

LIFE notes

LIFE prides itself on helping those in need and for being the champion for those who cannot speak but who enrich our lives and everyday make us a little more... human

Issue 32, September 13, 2016

Hero Dog Monument Edition



America's Military Heroes Come on Both Four and Two Legs: The American Military Hero Dog Monument

During World War I, an American serviceman named Lee Duncan found a destroyed dog kennel on the battlefield. Miraculously, a puppy was still alive inside. Mr. Duncan rescued the pup, named him Rinty, and took him home to California.

Many Americans know the rest of the story. That pup became Rin Tin Tin, the legendary TV and film star. But the real rest of the story is that battlefield dogs are, for the most part, a completely overlooked breed.

How many of us know American military dog Sergeant Stubby, the Boston Bull Terrier who captured a German spy among his many exploits? He was the most decorated dog of the First World War and the only one to be nominated for a specific military rank and promotion.

How many of us know American military dog Chips, the German Shepherd-Collie-Siberian Husky mix who saved his unit in the invasion of Italy in World War II? Chips attacked a group of enemy gunmen, who then surrendered to the U.S. troops.

And how many of us know American military dog Cairo, the Belgian Malinois who served in the Navy SEALs? Cairo was with the SEALs during Operation Neptune Spear, in which Osama Bin Laden was killed.

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Upcoming events

Tuesday, November 15

LIFE Auction and Cocktail Party
Hosted by Lois Pope
By Invitation

Friday, November 18, 2016

"Lady in Red" Gala Pre-Party
Hosted by Provident Jewelry
Jupiter Florida
By Invitation

December 3, 2016

LIFE's "Lady in Red" Gala
"Speakeasy"
Starring the Empress of Soul,
Gladys Knight
The Mar a Lago Club
By Invitation

Thursday, February 9

American Humane Association Cocktail Party
The Brazilian Court, Palm Beach
By Invitation

Wednesday, March 8

American Humane Association Luncheon
The Mar a Lago Club, Palm Beach
By Invitation

To learn more or to donate, visit
www.life-edu.org or call 561.582.8083.

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The sad story is that America's military dogs go unrecognized and are easily forgotten. They don't come home to parades down Main Street. They don't have celebratory reunions captured by TV cameras.

In fact, until very recently when Congress passed legislation enabling American military dogs to return to the U.S., many didn't even get to come home. In Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, dozens were left in country to be euthanized!

That is beyond comprehension. And it is simply inhumane. These are American military dogs fighting American battles and saving American lives. Indeed, it is estimated that each military dog saves the lives of 150-200 service men and women.

We as a nation have a collective responsibility to honor their service, just as we should always pay tribute to the men and women who have served so selflessly and valiantly in America's Armed Services.

Several decades ago, I set out to create the country's first permanent public tribute to our four million living disabled American veterans and all those who have died. I believed then, and now, that they are unsung heroes. But far too often, we as a country have marginalized them and averted our eyes to their plight.

It took nearly two decades, but on October 5, 2014, I was honored to present to President Obama and our nation the American Veterans Disabled for Life Memorial. Through this Memorial, generations will come to learn about all those who have been seriously injured in the line of duty while wearing the uniforms of America's five military branches, past and present. The Memorial honors them, just as they honored us with their service and sacrifice and protected the freedoms we so enjoy and cherish.

Now is the time to do the same with our American military dogs. They, too, are unsung heroes. Their services and sacrifices have also been forgotten.

There are some 2700 dogs in active military service, 700 of whom deployed overseas. And just like their four-legged military brothers and sisters who have served on the battlefield, these hero dogs have done so much to protect our freedoms, as well as their human soldiers. They detect explosive devices and carry out life-saving tasks. They search areas that cannot be accessed by the soldiers themselves. They do scout and sentry work. And at times, they even shield their human soldiers from bullets. On top of all this, they provide comfort and companionship to our troops, in country and when they come home - many serve as therapy dogs for their returning troops, helping them heal from the ravages of war.

Of course, their bravery also often comes at a cost. Just like with our human warriors, these dogs can get injured and maimed. Just like our two-legged soldiers, they can suffer emotional and psychological distress. Some are even killed in combat.

Just as with America's disabled veterans, our nation's military dogs are not given the credit they have earned and deserved.

That is why I am now joining forces with the American Humane Association to build the first American Military Hero Dog Monument in Washington, D.C. To get this project off the ground, we are launching a nationwide design program. Whether one is a professional or amateur artist, a sculptor or designer, a veteran or civilian can submit a fitting design for the monument. I encourage all Americans to visit www.americanhumane.org for details on the American Military Hero Dog Design contest.

Upon completion, the American Military Hero Dog Monument will honor these courageous canines. It will educate the public about the essential roles that military dogs have played in service to America. It will remind us that bravery in uniform comes on both four and two legs, and on both ends of the leash.

Love,

Lois

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