



## **Seasons Greetings** **Let the Snow Games Begin**



*Roo playing in the snow.*

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## **Cemetery Training for Our New Puppies**

Currently we have three puppies in our group.

Quincy, the youngest, DOB: July 5th, 2021

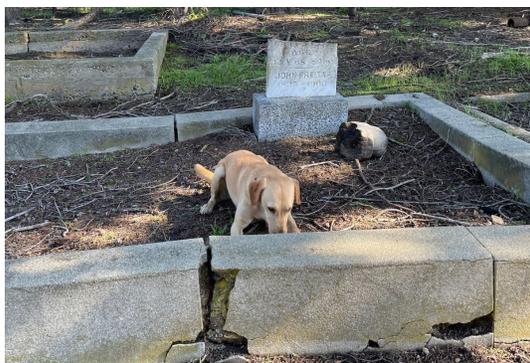
Zia DOB: April 26th, 2021

Clío DOB: November 14th, 2020

After our young dogs learn their target scent, we take them to historic cemeteries where they make the leap from a training set-up into the real world. Here, they have to find the strongest location of scent to alert on. There is nothing visible or touchable. Also these remains have spent the last 100 years "in that spot". Decomposition changes the scent of the soil in the area, and that's not something we can reproduce in a training set-up. Since locating old burials is the main work we do, it's important to introduce historic cemeteries early in our puppies' training.

The first few times a puppy works a cemetery they want to run wild, their brain overwhelmed with so much scent. We have to teach them to work calmly and methodically, so their brain can concentrate on one location at a time. Also, a young dog may try to leave a difficult area and "go shopping" for a source that's easier to pinpoint. They need to learn to persevere, even when the source is hard to find. So much to learn for such tiny dogs!

After a long, dry California summer, we took advantage of the first rains where the scent will be much stronger in the moist soil. Graves with a curb around them helps contain the scent, and helps focus the puppy to alert. We also take advantage of concrete covered graves with large cracks where the scent surfaces in a specific locations. This way we can make sure the puppies are alerting at the strongest scent location.





**Top left:** Clío alerting. Example of a curbed plot.

**Top right:** Quincy, at 4 months of age, understands her target scent is coming from the ground. She is sorting out where the strongest scent is coming from. This was her first week of cemetery training. The scent will get trapped in shallow depressions, stick to porous surfaces and will surface in cracks and rodent holes over the graves.

**Bottom left:** Zia (6 months old) finding cracks where the scent is rising to the surface.

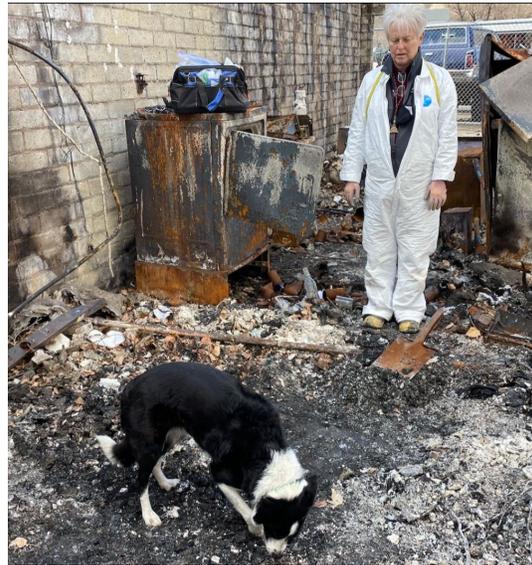
**Bottom right:** Clío and Joseph - This is the second time Clío has ever worked a cemetery. She is alerting at the cracks in the concrete, the location of the strongest scent.



# ALTA HERITAGE FOUNDATION

## Cremaains Recovery 2021

While the fires have raged across the state this season, requests for cremated human remains (cremaains) recovery were unusually low. (Hopefully this means that many folks are evacuating early with their loved one's cremaains.) We had one trip to the Cache Fire in Clearlake CA, where we worked two sites, recovering cremaains at both sites. November 19-21 found our teams in the aftermath of the Dixie fire in Middletown, near Quincy CA, and in Doyle, a tiny town in the eastern Sierras, where we worked with six clients, all with positive results.



**Upper Left:** Jasper and archaeologist Michael Newland.

**Upper Right:** Piper and Lynne

**Lower Left:** Even though the asbestos abatement crew had highly disturbed the area we were able to recover the client's loved one, archaeologists Michael Newland and Alex DeGeorgey.

**Lower Right:** Necessity is the mother of invention. Over the years we have struggled with transferring the remains into plastic bags. Larry, our field coordinator, created and built a funnel specifically for this purpose. (Alex and Lynne)



*Zia alerts on a rock pile. The property owner said it was a child's grave who died in an accident.*

While working the cremains recovery in Indian Valley (just outside of Quincy) the home owner said she had a historic family cemetery on her property. She said ICF had worked it back in 2013 and helped identify the unmarked graves. Karen and Adela both had their puppies with them and took advantage of working the small cemetery.

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We are happy to talk with you about your project and  
how our dogs might help locate human remains or burials.  
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Institute for Canine Forensics  
P.O. Box 620699  
Woodside, CA 94062-0699

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