



NPCA 2011 News Letter

Message from President: Terry Anderson

Here we are at the end of 2011 and I have had the great pleasure of being a part of many important accomplishments of this great organization.

First I must say that it was great to see so many of our members at the Nationals in Beaumont, Texas. We had a great time! Thanks to all the Beaumont K9 teams who worked so hard to make the seminar such a success. They did a great job! I also want to thank our instructors who taught for us in Beaumont. GREAT JOB! We would not have been able to provide the seminar without their dedication to our members. The Training Division did a great job of setting up the training so that we could provide the best learning opportunities to our members. The Training Division has proven to be an integral addition to NPCA and I look forward to seeing what new things they add to our training capabilities.

During the Beaumont Nationals a discussion was had regarding changing NPCA's format for the Nationals. We are looking at hosting the 2013 National Training Conference as a "NON-DOG" training event. We would set up a training platform similar to the HITS Conference, where all the training is done in classrooms during the seminar. NPCA would then provide four regional training events per year. It has been noted that our Nationals are a regional event on steroids. We always have a majority of local teams and a handful of teams from across the country. So it is very hard to call it a national event when the attendee's are local to the region that is hosting the seminar. This would put more work on the Training Division, but at the same time we would be able to have more teams attend because it is more geographically local, reduced travel distances. Please contact your regional representative, myself or Mark Green and let us know what you think about the idea. This is your organization and we want to provide the best product we can.

For those that could not come to Beaumont, I hope next year you can come to Florida as the 2012 Nationals will be hosted by Lee County Sheriff's Office in Fort Myers, Florida. I am looking forward going to Florida. Stay tuned for the dates of the 2012 Nationals.

Next, it is with sadness that I announce that Terry Fleck who has been the Chairman of NPCA's Legal Committee for a number of years has decided to discontinue his travels. Effective December 31, 2011, Terry will no longer be teaching

his legal update classes. Terry is still going to maintain his web site so that resource will still be available to any law enforcement officer to research. Additionally, Terry has resigned from his position with NPCA and asked me to express his thanks to all our members for allowing him to represent us on our legal committee. NPCA thanks Terry for his service and wishes him nothing but the best. With that said, I am announcing that Ted Daus has taken up the reigns for NPCA as the Chairman of the Legal Committee. Ted has an extensive background in court room trials involving canine detection utilizations. He is going to keep us posted on any legal issues that we need to be aware of so that we are prepared when it is our time to try our cases in court. Ted is a welcome addition to NPCA and he is excited about assisting our members. Please feel free to contact your regional representative with any new cases, from any state, that you need assistance or clarification on and we will send it to Ted for review.

There has been, and probably always will be, great controversy with some NPCA members regarding a mandatory recall. These topics were brought to the board by several of our members who wanted to see NPCA mandate the recall. (We have always had a mandatory verbal release: still have four commands, ten feet away from decoy: 45 seconds from start to finish.) I know this has caused a lot of stress for some of our members and created a lot of work for the board. The reality is that it should not be a stressor at all. Yet, it is.

The truth is this, every police dog should have the ability to recall, immediately release a bite on a verbal command and find hidden suspects in both the area search and building search. NPCA considers this a best practice and every patrol dog should achieve this level of competence. The board has done our homework and I believe that we have come to a positive solution that makes the organization stronger. We have accomplished this without changing our rules. "If it is not broken, why fix it". That is true. To date, no national organization has ever been sued because of their certification standards; however, we do not want NPCA to be the first.

Canine teams everywhere put too much emphasis on their certification and do not take enough responsibility for what they do every day in training. Their documented training, departmental policies and operational guidelines should be driving the capabilities of their canine teams, not the national organization certifications. Certifications are a snap shot in time and who knows for sure how their dog will respond. The majority of liabilities rest on the individual team or



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department; however, there is also an element of responsibility that goes to the certifying organization.

NPCA patrol certification is a true test. You step up to the line and you are successful or you are not. As a result, NPCA will now have two different levels of certification: Patrol 1 and Patrol 2. In the past, we had no way to differentiate between a team that did or did not get the recall or got either the building and area search or just one of those two. If you passed our patrol certification, you at least got the release and one hidden suspect search: A MINIMAL STANDARD, not a Best Practice. But the certification just said Patrol Certification.

Several times this year, NPCA received subpoena's regarding patrol certifications and we could only advise them that they passed but we did not know for sure what they had done or passed during that certification. So there was no distinction between a dog that got everything and the dog that met the minimal standard.

So let me go over the changes and make them as simple as I can. You must test all phases of the certification. In the areas were you could miss an element but get the other three elements, you still pass that section. The difference is this:

Patrol 1: Must pass the obedience and courage test, and:

- A. Canine team fails the recall but passes the immediate release and passes either the area search or the building search.
- B. Canine team fails the recall but passes the immediate release and passes both the area search and the building search.
- C. Canine team passes both the recall and the immediate release and passes either the area search or the building search but not both.

Patrol 2: Must pass the obedience and courage test, and:

- A. Canine team passes both the recall and immediate release and passes both the building and the area search.

NPCA recommends that every team achieves our Patrol 2 certification and recognizes this as the best practice. Again, we did not change any rules we just made a distinction between a minimal standard and a best practice. At the same time we changed the way we document our patrol certifications to reflect what each team achieves.

A team that meets the minimal standard will get a Patrol 1 certification and the teams that meet the best practice will

receive a Patrol 2 certification. For all CO's, we also changed the master score sheet. We included several check boxes to indicate if a team passes the recall and release as well as boxes for the building and the area search.

Our intent was to clarify a distinction between minimal standards and best practices and improve our documentation so that we could go back in time and be able to determine exactly what a team did during any patrol certification. This new certification documentation will be effective 01-01-2012. NPCA is responsible for the credibility of our certification. Each team working in the industry has the obligation to meet the minimal standards and strive to achieve the best practice. It is a department's responsibility to decide what level they require of their canine teams.

Sorry for the length of this newsletter but as you can see it is very important information and with our law suit happy society it is imperative that our certifications pass court room credibility standards. Please feel free to contact your regional representatives with any concerns regarding these new documentation standards. Stay safe and train hard. See you in Florida.

Terry Anderson, President NPCA

Message from Secretary: Greg Thomas

As I write this column, I have recently returned from the National Seminar in Beaumont, Texas. It would be a disservice not to mention the great hospitality provided by the Beaumont Police Department and South Central Region Director Danny Valdez. Thank you all for a great seminar!

In conjunction with the Seminar, we held elections for several different Region Director Positions. The only contested Region Director position was that of the West Coast Region. While the duties of conducting the elections fall under the purview of the Secretary, I would like to thank NPCA Administrative Assistant Katy Farnsworth for coordinating the entire task. The process of conducting an election is no small undertaking. NPCA is very fortunate to have Katy as a very competent and motivated employee of the organization. The NPCA bylaws currently mandate mailing paper ballots to each member, complete with a postage-paid return envelope. As you might guess, this is no small expenditure for the organization and is very time consuming. At the recent



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executive Board meeting, we discussed ways to streamline the process. There are a variety of ways to conduct voting via the

internet and we are researching means most conducive to NPCA. If you have ideas and/or experience in this regard, please share it. You can contact me directly via the email address on the NPCA website (www.npca.net).

Whenever I mention elections, I feel compelled to urge more involvement in the organization. There are many ways to serve NPCA and the rewards can be many. This organization cannot succeed without dedicated volunteers to serve in leadership positions. For the last four years, I have served in several different leadership positions in NPCA. The majority of my time has been spent serving as Secretary and I have enjoyed it greatly. But with mounting administrative duties from NPCA and elsewhere, I found myself missing out on the most fun part of being in K-9 – working my dog on the street! With that in mind, I have decided to resign from the Secretary position this year. I remain committed to the organization, hope to continue to contribute at future training seminars, and certainly look forward to serving NPCA again in the future. Have a safe and productive 2012!

Sincerely,

Greg Thomas

Secretary NPCA

Message from
Treasurer/Director of
Training: Mark Green

Greetings fellow NPCA members, as the holiday season approaches us, I hope this newsletter finds you all safe, secure and healthy.

In regards to the financial state of the organization I will provide a brief on the account information listed below. Our finances are an open book. Any member wanting more information or a detailed report please feel free to contact the Associations Administrative Assistant Katy Farnsworth.

Account information: Checking Account: \$50,422.08
CD: \$11,549.17

The National seminar held in Beaumont Texas in October was not only another example of the quality training NPCA has become known for, we also did not break the bank in supporting the host agency. Danny and the Beaumont crew worked hard and it paid off for them as well as the association.

Speaking of training I want to touch on the progress of the training division. We recently lost Tim Norton from the training staff as he became the Regional Representative for the Southwest. The board has added Rob Lukason (USBP) to the training division to join Andrew Carlsson and myself.

The Training Division is working hard in developing a new format on how NPCA training events are produced. We hope that we can come up with a plan that will allow more training to our members at the same cost of putting on one National Training Event.

Not only will this allow more training opportunities for the members to attend, but it will help us develop more instructors to meet the demand of additional NPCA training events throughout the year.

I am excited about the possibilities of the new format and I will be putting out more in E-Mails to the members as they develop.

I would also like to welcome Sgt. Rich Maiocco on board as the associations new Recruitment Director. He is already working hard at bringing on new members to NPCA.

Keep your powder dry and your mind sharp.

Mark