

THEQUEST ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022



MISSION

The Search Dog Foundation (SDF) strengthens disaster response in America by rescuing and recruiting dogs and partnering them with firefighters and other first responders to find people buried alive in the wreckage of disasters. We provide highly-trained search dogs and ongoing professional training to task forces across the nation at no cost to their department or taxpayers.

To date, SDF has trained over 200 certified teams that have deployed to over 245 disasters and missing person searches. Thanks to mutual aid agreements, teams can deploy nationwide, and some internationally, wherever disasters occur.

2021-2022 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

George Leis, Chair Dennis Kuykendall, Vice Chair & Treasurer Michael J. Diani, Secretary Richard Butt Robert Harris George Haynes, Ph.D. Crystal Wyatt



AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Over 3,500 individuals, foundations, companies, and groups came together to support our life-saving mission during our 2021-2022 fiscal year. We are grateful for each of your contributions and worked diligently to use every dollar wisely.

Financial Position

September 30, 2022

Total Assets	\$ 38,168,208
Current Assets Investments in Endowment Investments Operational Reserve Fixed Assets	\$ 2,294,543 \$ 7,297,450 \$ 1,650,141 \$ 26,850,279
Other Assets Total Liabilities & Net Assets	\$ 20,830,279 \$ 75,795 \$ 38,168,208
Total Liabilities —Current Liabilities —Long-Term Liabilities Net Assets	\$ 2,122,359 \$ 736,881 \$ 1,385,478 \$ 36,045,849

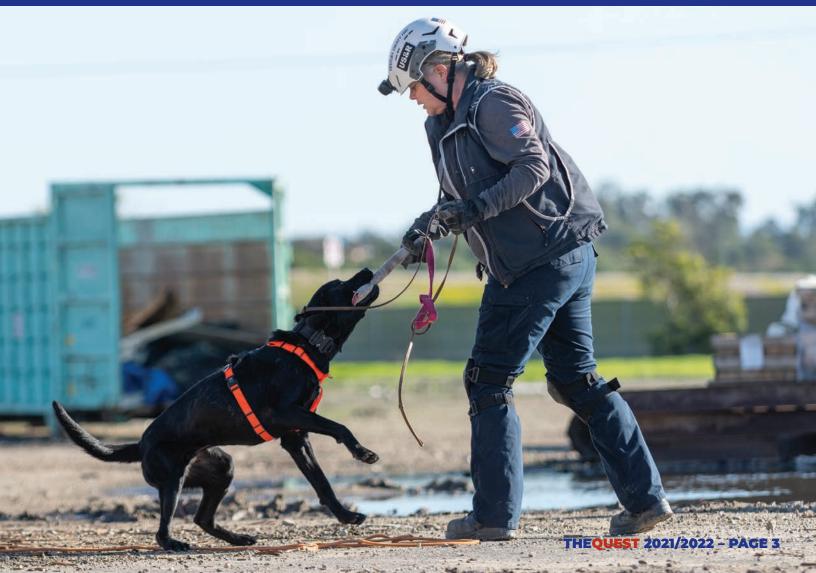
A healthy endowment supports the stability of our work. Unless otherwise restricted, planned gifts are allocated to our endowment or capital projects as needed. The investment income from our endowed funds is reinvested to facilitate diversified income streams and act as a reserve for our programs if needed.

Activities October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022

Total Public Support and Revenue	\$ 7,125,336
Contributions	\$ 2,862,515
Grants	\$ 1,898,660
Planned Giving Income	\$ 2,815,839
In-Kind Donations	\$ 96,054
Investment Income	\$ (1,027,910)
Merchandising Income	\$ 13,994
Other Income	\$ 466,184

A total of \$369,930 in public support received was restricted by donors for use in future fiscal years.

Total Operating Expenses	\$ 5,920,170
Program Services (76%)	\$ 4,477,314
General & Administrative (13%)	\$ 757,286
Fundraising (11%)	\$ 685,570
Total Non-Operating Expenses	\$ 1,717,264
Site improvements of our National Training Center and other capital items	\$ 1,477,264
Principal payments on the note payable for acquisition of the National Training Center's land	\$ 240,000



CANINE RECRUITMENT

Our Canine Recruitment team continued to see success through their diligence in forging and maintaining relationships with shelters and rescues to find high-drive dogs in their care. The team shores up these endeavors by efficiently utilizing online platforms and the power of social media. Among these initiatives are the Volunteer Canine Recruitment Support Team, a core group of volunteers who monitor California-area shelters and rescues via Facebook and who generated 276 leads for the 2021-2022 fiscal year, our "Refer a Dog" web form through which we've received 184 submissions with seven dogs recruited into

our program, and an SDF Recruitment Facebook group that monitors shelters and rescues nationally on social media and brings promising canine prospects to the attention of the SDF Recruitment team.

These partnerships have proven invaluable in discovering dogs with the potential for search work. During this fiscal year, these efforts resulted in:

211 shelter and rescue groups engaged across 45 states

53 dogs recruited into search dog training



While Rookie excelled in disaster search training, it soon became clear that he did not enjoy walking on rubble—he still loved to hunt and has now followed his nose to his new career as a narcotics detection canine.

OUR LIFETIME CARE PROMISE:

ONCE RESCUED, THEY WILL NEVER NEED TO BE RESCUED AGAIN

We are proud to be able to pledge to every dog we recruit from a shelter or rescue that we're with them for the long haul. That means no matter where they are in their search training, if they decide the work is not for them, we will find them an alternate career or a family home. Fields that utilize canine expertise are expanding, affording us more opportunities to place canine candidates in a career they love. As we continue to evolve our programs, we're excited about the increasing number of areas we

can advocate for these awesome dogs, ensuring they have the best chance at the happy life they deserve.

In our 2022 fiscal year, SDF offered care to:

- **196** dogs who started the year in our Lifetime Care Community
- **19** dogs placed in new family homes
- **12** dogs placed in alternate careers

FORMER SEARCH CANDIDATE, ROOKIE, THRIVES IN HIS NEW DRUG DETECTION CAREER

Rookie was found as a stray and taken to Baldwin County Animal Shelter in Summerdale, Alabama. He was in the shelter for a month with little adoption interest when a family took him to the play yard and, after interacting with him for a few minutes, decided he was "too much" for them. Luckily, a canine recruiter stopped by the shelter and noticed Rookie's high energy and willingness to engage with her when she offered him a tennis ball. She knew Rookie was a potential candidate for SDF.

During his evaluation, Rookie was excited and friendly during the pack walk with other dogs and showed great toy possession. However, when it was time for a trial rubble hunt, Rookie did okay the first few times but had significant concerns on the last try and could not complete the hunt. He disliked walking on rubble, which could limit his ability to succeed at search and rescue. Still, his drive and toy possession were good enough that trainers wanted to work with him before determining if he would be released from the search program.

Despite the extra effort to build his confidence in his footing, Rookie did not overcome his aversion to rubble, so we honored his preference and began looking for other job options for him through our Lifetime Care program.

Around this time, the Los Angeles County Probation Department's Canine Team was looking to add another dog to their unit. In the past, the department had purchased fully-trained dogs directly from a breeder or vendor, but this time they wanted to find a rescued dog who needed a job and train the dog themselves. After doing some research, they found SDF and reached out to our recruitment team, who immediately thought of Rookie and set up a trial.

Rookie performed great and was enthusiastically welcomed as the department's newest employee! In this job, Rookie will be searching sites for contraband drugs, so he had to learn a range of new scents. He picked up this skill quickly and soon certified in the detection of heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana.

In March, Rookie's handlers brought him back to our campus for a visit, showing off his new detection skills and how he is thriving in his new career.

We're so happy Rookie can apply the skills he learned while with us at SDF to a career that fulfills him physically, mentally, and emotionally. Happy life, Rookie boy!



Rookie trains with his handler in public spaces like Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) to hone his skills.

CANINE TRAINING

As we gain more insight into canines as a species, we continue to evolve our approach to training to be more empathetic and responsive to each of our dogs as an individual.

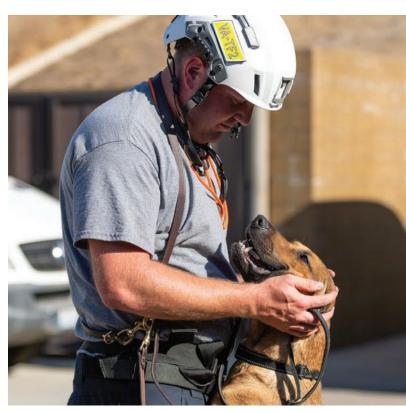
Like humans, dogs' perceptions and reactions are individualistic and shaped by factors like genetics and personal experience. Understanding a dog's perspective helps us adapt our training to complement their learning style, discover their motivation, and strengthen the bond between canine and handler.

Most importantly, this philosophy puts the best interest of our dogs above all else, so we can be sure the life path we ultimately set them on is one they really want.

77 dogs were supported in our training program throughout the year

Right: The bond between handler and canine transcends training sessions and becomes a significant part of the motivation to work.

Below: Innate toy and hunt drive are important traits we look for in potential canine candidates, but we help dogs reach their highest potential by introducing human-canine collaboration through play.





UNLOCKING POTENTIAL:

BUILDING TRUST THROUGH MOTIVATION

At SDF, we embrace the philosophy that a strong understanding of each dog's motivations can create a stronger performance in whichever line of work best suits that canine. *Do they love to hunt? Play fetch? Get extra affection and praise?* When we understand what motivates an individual dog, we can incorporate those elements into their training plan, stimulating their desire to work by making learning exciting and fun.

SDF graduate Chirp is a success story of this approach. Chirp came to us from the Rescue Ranch in Yreka, CA, where staff noted his toy drive and recorded videos of his skills that were impressive enough to earn him a spot in our program. Chirp was confident, had high drive, and liked retrieving and engaging with people—all great foundations for teaching the search game. Early in his training though, elements of his education were not connecting with him until trainers got to know Chirp better and learned what really moved him.

In teaching the bark alert, where the dog uses its nose to detect a hidden person (representing a disaster survivor) and must "alert" the handler by barking, there are several ways the dog can be rewarded for the find. When Chirp realized his reward could be to engage with the survivor by playing tug, he lit up! (He was so ecstatic that in the throes of delight, he made an excited squeaking sound that helped earn him his name.) When the person on the other end of the tug took the engagement a step further by mimicking Chirp's unique exclamations while yanking on the toy, well, that was the best prize ever!

Following this discovery, trainers made sure that Chirp's compensation for learning new skills was an extra spirited (and squeaky!) round of tug, and the thrill of anticipation of his favorite game incentivized Chirp to excel in every aspect of the search program. More than the act of playing tug, Chirp was responding positively to the human-canine collaboration and the opportunity to do **what he wanted to do**. Having a degree of agency was self-reinforcing. Chirp's motivation for search work had been unlocked.

By engaging a dog's motivation in training, we are building the trust between canine and handler because the objective is to nurture cooperation, not force compliance. We can also design training programs that are faithful to the dog's needs and desires, ultimately revealing whether a career in search will fulfill them or whether they would be happier doing something else. In Chirp's case, he successfully graduated from training and was partnered with his first responder handler in 2022 as an exceptional search dog who seized his destiny.

Chirp is sponsored by Doris and Howard Busloff.

Chirp now keeps his eyes on handler Jeremy DeMott, not just for direction, but asking for engagement and the next opportunity to work together through toy play.



SEARCH TEAMS

PASSING THE LEASH FROM TRAINER TO NEW HANDLER

The pairing of a search team is the intentional creation of a partnership after months of observation by our instructors as canines and handlers train together. Ultimately, it is the dog who makes it clear who they choose as their partner, laying the foundation for a lifelong relationship of trust, respect, and loyalty as they work toward the goal of saving lives.

20 search teams paired this fiscal year

10 fire departments received SDF-trained teams

10 task forces received SDF-trained teams

ACHIEVING CERTIFICATION TOGETHER

To be eligible for deployment with their task forces, search teams must pass an evaluation every three years to ensure their skills remain sharp. We are so proud of these teams for their hard work and continued dedication to their training.

23 re-certifications15 certifications

Partnered search teams must pass state or federal certification every three years to qualify for deployment.



Handler candidates complete a six-month initial training program to learn the basics of being a working dog handler.



DEPLOYMENTS

We are incredibly grateful for the bravery of the search teams who answered the call in a year of several significant disasters.

- **16** activations
- 19 search teams deployed (several teams deployed multiple times)
- 6 states supported in 3 countries or territories







Scott Hofstetter & Amber search a grain silo collapse in Yarmouth, Iowa, in June 2022.

1 Missing Person Search

November 29, 2021 – Castaic, CA Mandy Tisdale & Paul

2 Structure Collapse

December 14, 2021 – Tijuana, Mexico Luis Garcia & Montecito, Fidel Gomez & Gemma

3 Missing Person Search

March 1, 2022 – Bethlehem, NY Brian Girard & Keila, Greg Gould & Dax, Adam Leckonby & Luka, Brook Rowley & Echo

4 Structure Collapse

June 22, 2022 – Yarmouth, IA Laura Denison & Flyer, Scott Hofstetter & Amber

5 Missing Person Search

July 10, 2022 – Washington County, NY Brian Girard & Keila, Greg Gould & Dax, Adam Leckonby & Luka, Brook Rowley & Echo

6 Structure Collapse

July 12, 2022 – Greenwich, NY Brian Girard & Keila, Greg Gould & Dax, Adam Leckonby & Luka, Brook Rowley & Echo

7 Structure Fire

July 15, 2022 – Oxnard, CA Mandy Tisdale & Paul

8 Missing Person Search

August 9, 2022 – Truckee, CA James McCandless & Mac

9 Landslide

August 16, 2022 – Tijuana, Mexico Luis Garcia & Montecito, Fidel Gomez & Gemma

10 Cliff Collapse Pre-Staging

August 25, 2022 – Goleta, CA *Eric Darling & Steven*

11 Structure Fire

August 29, 2022 – Montebello, CA *Ed Ruiz & Harper*

12 Missing Person Search

September 4, 2022 – Gaviota, CA Eric Darling & Steven, Eric Gray & Dee

13 Mudslide

September 13, 2022 – San Bernardino, CA Imelda Cordova & Diesel, Eric Darling & Steven, Eric Gray & Dee

14 Hurricane Fiona

September 19, 2022 – San Juan, Puerto Rico Andrew Pitcher & Storm, Damon Wirth & Koa

15 Hurricane lan

September 25, 2022 – Gulf Coast, United States Shawn Hall & Manion, Karen Meadows & Jax, Ed Ruiz & Harper

16 Building Collapse

September 30, 2022 – Casitas Springs, CA Eric Darling & Steven

ADVANCED SEARCH TEAM TRAINING

Each year, SDF is thrilled to welcome working dog teams from around the world to train on our campus, utilizing props that include multiple rubble and debris piles, a train wreck, collapsed freeway, and a disaster-ravaged neighborhood scenario.

We look forward to updating our training props periodically for returning teams, as well as for those that have not visited our training center before, to practice on new deployment simulations and prepare for the next time they are called upon to help others.

206 working dog teams visited SDF's campus between October 1, 2021, and September 30, 2022

78 training visits to SDF's campus, including teams from:

Urban search and rescue:

California Task Force 1

California Task Force 2

California Task Force 3

California Task Force 4

California Task Force 5

California Task Force 6

California Task Force 7

California Task Force 8

California Regional Task Force 7

Iowa Task Force 1

K9 Search and Rescue of Northern Ireland

Nebraska Task Force 1

Nevada Task Force 1

New York Task Force 2

Oklahoma Task Force 1

Utah Task Force 1

Virginia Task Force 2

Washington Task Force 1

Other working disciplines including wilderness search. law enforcement, and home protection:

California Rescue Dog Association (CARDA) Gold Coast K9 Kauai Search and Rescue Monterey Bay Search Dogs Prairie Dogs Search and Rescue San Bernardino County Sheriff Search and Rescue San Diego County Sheriff Search and Rescue San Luis Obispo County Search and Rescue Santa Barbara County Search and Rescue Search Dog Resources Search Dogs 24/7

3 large-scale training events hosted:

Two Nose Work workshops California Regional Task Force 7 mobilization exercise







SEARCH TEAM FUND

The Search Team Fund is a financial assistance program offered by SDF to help handlers with out-of-pocket expenses not covered by their task forces or government agencies. In the last few years, we have added more benefits to the program and expanded the scope of eligibility to include more working dog teams throughout the United States, regardless of where they were initially trained.

We are proud to lessen the financial burden on these teams so they can remain focused on what's important: staying deployment-ready to assist communities in need.

18 task forces or departments served:

CA-TF1 (Los Angeles City)

CA-TF2 (Los Angeles County)

CA-TF3 (Menlo Park)

CA-TF4 (Oakland)

CA-TF5 (Orange County)

CA-TF7 (Sacramento)

CA-TF8 (San Diego)

CA-RTF-7 (Ventura County)

FL-TF1 (Miami Dade)

IA-TF1 (Cedar Rapids)

NE-TF1 (Lincoln)

NV-TF1 (North Las Vegas)

OK-TF1 (Tulsa)

TN-TF1 (Memphis)

United States Department of State

UT-TF1 (Salt Lake City)

VA-TF2 (Virginia Beach)

WA-TF1 (Pierce County

Opposite far left: Law enforcement canine training groups utilize SDF's campus as a new environment to generalize training.

Opposite center top: Disaster search teams from around the world can cover basic and advanced training scenarios, including night operations.

Below: Wilderness canine search teams hone their essential skills in both backcountry and urban environments at SDF's campus.



Through the following programs:

SEARCH TEAM GRANT

95 Search Team grants totaling **\$68,059.23** used for:

\$25,596 in training travel expenses \$12,453 in training equipment \$23,165 in canine care equipment \$6,845 in veterinary care for non-SDF canines

CANINE HEALTHCARE FUND

94 active and retired search dogs received healthcare services totaling **\$192,688**

PETCO LOVE CANINE CANCER FUND

6 Petco Love Canine Cancer Fund grants to working dogs in disaster search, wilderness search, and explosives detection totaling \$43,896

Read more about our longtime partnership with Petco Love on page 12.

If you know of a working dog team that is interested in applying for one of our Search Team Fund programs, contact our Search Team Operations team at SearchTeamOps@SearchDogFoundation.org.



"SDF's support of SAR teams is very much appreciated and I'm sure it has a big impact on the SAR community! Bax and I are very grateful to be awarded this grant by the Search Dog Foundation! We went to a [human remains detection] (HRD) training in Idaho that provided scenarios in wide area searches and water searches from boat and shoreline. These trainings make Bax and I a stronger team that is better prepared to help our communities when needed!"

— Jo Huxel, handler of Bax (Washington Task Force 1)

CORPORATE PARTNERS

PETCO LOVE HELPS SDF PROVIDE CRITICAL SUPPORT TO WORKING CANINES DIAGNOSED WITH CANCER

Petco Love (formerly Petco Foundation) invests in organizations they deem to have the most impact among their peers, and their immense generosity has been crucial to advancing our mission. Over the last 20 years, SDF has received over \$3.1 million from Petco Love to build our National Training Center and support our programs.

Since 2012, SDF has been a recipient of Petco Love's investment in healthcare for our canines in the form of our Petco Love Canine Cancer Fund. Dozens of canines in disaster, wilderness, and avalanche search, as well as law enforcement and military disciplines have utilized this fund, and it has helped SDF provide financial assistance to handlers of working dogs when their canine partners receive a cancer diagnosis.

SDF search dog Blake was one such recipient. Partnered with Mike Brice of San Diego Fire-Rescue since April 2018, Mike and Blake achieved FEMA certification in 2019. They deployed as members of California Task Force 8 to a cliff collapse in Torrey Pines, California, in 2020.

In 2022, Blake was diagnosed with osteosarcoma of the front leg. His veterinarian, along with his family, decided in Blake's best interest to have his leg amputated. Blake had to retire from the task force, but after follow-up surgery and a course of chemotherapy, he made a full recovery.

As disappointing as it was that Blake lost a limb, Mike and his family were overjoyed that his life could be saved.

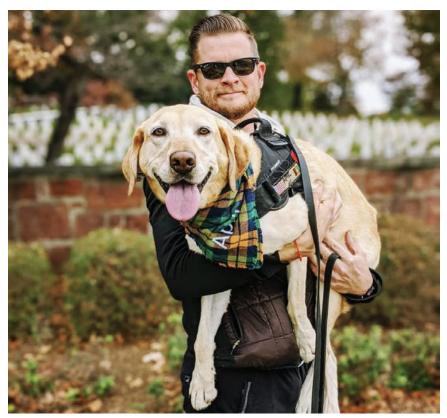
Petco Love's ongoing support of this fund helps families pay for the diagnosis, treatment, and aftercare required by this lifealtering disease and relieves them of the added strain caused by



"I truly cannot say 'thank you' enough to the people at Petco Love and SDF who helped make sure Blake received the best care possible when he needed it most. This was a difficult situation, and I was heartbroken for Blake, but the Petco Love Canine Cancer Grant alleviated a lot of stress and let me focus on my partner's health instead of the hospital bill. My main focus is a happy and peaceful retirement for Blake."

financial burden during what is already a very distressing time. We are so thankful to Petco Love for empowering SDF to give critical healthcare support to these canines who have given so much to all of us.

Blake is sponsored by Red Oak Foundation.





The Petco Love Canine Cancer Fund helps working dogs from many disciplines, like United States Department of State Diplomatic Security Service explosives detection canine April, ensuring handlers can focus on what's most important—the health and quality of life of their canine partners.

CORPORATE PARTNERS

THE RACHAEL RAY FOUNDATION™



Since 2010, The Rachael Ray Foundation™ has donated over \$2.7 million to our programs. They lent their generous support once again in 2022, helping SDF raise \$527,720 through *The Rachael Ray Rescue Brigade* campaign. The Rachael Ray Foundation's grant assisted us in recruiting rescued dogs into our search program, providing their daily care, or, if they didn't choose search as a career, steering them toward jobs or family homes that better suited them through our Lifetime Care program. We are grateful to everyone in our SDF community who donated to this campaign to provide the potential hero dogs in our nation's shelters with a second leash on life!

We are happy to announce that The Rachael Ray Rescue Brigade will be back for a seventh year this summer. Stay tuned for the launch of this campaign and your opportunity to help more shelter dogs become search dogs in 2023!



VMLY&R

VMLY&R has been an essential partner for over two decades, sharing our mission with audiences nationwide through ad placements and pro bono campaigns. The most recent campaign, launched in 2023, highlights the impact of our mission on both canines and humans by showing that shelter dogs who face steep obstacles in a typical home can triumph and be trained to fulfill a noble, lifesaving purpose: rescuing people in need.

The assets created by VMLY&R's professional photographers and copywriters were also provided to SDF and used as cornerstone pieces in our successful year-end fundraising campaign. We are grateful to the fantastic team at VMLY&R for supporting and amplifying our mission so generously.

Look for placements of the UNDERDOG campaign created by this distinguished firm in the *Wall Street Journal* and other major publications!

DID YOU SEE AN SDF AD?

If you see one of our ads in a publication, raise your paw! Many pro bono placements are secured last minute, so we don't always know when they'll run. If you spot one, snap a photo and email us at Rescue@SearchDogFoundation.org, along with the publication name!

PHILANTHROPY

All gifts made to support the Search Dog Foundation's annual, capital, and endowment needs are important and put to good use.

CASH CONTRIBUTIONS

Always appreciated, gifts of cash are critical to implementing our programs and tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

GIFTS OF STOCK

If you own appreciated stock, reviewing your investments with a donation strategy in mind is a simple way to give more to the cause you care about and could garner a significant tax savings at the same time.

MEMORIAL AND HONORARY GIFTS

These thoughtful gifts provide a special way to pay tribute to a friend or family member or to acknowledge a birthday, anniversary, or other significant event.

MATCHING GIFTS

Many employers offer giving programs that double or even triple charitable contributions made by their employees. Check with your employer to see if your company has a matching gift program.

IRA CHARITABLE ROLLOVER DISTRIBUTION

At 70 $\frac{1}{2}$ years old, you are eligible to rollover your IRA distribution directly to SDF and can use it to satisfy all or part of your required minimum distribution beginning at age 72. Also known as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD), this transfer generates neither taxable income nor a tax deduction, so you benefit even if you do not itemize your deductions.

ESTATE GIFTS

The simplest and most popular way to include SDF in your estate plans is through a bequest, designating a specific dollar amount, asset, or percentage of your estate to SDF in your will. You will join over 350 other visionary individuals as an SDF Guardian, ensuring the future legacy of our mission to save lives—both human and canine.

GIVE WITH CONFIDENCE/SPREAD THE WORD

Did you know that Search Dog Foundation has a four-star rating on Charity Navigator? This means you can have confidence that your contribution will be used effectively to advance our mission. There's also an opportunity to leave a review about our work!







To learn more about these or other gift opportunities, please contact Director of Philanthropy, Debra Roets, at (805) 229-0083.

You can also make a donation through our website!







We love our volunteers! Always ready to pitch in with a smile whenever and wherever they're needed, our volunteers are an essential part of SDF's mission, providing assistance in the following areas:

- Administrative support
- Being a "victim" for search training
- Canine calming and enrichment
- Canine health clinic
- Canine meal prep
- Kennel cleaning
- Helping in the Canine Pavilion

The countless hours these volunteers dedicated to supporting our programs in the 2022 fiscal year contributed to our success, and we thank them for their generosity:

Lucinda Anderson Karen Branch Annie Brown Donnell Buckley Kristi Cargill Cara Cattanach Marlee Cattanach Steve Cattanach lanet Chamberlain Sharon Cromartie Shirley Denny Leah Evert-Burks Kevin Donofrio Virginia Feyh Ioan Field Vita Franco

Sue Gary Sysan Garfinkel Lisa Hammond Tom Higgins Brad Holt Lindsey Johnston Michelle Johnston Mary Ann Kendall Lauren Klinosky Shari Lee Mary Looby Judy Mangione Celeste Matesevac Gena Mathwin Sean Moran Dan Munday Linda Munday

Lori Myers Diane Noda Pam Nothwang Karen Prechtel Patrick Siemon Michelle Skidmore Kayann Stables Angie Tapia Eric Tisdale Michele Wagner Carol Wan Kirk Wellington Leslie Wellington Dianne Williams les Zaiss Karen Zuber

We also want to thank the pilots from our nonprofit partners Angel Flight West, Angel Flight Central, and Pilots 'N' Paws, who donated their time, planes, and fuel to transport search candidates from all over the country to our campus in California, and the drivers and owners of Four-Legged Kids Bus who transported search dogs to our training center.

From all of us at SDF—staff, board, handlers, and canines—thank you from the bottom of our hearts!

We're so grateful you're part of the pack!



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