FROM RESCUED... TO RESCUER


Your Estate Gift will create a lasting legacy for Canine Disaster Search in America. It will say to our communities and country: *No one will be left behind*
Wilma Melville here, founder of the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation. Since you’ve turned the first page of this brochure to look inside, I’ll wager you’re a dog lover. So am I!

The photo to the right is me, age 6, with my first puppy, Brownie. The picture below on the left is me at age 80 with a new friend, Nino, along with his handler Jim Boggeri, one of our Canine Disaster Search Teams. Different dog, same Wilma—in love with rescued dogs and helping them get a “new leash on life.”

Like most of you, I’ve had to make some tough choices when it comes to my will. As we all know, tomorrow always comes “a day too soon.” We never know what’s going to happen around the bend.

That’s why I went ahead and made my Estate Gift to SDF. I invite you to do the same! It’s a great way to help ensure that our mission—of training rescued dogs to become rescuers—continues for many decades to come.

With so many options available to you in making a gift of this kind, it’s easy to have a long-term impact on the Search Dog Foundation while fulfilling your own personal and financial goals. On Page 7 of this brochure you will see some of the most popular ways to make a Planned Gift to SDF.

We stand by to assist in your planning, whether it’s a Bequest, Charitable Gift Annuity, Remainder Trust or any other option available to you when planning for the future. We can also help with the legal fees associated with making your gift.

Join me, and our family of Estate Donors throughout America, in making your mark on disaster preparedness in our country.

There is no better time than right now to become a part of SDF’s future, and Part of the Search!

Wilma Melville

For more information, contact:
SDF Estate Manager Rhett Mauck (888) 459-4376 x105 or Rhett@SearchDogFoundation.org
As a retired teacher, equestrian enthusiast, and grandmother...why, at the age of 62, did I complicate my life by starting a nonprofit to train Canine Disaster Search Teams? The answer is simple: “I was deployed to Oklahoma City.”

In 1990, I decided to indulge in my desire to train a dog to an advanced skill level. Why disaster search? I was fascinated by the ability of dogs to find a live human trapped under tons of debris and attracted by the high degree of specialized training required for this. I had the good fortune of meeting Pluis Davern, a nationally renowned dog trainer and the owner of Sundowners Kennel in Gilroy, CA, to help me do this.

Pluis worked with me and my Black Lab, Murphy, teaching us the skills we needed. We trained intensively, and within two years attained FEMA Certification.

On a sunny April day in 1995, Murphy and I received the call that the Oklahoma City Federal Building had been bombed, and that we were being deployed with the firefighters of California Task Force 2 to search for survivors. During the 10 days the Task Force spent combing the rubble for survivors, only one person was found alive... but there just weren’t enough of us to cover the devastation.

This experience was life-changing for me. I realized that America had a severe shortage of Canine Disaster Search Teams. Somehow there had to be a way to train more teams—better and faster.
I returned home determined to do something about this. I gave up everything else I was doing (endurance horseback riding, flying experimental planes, falconry and archery) and started a nonprofit dedicated to training Canine Disaster Search Teams.

I knew the key was finding the right dogs, matching them with the right handlers, and giving them at least six months of professional training. Pluis and I set out to develop an effective, streamlined training methodology. I visited shelters and breed rescues throughout California to find rescued dogs with the insatiable drive, exceptional athleticism, and tremendous focus needed for the job. We chose to use firefighters as the canine handlers – men and women with the skills needed for disaster response, schedules that allowed for constant training, and the dedication and discipline to commit to a decade of intensive, ongoing training and service.

We also made an ironclad promise: Once a rescued or donated dog is accepted into our program, that dog will never need to be rescued again. SDF guarantees that every dog admitted to our program will receive excellent care and abundant love throughout its life. When dogs retire from active service they remain with their handlers, enjoying their “golden years” as pets. If a dog who has been admitted to our training program doesn’t have all of the characteristics required for disaster search, we find a permanent, loving home for them, either as a pet with a Lifetime Care family, or as a service dog in another field such as animal-assisted therapy or narcotics detection.

In 1996 we formed our first Canine-Firefighter Search Teams, and they were soon called into action both close to home and throughout the nation.
By the fall of 2001, Pluis and I had trained 33 Search Teams. We were a very small nonprofit working out of a closet-sized office, depending on volunteers and friends to raise the funds to keep our operation going, and scouring shelters for Labs, Golden Retrievers and Border Collies.

Then, the unthinkable happened...

Like most Americans, I will never forget September 11, 2001, the day we witnessed the worst terrorist attack in U.S. history. Soon after the World Trade Center Towers fell, a call went out to Task Forces nationwide to help search for survivors. In all, 33 FEMA-Certified Canine Disaster Search Teams were deployed, 13 of which were SDF teams. The search was extremely challenging—emotionally and physically—for all the handlers, but their high-level training served them well.

Despite the treacherous terrain and tragedies unfolding all around them, for the dogs it was just another chance to do the thing they love most: SEARCH! They navigated mountains of wreckage over eight city blocks with grace and focus, “clearing” each section so rescue workers could move on to another area. The dogs also brought tremendous comfort to the handlers, stunned onlookers, and families of the victims during these desperate hours.
Since 1996, SDF has trained more than 150 Search Teams. There are currently over 70 active SDF-trained Teams—in California, Florida, Nebraska, New York, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia and Baja California.

These teams have been deployed to more than 100 disasters, including the World Trade Center attack, Hurricane Katrina, the Haiti earthquake, the Japan earthquake and tsunami, tornadoes in the Midwest, building explosions, mudslides, train derailments, and missing person searches.
The characteristics that can make dogs unsuitable as family pets and land them in shelters—intense energy and extreme drive—are exactly the qualities required in a Search Dog. SDF goes to great lengths to find these dogs in animal shelters and breed rescue groups throughout the Western states. We seek Labs, Golden Retrievers, Border Collies, Shepherds, Malinois and mixes with just the right combination of drive, agility, focus, intelligence and fortitude needed for disaster search.

In some cases the dogs we recruit are just days or hours away from euthanasia.

We give these amazing animals exactly what they crave: a job and a new leash on life! A happy ending for all... as rescued dogs receiving the utmost in loving care and training to save lives.
SDF gratefully accepts a variety of estate giving options. Here’s an easy guide to the most popular of these:

**BEQUEST**
The simplest and most popular way to include SDF in your estate plans is through a Bequest—designating a specific dollar amount, asset, or percentage of your estate to SDF in your will. If you already have a will, a codicil (amendment) can easily be added to include SDF as a beneficiary. We have enclosed a Bequest form for your convenience. Simply fill it out, show it to your financial advisor or attorney, and mail it back to SDF.

**CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY**
A Gift Annuity provides you or a loved one with a permanent annual income for life, based on the level of the gift you designate and your age. Your income is guaranteed regardless of market fluctuation. A portion of the gift is tax-deductible.

**CHARITABLE REMAINDER ANNUITY TRUST (CRAT)**
A Charitable Remainder Trust delivers a fixed income amount to you that you determine, regardless of the investment performance.

**LIFE INSURANCE**
If you own a Life Insurance Policy that is paid up and your family no longer needs the policy’s protection, you can designate SDF as the owner of the policy and receive an immediate tax deduction.

**OUR GIFT TO YOU**
We strongly encourage you to visit with your estate planning attorney or financial planner to determine which type of gift works best for you. We would be happy to help underwrite the legal fees incurred in the designation of SDF as part of your estate planning.

“I remember reading Wilma’s letter in 1996 introducing the newly formed Search Dog Foundation after she and her dog Murphy were called to the Oklahoma City bombing. We felt strongly enough about Wilma’s vision to include SDF in our estate plans. We are so glad to be part of such a meaningful organization, and being Search Dog Joe’s Guardian is such a unique experience!” – Tildon & Lunn, Lompoc, CA

“I was so impressed by the Search Dog Foundation that I wanted to support the organization financially. I couldn’t give much at the time, but I knew I could help by pledging an estate gift. It's a great feeling to know that my gift will strengthen the organization in the years to come.” – Barbara, Crescent City, CA
THE SDF GUARDIAN ENDOWMENT FUND

SDF’s Guardian Endowment Fund was established with gifts received in response to the World Trade Center deployment. The Fund is designed to help SDF fill a crucial gap in America’s disaster response system by transforming rescued dogs into rescuers to save lives. Today, all Estate Gifts are designated to this Fund, ensuring that Canine Disaster Search Teams can be recruited and trained at the highest level of deployment readiness for decades to come.

Since we established the Endowment Fund in 2002, more than 230 generous individuals have become SDF “Guardians” by including the Search Dog Foundation in their estate plans.

Our Endowment Guardians are the caretakers of SDF’s future. Through their kindness and generosity, they have made a timeless promise to bring a life-saving resource to America, honor disaster victims, and support the heroic men, women and canines who risk their lives to save others. Thanks to our Guardians, the dedication and hard work of so many will never be forgotten.
Every Estate Donor has the opportunity to become the “Guardian” of an SDF Search Dog and follow the life and career of an extraordinary animal. The relationship that develops between canine and Guardian is a very special expression of the canine-human bond, and gives our Estate Donors a true partnership with a Search Dog and his or her handler.

“We are so glad we placed SDF in our estate plans and became Riley’s Guardian! We wanted to make certain that the desire we share with SDF—to help both people and dogs in need—continues when our time here is done. We believe there is no better organization that brings together the human and canine spirit to serve others. We have seen that spirit firsthand in Eric and Riley. We are thankful for the important work they do and we are confident that as Estate Guardians our legacy will be carried on through the amazing canine-human bond.” — Mary & Jeffrey, Burlingame, CA

“It is such a joy being part of Eric and Ellie’s family—keeping up with their activities and cheering them on! I feel great about my decision to include SDF in my estate plans. I encourage anyone who is contemplating this kind of gift to join me and my fellow Guardians in being Part of the Search.” — Jamie, Prunedale, CA

“We were so happy to meet Doug and Wylie! Doug and his family are incredibly good people, and we are so glad that Wylie is with such a wonderful family. Seeing the dogs and their handlers work was amazing. What they do and the dedication they have for their job is extraordinary. We really enjoyed meeting everyone, and seeing Doug and Wylie was a highlight of our trip to California.” — Beatrice & Gordon, Houston, TX

“I first heard about SDF on September 11, 2001. I was glued to my TV as everyone was on that dreadful day. A banner came across the screen asking for Search Dog support, and I was compelled to learn more. I have been so impressed with this group of dedicated people that I recently decided to direct a sizeable part of my trust to secure the future of this wonderful organization. I chose to become Guardian to Lilly-Belle and her handler, Julie Padelford-Jansen. Julie keeps me updated on their progress, and I definitely feel that I’m Part of the Search.” — Delores, Fallbrook, CA
Many people consider their pets as family, and share a common concern: What will happen to my pets when I am no longer here to take care of them?

To address this concern, and to help put these worries to rest, SDF created the “Pet Promise Program” which guarantees that your pets will receive loving lifetime care by an SDF-selected “Fur-Ever Family” upon your passing. SDF is ready to become part of your legacy, and part of your pet’s extended family. The Pet Promise is offered at two levels:

**The Soul Mate Plan**
The program will cover one pet for donors who have made an irrevocable gift or contingency promise to SDF as part of their Estate plans and whose gift at the time of their passing is at least $100,000.

**The Family Plan**
We cover up to four pets for donors who have made an irrevocable gift or contingency promise to SDF as part of their Estate plans, and whose gift at the time of their passing is $250,000 or more.

“I began supporting SDF’s future by becoming an Estate Donor several years ago. An organization that rescues dogs and trains them to rescue people is a group that I want to make sure is around for decades to come. I also wanted to take advantage of SDF’s Pet Promise. This gives me great peace of mind, knowing my dogs will be lovingly cared for should I precede them out of this life. I have rescued dogs of my own, and they are my ‘children.’ The Foundation knows about each of their special dietary needs and their idiosyncrasies. I know they will always be in good hands and in the loving care of a special SDF family.” – Judy, Ojai, CA

“I wanted to make sure that Wylie wouldn’t be abandoned or taken to a shelter when I’m no longer here to care for him. SDF’s Pet Promise Program ensures that he’ll be placed in a great home where he’ll be well loved, with SDF always there close at hand providing a safety net.” – Janice, Thousand Oaks, CA

“I feel blessed to have the opportunity of being an SDF handler. It’s been an amazing experience! Becoming an Estate Donor is my way of giving back. The Pet Promise Program assures us that SDF will take care of Missy when we’re no longer here.” – Keri & Stuart, McKinney, TX
SDF is building a National Training Center (NTC) for Canine Disaster Search Teams who risk their lives to make sure no one is left behind when disaster strikes. Located on 125 acres of ranch land in Santa Paula, CA (90 minutes north of Los Angeles), it will be the only Center of its kind in the nation, giving dogs and handlers the training they need for the most demanding deployments.

The Center currently features a Transitional Kennel for our canine candidates, agility equipment, direction and control fields, and rubble piles for “paws-on” training. When fully developed, it will also feature a state-of-the-art Canine Pavilion and a Disaster Training Zone with real-life disaster scenarios. Your gift to the SDF Guardian Endowment Fund will help give the nation a resource that it needs... and deserves.

“You have to have a facility that provides the right kinds of props and provides a way of changing those props, to keep producing the different levels of training that the dog and handler need and to keep challenging the dogs. This is absolutely vital to the impact a Canine Disaster Search Team can make in the field.”

- Captain Rick Lee, retired SDF Handler partnered with Ana
“As a former Canine Search Specialist trained by the Search Dog Foundation, I can attest to the importance of a project like this! Having a facility that can replicate those disaster situations and the range of environments that you are going to be in as a handler—it’s worth its weight in gold.”

- Captain Randy Gross, retired SDF Handler partnered with Dusty

“I’m most looking forward to the realistic scenarios the Disaster Training Zone will have to offer. Our Search Dogs know what they’re doing and will search on anything... the DTZ helps the handlers to practice strategizing and thinking tactically before we get called out for the real thing.”

- Captain Dennis Clark, SDF Handler partnered with Rugby

“It would be great to not burn so much time and money on travel and gas, looking for venues that really aren’t set up to handle the type of searching we need. We’re looking for quality training in a location where we can train for days on end without worrying about the site disappearing. We need the ability to change the search sites and props to constantly challenge our canines.”

- Linda Tacconelli, SDF Handler partnered with Joe

“The Search Teams need a home, and SDF – the nation’s leader in the field of Canine Disaster Search – is the right organization to build it.”

- Captain Jim Boggeri, SDF Handler partnered with Nino, Canine Coordinator CA-TF4, SDF Board Vice-Chair

“The convenience and ready access to the NTC, its trainers, support staff and incredible facilities will not only make maintaining Riley at a peak performance level simple, but will also allow me the opportunity to sharpen my skills as a handler and gain new ones.”

- Eric Gray, SDF Handler partnered with Riley
All of our Estate Donors are acknowledged with their own engraved tile in the Scaife Family Foundation Guardian Glade at the National Training Center. The Glade is located in a beautiful, serene corner on the lower tier of the facility. It is dedicated to those who have made the Search Teams part of their personal legacy. It was unveiled on September 11, 2011.

“I found it incredibly moving to visit the NTC and stand before the wall and see my tile there with all of my fellow Estate Donors. Immediately beside the Guardian Wall is the Canine Memorial, which movingly depicts the necessary work that these highly skilled dogs accomplish. As an attorney, I am tuned in to the great sense it makes to support deserving charitable groups. I want to make sure this good work continues.” – Margaret, Venice, CA

“It was so wonderful meeting all of the SDF staff and seeing the National Training Center. Getting to know Wilma and the SDF staff was a real highlight of our trip to Southern California. ‘Thank you’ is insufficient! Actually seeing what SDF does, and the Training Center itself, has inspired me to reach out to even more people about your organization, and affirmed my decision to support such a great cause with my Estate Gift.” – Lorraine, San Francisco, CA
The Search Dog Foundation is the nation’s only nonprofit organization that recruits dogs from shelters and breed rescue groups, gives them professional training, and partners them with firefighters to find people trapped in the wreckage of disasters — all at no cost to their departments or taxpayers. The search starts…with YOU!
Guardians indicated with an asterisk, have taken advantage of SDF’s “Pet Promise,” entrusting the future well-being of their pets to the Search Dog Foundation.

1. *Diane – (Thousand Oaks, CA) – Annie
2. *Edell – (Okeechobee, FL) – Brutus
4. *Jeffrey & Mary – (Nipomo, CA) – Riley
5. *John & Jo (Ojai, CA) – Tank
7. *Mary – (Carmel Valley, CA) – Comet
8. *Peg & Dan Puhl – (Vienna, VA)
9. *Sue – (Pasadena, CA) – Matte
10. *Willma – (Santa Paula, CA)
11. Alexandra & Robert – (Nevada City, CA) – Ripley
12. *Barbara & Michael (Colonial Hills, FL)
13. *Annie – (Houston, TX)
14. *Bill – (South Orange, NJ)
15. *Joyce – (Springfield, MA) – Abigail
16. *Anonymous – (Skokie, IL)
17. *Kari – (Lincoln, CA)
18. *Joan – (Wilbraham, MA)
19. *Anonymous – (Agoura Hills, CA)
20. *Alexandra & Robert – (Nevada City, CA)
21. *Wilma – (Santa Paula, CA)
22. *Sue – (Pasadena, CA)
23. *Peg & Dan Puhl – (Vienna, VA)
26. *Jeffrey & Mary – (Nipomo, CA)
27. *Janice – (Thousand Oaks, CA)
28. *Keri & Stuart – (McKinney, TX)
29. *Jeff – (Stillwater, OK)
30. *Keri & Samantha – (Canyon Lake, TX)
31. *Bryan & Sherry – (Atlanta, GA)
32. *Theodore – (Redondo Beach, CA)
33. *Ben & Sydney – (South San Francisco, CA)
34. *Andrea – (Novato, CA)
35. *Bicky – (Santa Barbara, CA)
36. *Bill & Markay – (Santa Paula, CA)
37. *Al – (Los Angeles, CA)
38. *Alex – (San Diego, CA)
39. *Maggie – (Santa Barbara, CA)
40. *Lindsey – (San Diego, CA)