From message carriers in World War I to explosive device scouts in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts, military working dogs (MWD) have become vital in times of war. It is estimated that military working dogs saved more than 10,000 lives in the Vietnam War alone. Their service often comes with sacrifice—and their sacrifice often overlooked. But now is our opportunity to give back to these noble animals.

OVMA will be taking up a collection of toys, treats, and miscellaneous items needed and will send care packages to American military dog kennels across the globe.

**How can I help?**

Bring items from the list below to the 2014 OVMA Convention at the Renaissance Hotel and Convention Center. We will have a booth set up where donations will be gathered. Once all the donations are accounted for, the OVMA office staff will package and send the items to multiple military dog kennels.

The list below also includes items that would be of benefit to dog handlers.

**Treats:**

- Must be in original packaging (no homemade/separated treats)
- Medium or large plain or assorted Milkbones (the hard treats, not the chewy kind)
- Greenies make treats specific to caring for the joints, teeth, and even allergies. They also make a line called Pill Pockets that can be used to give dogs important medications while away from a vet.
- Treats without artificial preservatives and made from more real ingredients are best.
- LARGE Greenies and Pedigree Dentastix are acceptable
- Peanut butter

Be advised that MWDs have very strict diets. **DO NOT SEND:**

- Rawhide, animal bones, pig ears, antlers, bully sticks, etc
- Beggin’ Strips, jerky, rawhide sticks/twists, chews, Pup-Peroni, Pupcorn, etc
- Canned or dry dog food

**Toys:**

- Must be a very durable, tough brand, such as Kong or Dogzilla
- Do not send stuffed animals or cloth toys
- Do not send anything small enough to be swallowed by a 70+ pound dog
- Do not send blankets, bedding, leashes or collars

**Besides toys and treats, you can send:**

Canine ear cleaner, Canine bath wipes, -Grooming tools (brushes, combs, nail clippers)
Paw pad cream

*Canine shampoo* (mild, not heavily fragranced, oatmeal base, or something for dry/sensitive skin)

**For the handlers:**
You can send general toiletries, over the counter medications (like medication for colds or headaches), games, magazines, snacks, water flavoring packets, books, boot socks, foot powder, hand warmers, Chap Stick/lip balm, cough drops, etc.

**Handlers also appreciate Food.**

Protein bars, granola bars, crackers, tuna/chicken packets, nuts, dried fruit, trail mix, fruit strips, cereal bars, jerky/Slim Jim, sunflower seeds, gum, peanut butter, energy gel/chews, Gatorade powder for water, etc. Something that won't melt, freeze, or go bad quickly, and that does not require preparation (but is still somewhat healthy, so don't send a lot of candy).