

ISSUE

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CANINE HANDLER

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WLECHA

PO Box 136

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President's Message for WLECHA

I hope everyone has had a successful year of deployments with their K9 partners and that you all are doing well! Another year has quickly passed and upon us is another great training conference! Our association continues to grow and know that your Board of Directors continuously work hard on finding ways to allow all canine teams in the state to attend. One of these ways is by increasing our specialty training at the conference this year.

Soon we will be meeting up with our old friends and making new friends while making great memories. We will be problem solving, learning and getting better at our craft of K9 handling and know that what you put into the conference will be reflected in your future successes.

See you all soon and please take a moment to thank the Board of Directors for the excellent work they do for all of you. I am honored to be part of this great organization and look forward to seeing you all.

Sincerely,

Curtis

2024 Conference Updates

With the 2024 conference only a few short days away, please review all the information below in order to make your arrival at the venue(s) as seamless as possible. While our membership will be spread across 3 different hotels, the recommendations are the same for all.

CHECK IN:

To make the check-in process as quick as possible, please call your hotel ahead of time and confirm all your reservation details as well as get a credit card on file. Many times, an agency will book a hotel room for their staff and the reservations end up in the name of the person doing the booking rather than who will actually be checking in. Having to make these changes at the counter becomes a major contributing factor to slow check-in by membership. A quick phone call over the next week can save you (and the rest of the membership) a lot of frustration.

MEDICAL EXAMS/SCREENINGS:

OpK9 will be attending the conference and once again offering free medical screenings and examinations on Sunday night. We recommend that every K9 have at least a basic medical exam prior to training at the conference. In year's past handlers have showed up to train, only for a routine physical to find some sort of problem or injury they were unaware of. With the workload your K9 partner is going to be exposed to during the conference, don't risk them training through an injury and ending up worse for wear.

- OpK9 will be offering: Physical Exams, Eye Exams, Dental Exams, Blood typing and prescription of Clevor medication (used to induce vomiting).
 - They will be offering these services SUNDAY NIGHT ONLY.
 - In order to keep things orderly and moving, OpK9 will have sign-up sheets at registration. Those who wish to have their K9 participate in any (or all) of the exams, will be asked to sign up for a specific time slot. Time slots will be available on a first come, first serve basis.
- All dogs taking part in any of the exams MUST be muzzled for the safety of OpK9's staff. Some of these exams/services are invasive and require blood draws or OpK9 staff to be in very close proximity to the dogs face, so muzzles must be in place at all times.

CODE OF CONDUCT:

The Board of Directors have made slight changes to the Code of Conduct for all attending the conference. These changes will be discussed at the membership meeting on Sunday evening.

Message from OpK9 Medical Team of Wisconsin

The OPK9 Medical Team is excited to provide K9 care at WLECHA 2024! We will have a medical treatment station at our site throughout the conference, and additional veterinarians will be available 24/7 to assist with medical care if needed.

On Sunday, October 6th, there will be sign-up sheets at registration for eye and dental exams. We are thrilled to welcome Dr. Katie Smith (Ophthalmology) and our returning dental specialist, Dr. Karin Bilyard. To manage the volume of dogs, sign-up is required for these exams, which will be provided at no cost. Additionally, we will have blood typing and physical exam stations for all K9s. These stations will be open from 3pm to 9pm. For safety, please bring a soft muzzle for all exams.

On Monday and Tuesday, our medical site will feature scenario-based training. Your K9s will not be needed for this, so they can remain in your air-conditioned vehicles. We will also have supplies to replenish your K9 medical kits if needed.

We are looking forward to a great conference!

If there are any medical needs for your dog during the conference, please contact:

Brian Noll, WLECHA Secretary at (608) 369-3570

or

Lyn Schuh, OPK9 at (920) 450-7915





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Editors Notes:

Greetings WLECHA Members,

As always, I hope this newsletter finds both you and your K9 partners healthy and successful. 2024 has brought some major changes for me, as it saw the retirement of my longtime partner, K9 Blackjack. After 8 years of service and over 650 deployments, Blackjack retired at the age of 10. After a few confusing weeks of watching my squad car leave the driveway without him, he has finally settled into retirement. These days you can mostly find him lounging around the house and dutifully barking at every UPS, FedEx or USPS carrier that dares drive up our driveway.

Following the retirement of Blackjack, I asked for and was granted the opportunity to handle another K9 for my agency. After looking at several dogs to be my next partner, I settled on a "lively" young German Shepherd named Josch. I've been told many times over the years by repeat handlers that taking on a second dog is a whole new adventure and harder than you'd expect. I have found this to be true on both fronts. In the past year, I've embraced the lessons of: Patience and Managing Expectations. While this go-around, I feel like I actually know what I'm doing, I have to remind myself that at only 1 ½ years old, Josch is still very much a puppy and didn't come pre-programmed as a clone of Blackjack. The old saying of "this is a whole different animal" suddenly has newfound meaning and truth to it. Josch is coming along nicely in his work and development, but over the past 8 years I have seem to forgotten that at this age, these dogs give it 100%....no matter if they are on task or not.

This change has also reminded me the time we have with our dogs is precious and will slip away faster than you'll ever understand. One day your dog was a just a young pup who didn't seem to know anything, the next he'll be in his glory days and suddenly... the word "retirement" starts entering your mind. With that lesson in mind, be sure to enjoy and fully appreciate every day, every shift and every deployment you have with your partner.

This years's conference will undoubtedly be a great one, as Fond Du Lac has some great venues. I have trained with their handlers many times over the years and have found that both Ben and Charlie always seem to have a connection or "know a guy" who will let us train at their property. From old department stores in the mall, to a defunct cheese factory, I've had some great training days in Fondy. I'm confident that they have some great training sites lined up for our conference to challenge both the dogs and their handlers.

I look forward to seeing you all soon!

As always: Stay Safe, Train Hard and Trust your dog.

Brian, Josch and Blackjack (Ret)

"Confido Fidelis Canis"