

TRAINING

New members bring experience

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joined the team about a month ago. West, a German wirehaired griffon, is an area search dog who was previously certified by the California Rescue Dog Association.

Sullivan's expertise will help the team's newest member — 8-week-old Jovi (short for jovial), a Nova Scotia toller which handler Julia Sauder purchased to train as an area searcher for the team.

At work, West cuts a swath around Sullivan until finding a subject who he then greets before running back to the handler and jumping on her as an "alert." Sullivan said field hunting dogs like West and Jovi do well with non-specific area searching.

"Instead of flushing a bird you find a human, and instead of retrieving you come jump on me," Sullivan said.

Chelsey Betterley joined the team to support handlers. Jones said handlers rely on "flankers" to handle navigation and communication as handlers are focused on their

dogs. Betterley started bringing her dog Khuno when she realized trainings amounted to dogs finding people in exchange "for hot dogs and scratches."

"He is extremely food motivated and will pretty much do anything for a hot dog," Betterley said.

At a training above Lyle May 5, Betterley and Sauder took turns hiding for K-9 West. Dana Reid, whose Swedish Vallhund Aster's mother was the breed's first certified human remains dog, hid for K-9 Griffin and DiSalvo.

The subject of Jones and K-9 Ellie's mock search was Kathy Harris, who doesn't have a dog of her own and was one of the first volunteers to join Jones and DiSalvo last year.

Harris said she volunteered to get her "dog fix."

"How can you not love it," Harris said as she rewarded Ellie with a can of Vienna sausage. She said she feels watching the dogs train has given her a better idea of what to do if she and husband Steven get lost on a backpacking trip.

"Carry Vienna sausages?" Jones joked.



Above, from left, Molly Sullivan, Chelsey Betterley, Julia Sauder, Jeff Adams, Maija DiSalvo and Jim Jones talk after K-9 West completed a mock search at a training May 5 above Lyle, Wash. Below, Dana Reid, Sauder and DiSalvo meet K-9 Jovie, the team's newest and youngest member. At right, Jones handles K-9 Ellie. Walker Sacon Photos



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