



Middle Creek Search & Rescue

...where teamwork is a tradition.

**Dedicated and trained volunteers providing community support
to South Central PA.**

Thank you for your interest in Middle Creek Search and Rescue (MIDSAR), and specifically in our K-9 team. We have K-9 handler teams who are in various levels of training for air scenting and/or trailing. Our handlers come from all over south central PA, ranging from Chester, Berks, York, Lebanon and Lancaster County areas.

The MIDSAR K-9 team trains together once a month. These trainings are open to anyone who is interested in learning more about training or using search dogs. In fact, we recommend that anyone who is even thinking of becoming a handler attend one or more trainings to see what it is all about, and what is expected of both the dog and the handler. Membership is not necessary to train with us, but it is required for certification.

Training a search dog takes a **serious commitment** and requires **extensive time**. A willingness to train in all weather conditions, have other people committed to assisting you with the training process, and the ability to purchase the necessary equipment. To train a successful search dog, you must be able to commit to training at least 2 to 3 times a week, with an average of 1 to 2 years of training before reaching a level of certification.

After certification is achieved, you must continue to train your dog several times a month to keep their performance at a mission ready level. Since we only train together once a month as a team, this means that you must have friends or family available and willing to assist you as subjects (victims) for your dog to find. Keep in mind; this is a **year-round training commitment**, not only for you, but for your training helpers as well. It's possible that another handler may live in your area and be willing to assist you with your training efforts. However, you must be prepared to be self sufficient with your training needs.

In addition, the dog you train cannot be aggressive towards people and must be maintained under control around other dogs and animals. Nor should it be overly shy or afraid of new experiences and settings. While all dogs have the ability to use their noses, some are not as proficient in doing so as others, or lacks the drive (interest, motivation) needed to become a search dog.

Please understand that training a search dog takes a unique dedication. And you need to know what you are getting into. To meet the other handlers and to learn more about K-9 SAR training, we would love to have you join us for training! To learn more about our training schedule you can check out the calendar that is posted on the website, www.midsar.org. Please let us know if you are coming so we can prepare to assist you that day. In addition, if you would like us to add your e-mail address to the group K-9 training list, you will receive training information, scheduling updates and directions to all monthly trainings.

Thank you again for your interest in the MIDSAR K-9 team!

Sincerely,

Susan Hamberger
MIDSAR K-9 Team Captain

Sam Merman
Lieutenant