

Meet our New COO Blake Myers



Message from the President

Welcome to the Summer of 2016. Our new Canine Training and Veteran Support Center in Dulles is up and running, and our Canine Team and our puppies love training in this new facility. Join us on July 23rd from 1:00 - 3:00 pm for our Grand Opening & Open House that will showcase the Center and the terrific things that happen within it!

Meet Blake Myers, our recently installed COO & Facility Manager, at the Open House and learn more about him in the article below.

In addition to our Assistance Dog in Training (ADIT) program, VMF's Therapy Dog Teams provide invaluable comfort and therapy services during visits to veteran health-care facilities, hospitals, clinics, assisted living facilities and veteran-centric events. Indeed I now have my dog, Beau, in a therapy dog training and certification program and look forward to directly assisting in the canine therapy services provided by VMF.



Ken Dowd and Beau

Ken Dowd
President/CEO
Major General (R)

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VMF Canines Greet Veterans at Dulles Airport

On May 7 and 10, VMF Assistance Dogs in Training (ADITs) and Therapy Dogs Dutch, Eagle, Finn, Josh, Kirby, and Vincent greeted 120 veterans and their caregivers at Dulles Airport. They came from Iowa and Missouri with Honor Flight Tours coming to D.C. to visit

the WWII, Vietnam and Korean War Memorials at the National Mall.

In addition to Honor Flights, VMF ADITs join VMF Therapy Dog teams at locations such as the USO, Vinson Hall military retirement community, medical centers, and veteran support groups. In this way, VMF ADITs not only serve the veteran with whom they are ultimately placed, but also provide canine comfort and therapy services to hundreds of veterans throughout their training.

Therapy Dog teams consist of a volunteer and their personal dog who they trained to be a certified Therapy Dog. Therapy Dog certification must be renewed every year.



[Application to join the VMF Therapy Dog Team](#)

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Meet VMF New COO & Facility Manager Blake Myers

Blake is an Army Veteran, retiring in 1999 upon serving 25 years on active duty as a Field Artillery Officer. Upon his retirement for active military service, Blake embarked on a 15-year, 2nd career as a federal government contractor and small business owner until retiring in December 2014. A life-long dog lover and owner, he has been associated with VMF since its founding, first as a donor and supporter from the business side and more recently as VMF's Volunteer Coordinator.



Blake Myers

Beyond his work with VMF, Blake's passions include history (particularly colonial American and civil war history) and family genealogy. He is a member of the Bull Run Civil War Round Table and its Executive Committee, and is the Round Table's Preservation Chair. He leads tours of civil war sites in the Virginia, Maryland and DC areas, and is actively involved in local preservation efforts.

Blake is a long-time, active volunteer in his Burke Centre community, including serving as the Architectural Review Board Chairman and serving previously as a Board Trustee. As VMF's first COO, our goal is to leverage Blake's organizational skills and business expertise to enhance the growth, effectiveness and efficiency of VMF's operations, programs and services. In addition to being our COO, Blake is also serving as the facility manager for VMF's Canine Training and Veteran Support Center in Dulles.

Blake and his wife Connie live in Burke Virginia - they have extended family throughout Virginia, and in Texas and Colorado Springs. Welcome Blake to our great VMF team!

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Canine Training Facility Grand Opening

Please join us on Saturday, July 23, 2016 as we celebrate the opening of our Canine Training and Veteran Support Center. Come and meet the donors and volunteers who made the Center a reality, meet the VMF dogs and their raisers and trainers, and learn about what goes on in our Center. We look forward to seeing you on the 23rd!



SAVE THE DATE!

VMF CANINE TRAINING
AND VETERAN SUPPORT CENTER

GRAND OPENING & OPEN HOUSE

44225 Mercure Circle, Suite 130
Dulles, VA 20166

JULY 23, 2016 ★ 1:00 – 3:00 PM

PLEASE JOIN VMF IN CELEBRATING THE OPENING!

- ★ Ribbon Cutting ★
- ★ Training & Support Center Tours ★
- ★ Canine Training Demonstration ★
- ★ Meet VMF's Canines ★
- ★ Desserts and Cold Beverages ★

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Veterans Moving Forward is a 501(c)(3) public charity whose mission is to provide service dogs and canine therapy services to veterans with physical and mental health challenges at no cost to the veteran.

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Save the Date: Upcoming Events

From the Frontlines to the Homefront
[Oatlands National Historic Site](#)
Saturday, July 9 from 10 am to 5 pm and
Sunday, July 10 from 11 am to 3 pm



From the Front Lines to the Home Front commemorates our country's war experience with a focus on Loudoun County and Oatlands. The weekend has something for everyone: living history interpreters and WWII re-enactors, military vehicles, activities for children and music. Concessions will be available. \$20 per family. \$10 per individual. **Free to active duty personnel and all veterans.**

Along with other veteran organizations and non-profits, VMF will be present to share information.

Cocktails with Canines
Saturday, November 5, 2016
Crowne Plaza, Tysons Corner McLean
1960 Chain Bridge Rd, McLean

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Did You Miss the Adventure?

Volunteers Lyn Sherlock and Blake Myers manned the VMF information table at Adventure Brewing Company in Stafford VA, Saturday May 14th. Lots of veterans and their families, plenty of good food and a variety of excellent beers, live music all afternoon and evening, and just a wonderful atmosphere! Veteran Justin with Service Dog Buckles, their family and friends were also there, as well as former VMF Assistant Trainer Betsy Abdeen, who was visiting from Washington state.

VMF collected \$126.00 in individual donations during the event, made some potentially excellent contacts and spoke with several veterans interested in service dogs. This is our second event with Adventure Brewing. VMF conducted an outreach and fundraising event at Adventure Brewing in October 2015.

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Adventure Brewing Owners
Tim Bornholtz, Stan
Johnson & John Viarella



Veterans Moving Forward (VMF) is a veteran-centric, non-profit foundation and 501(c)(3) charity dedicated to providing trained service dogs and canine therapy

services to veterans with physical and mental health challenges across the full spectrum of needs. Your **tax-deductible donation** to VMF will help us with this mission.

909 N. Washington Street, Suite 410 ★ Alexandria VA 22314
703.431.2212 / 866.375.1209 ★ www.vetsfwd.org



VMF is proud to have earned the GuideStar Exchange SGold Logo as a symbol of our commitment to transparency and accountability. We encourage you to visit our GuideStar profile.

WATCH OUR DOGS GROW ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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