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Honoring the military working dog American Veterinary Medical Association endorses national monument

SCHAUMBURG, Illinois (June 1, 2011) – The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) is proud to announce its support of a national monument that will, for the first time, officially recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by military working dogs to the safety and security of our nation and our troops abroad.

The AVMA Executive Board recently endorsed the Military Working Dog Teams National Monument as an expression of the association's respect and appreciation for the invaluable role working dogs play in the military.

“Military working dogs have served our country gallantly in many theaters, from World War II to their role in the war against terror in places like Iraq and Afghanistan,” said Dr. [Larry M. Kornegay](#), AVMA president. “It is fitting and proper that the largest veterinary medical association in the world should help recognize these unheralded heroes and what they have done – and continue to do – for our nation both at home and abroad.”

The monument, according to John Burnam, president of the National Monument for Military Working Dog Teams, will be located on a 5,000-square-foot lot on the grounds of the new National Museum of the United States Army, which is under construction at Fort Belvoir, Va., just 25 minutes from Washington, D.C.

The monument will be open to the public, with dedication expected to be held in the fall of 2013. The monument also will be open to dogs, as stipulated in the federal legislation that approved its construction. Monument supporters have been working on the project since October 2009.

The monument portrays a military dog handler with the four primary military working dog breeds – a Doberman pinscher, a German shepherd, a Labrador retriever and a Belgian Malinois.

“This is the first time in U.S. military history that the U.S. Congress has elevated an animal to national monument status by law,” said Burnam, a retired U.S. Army master sergeant and former scout-dog handler during the Vietnam War. “And this is the only national monument featuring a combat dog handler.”

The [AVMA](#) and its philanthropic arm, the [American Veterinary Medical Foundation](#), will work to build support for the monument through outreach initiatives geared toward its members and the general public.

For more information about the monument and how you can help, visit the Military Working Dog Teams National Monument website at www.jbmf.us.

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The AVMA, founded in 1863, is one of the oldest and largest veterinary medical organizations in the world. More than 81,500 member veterinarians worldwide are engaged in a wide variety of professional activities.