our website for more details on the Conference  
<http://pennvetwdc.org/conference/>

## Working Dog Terminology Resource

With so many different groups within the working dog community, different lexicons have developed.

As a result of feedback from the 2011 Working Dog Conference, we launched a Terminology section on our website with the goal of improving communication and helping to drive better understanding among disciplines.

<http://pennvetwdc.org/pvwdc-terminology/>

This site is a compilation of terms from various canine organizations.

If you would like to recommend a source of terms please email:

[workingdoginfo@pennvetwdc.org](mailto:workingdoginfo@pennvetwdc.org)

Terms can be related to anything canine including: training, breeding, veterinary care, and certifications.

Individual terms can also be submitted on the site as well.

Individuals have the ability to comment on each term as well as provide supplemental videos, graphs, or pictures.



## Benefit to Being a Therapy Dog

It is a commonly accepted fact that there is great benefit to humans from petting and interacting with a therapy dog. It lowers blood pressure and decreases stress levels. Master's student Zenithson Ng has partnered with Dr. Otto to look at the other side of the equation and explore the effects on therapy dogs themselves. Their goal is to identify the physiological responses the

dogs have from their therapy work..

There are some groups who believe that the use of therapeutic dogs is immoral and unkind to the dog. This study will explore the effects of petting on the dog's cortisol level as well as their response to a behavioral analysis and a chronic stress test. 16 dogs will participate in the study along with 40 volunteers.

Saliva samples will be collected every 30 minutes during the therapy session.

Dogs will be walked by their owner for 30 minutes, followed by an hour of petting from volunteers, and ending with another 30 minute walk.

The information gained from this study will be used to create protocols for using therapy dogs.

To read more on this study: The Daily Pennsylvanian-  
[www.thedp.com](http://www.thedp.com)

**“...this study will be used to create protocols for using therapy dogs.”**

## Q & A

**Dear Dr. Otto: I have seen your fitness videos on Facebook and noticed you have not recommended the use of a treadmill?**

-Trainer

Dear Trainer:

The videos you have seen on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/pennvetworkingdogcenter) have primarily focused on stretching, strength and proprioception. When it comes to conditioning, the challenge is that it takes a

lot more distance and speed to condition a dog than the average trainer can supply on foot. A treadmill can be a valuable tool, especially when the weather is bad, but there are a few serious issues that need to be addressed.

#1-The average treadmill's belt is too short to allow a dog to correctly stride w/o injury. Look for a runner's treadmill with an extra long belt 60"+.

#2-Too much, too fast. It is easy to pop your dog on a treadmill and push start. Make sure they are properly trained to run on the treadmill and that you build them up slowly increasing speed and incline over time. (Crate to 5K for dogs!) Also consider using a bike. This is an excellent and safe tool and provides both dog and handler fitness.



**Dr. Otto receives flag for service to working dogs**

## Special Honor for Dr. Otto

On March 13th Dr. Otto received an unexpected surprise. Upon opening the package she found an American flag and a declaration stating that on January 1, 2012, the enclosed flag was flown over Afghanistan by US troops “in support of missions utilizing military working dogs, in honor of you and your colleagues.”

Due to her experience with working dogs and expertise in critical care, Dr. Otto has been

serving on an advisory group dedicated to the care of special operations military dogs.

This group focuses on creating guidelines for addressing the variety of injuries and illness that dogs serving on the front lines might encounter.

In addition to her work with Military Dogs, Dr. Otto has also been devoting her work to the benefit of other detection dogs including Search & Res-

cue.

Including deploying to the World Trade Center, she is the director of the Penn Vet Working Dog Center.

The flag was a special and unexpected honor and will be hung for display at the Working Dog Center building opening this fall.

## ACVO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam

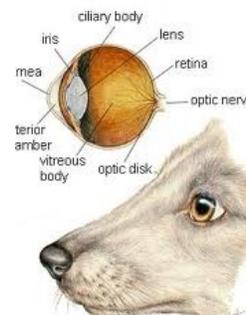
For the month of May 2012, the American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists (ACVO) is launching the 5th annual ACVO/Merial National Service Dog Eye Exam Event to help service animals who dedicate their lives to serving the public. More than 200 board certified veterinary ophthalmologists throughout the U.S., as well as Canada and Puerto Rico, are estimated to provide free sight-saving eye exams to thousands of eligible service animals. During the complete ocular

exam, the veterinary specialists look for problems including: redness, squinting, cloudy corneas, retinal disease, early cataracts, and other serious abnormalities. To qualify, animals must be "active working animals" that were certified by a formal training program or organization or currently enrolled in a formal training program. Owners/agents for the animal must FIRST register the animal via an online registration form beginning April 1, 2012 at [www.ACVOeyeexam.org](http://www.ACVOeyeexam.org).

Registration ends April 30th.

To find out if your dog qualifies, click [HERE](#).

To find a participating ophthalmologist in your area, click [HERE](#).



## Fit to Work

**DATE:** April 15, 2012

**TIME:** 12pm-4pm

**LOCATION:** Y2K9  
1000 E. Mermaid Lane, Bld 13A  
Wyndmoor, PA 19038

The Working Dog Center receives numerous request to provide fitness classes based on the skills shared on our [Face-book Page](#).

With over 20 years experience in canine health and perfor-

mance, Dr. Otto has combined her knowledge of the working dog with techniques from leading fitness trainers to provide a unique program designed to help trainers take their working dog to a new level of performance.

To meet the increased demand for the specialized skills of working dogs, Fit to Work helps handlers ensure that their

canine partners are not only trained for their specific job, but that they have the physical condition to sustain the work without injury.

Introducing a fitness regimen into a training program will not only build strength and flexibility but improve a dog's mental well-being and enhance human/dog bond.

Click [HERE](#) to register now.

***"Builds strength and flexibility while enhancing the human-dog bond"***

## Hero Dog Awards: Voting Begins April 1st

We want to highlight those nominees for the 2012 Hero Dog Awards-Search & Rescue Category who chose us as their charity partner. We appreciate the support and wish you all the best of luck. Voting begins April 1st. Visit the American Humane Association Hero Dog Award site to read about the nominees and place your vote: [www.herodogawards.org](http://www.herodogawards.org)



K9 BUSTER



K9 CAZO



K9 KAISER



K9 MOJO



**Vote for Dolce (Dr. Otto's dog) in the Therapy Dog category. Charity Partner :The Good Dog Foundation**

## Penn Vet Working Dog Center...Our Mission

The mission of the Penn Vet Working Dog Center is to serve as a consortium to bring together programs that employ dogs to detect threats to local, regional and national security. The overarching goal is to collect and analyze genetic, behavioral and physical data, and integrate the latest scientific information in order to optimize the success and well-being of detection dogs. In order to prepare for future demands for these dogs as well as facilitate research, we will develop a detection dog breeding and training program that will implement, test, and disseminate the knowledge gained.

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We're on the web  
[www.PennVetWDC.org](http://www.PennVetWDC.org)



### JOIN US ON FACEBOOK

[www.facebook.com/PVWorkingDogCenter](http://www.facebook.com/PVWorkingDogCenter)

Monthly prize drawing for all of our Friends!

- Fitness
- First Aid
- Education
- Training
- Genetics

## Working K9 Handler Academy

The mission of the Working K9 Handler Academy is to provide high quality, interactive, computer-based learning classes designed for the continuing education of working canine handlers or others interested in the field of working canines.

This mission is being fulfilled through a partnership between the [Paws of Life Foundation](#) and [Iowa State University Extension](#).

This site is geared towards:

- Law Enforcement K9 handlers (police, military)
- Search and Rescue Canine handlers
- Schutzhund, Mondo, or French Ring and other com-

petitive protection sports

- Anyone who may be interested in canine learning theory, nutrition, and has a love of dogs.

This site provides a variety of classes for handlers including Blood Borne Pathogens, Intro to Canine Search and Rescue, Search Strategy for the Wilderness/Area Search Dog Handler, and Crime Scene Preservation and Search Incident Considerations for the Professional Volunteer.

Classes are constantly in development so the offering continues to grow.

The site also offers an online library consisting of

peer reviewed articles as well as books recommend by their various instructors. Visit Working K9 Handler Academy to learn more about the resources available to you.

[k9handleracademy.com](http://k9handleracademy.com)



[www.k9handleracademy.com](http://www.k9handleracademy.com)  
a Paws of Life Foundation Program