CSAR 2021 Biographies

## Allen Russell

Allen Russell has been a law enforcement officer for over 24 years with the Blount County Sheriff’s Office (TN). The majority of that of that time has been spent in the K9 Unit. Corporal Russell has worked 5 different K9s, three bloodhounds and two Malinois (criminal apprehension and narcotic detection). Corporal Russell has run hundreds of tracks searching for criminals and missing/lost persons, assisting Federal, State, and local agencies. Corporal Russell is the head trainer and K9 Unit supervisor for his department and conducts training for other agencies as well. Corporal Russell has been a guest instructor of many agencies throughout the United States, such as the New York State Police and the Arizona Department of Corrections, as well as many others. Corporal Russell also travels frequently to Europe conducting training for search and rescue K9 teams in Sweden and Switzerland.  He also taught the Urban class two years ago at the CSAR seminar in Tennessee.

## Anan Chiang

Anan is a sergeant with the Los Angeles Airport Police and has 15 years of law enforcement experience in investigations, ICS and training.  She has 10 years of search and rescue experience and has responded to searches throughout California.  She is a member of Los Angeles Search Dogs which serves the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department and is a member of the California Rescue Dog Association (CARDA) which serves the California Office of Emergency Services.  She is an Area evaluator with CARDA and has experience working with a variety of canine breeds.  She has taught previously at AZSAR K9 CON and CSAR seminars.  She has worked and certified dogs in both Area and Trailing.  Her first certified dog was a Weimaraner and her current certified dog is an Australian Kelpie.

## Brad Dennis

Brad Dennis has over 30 years of experience in search and rescue and 22 years as a K-9 handler. Brad is the National Search Director for the KlaasKIDS Foundation’ Search Center for Missing & Trafficked Children. He managed the community- assisted search effort following the abduction of 12-year-old Polly Hannah Klaas in 1993 from Petaluma, Ca.; which has become the model for child abduction search strategies. He is also the owner of Threshold Education, which conducts training scenarios to prepare responders for realistic deployment operations.​

He has managed search efforts for over 300 missing/abducted children around the country. He travels extensively throughout the United States providing instruction concerning search and rescue operations, advocacy to families of missing children, child abduction search management, sex trafficking of minors and serves as “Evaluator” for the National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR).He has been awarded the Commissioner’s Award from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the prestigious Justice Award from the Foundation for Improvement of Justice for his efforts to locate missing children.

Brad is a retired Cryptologic Master Chief Petty Officer, US Navy, and is highly decorated for his counterterrorism work with the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC). He also proudly serves as the Pastor of Eden Fellowship Church located in Pensacola, Florida.

## Brianna Acevedo

K9 Kovu- Mission Ready: FEMA LF CE, Disaster response

K9 Snitch- Mission Ready: NASAR SARTECHII, Area & GTA/Pacesetter K9 Narcotics detection

K9 Khrona- Mission Ready: NASAR Canine Human Remains Detection Land Type Other

Brianna began involvement with search and rescue in June 2014, when becoming a member of Texas Search & Rescue (TEXSAR). After certifying her Belgian Malinois, Kovu, with NASAR in October 2015, she applied and became a canine handler for Texas Task Force 1. Brianna certified under FEMA’s type 1 LF-CE in June 2017, as well as certifying her border collie, Snitch, for area search under NASAR. In 2018, Brianna certified her Belgian Malinois, Khrona, under NASAR’s HRD Other certification. Brianna has consistently responded to SAR deployments, including the Wimberly Floods of 2015, Hurricane Harvey in 2017, Hurricane Micheal in 2018, and numerous other local deployments. Brianna currently works full time training dogs for her private training business, Einstein K9 LLC, as well as doing detection contract work, and other occupations in the dog training field. Brianna spent three years working for Global Training Academy (GTA), an internationally recognized training facility providing dogs to law enforcement, military, and fulfilling overseas contracts. She was an instructor/ trainer for GTA and produces dogs fully trained in narcotics detection, explosive detection, and patrol work. Brianna also handles both narcotics and explosive detection dogs for contract searches for schools, prisons, stadiums, and other facilities. Prior to working at GTA she worked for K10 Working Dogs and specialized in the raising and training of puppies to be sold as working dog candidates to military and law enforcement. Brianna has certified detection canines through organizations such as FEMA, NASAR, GTA, and PacesetterK9

Cindy Corcoran is a 21 year veteran of the Prince George's County Police Department in Maryland, serving 7 years as a Sergeant/ Supervisor in the Canine Unit since 1990. There, she supervised the emergency operations, daily training, and frequent Public K9 Demonstrations of the 25-member Canine Division. During her career, she has been an Investigator, a Patrol Sergeant, a Police Supervisor Trainer, and an Instructor for the Field Training Officers Program, as well as an Instructor for the Officer Survival Skills Course at the Police Academy. Cindy is the Founder of Public Safety Disaster Response Team (P.S. DiRT), a volunteer K9 Search group comprised of Professional Police and Firefighters, handling only Federal, State,and Local Law Enforcement cases. P.S. DiRT has been deployed to many States on land and water to recover victims and evidence in challenging assignments. She has been involved in Search and Rescue since 1995, proudly celebrating 25 years as a member of CSAR since 1996, and one of the first CSAR Water Instructors. Cindy is also a member of Search and Rescue Dogs of the United States (SARDUS). Following her Retirement in 2001, Cindy remained active in K9 SAR and was called to action September 11, 2001 with her partner, K9 Gretel, to serve at the Pentagon at the request of the FBI Evidence Recovery Team: Operation Rising Phoenix.

## Chris Snipes

As an Active Duty Service member, I wanted to give back to the community. I began my Search and Rescue career in 2009 while stationed in Monterey, CA with Monterey County Search and Rescue Dogs (MCSARD) as a K9 Handler where I focused on Live Area with my Golden, Linus. Linus was originally raised to be a guide dog for the Seeing Eye Foundation in Morristown NJ. Unfortunately, Linus was not suited for Guide work, he was well suited for Search and Rescue. Upon completing my requirements in CA, we moved to Huntsville, AL and joined North Alabama Search Dog Association (NASDA).

During our time in Al, I was a member and K9 Handler with NASDA (2010-2015) and through lots of teamwork and training we obtained certifications from National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR) as SARTECH II, Live Area II & III, and Land HRD Type IV. NASDA introduced me CSAR in 2010 and I have been an active member ever since. Additionally, while in Alabama I obtained certification as NASAR Lead Evaluator for Live Area II & III and Land HRD Type Other/IV. After completing my assignment in AL, I was stationed in Grand Prairie, TX.

While in TX (2015-2018), I joined the Search One Rescue Team (SORT) as a K9 Handler focusing in HRD. As a K9 Handler, we obtained a Mission Ready status with SORT and participated in numerous HRD searches. While with SORT, Linus and I participated in several SORT seminars. I was selected as an assistant instructor for Intermediate HRD Water during the 2015 CSAR seminar and Intermediate Live Area during CSAR 2017. In 2018, I was taught an Intermediate Live Area class during a mini-seminar hosted by NASDA. Due to medical issues, Linus was retired in 2018 to enjoy the happy homelife of a retired SAR dog. I didn’t immediately start working another partner due to the uncertainty of time and locations for my Army career.

After Texas, we were stationed in several locations for short periods of time. The first was Carlisle, PA while I attended the Army War College from 2018-2019. The second short assignment was in Fort Sill, OK from 2019-2020. After these two short duration assignments, the Army stationed me back in Huntsville, AL for my current assignment where I was fortunate to rejoin Team NASDA. Although I am not currently a K9 handler, I still get the opportunity to work with other handlers for Live and HRD.

I believe the seminar is a two-fold education experience, with the primary goal of providing alternate experiences to handlers in attendance and assist with the small fine tuning between the handler and their canine partner. Secondly, the instructors learn from the students as well. During the seminar, both parties (instructors and attendees) will take away valuable learning experience with the goal of cross populating those experiences to their respective teams, thus increasing and expanding CSAR’s purpose.

Within the Army, consistency is paramount. We train our tasks until they become muscle memory. I utilize these very basic concepts in my approach to training K9 teams. Our K9 partners love and thrive on consistency. I like to challenge the handler to think through difficult situations and how your actions impact and drive the behavior of your talented partner.

I am extremely excited to work with Natalie once again. I know we will challenge the teams with exciting, fun, and challenging scenarios.

## Darcy Harbaugh

Darcy is a founding member of the North Alabama Search Dog Association (celebrating it’s 25th year this year!). She has personally trained and fielded dogs for Area and HRD, land and water. She has also helped train a few trailing dogs over the years. She started in obedience work and AKC tracking (up to a TDX) and expanded that into SAR work eventually. She still dabbles in obedience and agility. She has served as NASDA’s team trainer since inception and still enjoys going to other seminars to test her and her dog and learn more about dog training techniques and theories. She has certified dogs in Area and HRD through NASAR and NAPWDA during her career, and currently serves as a NASAR K9 lead evaluator for Area and HRD. She attended my first CSAR seminar in 1997, which was also CSAR’s first seminar. She have served on the board, as treasurer/secretary and as President. She has instructed Area and HRD water multiple times over the years (thank you Denver Holder for being such a good CSAR mentor) and am looking forward to teaching HRD Land. She loves working with teams and figuring out ways to make the handler think and coming up with ways to solve noted problems.

## Janet Anagnos

Janet lives outside of Chicago, IL and has actively been working with dogs the majority of her career, starting with AKC obedience and tracking competition with several dogs then dabbling in agility and IPO.

She has been a member of Illinois Wisconsin Search Dogs for 25 years and is currently training and working her 6th German shepherd. All of her dogs have been cross-trained in HRD and tracking/trailing.

She has certified all of her dogs in both disciplines with various certifying bodies. Her two current working dogs are certified with NAPWDA in trailing and HRD.Being part of ILLWIS has given her the opportunity to be active in hundreds of searches throughout her SAR career. Her dogs have been successful in HRD and trailing finds.Janet has been an active member with CSAR since the beginning. She is active on the board and has taught land cadaver classes at several past seminars.

She is always learning and loves teaching from her experience.

## Janet Geist

Janet is a member of the North Alabama Search Dog Association. She started out as an area search handler with her first dog Jester and crosstrained into HRD. Her current dog Barrington is NASAR certified in Area Search with plans to crosstrain him to HRD.  Her older operational dog Tusket is HRD only and has a number of land and water finds to his credit.   Janet has been training in live airscent and cadaver work since 1996, and has also trained and certified Chaos, a Belgian Malinois, in airscent. Janet is a NASAR evaluator for live and HRD. She is an avid hiker and outdoor person and enjoys combining that with her love of working dogs. She has a background as a dog obedience trainer and instructor. Janet has taught at previous CSAR seminars teaching beginner and intermediate area, and water hrd. Janet has been a member of CSAR for many years, having served on the board in the past and is currently serving as CSAR president.

## Jenn Hirakawa

Jennifer brings over 20 years of local, national, and international experience in canine training, canine program management, and canine behavior.

In May of 2012, Jennifer retired from the US Army Military Police Corps after 23 years of service with the rank of Master Sergeant (MSG) in the US Army Military Police.  Jennifer’s military career included many postings and positions including over six years as a canine handler/trainer in patrol, narcotics and explosives detection. During Jennifer’s career she deployed multiple times for both short and long deployments (IFOR, SFOR, OEF, and others). She also successfully challenged the German National Dog Trainers Exam.

Jenn is the owner of Kawa Farms K9 Training. In 2012 after her retirement from the US Army, she began training dogs and humans to help them form a better human-canine bond.  Jenn has worked with all different breeds and temperaments; she has also worked and trained many disciplines and actively completes behavior consultations. She trains Service Dogs, working odor detection dogs, and dual-purpose canines.

Jenn launched into world of search and rescue in 2015.  Jenn is currently working K9 Moose in HRD, and K9 Gracie Bell in Wide Area. She is currently certified and has deployed dogs in wilderness HRD, responding to requests by various law enforcement agencies in and around the state of Iowa and has deployed with the Nebraska State Task Force.  She is an Examiner for AERIE Canine Search Specialist Area Search and a Chief Examiner for AERIE  Canine Search Specialist, HRD Land. She maintains current certifications with AERIE and SARDUS. Jennifer serves as an instructor with K9 Sensus,teaching the human end of the leash and canine behavior in the cadaver dog program. She is also an Instructor for NNCDS where she teaches HRD and Live Area Search. Jennifer handles EDD and narcotics k9s for Merrill Detector Dog Services.

Jennifer holds memberships in: National Police Canine Association (NPCA), National Association of Search and Rescue (NASAR), Canine Search and Recovery (CSAR), Search and Rescue dogs of the United States (SARDUS), Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT: Premier Member), AKC: Trainer and Evaluator, ADPT C.L.A.S.S. Trainer and Evaluator, and The International Association of Animal Behavioral Consultants: Supporting Member (IAABC). Jennifer is also a Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), The Disabled America Veterans (DAV), United States Army Military Police Regimental Association, and many other veterans’ groups.

Laurie Strite has been a member of KlaasKIDS Search and Rescue team for 15 years. She has worked five K9's in three different disciplines. She currently works K9 Quest (Australian Shepherd) and K9 Angel (Border Collie/Belgian Shepherd) in Human Remains Detection and K9 Junior (Bloodhound) and  
K9 Skye (Labrador Retriever) in trailing. K9 Nova (German Shepherd) is retired from area search. When not working her own K9's and attending seminars, Laurie loves instructing where she can share her experiences, pass along knowledge learned and continue to learn from students. Besides the K9 field, Laurie works as an Incident Commander, Ops Chief or Plans Chief for SAR missions. Laurie was a developer of a search management collaborative computing environment that allows multiple search planners to work together on large missing person cases where Incident Command is sending hundreds of emergent volunteers into the field. Laurie retired from IBM where she worked as a project manager. She has a Master's Degree in Telecommunications and spent most of her career in the field of computer networking.

## Lisa Higgins

Lisa Higgins is a certified NASAR SARTECH II, a Canine SAR Tech III. She has been in law enforcement since 1978. She started with Pearl River P.D. as a mounted officer and has completed her thirty year run with St. Tammany Sheriff's Office mounted as well as SAR canine. She was in the Special Operations Division from 1991 through 2008.

Higgins is co-founder and still active with LaSAR, has been a member of NASAR, NSDA, and NNCDS, and has served on their advisory boards. Lisa qualified as a "Subject Matter Expert" in canine body recovery in New Orleans Criminal Courts. Higgins has served as member of the Federal DMORT Region VI Team, Louisiana and Texas State Mass Fatalities Taskforce. Lisa serves as a civilian contractor with the FBI on the Victim Recovery Team, where she has successfully deployed across the country in support of a variety of search operations.

Lisa has co-authored several articles and a book chapter on water search and recovery. She has taught across the country in HRD Land and Water and is well respected for her knowledgeable point of view in both dog training and HRD deployments. She has taught for years at the Canine Search and Recovery Seminar.

## Mary Margaret Crestani Eberle

Mary Margaret has been a member of the North Alabama Search Dog Association since 2003 and a CSAR member since 2004.  She has worked both area and HRD dogs, although her current dogs are area only.  She has worked a Newfoundland, Nereus; two flat coated retrievers, Scout and Triton (currently active); and a Lab, Katie (currently retired).  Katie, Triton and Scout are/were NASAR Certified Area Dogs (area K9 Sartech III and II, and HRD for Scout).  Mary Margaret is an experienced adult educator having taught at the University of Alabama School of Medicine for many years.  She enjoys working dogs and sharing what she has learned with others.  Mary Margaret has taught or assisted in teaching at search seminars in both beginning and intermediate level classes as well as for few multilevel classes.

## Melodie Ray

Melodie (Mel) Ray, a lifelong search-and-rescue volunteer, was raised side-by-side with her mother’s K9 partners (she knows how to lead dog). She has been certified “mission ready” for more than 10 years with the California Rescue Dog Association (CARDA) and is also a current member of Red Rock Search and Rescue (RRSAR) and a former member of the Los Angeles Sheriff’s Department search and rescue team. Mel holds a SARTECH II certification in NASAR.

## Natalie Castle

Natalie has been active in Search and Rescue since 1988.  Starting out in Colorado with Search and Rescue Dogs of Colorado (SARDOC) and Larimer County Search and Rescue (LCSAR).  She moved to Michigan and joined Michigan Technical Rescue Operation Team (MTROT) and then Michigan Urban Search and Rescue (MUSAR).  She returned to CO, and rejoined SARDOC and LCSAR in 2000.

 She moved to California in 2004, and joined California Rescue Dogs Assn(CARDA). and then Los Angeles Search dogs (LASD).  She has deployed on searches in Papua New Guinea, and Nepal after disasters there and in over 5 states.  She has certified with dogs in Area, Trailing and Cadaver.  She is currently working her 5th and 6th dogs, a Malinois in HRD and a GSD in Trailing.

Natalie currently serves as a Training Group leader with CARDA in the LA area, and Member at Large for the LASD group.

## Pam Nyberg

Pam Nyberg has been active in volunteer Search and Rescue for 18 years. She was a founding member of Alpha Team K9 SAR - established in 2004.

Pam started her journey in SAR as a Field Support member. 2 years later she started the joy of becoming an operational K9 handler. Over the past 16 years Pam has had 5 K9 partners. 2 operational trailing K9’s and 2 operational HRD K9’s. The 5th K9 is ‘in training’ for HRD. All are Labrador retrievers – her favorite breed.

Pam embraces the phrase “train the dog in front of you” – incorporating a variety of training methods that will work best for each particular dog.

Living in the metro Atlanta area has provided numerous opportunities for interesting and challenging deployments in both disciplines. In addition, Pam has participated in numerous K9 seminars throughout the country. She has also instructed trailing classes at some of these seminars.

## Roy Lopez

Roy Lopez started his career in the U.S. Navy in 1987.  He completed SEAL training in 1989 and was deployed as a Special Warfare Operator during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.After the Navy, he joined the Border Patrol in 1997 and became a founding member of both the U.S. Border Patrol’s Search, Trauma and Rescue Team (BORSTAR) as well as the BORSTAR K9 Program.

Mr. Lopez became a SAR canine handler in 2001 and graduated the Border Patrol’s SAR Canine Instructor School a couple years later. As the agency’s first certified trailing canine handler, he was able to record nearly 2,000 people finds over his extensive career. Being a member of one of the busiest SAR Teams in the country Roy quickly recognized a need for human remains detection dogs to assist in recovery efforts during searches. He attended the six week New England State Police Cadaver Dog Course in 2003 and set out on a mission to develop a full HRD course for the Border Patrol. In 2007, his plans were realized when the first course was launched. This is the Federal Government’s only complete HRD course. Graduates of the 400 hour course include Border Patrol Agents, State and Local Law Enforcement and many Foreign Law Enforcement Officers. Both nationally and internationally numerous missing persons have been recovered and many criminals have been prosecuted as a result of this program.

Roy is a Master Trainer of Cadaver Detection and Tracking and Trailing Teams for the North American Police Work Dog Association (NAPWDA). In this role, he has had the opportunity to train and certify volunteers and law enforcement teams from around the country.  Roy retired from the Border Patrol in December 2019 and immediately founded Core Canine Concepts, LLC. Through this new venture he desires to impart his vast experience and knowledge to enhance the skills and abilities of K9 Teams throughout the world.

## Robin Houston

Robin is a long standard member of Missouri Search and Rescue. For years, she also work with the Kansas City Police Department while juggling her SAR K9 career. She has attended seminars all over the country to learn and expand her own skills in area, trailing, HRD and disaster. She has largely worked Border Collies but has added a Bloodhound to the mix as well. Robin is retired from KCPD and enjoying concentrating on K9 life. She has certified (NAPWDA, NSDA, AMPWDA and AERIA) and fielded multiple dogs in Area, HRD and Trailing.  She enjoys helping K9 Teams develop by addressing their specific needs and challenging them with real life scenarios.

## Sherri Schwartz

Sherri has been a long standing member with Alpha Team SAR in Georgia. She started with her GSD Clue, doing trailing, airscent and HRD with him. She is now on her fourth generation of a working partner, and after three generations of pointy ears (her current operational dog is Thunder), she has a new floppy eared lab pup named Sierra for HRD. Over the years, she has certified with NASAR/NSDA/NAPWDA in trailing, HR and area search and maintained all her required ATSAR certifications.  She enjoys troubleshooting and helping dog teams become more excited and reliable in the field.

## Terry Camp

Terry is a NASAR ST I, a FUNSAR Instructor & Lead Evaluator for the ST II & III, a K9 Lead Evaluator for NASAR in Tracking/Trailing, HRD Land, Area Search & Article Search.  She has been involved in working K9’s for over 15 yrs. and has certified them in Trailing I, II, and III, HRD Land III, Area Search III and has also with NAPWDA in Tracking /Trailing.  Terry was a SAR member and Lead K9 Trainer for the Cherokee County Fire and Emergency Services in Canton GA until she retired.  She and her husband moved to TN and is currently an independent K9 handler serving her state and surrounding counties. She has been a volunteer firefighter/EMT and has worked several breeds. She currently works a GSD & Bloodhound in Tracking/Trailing, a Belgian Tervuren&Pitmix in HRD.

## Terry Plumlee

Terry Plumlee is a member of the Arkansas Alliance of Bloodhound Search Specialist (AABSS) as a canine handler. Terry retired from his local fire department after 30+ years of service as assistant chief. During this time, he assisted on several local searches and realized a critical need in his area of rural Arkansas for trained man-trailing search dogs. He is a former member of the Carroll County Special Operations Rescue Team and a current member of the Tri-County search and rescue team. Terry currently works his six year old bloodhound, Copper, and has responded to multiple searches throughout Arkansas, southern Missouri, and eastern Oklahoma. He recently acquired his next K9 SAR partner, a bloodhound puppy named Penny, in November 2020 and is currently training her in trailing. Terry has attended several CSAR seminars in years past, along with other seminars in Texas and Arkansas and Missouri. He also is an assistant instructor for the annual national training weekend hosted by AABSS in Arkansas each year. This year was the 21st Annual Search Dog Training Weekend. Terry has done several demonstrations for youth groups like 4H, Civil Air Patrol, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, church groups and local schools. Besides his bloodhounds, he shares his life with his wife, Louetta, who is an HRD K9 handler, on their cattle farm in Northwest Arkansas.