



## Media Alert January 20, 2010

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Photo courtesy of Andrea Booher/FEMA

### “Rescue Dogs on Duty” – A family program

Come share your love on Valentine’s Day with a furry friend at the Tribute Center. On **Sunday, February 14, 2010**, from **2:00pm – 3:00pm**, as a prelude to the Westminster Dog Show, the **Tribute WTC Visitor Center** at **120 Liberty Street** invites families to meet, greet and celebrate some of New York’s working dogs.

After the attacks on the World Trade Center, search and rescue dogs and therapy dogs were both vital components of the recovery story. The Tribute WTC Visitor Center is honored to welcome an NYPD K-9 Unit dog, Mac, and his human partner, Bill Saunier, for a **free, family friendly** public program. Demonstrations of how these dogs do their work will be offered and the handler will share stories of how dogs helped in the World Trade Center search and rescue in the aftermath of the attacks.

Bill is a K-9 trainer in the NYPD K-9 unit who has overseen the training of all of the dogs in the unit and participated in the recovery efforts at the WTC site. Mac was a puppy on September 11, 2001 and was named after a 9/11 victim, NYPD Brian McDonnell. Toward the end of the recovery period, in 2002, Mac’s training was completed and he was brought in to work the site and search for remains. This NYPD K-9 unit is unique in that they engage in both rescue/recovery and on-going police work. Bill and Mac did recovery work at Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita, while others from their FEMA trained unit have gone to Haiti to help in the current rescue efforts.

Meeting the dogs provides parents of young children an opportunity to open a child-friendly discussion about the events of September 11, 2001. Tribute plush rescue dogs will be available to encourage ongoing discussion of 9/11 at home and to celebrate the valuable work that rescue dogs perform every day.

Following the presentation, young visitors are welcome to make a valentine to send to their favorite working dog.

Unfortunately, due to the nature of the K-9 Unit training, service dogs and other pets will not be allowed at the Tribute Center during this presentation.

This event is **free** and **open to the public by reservation only**. To reserve a space, please contact [rsvp@tributewtc.org](mailto:rsvp@tributewtc.org).

#### ***About the Tribute WTC Visitor Center***

*The Tribute WTC Visitor Center is located at 120 Liberty Street along the south side of the World Trade Center site. The center was created by the September 11th Families’ Association to share the personal stories of victims, survivors, rescue and recovery workers, volunteers, and residents of Lower Manhattan. By engaging visitors in the authentic experiences of those most affected by the events of February 26, 1993 and September 11, 2001, the center’s five galleries and its walking tour program convey the courage, loss, heroism, and grief of those who responded to the tragedy.*

*The Tribute WTC Visitor Center is open seven days a week: Mondays, and Wednesdays through Saturdays, from 10AM to 6 PM; Tuesdays from noon until 6 PM; and Sundays from noon to 5 PM. Walking tours around the perimeter of Ground Zero are also conducted daily. For further information please visit our website, [www.tributewtc.org](http://www.tributewtc.org). For school or group reservations of 10 or more people, please contact Tribute Visitor Services at (866) 737-1184.*

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