

TRADING IN ON TRAGEDY FOR FAME

Succumbing to the Lure of Truthiness

I have a story to tell. A story I have not wanted to even whisper about. It has stayed with me for over four years. While Scott Shields—the central character in this sordid tale—has, and continues to, deceive many unsuspecting souls, it shames me to even have to acknowledge that I, too, fell victim. Yet, I am hopeful that its readers will come to see that bigger, far more important matters, are at issue here. Certainly, far bigger than my wounded pride. ~ Rochelle Lesser, September 26, 2006

Setting the Stage

In the past five years, our world has irrevocably changed. It began on September 11, 2001 as we were jolted by a coordinated attack upon our country—carried out by nineteen hijackers who took control of four commercial airliners. Labeled America's bloodiest day and the second Pearl Harbor, we were riveted by the horrific scenes of destruction and grievously saddened by a record 2,967 deaths.

Thursday, September 13, 2001

Today the team from the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation [Sacramento's FEMA Urban Search and Rescue Task Force 7] split into two 31-person teams and started 24-hour operations in the area of Barclay & West Broadway at the World Trade Center Tishman Center. This was the 47-story building which collapsed shortly after the World Trade Center collapsed. The start of operations required transporting the rescue equipment to a forward staging area near the site. The search dogs conducted searches of the building and surrounding buildings. But, sadly, no victims were located. The remainder of the team assisted the Structure Specialist in assessing building stability and locating voids in the collapsed buildings.

The team indicated that the destruction was spread over 100 square blocks from Ground Zero, with debris piled 11-stories high. Due to unstable buildings, there were concerns of being able to gain access.



I truly believe that those unimaginable images from Ground Zero have been indelibly ingrained onto our consciousness. And, clearly, the September 11th attacks are among the most historic events to have occurred thus far in the 21st century with respect to the profound political, psychological, economic, and health effects that followed in our country as well as several other parts of the world. ...

Now, jump ahead with me four years to a time when our senses were again shocked beyond comprehension. On August 29, 2005, Hurricane Katrina touched down along the Central Gulf Coast and caused massive damage along the coastlines of Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. With levees separating Lake Pontchartrain from New Orleans now breached by the surging water, 75 percent of the city of New Orleans became flooded, with some parts of the city under 20 feet of water. The largest civil engineering disaster, as well as one of the deadliest natural disasters in our history, this storm has claimed 1,420 lives, with more than 2,000 people still remaining

unaccounted for. Moreover, the event continues to have major implications for a large segment of the population, as well as for the economy of and politics for the entire country.



Given the name Ringo Star, this unclaimed Golden swam through Katrina and was picked up by Louisiana State University's Veterinarian Center. After being unclaimed for a long period, the dog was sent to Plantation, Florida and was adopted by Deborah R. Dolen in Sarasota. The headsets were because the plane was too loud for his ears.

Before Deborah could retrieve Ringo, Hurricane Wilma hit South Florida leaving most of the Animal Rescues without electricity. Dolphin Aviation pitched in and a pilot named Dan Fleming volunteered to make a one-hour flight to Ft. Lauderdale and pick up Ringo. On the flight, Deborah noticed the whole area of Ft. Lauderdale looked like cornfields that a tornado hit. But, they were not cornfields; they were huge forests of trees. Not to mention trailer parks and homes totally obliterated.

There has been much opportunism associated with the September 11 tragedy. Many people have fraudulently collected benefits through governmental programs to aid both emergency workers and those in NYC who suffered residentially related loss. And, there have been many different selling scams, an estimated \$2.5 million fraudulently taken.

Sadly, we may never be immune from those members of our society who prey on the system or on others when they are at their most vulnerable. We seem to easily fall victim at times of disaster, as such times lead us to think more with our hearts than is probably wise. That is what happened to me after 9-11, and I have been haunted by the consequences ever since.

My Golden Obsession

In those first few weeks, fellow dog lovers and myself were glued to their televisions, hoping against all hopes that we would somehow see life emerge from the huge pile of twisted metal beams and smoking hot debris. Tragically, we never did.

We were all genuinely pained by the emotional suffering, which was so clearly etched on the dusty faces of our noble firefighters and emergency management personnel. And, we were worried about the stress and physical danger that was affecting both our two- and four-legged workers.



Also visually overwhelmed by the crowded collages of posted signs from those searching for their loved ones, I believe we collectively yearned for images and stories that could communicate a sense of resilience and strength of spirit. Simple images of love and devotion and purity of heart. So for many, the dark rimmed brown-eyes and deep soulful expressions of the Golden Retriever workers, in particular, became a much welcomed sight.



Some Golden workers worked tirelessly on the pile beside their beloved human handlers and companions. At the same time, other Golden workers brought cheer to volunteers needing to cope with the stress of helping victims. Receiving the state of New York's highest award from its Governor, Golden Nikie and Frank Shane's K9 Disaster Relief Therapy organization—without a doubt—provided a critical mental health service. Following the dedication ceremonies of the City of New York's respite facility at Ground Zero, the Mayor even had to smile and come over to Nikie. Then, gently petting his soft fur, he readily affirmed what we all feel: "When I see him, I feel better too!"

My Golden family has provided an important lifeline for me, and my spirit continues to be touched by the wonders of the human-canine bond. *Dogs Never Lie About Love: Reflections on the Emotional World of Dogs* author Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson undeniably sheds light on why: "There is some profound essence, something about being a dog, which corresponds to our notion of an inner soul, the core of our being that

makes us most human. In human animals, this core, I am convinced, has to do with our ability to reach out and help a member of another species, to devote our energy to the welfare of that species, even when we do not stand to benefit from the other—in short, to love the other for its own sake. If any species on earth shares this miraculous ability with us it is the dog, for the dog truly loves us sometimes beyond expectation, beyond measure, beyond what we deserve, more, indeed than we love ourselves."

It is this very sentiment—our dogs loving us beyond expectation, and undeniably, beyond what we deserve—that drives my telling of this story.

Honoring our Golden Workers

In watching the Ground Zero news clips of our Golden workers in action, I came to learn of a man named Scott Shields who had gone onto the pile with his dog, Bear. While there were a few photos online, as well as some television footage, I was unable to access any information in order to contact Scott. So, I took to the online dog forums, joining and then posting to various groups on SAR (Search & Rescue) Dogs and Emergency Management. But, absolutely no one had any knowledge about this particular team. Oh, how I wish I had picked up on this, now important, early clue.

I had wanted to expand the pages at my Land of PureGold site so that these special Golden Ground Zero workers would be featured. While I already had pages on many various working dog professions, I had not included a major focus on the field of Urban Search & Rescue. I had not known that when earthquakes, tornadoes or bombs reduced huge office buildings to rubble, it was our Disaster Search Dogs who searched out victims in these collapsed structures. In fact, they are the only ones at this time who are trained to do this work, and they must submit to very difficult testing and national certification standards. At the time of the September 11th Attacks, there were only 48 dog and handler teams trained to an Advanced level and certified as FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] Type 1 Advanced Canine Teams.



But, I learned all of this when I began reading the articles online about these incredibly trained animals. And, so I added a page to my site about our talented Disaster Search Golden Retrievers. Initially, I did not have much information in the form of detailed photos or stories but in the weeks to come I was able to make contact with one such FEMA group and provided a wonderful diary of their work at Ground Zero. And, I was still hoping for more information to come out on Scott and Bear, so that their work could be more greatly detailed.

I think Scott must have been scanning those same working dog forums where I had first posted. What else would account for that initial phone call, which began with "Hello, my name is Captain Scott Shields"? If you remember back to those early days following the attacks, the gratitude toward our public safety workers was quite high given the risks they were taking just to remain on the scene. In this respect, I was no different. Expressing my thanks for his and Bear's contribution, I came to learn much more of their story. Scott very much wanted to be part of my site and provided many photos of himself and Bear, as well as links to articles about his work. He then began calling me daily, sometimes a few times a day, providing me with his continued perspective on the work down at Ground Zero.

Scott was thrilled with my site and the page that was devoted solely to him and Bear. It was bringing him much attention as thousands and thousands of Golden lovers were frequenting these pages in those early days. It was also resulting in many Golden folks contacting me, wanting to know if there was any way they could help Scott and Bear. With Scott's agreement, I put together a raffle to raise funds for him. And, I sold sets of cards created from my own artistic renderings of an old beachfront photograph of Bear (shown here).



What a massive undertaking in both time and money. Yet, it was heartwarming to see how happy Golden folks became when they were able to somehow—through Bear—feel that they were personally helping with the 9-11 tragedy. It almost seemed to function like an emotional salve, applied directly to their hearts.

With the help of close to a hundred Golden lovers, well over a thousand dollars was raised for Scott and Bear. Although there was much happiness all around about the success of these endeavors, I soon began to question Scott's actions as he described his days during the

spring and early summer of 2002.

Closing the Book

According to Dr. Marty Becker, "Our pets lend a touch of grace to our lives. They teach us the real meaning of unconditional love and bring out the kindest and most generous impulses of humanity." Sadly, Bear was unable to bring out the humanity in his beloved human companion Scott. What began as a cherished life on the water for over ten years, ended in pain and disillusionment at the hands of his supposedly loving master.

Scott was never one to take training seriously and Bear's only training came from the oddball methods that Scott personally employed. Although I had attended obedience classes for years and knew far more than Scott about what formal training practices truly entailed, I found myself caught up in his stories despite their merits being rigorously attacked by legitimate Search & Rescue professionals.



I learned that Scott's stories about working down at Ground Zero for six months were just that stories. He was, in actuality, asked to leave the site his second day on the pile. This was due to the fact that he was not a recognized Search & Rescue professional. Yet, he wove tales of his and Bear's exhaustive work and even of their both being injured due to their work there. On an online forum that has attempted to detail the many frauds perpetuated by this man, one of the members offers this telling commentary:

"There's also that little issue of him collecting disability for his 'injuries' from working at Ground Zero. He claims he broke both knees and an ankle. Yet he was clearly physically fine approximately one month later while walking behind Hilary Clinton in NYC at the Columbus Day parade. That's a pretty quick recovery time for such serious injuries!"

It was always an impossible task to get any straight answers from Scott about his situation and what he was doing those many months after the attacks. I continually wondered how he could afford to live in a high rent area of the city despite his not having worked for some time before 9/11 and thereafter. My only experience with the costs of being in NYC honestly shocked me. Forging over \$5 for one of the area's famous 'Black & White' cookies a few years back told me more than I ever wanted to know about general living expenses in the city.

Sadly, I learned that Scott was trying to build onto his 15 minutes of fame, but at the expense of his purportedly beloved Bear. Here was an animal who was quite senior in years at 12 years of age. An animal who had been injured by the dangerous metal debris on the pile. An animal that was used to either spending his summer days indoors in an air-conditioned home or enjoying the cooling breezes off the Connecticut waters on Scott's boat. But, tragically, now Bear was forced to walk the hot asphalt streets of the city day in and day out. Scott and Bear would venture out in the morning and continue until nighttime. Always dressed in his mock rescue outfit, embellished with numerous patches, with Bear sporting a bright orange rescue vest, Scott would seek out the folks who often frequented the area streets.

I was shocked to learn about what Bear was now being asked to endure, despite observers relating their own concerns about this to Scott. However, this fell on deaf ears despite the fact that Bear was reportedly now beginning to show outward signs of physical decline. So, I searched out veterinary health professionals in NYC that could possibly provide services for Bear. How excited I was when I learned of a woman who had a facility within blocks of Scott's city residence, a facility that could provide hydrotherapy sessions for Bear. And, because Bear had been at Ground Zero, he would be given these quite expensive therapy appointments (over \$100 per 30-minute session) at no charge. Excitedly, I relayed the great news to Scott, assuming that he would not delay in setting up appointments for Bear. Knowing how Bear loved the water, I thought this would be just perfect for him.

But, who could have predicted what happened next? Who knew that the reality of who Scott really was would finally hit home? You see, I was later contacted by the hydrotherapist who indicated that Scott had not come in for his scheduled appointments and no matter how often they were rescheduled for him, he just always failed to show. Obviously taking a huge financial loss in keeping these hours open for Scott, she finally had to sever this generous offer.

I contacted Scott who was unable to deny any of this. The man who was so concerned about his wonderful Bear just did not want to take the time away from parading up and down the streets. I guess it just was not that important in the scheme of things. Such blatant disregard and neglect was beyond my comprehension, and I felt humiliated about having presented his story as an honest one. And although I removed every mention of Scott Shields and Bear from my site in the summer of 2002, the stench still remained.

Death Springs Eternal

I continued to be updated about Scott's sordid story, learning that Bear died on September 23, 2002, at almost 13

years of age. The proceedings following his death were filmed, as was his funeral. And, while it is not on film, and certainly only hearsay, I heard that Scott's sister incongruously asked, "What do we do now? He's dead."

In my naiveté I could not even begin to fathom what was to be set in motion. I thought Scott would pocket the memories from his small brush with fame, and go on his way. But, just the opposite occurred. This silly man's claims of having the most celebrated dog were actually being taken seriously. And, it appeared that the prodigious firm of Proskauer Rose LLP was also taken in by this man—despite his repeated evictions, poor business practices & bankruptcy—affording him even more credibility in their formation of his foundation in Bear's memory.

Currently, at the Bear Search and Rescue Foundation website, this address is provided for grant applications: Anthony T. Wladyka III, Esq., Proskauer Rose LLP, 1585 Broadway, Suite 19-62, New, York, NY 10036-8299. I contacted this attorney and he indicated having no relationship with Mr. Shields, his having requested for years that this erroneous information be removed. Specifically, Mr. Wladyka imparted the following: "My wife and I submitted letters of resignation a number of years ago. I have asked Scott a few times over the years to take my name off the website and asked again recently. I forward any Foundation mail I receive to Scott unopened and direct any calls I receive to him as well."

Perpetuating a Myth

Truthiness is a satirical term coined by Stephen Colbert, his intention to convey this message: "'What I say is right, and [nothing] anyone else says could possibly be true.' It is not only that I feel it to be true, but that I feel it to be true. There's not only an emotional quality, but there's a selfish quality." That narcissistic emphasis is also relayed in John C. Bogle's view that truthiness is the "presentation of ideas and numbers that convey neither more nor less than what we wish to believe in our own self-interest, and persuade others to believe too."

CO-AUTHOR SEEKS TO SET RECORD STRAIGHT

Letters to the Editor, August 29, 2006, Packet Online, Princeton, NJ

TO THE EDITOR: There have been many erroneous facts, as well as misleading information printed in news and television articles about Scott Shields and his dog, Bear (TIMEOff, Aug. 25). I hope the following helps both readers and the media who may be interested in gaining greater knowledge of Bear's true story:

1. Scott Shields refers to himself as "captain" because that is what others called him for many years on the waterfront in New York and Connecticut. This does not refer to any military or authoritative rank.
2. Scott has emergency management training, but he and Bear did not have "official" or "professional" search and rescue training.
3. Bear did not accompany Scott to the World Trade Center to do search work. He was there because he was always at Scott's side.
4. Bear is not credited with making any live finds by a dog at the WTC.
5. Bear did not find more victims than any other rescuer or canine. Many official search and rescue canine teams stayed and worked for weeks after Bear left. Presumably, these teams made many sad discoveries.
6. Scott and Bear did not work at the Oklahoma City bombing rescue and recovery mission.
7. Scott and Bear did not respond to the earthquake in Turkey.
8. Theodorable is not Bear's son. At this time, Theodore is not a trained search and rescue dog. Theodore has been made an honorary "mascot" in the Coast Guard Auxiliary. He is not a Coast Guard SAR canine.

Nancy West, Hero Dog Publications, Broadway, Thornwood, N.Y.

The writer is co-author and co-publisher with Scott Shields of "Bear: Heart of a Hero."

I honestly doubt that Scott believes the repeated lies that he has put out in the media. But with the lies firmly entrenched due to poor fact checking, it is confusing for people to truly understand who is right. How could it be possible that a man would receive proclamations and be listed in the legislature's records for his proud deeds, when they never occurred? How could people listen to his repeated assertions of 'Bear found the most, did the most, had the most live finds by a dog', and not believe in his rightful place in history? How could one come away from the nearly 1500 'results' from a Google Search of Bear Search and Rescue Foundation without believing in his credibility?

I guess it is the same way that despite presidential press conferences and several government documents including those from the 9/11 Commission, a recent New York Times/CBS Poll reveals that almost one-third of Americans still believe that Saddam Hussein was personally involved in the 9/11 terror attacks. And, while the White House credits some of the confusion to former CIA Director George Tenet, I guess it makes sense that Bush went on in 2004 to award him the Presidential Medal of Freedom. It must be a function of the medals Scott has received.

But, one only needs to remember what was the ultimate tragedy at Ground Zero . . . , which was this. Despite the many brave firefighters and rescue professionals sadly risking their lives—and as we now learn their health—there were no live finds by a dog. The rescue effort quickly became one of recovery. How that elemental piece of information could be lost is simply beyond comprehension.

During those many months that Scott was seeking publicity so that he could detail the amazing work of his Bear, he came to speak to many groups, including that of our most impressionable youth. Think about the layers of deception in the following statement that he matter-of-factly made (on tape) to a group of boy scouts:

"Bear was the first Search & Rescue Dog inside the WTC. He found the most live people."

Now, let me count the lies—that in 17 seconds and less than 20 words—Scott managed to tell.

- 1.** There is **no factual information to support that Bear was the first dog** inside the World Trade Center. The area involved in the attack was quite extensive and in a state of chaos. There is no way to determine whether dogs entered from another area or when they specifically entered.
- 2.** Bear **never received any formal dog training of any sort**. That is, he attended no obedience, agility, or specific working dog training classes. He never received formal Search and Rescue Dog training, nor is he certified as a Search and Rescue Dog (with a record of scoring on respective examinations, etc.) .
- 3.** Bear **was on the pile for merely two days**. Formal canine teams were on the premises far longer and would be expected to make many finds, albeit not of live persons.
- 4. THERE WERE NO LIVE FINDS MADE BY A DOG.**
- 5.** As there were no live finds made by a dog, how was it possible that Bear went beyond that and found "*the most live people*"?

Katrina: Ripe for the Taking

To visit Scott's Foundation website, and see the accolades and repeated claims of good deeds, you could begin to wonder if he has somehow been wrongly maligned. That confusion is what Scott is hoping for. Yet, do be sure to read the fine print that follows at the home page of his site: "Disclaimer: The Bear Search and Rescue Foundation shall not be liable for any errors in the content of any of the articles displayed on this site."

I believe Scott is always on the lookout for the next big disaster. And, it comes as no surprise that he would try to benefit from the Katrina disaster. This photo



shows the press conference that he called for before even getting to Louisiana. Just look at what Scott claims at his site about his Hurricane Katrina Rescue Efforts:

"The Bear Search & Rescue Foundation deployed 27 teams to Hurricane Katrina (that it had funded or trained in the last four years). These teams averaged 220 human rescues per team along with hundreds of animals. The special boat teams, led by Captain Scott Shields, for the Third Brigade 82nd Airborne (with 45 boats supplied by the Foundation) rescued just under 6000 people with boats and boat crews provided by the Bear Search & Rescue Foundation. In all 11,000 people and hundreds of animals are alive today because of the Foundation."

And, in Sharon Schlegel's September 21, 2005 article at his site, "A witness to Katrina's tragedy," Scott reflected on his search and rescue work: "For the past two weeks, except for a few occasional stolen hours of sleep, Shields worked day and night with marine search and rescue (SAR) teams put together with his help from members of the Army 82nd Airborne Division, steering their boats through the flooded streets of the city. The upshot of their efforts was 847 live rescues, the evacuation of 4,106 people by boat and the saving of dozens of animals that had been lost or abandoned, he reports."

Pretty amazing stuff, don't you think? Try to keep these New Orleans figures in mind: Scott's "two weeks" of rescue work, his foundation providing "847 live rescues" and evacuating "under 6000 people", and that 11,000 people are alive today because of his group. Now, let's talk to some other rescuers who worked the site.

James Kushner and Todd Shea provided assistance in Louisiana for three weeks following the hurricane [see [Back from Louisiana's Front Lines](#) and [Louisiana Animal Control Association](#)]. A former marine, James is a member of Auxiliary Coast Guard Flotilla 5-10 and the Battery Park City Marine Search & Rescue team. Todd has provided Tsunami disaster relief and in Pakistan administered the American hospital that he and James helped to establish in the devastated Kashmir following the earthquake. Todd has been cited twice by the government of Pakistan for his role



JAMES KUSHNER, at left, bandages a New Orleans resident stranded by Hurricane Katrina. Mr. Kushner spent three weeks helping residents of the ravaged city.

in their relief effort.



According to James, an article appeared in The Navigator Online Magazine on November 20, 2005. He felt the US Coast Guard and its Auxiliary were disgraceful for claiming, "that during Hurricane Katrina Mr. Scott Shields worked with the 82nd Airborne to bring 4,106 victims to safety." As James noted, "This is a far cry from the 941 souls officially claimed rescued from flooded areas by the 82nd in their official report on Operation American Assist. Rather than being the savior of New Orleans, Scott was nothing but an impediment to the rescue efforts."

Various folks from the Scott Shields Fraud Forum offered the following remarks: [This forum was created in January 2006 in an attempt to stop Scott from committing further frauds. The site contains records detailing a history of defrauding landlords and small businesses.]

"The dumb part is Scott has NO idea what really went on down there [in Louisiana]. I was there. You did NOT work at night. Waaaay to dangerous. No one was allowed. How do you evacuate 4100 people by boat and then turn it into 11,000?"

"Probably hard to work with your world-famous biography tucked under one arm and your foundation flyers under the other. [In this photo] he really does have the book under his arm while everybody else busts their chops." "In those pictures, if you look, he is in shorts and just shoes ... looks like he is on vacation while everyone else has knee pads on and is working ... and that was just at camp."

"I believe that he went from 22 teams to 27 as is now posted on his website. Scott can't name five teams. His numbers exceed the entire 82nd Airborne's numbers including the Superdome evacuation. So even if he took credit for all of their hard work, his numbers are still an aberration."

"Scott was escorted out of LA and was on the water only ONE DAY. I spoke to the Chief and Superintendent of NOPD. They told me they never heard of Scott and there was NO WAY he rescued 5,000 or 11,000. He was in charge of nothing."

More From James Kushner

Scott Shields was in New Orleans from September 6th to about September 13th. Of the eight days, only about four or five were spent on the water. Scott was not out on the water more than one or two days. Most of his time in New Orleans was spent on the Algiers naval depot, promoting himself as a hero. His role in Katrina was that of seeking accolades at the expense of the rescue teams.



This particular picture was taken in front of the building that housed the Unit that carried out the zodiac boat rescues. The soldiers and Captain Ferris performed their mission admirably. They had no idea who Shields was and posed for the photo with him simply to be affable. The 82nd was used by Shields as he has used everyone who crosses his path—just another photo-op.

'Captain' Shields is not a Captain at all. I have a series of pictures in which Shields is wearing the eagle insignia of an O-6 Naval

Officer, a federal offense. He never spent a day in the military. Neither is Bear the rescue dog, from which his foundation takes its name, the world's most decorated dog—unless you count the decorations that Shields conned gullible organizations into presenting him.

Theodore, as Shields asserted on New Orleans radio, is not a Coast Guard trained SAR canine. Scott's only work in New Orleans consisted of staging publicity photos and posting Bear Foundation signs all over the Algiers naval depot. He stuck his Bear Search and Rescue signs on anything that moved or didn't. They were everywhere. Putting up these signs was part of the round-the-clock work he did in New Orleans.



Theodore NEVER deployed on missions. He spent the entire operation being cared for by veterinarian Jeanine Avelloni and others that Shields recruited to watch him. Jeanine was furious that she could not utilize her much needed skills during those periods. Neither Theodore, nor Bear, were trained SAR dogs. They were just props for Shields' Foundation.



assemble the boats.

Shields defaced these Army boats at Katrina, soldiers needing to scrub them down after he left. The pumps had drained the water levels too low for the zodiac boats to be operational. The operations were planned by the 3rd brigade of the 82nd Airborne with a member of the Zodiac crew piloting each boat. The boats were assembled in the morning by the CERT team from Battery Park City, two Auxiliary Coasties and a girl named Sarah who put a lot of effort into her work. Later, the Zodiac crew instructed the 82nd Airborne to

Scott Shields never lifted a finger during this grunt work. He was usually at the chow area or headquarters, telling lies or "stretchers" as Mark Twain called them, about his and Bear's heroic exploits at the World Trade Center. He was always decked out in some kind of SAR outfit and sometimes sported the insignia of a naval Captain on his cap.

Take a look at the gas bladders from the Zodiac boats. They are from the eight or so Zodiacs that Scott marked with "Bear" in orange paint. These gas bladders are clearly marked "Explosive. Do not leave in heat". Scott left them on the hot tarmac of the Algiers naval depot.



So, I gathered them up and stored them in the garage seen in the picture. And where was Scott? He'd left for New York, and on September 17th, while we were breaking out dogs who were trapped in locked houses, he was on the Intrepid giving an award to Tom

Venezio of the Coast Guard Auxiliary.

When Does it End?

A special Golden friend and retired police chief told me: "The wheels of justice turn slowly, but they do turn. Some day this will be totally brought to light." I would like to think that is true but it does grow harder and harder to believe.

It is disturbing to me that at Scott's Foundation it is noted that "Captain Scott Shields, along with Bear's son, Theodore, are available for public speaking engagements/presentations" on areas such as Emergency Management, the Use of General Aviation Volunteers with Search & Rescue, and a Search & Rescue Overview of the World Trade Center. As early as 2002, Scott began making presentations. How hideous that he was passing himself off such an authority on the Search & Rescue work at the WTC. However, a friend of mine from a well-known Golden Rescue organization had not been duped, relaying the following after learning about this current situation.

Scott asked us if he could speak at our auction in 2002. Something didn't sit well with me when all his publicity came out. I had a friend who is an investigative reporter in NYC and he did some research for me.

The facts didn't add up so we politely declined his offer. That and Scott wanted us to put him up in a five star hotel for three days with a rental car. :-) I never heard anything after that until now. Seems my guy was right! We're all human and we like to see the good in everyone. I'm the worst offender here but I also have learned to trust my inner voice ... when it works!

It is so difficult to see schoolchildren believing Scott's multitude of myths and donating their hard-earned dollars to him. In the May 6, 2006 article, *Boy, 12, Raises Money For 9/11 Rescue Dog Foundation*, we learn that a youngster named J.P. Wilkinson raised \$1,000 for Shields' foundation. And, in the April 20, 2006 article, *It's part of the job for search-and-rescue dog*, we learn that as part a service project, English teacher Marissa Reynolds' team raised more than \$500 over a period of two months for Shields' foundation through a bake sale and an appeal letter sent to students' parents.

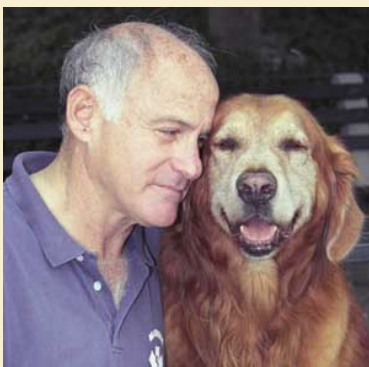
Yet, tellingly, on the sole IRS Form 990 filed for his foundation, only roughly 6% of its donations are going out as grants to Search & Rescue groups. According to Guidestar, a public database for information on non-profit organizations, the Bear Search and Rescue Foundation has submitted only one Form 990 to the IRS for the year 2003. However, this form was not filed until April 2006. And despite there being \$37,210 in donations, only two grants were given, their totaling \$2,812. Subtracting for his stated expenses, an excess of over \$29,000 was left. As one of the fraud forum members noted, the foundation's "mission is to help and equip SAR teams. Six percent seems quite pathetic."

But, the first break in the case might have come with Recchia and Hamilton's September 25, 2006 article in the New York Post. This is the first time, after a wait of too many years, that Scott's questionable ethics and mistruths have been detailed in print.

FRAUD PROBE HOUNDS RESCUER

By Philip Recchia and Brad Hamilton, New York Post

September 25, 2006 — A celebrated Ground Zero volunteer who claims that his dog "made the only live finds" at the site is being investigated over \$16,000 FEMA gave him to live in a Battery Park City high-rise, The Post has learned. Scott Shields, who resided in Greenwich, Conn., in 2001, didn't move downtown until six months after 9/11, and then got evicted from his \$3,182-a-month apartment, records show.



The former dressmaker—who calls himself "captain" yet holds no military or police rank—is also being quizzed by the Parks Department for trying to pass himself off as a Parks officer in Hurricane Katrina's aftermath, the department said. He and his dog Bear didn't find any 9/11 survivors, says the co-author of his memoirs, Nancy West, and primatologist Jane Goodall has asked that her blurb be taken off its future printings.

It's unclear what happened to the \$16,443.50 FEMA gave Shields on Nov. 19, 2002 for "temporary housing" at luxe building 225 Rector Place. According to eviction papers, he was booted from the pad in 2003 because he owed more than \$27,000 in rent. Ann Croke, who manages the building, says Homeland Security investigators interviewed her about the matter about four months ago.

Shields has claimed in various media that Bear made "the only live finds" at Ground Zero. Four months before 9/11, he filed for bankruptcy. Shields' memoirs, "Bear: Heart of a Hero," self-published in 2003, tells how he drove to Ground Zero on 9/11 with his golden retriever, who later died of cancer.

And, it is amazing what this small crack in what has been a closed door all these years can do. Already, Search and Rescue professional, Chris Lyons, has written this letter to The New York Post editor, hoping to spur others to reveal their own tales about their experiences with Scott Shields.

To whom it may Concern:

I'd like to say right off the bat, how happy I am that finally this guy is getting the real media attention he deserves. However, there needs to be more ... A LOT more. Scott Shields is a FRAUD. Plain and Simple. I met Mr. Shields on two separate occasions and have been looking into his background ever since.

The first time I met him, we were on a search for a missing girl. Scott claimed his dog [Theodore] was a "trained search dog". Scott's dog chased butterflies, rolled around on the grass, and tore up a knapsack that he found destroying evidence (Scott had a tug-of-war with a sweatshirt the dog pulled out). We were lucky that it did not belong to the missing girl. The highlight was when Scott's dog attacked and bit (drawing blood) on an NYPD Police Dog. It was then that we were told, that Scott's dog was untrained. Scott stayed out of jail by promising to pay the vet costs. No payment has ever been made (and we have spoken to the officer).

The next time I met Mr. Shields was during a disabled Kayaker event that took place on the Hudson River. Unfortunately, I didn't recognize Scott. It had been a year and a half later. Scott was wearing a badge that stated that he was an EMT. Scott not only put peoples' lives in danger, but almost cost a woman her health by stating that because he was an EMT, he was calling the shots. We were able to call another boat out (against Scott's wishes) and get the woman medical attention. When we returned, I told the guy in charge I wanted the Police there because Scott was no EMT. Then, cell phones and pagers started ringing. The Staten Island Ferry had crashed. I had a motorcycle. I took one passenger and shot over to help. There is NO way anyone beat me there with the amount of traffic that was encountered. If you talk to Scott, he was there rescuing people, another lie.

I worked at the WTC disaster, everyday. I never saw Scott. I was down in New Orleans for Hurricane Katrina, and never saw Scott. I do know he was there. I was approached and told he was escorted off the Iwo Jima. I have also spoken to the Deputy Chief of NOPD and the Superintendent (Commissioner) of the NOPD. I told them of Scott and his supposed 5,000 - 11,000 rescues. They were appalled and said they would like to speak with him next time he is in town. Scott also claims to have deployed 27 Search and Rescue teams. He didn't. An example was NY Search and Rescue. He claimed to have deployed them. I have spoken to them directly (and I can put you in direct contact with the two top people in charge), and they were furious. They even had to put a statement up on their website stating they had not been deployed by any individuals.

On one note about Scott's world famous dog. Scott's dog did not die of WTC injuries. I have spoken with the insurance company that Scott conned out of \$3000 by using the media to get it. They were nice enough to give any dog working 9/11 a blanket insurance policy. Scott used them. What most don't know is Scott also received another \$3000 from the North Shore Animal League. The sad part, he never paid the vet bill and pocketed \$6000.

Please continue following this clown. Do not give up. He is very clever. But, you will find that you will have many people who have realized he is a fake and are willing to help. Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

Chris Lyons

After the New York Post article appeared, I emailed Philip Recchia, one of its authors. The subject of my post to him was this—Great story but there are so many more questions I fear. Here is the full text of my brief note:

I am thrilled that the real story of Scott Shields has finally cracked the media. As there have been so many articles that have put out false information, it has been a long wait for an article to finally get it right. I feel responsible for his having been able to extend his 15 minutes of fame, as he initially gained credibility through my Land of PureGold website. I do hope that this story is merely the beginning. While it does not seem to match the potency of the recent tale of the million-dollar fraud, I think that there is far more to this story that may well document far greater deceit.

Surprisingly, merely an hour later, I received this reply from Philip: "Yes, there IS much more to say about Scott Shields. Not sure when we can get to it, but I hope other media begins picking up on it." Let's all hope they do ...

UPDATE: September 20, 2006

I have received much positive feedback from my brave attempt to set the record straight on a major injustice. It has been eye opening to learn new information about Bear's real beginnings, such as the following:

When Bear was first making news as a rescue dog, my wife and I were did not believe that it could be true. We had known Scott, Bear and Honey for so long. We had never seen any indication that Bear was a SAR dog. He was quite fat, and fairly old. But you see a 9/11 'hero' and you don't want to question it. Who knows . . . maybe Bear and Scott really were a rescue team? Who was I to doubt the story. Hell, he had a book, was in parades, got all kinds of awards. There was even talk of a bronze Bear statue over at the dog park where we hung out. But the facts never added up for me. I only had one piece of the puzzle. This forum allows for all of those puzzle pieces to come together for a clear picture of what has been going on for the last five years.

This photo shows an almost 12-year-old Bear during his time on the pile. It should be noted that dogs of this age would never be allowed into an urban disaster site, given the inherent danger of the situation. Urban Search & Rescue dogs must have specialized agility training and continually train to remain in working shape. They are typically retired as they approach 8 to 9 years of age.

I was particularly moved by a blog comment from "Lt. Dan" left in response to this 'Lying all Along' tale. Lt. Dan has done what is always such a difficult task for me. He has summed up this travesty within three short sentences. This was his entire response:



I am the NYPD K9 Lt (now retired) who asked Scott to leave on the second day. Actually, I did not ask him to leave. But after questioning Scott I realized the dog had no SAR training. The dog was also obviously very old and in poor health so I told Scott I did not want to see him on the pile with the dog. I could not risk rescue workers digging areas based on false indications. During the first few days of the disaster it was very hard to control entry into the site, so I guess Scott got in for a couple of days. The rest is history for those of us who know of Mr. Shields.

I commend you for the courage to write this article. There were so many civilian volunteers with or without dogs who courageously helped us when we needed it. They returned to their homes and lives seeking or receiving no accolades for their service. They are my heroes.

Many people have asked whether Scott is still deceiving the public and they are wondering why he has been allowed to defraud the government. Scott Shields' lies and deception, evidenced from the WTC to Katrina, sadly do continue. He constantly travels the trade show circuit selling his wares of T-Shirts & books, always putting out his huge fireman's boot to solicit cash as well. He also continues to seek out monies from bake sales and such put on by various school groups as he solicits within the public school system as well.

Unfortunately, I am not the person equipped to right any of the wrongs in this situation. Your concern needs to be directed to the various newspapers who have put out erroneous, non fact-checked stories about Scott, and there are several. There are thousands of links when one does a Google search for Scott and Bear. While the New York Post has been the first paper to put out a factually correct article about the man, their article is short and limited in scope. Obviously, the story needs to be picked up by larger papers such as the New York Times, for example. Otherwise, it will be yesterday's news and many folks will continue to be taken in by Scott's smooth talking.

Additionally, law enforcement agencies at the state and federal levels, need to know that the public is truly concerned about this case. While they are investigating Scott, they are also investigating many other cases that are certainly more egregious. Amazingly, the founder of the Scott Shields Fraud Forum has managed to contact every one of the following agencies: NYPD, FDNY, NY's Attorney General's Office Charities Bureau, US Coast Guard, Mercer County NJ Prosecutors office, Ocean County NJ Prosecutors office, and the Department of Homeland Security. But, there has not been much support from the public for more aggressive investigations. I guess if we want to see the wheels of justice turn quicker, we need to contact some papers and agencies as well.

I have received many emails from folks who have interacted with Scott and who have seen his irresponsible actions with regard to trying to pass off his newest dog (Theodore) as a trained SAR dog. Tragically, his poor understanding of basic dog behavior has resulted in this dog biting a woman at a Pet Expo event and his attacking and biting other dogs (both working and non-working). Here is just one of these chilling communications:

I've personally met and talked with Scott and his dog, Theodore, on a few occasions. Unfortunately, during those times, I've witnessed Theo "attach" himself to Scott's leg through an entire demo (Scott couldn't get him to do anything but hump his leg, even as he exited the demo area), listened to a story from Scott during a one-on-one conversation about how Theo had gotten in a fight with another dog and was now required muzzled during outings (after I asked why he was muzzled), and then, shortly after, at another event, watched him climb off the exit ramp of the dock jumping pool (a group I help run was hosting the dock jumping competition and Scott wanted to try getting Theo to go in off the ramp, I allowed him to do so, but Theo had no interest and bolted back out). Upon exiting, Theo got away from Scott and ran the entire length of the pool plus 10-15 ft. (a total of 50-55 ft, as the pool is 40 ft long), and attacked a dog standing there, on leash with its owner, completely unprovoked. Theo charged this dog and went after him, the dog did nothing whatsoever in response, and the owner pulled him away and kicked at Theo to try to get him to stop attacking. Scott rushed over and literally jumped on top of Theo, pinning him to the ground and remaining in that position for about ten minutes after. This from a dog that Scott insisted in our conversation at the previous event had not been the one to start or continue a fight and now had to be muzzled. *Sigh.*

And, here is Scott at his best. After taking all the proceeds from my raffle, I find out he took even more.

Rochelle, I don't know if you recall my story. My three dogs (one a golden) died in our house fire July 2001. I won your raffle (February 2002) that was to raise funds for Scott. I talked to Scott 2 or 3 times after

we gave him a computer. He invited my family to come visit and STAY with him in New York. I had an uneasy feeling talking to him on the phone, why would he invite strangers from Texas to stay with him?! I'm sorry now that we gave him a computer, but I am glad I won all those wonderful things in the raffle!! —
Alice

UPDATE: February 10, 2007

Sadly, it seems that there has been no progress with respect to the investigation referenced in the above New York Post article:

A celebrated Ground Zero volunteer who claims that his dog "made the only live finds" at the site is being investigated over \$16,000 FEMA gave him to live in a Battery Park City high-rise, The Post has learned.

In fact, as you can see in the article below, Scott Shields continues to be carrying on in his same *legend in his own mind* ways.

Former Scout passes on life lessons

By Danny Adler, Bucks County Courier Times, February 10, 2007

If they hadn't known before, members of Boy Scout Troop 19 got a firsthand look at where their training can get them.

At the troop's annual anniversary dinner at Langhorne Presbyterian Church, the Scouts welcomed Princeton resident Capt. Scott Shields, the former director of marine safety for New York City Urban Parks Search and Rescue Team and the president of the Bear Search and Rescue Foundation, which funds the training, equipping and transporting of rescue teams countrywide.

In the past few years, Shields found himself in the middle of two horrific events in American history — he and his now-deceased golden retriever, Bear, led some of the first search teams on Sept. 11, and Shields is credited with coordinating several search and rescue teams in New Orleans in the wake of Hurricane Katrina with Theodore, his new companion.

While Shields was rappelling into a void in the wreckage at ground zero, one thing came to his mind:

"I learned this in the Boy Scouts," he said aloud.

The message wasn't lost on Troop 19's Scouts, who listened intently as Shields told them: "It's things that you can learn here that can change things in the future for everybody."

James Niwinski, an 18-year-old Eagle Scout, said all Scouts could learn the true meaning of courage from Shields' inspiring stories.

"Having a job just like that, and going headfirst into the face of danger, you've got to have courage," he said. "You have to have love, you know. Because you can be as courageous as you want, but unless you actually care, it's empty. ... Those characteristics are something everyone should aspire to."

Michael Niwinski, James' brother and a soon-to-be Eagle Scout, was also touched by Shields' rescue stories.

"It's very inspiring," he said as a crowd of Scouts played with Theodore. "I guess the Scout motto of 'Be prepared' comes to mind. He probably thought he'd never have to go rappelling into the World Trade Center.

Scouts will prepare you for so much in life. You go through the whole experience of it and you'll come out with something. Somewhere in your life, it will help you.”

Tim Kaiser, 14, said Scouts could prepare him for just about anything, as he showed off his numerous merit badges.

Scoutmaster Roger Chatot said Shields' speech embodied much of what the Scouts stand for: skills, personal responsibility and citizenship.

“You think it's always about camping,” Chatot said. “But it's how to step up and be courageous, to make right decisions.”

Danny Adler can be reached at 215-949-4205 or dadler@phillyBurbs.com.

I immediately penned the following letter directly to Mr. Adler, also sending it through the paper's online Letter to the Editor link:

Dear Mr. Adler,

It was quite distressing to see your article today. As a previous teacher and now school psychologist, I find it unconscionable that this man is invited to speak to private children's groups such as the Boy Scouts or within the public school setting (where he has the tenacity to hang a fireman's boot to beg elementary school aged children for cash donations).

Please go to landofpuregold.com/truthiness.htm to read my article about this man and his work. Then, you may understand my reactions. Sadly, it is articles such as these that he uses to solicit more speaking engagements.

Take note of this particular passage from my article that details my horror at seeing a clip of Scott speaking to some Boy Scouts some years back:

And, although due to legal issues I am unable to share some of the actual raw footage of Scott's repeated telling of such falsehoods, please imagine this picture. During those many months that Scott was seeking publicity so that he could detail the amazing work of his Bear, he came to speak to many groups, including that of our most impressionable youth. Think about the layers of deception in the following statement that he matter-of-factly made (on film) to a group of boy scouts: "Bear was the first Search and Rescue Dog inside the World Trade Center. He found the most live people." Now, let me count the many lies, that in less than 20 words, Scott managed to tell.

1. There is no factual information to support that Bear was the first dog inside the World Trade Center.
2. Bear is not a formal Search and Rescue Dog.
3. Bear was on the pile for 2 days. Formal canine teams were on the premises far longer and would be expected to make many finds, albeit not of live persons.
4. There were no live finds by a dog.
5. As there were no live finds by a dog, how was it possible that Bear went beyond that and found "the most live people"?

I also received a copy of an additional, and far more incendiary, letter sent to Mr. Adler by a Div-01 FDNY firefighter:

Dear Mr. Adler,

I am writing to express my disappointment in your recent article entitled Former Scout passes on life lessons. Virtually everything in this article is untrue. Your subject Mr. Shields is in fact a fraud and a criminal, and is using you and your newspaper for publicity.

First and foremost, Mr. Shields is not a Captain of anything. He is not a US Coast Guard licensed Captain and has never attained any military or other civilian rank.

Second, Mr. Shields is not now nor ever was employed by the NYC Department of Parks. He was certainly never the director of Marine Safety. In fact that title or position does not exist. A simple call to their press office at (212) 360-1311 would have revealed this. This is what is called due diligence and good journalism.

Thirdly, Mr. Shields did not lead any search and rescue teams at 9/11, neither himself or his dog Bear had any training in search and rescue. This he even admits in his book.

Fourth, Mr. Shields didn't rappel at the World Trade Center site. This certainly did not happen and this is the first time he has even claimed this. Certainly he would have remembered this when writing his already embellished book. Sadly his account of rappelling is absent, and I strongly suspect that he simply fabricated it to impress the Scouts he was addressing.

I can only imagine what else he told you and the impressionable Scouts. I feel that as a journalist you have a professional responsibility to correct your article or retract it. Not doing so dishonors the memory of the many brave men and women that did in fact act heroically on 9/11. Mr. Shields is not among them. He is simply a con man only interested in himself and exploiting these horrific events for his own personal benefit.

There are many law enforcement agencies interested in Mr. Shields, and I fully intend to make a complaint to your local district attorney's office regarding this fraud. It is in fact a crime to defraud children with lies.

I suggest you use Philip Recchia's recent New York Post article as a starting point for researching who Mr. Shields really is. You can also familiarize yourself with Nancy West's comments on Amazon.com. Nancy West is Mr. Shields coauthor. You can also view the web page at scottshieldsfraud.co.uk if you are still on the fence. Thank you for your time and prompt attention.

I received a copy of another letter sent to Mr. Adler by Lt. Dan, a retired NYPD K9 unit Lieutenant:

Dear Mr. Adler,

I am the retired NYPD K9 unit Lieutenant who was at the World Trade Center from the collapse of the second tower and remained for 9 months until the job was done. A copy of your article was forwarded to me. I wish you reporters would get your facts straight or at least do some investigative research. Now before going into many details, I would just like to ask you this. If Scott responded from Mass, and all the bridges were closed, how was he there first?? I leave you with that discrepancy, and then would ask you to find the K9 teams he led at the WTC. Just run a Google search on Lt Dan Donadio.

Thanks, Dan Donadio

Well, I did just that after receiving this letter. I Googled Dan and here are some snippets from a few of the first articles listed:

September 11 tribute goes to the dogs

The Sunday Herald, August 11, 2002

Both the New York police and fire departments had dogs at the WTC site. The NYPD's are actually ordinary police dogs, which, for the last decade at least, have been cross-trained for search and rescue. They worked the Oklahoma City bombsite and a hurricane in the Dominican Republic three years ago. "Everyone loved to see the dogs," says Lt Dan Donadio, head of the NYPD's canine teams, of their presence at ground zero. "They're like therapy dogs."

Donadio had 25 teams on the site round the clock, scrabbling through the pulverized concrete. Some were still searching as recently as the end of May, when the rescue officially stopped. Over the months, many became severely depressed, because so few people were found alive. "They knew something especially bad had happened. They're tuned-in to us," said Donadio. "They couldn't comprehend it any more than we could."

Westminster to pay tribute to Sept. 11 search and rescue dogs

Associated Press, February 11, 2002

Lt. Daniel Donadio said he was surprised and honored that Westminster called. The head of the NYPD's canine unit, which includes up to 31 German shepherds and three bloodhounds had watched the big show on television a few times but never attended. "When we walk out on that green carpet at the Garden, it'll really be something," he said. "But let's remember, it's all about the dogs. And don't forget, they're still there at ground zero, working every day to recover bodies."



Apollo, among them. He was at the site of the disaster 15 minutes after the World Trade Center towers collapsed and was nearly killed. Apollo became completely engulfed in flames because of falling debris but was lucky having just emerged from a pool of water, he did not catch on fire. "We just brushed the embers off him, and he kept working," Donadio said. Donadio plans to bring a few dogs and their handlers to be honored during the two-day show.

9/11 dogs avoid health problems

By Joan Lowell Smith, For the Star-Ledger, September 17, 2006

It was nine depressing months for us and our dogs," said Lt. Dan Donadio, former commanding officer of the NYPD Canine Unit. Now retired after 21 years with NYPD, Donadio serves as a federal court security officer in Newark but has stayed in close touch with his buddies in the Canine Unit.

"I consider all 34 dogs in our unit were mine. Amazingly, none of them suffered any after-effects other than some shortness of breath at the site. We all did. Sure, some have died from natural causes since then, including my own Kong, but he never showed any ill effects (from 9/11).

"We were all depressed, especially at the 'pit,' where we searched for remains. Because dogs are in tune with

their surroundings, they react, they whine. A dog is going to be depressed. They know when something is bad. I think they handle adversity well because they go home every night with their handlers. That gives stability."

Kong, his German shepherd, died of natural causes in his 10th year.

Lt. Dan Donadio was down at Ground Zero, day and night, for nine long months. Of course, Scott was down at Ground Zero for a little over a day, but amazing how he has spun that into an *epic*. I have learned that the true heroes out there are not easily found. They do not do this job for the fanfare. They do not have media agents working on getting them mentioned in endless news articles. They are not obsessed with gaining notoriety. In fact, they'd rather not be in the spotlight. Rather, they struggle and train and work hard because they can, because they know they can help a fellow human being. These folks are a gifted bunch, and we do depend on their spirit of giving . . . for that time when it may be our lives hanging in the balance.

Rick Slatten, of Duluth, wrote a quite telling post to his search and rescue eGroup about this issue. I'm providing it here as I believe it may help others more readily discern the fiction from the non-fiction with respect to the world of search and rescue. Interestingly, you can check off every point except for #6, for Scott Shields. For #8, I'd add in the dressing up of the dog as well, as Scott has taken that to a new level.

Slatto's Index of Suspicion for Evaluating SAR Canines & Handlers

My unit was called for mutual aid to a nearby jurisdiction over the weekend to look for a missing woodsman. After quietly finding the subject's body, we slipped back to our home turf with little fanfare. What made me chuckle, however, was the glassy-eyed, awestruck look on some of the general staff in the CP at the "track record" of one of the canines present (not ours). I heard someone say, "that dog made 74 finds last year."

So it is, with no small amount of jocularly (keeping in mind that in every bit of humor lies a nugget of truth), I offer to you Slatto's Index of Suspicion for Evaluating SAR Canines & Handlers. The presence of one or more items on the list does NOT necessarily mean the canine team standing before you isn't any good. However, the more items you see, the more you should be suspicious, and the more digging into the team's background you should do. Here we go...

1. INCREDIBLE NUMBERS OF FINDS. If we added up the numbers of finds claimed by all the dog handlers in North America, the sum would be greater than all the people who have gone lost or missing in recorded history. Working a case where the subject was found while the dog was within a five-mile radius does NOT equate to a find for the dog! A good dog may go its entire career with no more than one or two true "finds." Some good dogs NEVER get a true find. If the handler is claiming "hundreds of finds," by the handler himself or the dog, ask for more data. Who? When? Where? How can I contact the responsible agency and confirm this?

2. THEY'RE A LEGEND IN THEIR OWN MIND. "My dog found Jimmy Hoffa, Amelia Earhart, Pocahontas, and the Unknown Soldier." If the only source of information about the team's capability is the team itself, beware. The handler should be able to give you contacts of official agencies with whom they have worked who will vouch for them. If they "promise" results, they're lying. And if they spend more time talking to the media than talking to you or working their dog, fire them and find another team who knows what the primary mission is: Find the subject. Above all other things, the dog and handler have two responsibilities: The dog must detect the scent of the object you seek; and the handler must recognize when

the dog is detecting it. Without those two, the fact that the dog can respond to hand signals, shoot a compass bearing, and make coffee all while humping your leg is irrelevant.

3. THEY CALL YOU FIRST. Cold sales calls from a canine team should be treated with the same suspicion as they would, coming from a telephone solicitor or a man in a plaid sport coat standing on your front porch holding a briefcase. Newly formed teams may need to do some marketing. There is nothing wrong with that, but their style and manner should discretely communicate quiet competence and confidence, not sell used cars.

4. A "SECRET FORMULA" FOR TRAINING. A good handler should be able to explain, clearly and concisely, how they train, how OFTEN they train, why their training works, and how their training is in keeping with recognized best practices. They should also be able to prove that they DO train. If they claim a "secret" or "proprietary" method of training that they are not willing to share, run the other way.

5. A BIG BAG OF REASONS WHY THEIR DOG WON'T PERFORM. A team of four-wheelers on that distant bluff. A nearby team member is smoking a cigarette. There is no distilled water available for their dog to drink. The wind is from the west on a Tuesday. Beyond trying to optimize environmental conditions for their dog, if the handler makes myriad excuses why their dog doesn't seem to know its ass from green paint, that's a red flag.

6. FLAMBOYANT NAMES. The good dogs I have worked with had names like Lacey, Abe, Otter, and Amos. If the dog is named One-Eyed Sally, Three-Day-Drunk, or Slap-My-Ass-and-Call-It-Mayonnaise, your eyebrows should go up. (See Item 8, "Nanook of the North" below.) But then again, "The Legendary Molly" doesn't have quite the same ring to it as "The Legendary No-Neutered Sam," does it?

7. ONE BIG OPERATION MAKES THEM AN EXPERT. There were dozens of dogs in New Orleans and at the World Trade Center. There were also some dogs and handlers who maybe shouldn't have been there. There are also outstanding canine teams who have never been to a search of national prominence. Presence at a national disaster does NOT automatically convey capability through osmosis! If they hang their hat on the fact they were present at the Last Big Thing, find out how they got there, as well as what Little Things they've done that resulted in helping a subject. Then, refer to the other items on this list.

8. "NANOOK OF THE NORTH" APPEARANCE. The best handlers I have worked with were regular people. French Voyageur clothing, swashbuckler hats with pheasant feather plumes, and three feet of facial hair are not necessary to be a good handler (or coveralls and a vest that would look right at home on a Third World Dictator). Any handler is entitled to their own unique personal "pizzazz," but the farther they stray from mainstream, the more you should wonder. Are they a capable team, or are they marketing an image? Are they looking for the subject, or media exposure? Looking like Gandalf from "Lord of the Rings" does not add to the effectiveness of the team.

I believe the web server for this list is located in western Canada. When I test-fired this on my dog handler partners, they figured we should be able to see the glow in the sky from here.

UPDATE: February 11, 2007

This is a copy of another letter that was sent to the scout director and reporter of the article above:

As a rescue person that worked the trade towers and New Orleans, I am deeply saddened that Scott Shields was able to spread his embellishment and perhaps lies to your troop members. Young people do need to

have role models, HOWEVER, I wish you had done some research on Mr. Shields first and had a REAL HERO FROM PA OR FROM FDNY come down. Scott maybe rappelled as a boy scout, however, I find it impossible that he did so at Ground Zero as he didn't exactly have the fitness to rappel, especially if he should wish to ascend. And, he spent a good deal of the time Wednesday at forward triage complaining about a painful leg and just walking around. And, from what I understand, he was escorted from the scene. Scott isn't a HAS BEEN, he is a NEVER BEEN. This I know from firsthand experience as I know him from Ground Zero as well as his procrastinating in deciding whether to go to new Orleans or not. For the sake of the young minds out there, please look to local heroes—as Pennsylvania has plenty—instead of someone who is always blowing his OWN HORN.

Sincerely Thomas Fletcher.

P.S.: Scott's position with NY Parks as a SAR director was nothing more than honorary as he's a good speaker and a good publicist, but knows nothing about actually performing in a disaster. It takes more than a few classes to actually be an expert.

UPDATE: July 15, 2007

9/11 'HERO' CHARGED IN 40G SCAM

By Brad Hamilton and Ginger Otis, New York Post

July 15, 2007 -- A self-proclaimed Ground Zero hero who says he and his golden retriever rescued victims from the World Trade Center rubble has been charged with fraud for allegedly ripping off \$40,000 in federal relief funds.

Scott Shields could face up to 35 years in jail after a Manhattan grand jury indicted him and his sister last month for allegedly swiping rental-assistance money from FEMA and other agencies.

Shields showed up in the days after the attack, accompanied by Bear, his cancer-stricken canine, but the dog was too sick to do any real work, and the two were on hand only for "a couple of days," according to a former NYPD officer.

"There's something wrong with the guy," said Lt. Dan Denadio, who as head of the NYPD's K-9 unit spent nine months at Ground Zero. "I don't know how he got so far."

Shields claims he and Bear "made the only live finds" at the site.

"Nonsense," Denadio said.

After his brief stint on the pile, Shields, who had resided in Greenwich, Conn., moved into an apartment across from the site - a swanky \$3,182-a-month pad on Rector Place - and got one check for \$16,443.50 from FEMA to pay for it, records show.

Shields collected thousands in additional rental assistance, the indictment says.

Part of the July 15, 2007 article above is not quite right. Bear was not cancer-stricken when he initially went onto the pile for two days in September 2001, and thereby "too sick to do any real work". He was untrained and almost 12 years of age. No untrained dog would have been allowed into a situation that required advanced agility skills. And, certainly no working dog in urban search and rescue is on active status at such a

senior age.

This copy of the felony indictment (landofpuregold.com/utoh.pdf) clearly displays the depth of the case that the US has against this brother and sister team. Although my legal knowledge is extremely limited, the three detailed counts of the indictment seem quite extensive and well documented. I can see by looking up the actual violations (through Title 18, Sections 641, 1341, 2) why the punishments are so steep.

Further court documents from Pacer indicate that Scott was arrested on March 20, 2007 and was freed on \$50,000 bail with travel restricted to NY, NJ, PA, CT, NH & VA. Sadly, he is still traveling the circuit of dog, boat & security show events—providing presentations to both children and adults and peddling his *version of the truth*.

The last addition to Scott's case file shows a Memo Endorsement that was reviewed by the court on June 18th, and so entered and approved on July 2, 2007. It seems that bail conditions were modified to include a *mental health assessment and mental health counseling*. The trial is set for November 5, 2007, Federal Judge Robert W. Sweet hearing the case of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA v. SCOTT SHIELDS, and PATRICIA SHIELDS, Defendants.

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UPDATE: July 19, 2007

N.Y. indicts 9/11 responder: W. Windsor man is accused of bilking FEMA out of nearly \$40,000

By Darryl R. Isherwood, New Jersey On-Line, July 19, 2007

A West Windsor man who rose to prominence with stories of his dog's heroic exploits while searching for victims of the World Trade Center collapse has been indicted in New York for allegedly stealing federal Sept. 11 relief money.

Scott Shields, who has claimed that his Golden retriever Bear was responsible for finding the most victims of any search and rescue dog working the World Trade Center debris known as the pile, allegedly bilked the Federal Emergency Management Agency out of some \$38,906 in rental assistance funds, according to the indictment from the U.S. Attorney's Office.

Shields' attorney, Jonathan Marks, said yesterday his client is innocent of the charges, which also include mail fraud. "Scott asserts his innocence and we fully expect we will go to trial and hope we will be vindicated," Marks said.

The charges arose out of a claim Shields filed with FEMA for housing costs he said he accrued while he worked at Ground Zero after the World Trade Center collapse. Shields has said for years that he and Bear were one of the first canine responder teams to reach the pile and that the pair worked for weeks searching for victims.

Marks said FEMA has alleged that Shields lied on his application, saying that he needed housing assistance because of Sept. 11. "Scott received the money, but he did not make any false representations," he said.

If convicted, Shields could face up to 35 years in prison.

Shields could not be reached for comment on the indictment. But Shields has been a controversial figure for years. His exploits became legend as he has toured the Northeast, regaling schoolchildren and other groups with tales of Bear, who died in 2003, and Theodore, who Shields calls Bear's son.

His Web site includes several pictures of him and Bear at Ground Zero and of him and Theodore during the Hurricane Katrina rescue efforts. Shields has parlayed the notoriety into a speaking career and operates a foundation that raises money for search and rescue teams. The foundation has raised more than \$75,000 of which about \$20,000 has been donated to search and rescue groups.

But interviews with several people who know Shields or who have had contact with him in past years paint a different picture than the one he portrays of himself.

According to several people, Shields started out with good intentions and has done some good things, but has become an "opportunist" who has fabricated much of the public portrait of himself and who has taken in dozens of organizations, officials and media outlets, including The Times, which published an interview with him in 2005.

"Most of what this guy says is not true," said Chris Lyons, a search-and-rescue specialist who met Shields while searching for a young girl in 2003. Lyons has devoted a lot of his personal time to debunking what he calls the myth that Shields has created for himself.

Nancy West, who co-authored a book with Shields about his relationship with Bear, detailing the dog's search-and-rescue efforts after Sept. 11, discontinued publishing the book and cut off contact with Shields after questions were raised about some of the information Shields told her.

In an authors' note West published on Amazon.com, West attempts to debunk some of the claims Shields has made, including the assertion that Bear, who Shields said was a trained search-and-rescue dog, found live victims in the World Trade center debris and found the most bodies during the recovery effort.

"Bear did NOT accompany Scott to the WTC to do search work. He was there because he was always at Scott's side," she said in the authors' note.

Retired New York City Police Lt. Dan Donadio, a former K9 officer whose teams led the recovery efforts at Ground Zero, said he encountered Shields during the first hours of the search effort, but soon asked him to take Bear off of the pile of debris. "I made a visible observation of the dog and based on that I told him I didn't want to see him on the pile," said Donadio in an interview yesterday. "(Bear) wasn't a trained rescue dog and we couldn't take a chance on rescuers going on false indications (of victims).

Donadio said he later saw Shields in "the vicinity" of the pile, but said Shields left after only a "few days."

Shields has also claimed that Bear was responsible for finding the most victims of the collapse, a claim that Donadio's account of his encounter with Shields and Bear disputes and which West says is patently false.

His efforts during the Katrina rescue efforts have also been called into question by some.

On his Web site (www.bearsearchandrescue.com), Shields posted a letter that he said is from Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Babineaux Blanco requesting Shields' help with the search-and-rescue efforts after Hurricane Katrina. The letter requests that Shields deploy search-and-rescue teams under his command to southeast Louisiana.

But a spokesman for the governor said yesterday the letter is not official and is on letterhead that does not belong to the governor. "We can comfortably say that the letter was not prepared by us," the spokesman said. Shields did not return phone calls for comment on the allegations of fabrication. According to court records, his trial on the fraud and theft charges is set for Nov. 5.

Staff writer Debra Friedman contributed to this report.

Contact Darryl Isherwood at Disherwood@njtimes.com or (609) 989-5708.

UPDATE: July 20, 2007

West Windsor man charged with 9/11 aid fraud: Self-styled hero is accused of stealing from FEMA

By Katie Wagner, Princeton Packet Staff Writer, July 20, 2007



Scott Shields with his dog, Theodore, in Princeton in 2005.
Staff photo by Mark Czajkowski

Scott Shields, a resident of West Windsor and self-proclaimed 9/11 hero, was indicted in New York this week for allegedly stealing thousands of dollars in Sept. 11 federal relief money.

The same charges have been brought against Patricia Shields, Mr. Shields' sister.

According to the indictment, between November 2000 and early 2002, Mr. Shields and his sister resided at 9 Nedley Lane in Greenwich, Conn. Between those dates, Mr. Shields allegedly told the FEMA National Service Processing Center and the American Red Cross that he been living at two different addresses in New York City that had been damaged during the 9/11 attack and that he needed financial assistance.

The indictment alleges that Mr. Shields received \$32,995.08 in "mortgage and rental assistance" from FEMA and \$10,533.08 from American Red Cross for "two months' rent and reimbursement of storage fees during displacement" as a result of lying about his residency, Social Security number,

jobs and job salaries to FEMA and the American Red Cross.

Mr. Shields is president of a search and rescue foundation with Princeton roots called the Bear Search and Rescue Foundation. The foundation, which formed in 2002, was named after Mr. Shields' deceased golden retriever Bear, who is credited with finding many 9/11 victims, said Mr. Shields, during a 2005 interview published in *The Packet*.

Mr. Shields even wrote a book about Bear and his alleged search-and-rescue experiences at Ground Zero.

The book is called "Bear: Heart of a Hero" and was published by Hero Dog Publications in 2003. Since the book's release, however, its co-author, Nancy West, has denied much of the information contained in the book. In a letter to the editor, published Sept. 9, 2005 in The Packet, Ms. West stated that Mr. Shields and Bear did not have official or professional search and rescue training and that Bear did not make any live finds or even search for victims at the site of the 9/11 attack.

Pictures of Mr. Shields, including ones of him allegedly doing search and rescues with the Army in parts of Louisiana flooded by Hurricane Katrina, and descriptions of Mr. Shield's heroic acts in Louisiana are posted on the foundation's Web site: www.bearsearchandrescue.org.

Mr. Shields could not be reached for comment. However, his attorney, Jonathan Marks, was quoted in a published report on Thursday as saying, "Scott asserts his innocence and we fully expect we will go to trial and hope we will be vindicated." The report further quoted Marks as saying that while Shields received aid money from FEMA, "he did not make any false representations."

West Windsor police Detective Kemp said he has seen Mr. Shields and his "makeshift canine vehicle" on several occasions in West Windsor. He added, the vehicle has flashing lights and markings that make it appear to be imitating a police canine unit vehicle.

Former Westporter Shields Questioned About Post-9/11 Housing Funds

By Frances Moore, Westport News, July 20, 2007

A Former Westporter Scott Shields and his sister, Patricia Shields, have been indicted by a Manhattan grand jury for allegedly stealing close to \$50,000 in federal living-assistance funds from FEMA and the American Red Cross in the wake of 9/11.

According to James McIntyre, a spokesman for FEMA, people living and working in the area of Ground Zero whose property had subsequently been damaged by the events of 9/11, were eligible for hardship funds from the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other organizations, including the American Red Cross.

Official court documents allege that Shields and his sister moved from Greenwich to an apartment at 225 Rector Place, New York, N.Y., across from Ground Zero, after Sept. 11, 2001. By Sept. 18, 2001, Scott Shields had reportedly already registered with the FEMA National Service Processing Center through a hotline telephone. From that time until Oct. 23, 2003, it was reported that he, his sister, or the two of them together, applied for funds in person, over the phone or through various mailings, all in an attempt to get assistance in paying their \$3,128-a-month rent.

During that time, the pair reportedly received approximately \$38,906 from FEMA Mortgage and Rental Assistance "to which they were not entitled, through fraud and deceit," according to the official charges. In July and August 2002, they also received a check in the amount of \$10,533.08 from the American Red Cross.

The two are being charged with conspiracy to embezzle public funds, theft of government funds and mail fraud and could face up to 35 years in jail. Both have pleaded not guilty and will appear in court on Nov. 5.

Scott Shields garnered regional attention after 9/11 when he claimed that he and his dog Bear had more "live finds" at Ground Zero than any other rescue worker -- man or animal. Though the claim has been disputed by many, including representatives from the NYFD, Shields subsequently organized the Bear Search and Rescue Foundation to financially supplement other search and rescue organizations, according to its Web site, www.bearsearchandrescue.org. After Bear's death in 2002, Shields continued visiting other emergency sites with another dog named Theodore.

Back in November 2006, the foundation Web site claimed that "Captain Shields was trained in marine emergency and national disaster management" by a number of organizations, including FEMA and the Red Cross, however those claims have not been confirmed as of press time.

Nancy West, Shields' co-author for the book *Bear: Heart of a Hero* acknowledged, "Scott has emergency training, but he and Bear did not have any 'official' or 'professional' search and rescue training."

Research done by Fairfield Citizen-News reporter Kirk Lang contributed to this story.

UPDATE: March 27, 2008

W. Windsor man pleads guilty in 9/11 relief fund fraud

By Ryan Tracy, The Times, March 27, 2008

Scott Shields, the West Windsor resident made famous by allegedly false stories about searching with his dog for victims of the World Trade Center collapse, has pleaded guilty to defrauding the federal government of Sept. 11 relief funds.

Shields' attorney, Jonathan Marks, confirmed that Shields pleaded guilty Thursday to charges of conspiracy to defraud the United States, theft of government funds, and mail fraud.

The guilty plea, entered at a federal court in New York, was not attached to any deal regarding sentencing, Marks said. Combined, the offenses carry a penalty of up to 35 years in prison.

The federal indictment alleged that Shields falsely told the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross that he lived near the World Trade Center before the Sept. 11 attacks and as a result received \$38,906 in rental assistance funds from FEMA and \$10,553 from the Red Cross.

Shields admitted in court Thursday to misusing those funds, Marks said. Shields "said that he knew that the money he was getting from FEMA was supposed to be used only for back rent, but he used some of it to pay for a new apartment, and he knew that that was wrong," Marks said.

Shields has been featured by several media outlets, including The Times, after claiming to have helped emergency workers find victims in the aftermath of Sept. 11 attacks in 2001 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Critics have accused Shields for misrepresenting himself as a trained search-and-rescue expert and exaggerating his exploits. Shields' website states that a now-dead golden retriever named Bear helped Shields discover the "most victims" at the World Trade Center site.



UPDATE: March 28, 2008

Man admits 9/11 fraud: W. Windsor resident lied about needing FEMA money

Bt Ryan Tracy, Trenton Times, March 28, 2008

Scott Shields, the West Windsor resident now famous for allegedly false claims that his dog Bear helped discover victims of the World Trade Center collapse, has pleaded guilty to defrauding relief agencies of nearly \$50,000 in the aftermath of Sept. 11.

Shields' attorney, Jonathan Marks, confirmed that Shields pleaded guilty yesterday to all counts of a federal indictment alleging he lied about needing housing assistance funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

On his assistance application, Shields claimed he needed the money because of the Sept. 11 terror attack on New York City. Federal officials charged that he was actually living in Connecticut at the time. Shields received money earmarked for those living near Ground Zero -- \$38,906 from FEMA and \$10,553 from the Red Cross -- after he gave false information to the agencies, according to the indictment.

Shields has not been sentenced and the guilty plea, entered at a federal court in New York, was not contingent on any agreement regarding sentencing, Marks said. Combined, the crimes of theft of government funds, mail fraud, and conspiracy to defraud the United States carry a maximum penalty of 35 years in prison.

Shields and his golden retriever became a nationally recognized duo because of Shield's claims that together they found the most victims at Ground Zero. The pair became feature story material for many media outlets, including The Times. However, Retired New York City Police Lt. Dan Donadio, a former K9 officer whose teams led the Ground Zero recovery efforts, has said that during the initial hours of the recovery effort he told Shields to leave the site because Bear was not a trained rescue dog and might mislead emergency workers.

Other critics have accused Shields of misrepresenting his search-and-rescue expertise and exaggerating his exploits. According to the federal indictment, Shields actually lived with his sister in Greenwich, Conn., in 2001 but subsequently paid rent on an apartment in lower Manhattan in 2002.

Yesterday Shields admitted to misusing the FEMA funds to pay for a new apartment, Marks said. According to Marks' account, Shields said in federal court that "he knew that the money he was getting from FEMA was supposed to be used only to pay back rent, but he used some of it to pay for a new apartment, and he knew that that was wrong."

Shields also claimed the Red Cross knew he was falsely giving a Manhattan address when he applied for the assistance, according to Marks. "He said the people at the Red Cross told him that they were going to try to fit him into a program to benefit people who lived below Canal Street (the northern boundary of the area in which residents could qualify for the Red Cross' aid program) even though he told them that he lived in Connecticut," Marks said. Shields did admit, however, that he "signed an application stating falsely that he lived below Canal Street," Marks said. Checks mailed to Shields for the fraudulently obtained Red Cross money were the basis of the mail fraud charge, which alone carries a maximum penalty of 20 years.

Scott Shields pleads guilty in 9/11 rescue fraud case

By Greg Forester, Packet Online Staff Writer, April 1, 2008

Staff Photo by Mark Czajkowski

WEST WINDSOR — A West Windsor man has pleaded guilty to fraud charges for the misuse of Sept. 11-related funds after he made false claims of rescuing victims with his dog Bear from the rubble of the 2001 terrorist attack.

The resident, Scott Shields, pleaded guilty on Thursday to all counts. That guilty plea pertained to the crimes of theft of government funds, mail fraud, and conspiracy to defraud the United States after receiving almost \$50,000 from the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the American Red Cross between November 2000 and early 2002.

Mr. Shields was actually living in Greenwich, Conn., at the time, but he signed assistance papers certifying he was living below Canal Street in Manhattan, and needed federal money due to the Sept. 11 attacks.

Those funds were supposed to be used for assistance for people living in and around Ground Zero, but Mr. Shields instead lied on his application, according to his attorney, Jonathan Marks.



”He admitted he knew that the funds that he was getting from FEMA were to pay for rent only, and he used them to get a new apartment,” said Mr. Marks. Mr. Shields now awaits sentencing in a New York federal court, where he faces a maximum penalty of 35 years in prison.

His initial fame stemmed from his story of searching and locating victims in the debris left over from the collapse of the Twin Towers with his golden retriever Bear. Following the publicity surrounding Mr. Shields, law enforcement officials and other critics eventually countered those claims. Mr. Shields was ordered to leave the disaster site with his untrained dog, they said.

A book about his alleged exploits in lower Manhattan — “Bear: Heart of a Hero” — was also disputed after its release by the book’s co-author, Nancy West, who eventually denied much of the information contained in the book.

Mr. Shields’ attorney maintained that his client had assisted in the rescue efforts, stating there was a video posted online showing rescue workers speaking about the efforts of Mr. Shields and his dog. ”There is certainly evidence that Bear was successful in finding some of the victims, and there is a tape on YouTube,” Mr. Marks said, referring to the Internet video site.

What a grand photo this is. Just goes to show the chutzpah this man truly has. It shows Theo, the dog that Scott has repeatedly lied about, as to his being a descendant of Bear. He has absolutely no training of any kind but Scott dresses him up in a Red Cross Rescue vest and sticks phony patches and badges all over it. And, I just love these comments at the paper's site about Scott's incessant lying . . .

From Jane Doe —

Obviously Mr. Shields is trying to blow a smoke screen over the essence of his fraud which is that he never should have applied for FEMA assistance in the first place. He was living in Connecticut at the time of 911 and had lived in CT for years. He moved frequently due to failure to pay his rents. He had declared bankruptcy shortly before 911 and was evicted from his Connecticut residence and needed housing. He did not move to NYC until March of 2002. After living in Battery Park City in a luxury high-rise and stiffing the landlord he moved to 39th Street where he again stiffed the landlord. As for 911 work, he was kicked off the pile after three days. He then hung around Ground Zero seeking publicity. He sometimes claimed to be writing up "lessons learned". This was a volunteer activity he invented in order to have a reason to hang around Ground Zero getting freebies. Many, many people know about this scam in great detail—mostly because of Mr. Shields own boasting!

Also, in the longer version of the YouTube tape referred to here and that was shown on local television, the firefighter says that the carnage was everywhere under the debris and that he had no idea of how a search and rescue dog works. The firefighters knew where the Chief was located as they knew exactly where the Command Center had been relocated to. Mr. Shields simply followed them to the spot. Mr. Shields should not try to tweak the facts.

From Dave —

FYI: The YouTube Video cited by Mr. Shields' attorney, Jonathan Marks is owned by Mr. David Mintzer (Ideogram Productions) and is part of a larger work. The individuals who obtained and posted this copyrighted work were never given permission to do so (listed on YouTube as Ann Casey and BSRF) by the owner, Mr. Mintzer. YouTube is presently being notified of alleged Federal Copyright Violations for this infringement. Thank you to Mr. Marks for bringing yet another alleged infraction of Mr. Shields to the attention of injured parties and, of course, to the media!

Rochelle Lesser, a Nationally Certified School Psychologist who engages in animal-assisted therapy, is a consultant with Millersville Psychological Services, located in Millersville, Maryland. Professional publications include two monograph articles: Stress and Illness in the Family: A Linear versus Family Life Space Perspective and The Child with Cancer: A Life Space Study of Six Families.

She also published the article, Following the Golden Brick, which appeared in Hoflin's 2003 Golden Retriever Annual, and wrote the foreword to the book, My Rescued Golden: True Stories of Rescued Golden Retrievers and the People Who Love Them.

Her private practice and graduate teaching work, however, have been significantly curtailed due to significant struggles with a mixed connective tissue disease.