

What's Happening



The Bloodhounds are Returning to Garrett County!

The National Police Bloodhound Association (NPBA), will be coming back to Garrett County once again for their spring bloodhound training session. Once each spring and once each winter, the NPBA sponsors a 40-hour training and certification seminar for its membership made up entirely by members of the law enforcement community from all over the United States who use “Bloodhounds” for man-trailing purposes only, in law enforcement both for criminal and humanitarian type deployments.

Lou Battistella, Spring Seminar Coordinator, stated, “Those who have attended in the past, raved about all the about all the training opportunities that Garrett County offered as well as the friendliness of the folks who live here and their great hospitality.”

The NPBA has utilized the Garrett County Areas a spring training location. Base Camp for some 80 participants was previously located at the 4-H Education Center near Bittinger on Rt. 495. “We were a fixture there for some 12 years and then opted to move the location to the Allegany State Park in Salamanca, NY,” explains Battistella. “In 2015, we returned to Garrett County as we have done since, we are back at WISP Resort this year after the hiatus from training due to COVID pandemic restrictions,” he added.



This year, they expect approximately forty handlers with hounds and about ten instructors. The seminar is set for arrival on Saturday, April 24 and will conclude Thursday, April 29.

Classroom and field training will begin Sunday morning, April 25 at 8:00 AM at the Garrett College Continuing Education

Building. Garrett College has arranged for the NPBA – 40-hour Man-Trailing Training and Certification Course to be an approved Licensure & Certification course through the Maryland Higher Education Commission. Garrett College will be issuing 4 Continuing Education Units to those attending this course. Participants will be placed into groups of 8 with two



Above: Trainees at the B&O Railroad Station in Oakland in 2019, Below: the dogs work in a variety of terrains over the five day course. (All photos courtesy the NPBA)



instructors. Instructors will be provided with a list and directions to approved training areas consisting of urban, rural, and forested areas.

Training will be conducted in the town of Oakland, at Broadford Lake Park, at the various state park locations, Garrett College Campus, Grantsville, Accident, Friendsville, the fairgrounds, Garrett College Camps, and at other pre-arranged locations.

The groups will move from area to area throughout the week, in hopes of getting in as many training trails as possible that generally represent all the various scenarios that would be applicable to the utilization of the main-trailing Bloodhound in law enforcement. The Annual Certification is based on an evaluation by a qualified instructor of the Handler and Hound from the demonstration of their ability based on the entire 40 hours.

Organizers want locals to understand that there is training

going on if they see all these dogs running in the streets and woods. “Sometimes people get nervous with this kind of activity,” says Battistella. “The dogs are generally friendly, but we ask that if the dogs are in a harness, to recognize that they are working and to respect that and not interfere. Out of harness, people may approach the handler for a closer look, but as always as with any animals, ask first if they may pat or touch the dog,” he advises. According to Battistella, bloodhounds do not viciously attack the subject they are trailing. To the bloodhound, trailing is fun and the dog’s reaction to a subject once the bloodhound finds them, is to usually do a jump up indication and will give the subject a big sloppy kiss!

This seminar is being co-hosted by Garrett County Sheriff Rob Corley. For more information, contact Battistella at l.battistella@greensburgpa.org