

November 9, 2009

Antoinette Battaglia, RMC  
West Milford Township Clerk  
1480 Union Valley Road  
West Milford, New Jersey 07480



Dear Madam,

Please submit this letter of request to the mayor and council to proclaim March 13<sup>th</sup> "K9 Veterans Day" in West Milford Township.

I feel there is a great need to bring to light the importance of the impact Military Working Dogs (MWD's) have not only had in history but the way they have served our troops and country, not only in the past, but continue to do so on the war on terror today. Ever since the first WW I war dog stow away "Sgt. Stubby who was brought to War and served with "The Dough Boys" have these valiant, and somewhat forgotten heroes, served our country with valor and countless times given their lives for their handlers and fellow soldiers. Our United States MWD's have continuously served with the type of loyalty and courage that would be envious of any of their 2 legged counterparts but unfortunately, at times, without any type of recognition or thanks from the population they have served and many given their lives for.

No one knows just how many MWD's have fallen in battle or just how many of their lives were cut short because of their sacrifices but you can be assured from the accounts of the handlers who they befriended and served with that thousands of these magnificent dogs have saved tens of thousands of soldiers from injury and death and at times by willingly giving their own lives to save their fellow soldiers. All this they have given without question or hesitation as they also protect and serve us here at home. At times they have lived and died in some of the most harshest and deplorable fighting conditions protecting our soldiers from mustard gas during WW I to the trip wired mosquito infested jungles of Viet Nam to the IED infested heat and cold deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan, all without question and regard to their own lives.

I could go on and on for pages and pages, hours and hours, describing the valor and courage of these animals as they defended and protected their handlers and just how much their impact had on the safety of our troops over the years and thus our safety here at home which brings me to my request. I am requesting that West Milford be the first in our area to make a proclamation making March 13<sup>th</sup> "K9 Veterans Day". This day is not by chance, and I could not have said it any better than as the attached letter which explains that March 13, 1942 is the official birthday of the United States K9 Corps. The letter is from a web site originated by Joe White. Joe served in Viet Nam as a dog handler with the 47<sup>th</sup> Scout Dog Division, 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne in 1970. His 4 legged partner was a black German Shepherd named Ebony (030M).

Together, they, as well as thousands of other WMD Teams have done in the past and continue to do today, served with honor and distinction saving countless lives of their fellow soldiers. The quest for having March 13<sup>th</sup> as a National K9 Veterans Day had been a dream of Joe for years. He has never forgotten, as many other handlers from the Viet Nam era have not, that their beloved partners were left to die alone in the Jungles of Viet Nam when the US departed. Back then, the only war that it occurred in, the MWD's were considered "**SURPLUSS EQUIPMENT**" and all but 231 of the approximately 4900 dogs had either been killed in action or were left behind to die alone and confused in a hostile land. They were either shot, just tied up to a tree or let loose to fend for themselves. Just imagine how they must of felt when their handlers, their friends, were ordered to leave without them. They died alone and abandoned by the soldiers they loved and protected. Joe has since passed away just a few short weeks before this letter has reached you but as he stated in his e-mail to me "Make no mistake about it, I do this for her". (Ebony). In kind Mayor and council members make no mistake about it. I had started the "Support Our 4 Legged Soldiers" organization to support the WMD's that serve and protect us and now ask you grant my request to make March 13<sup>th</sup> West Milford's K9 Veterans Day to remember and honor our 4 Legged Soldiers. Please make this proclamation to honor those courageous dogs that have done so with honor and distinction. The MWD's are Loyal, Loving and Fearless. They are the Soldiers Lifeline! Therefore, also ours!

**May God Bless All of Our Soldiers and Keep Them Safe!**

Thank you,  
Frank Yevchak  
cc: Mayor and Council

"Support Our 4 Legged Soldiers"  
P.O. Box 947  
Hewitt, New Jersey 07421  
4leggedsoldiers@optonline.net