

## LOCATING THE GRAVE OF JOHN SNYDER

Field Research on a Donner Party Death

Author John Grebenkemper's abiding interest in overland trails and his work with Historic Human Remains Detection dogs intersected as he researched the fatal quarrel between Reed and Snyder. The historical record does not describe the burial site, nor did the surveyors record any grave markers on the map. The early accounts indicate that Snyder's wagon became stuck in the sand while climbing the hill. A trip to Iron Point revealed that the hill has roughly the same steepness and soft sand from its start to the top. However, the trail in the upper portion of the hill narrows as it travels through rocks. A teamster could not have hoped to pass another wagon in that part of the hill. It was logical, therefore, to conclude that Snyder's wagon became stuck on the bottom half of the hill, where Reed and his team attempted to pass. Snyder presumably died in this area. The exhausted emigrants would most likely have carried his body to a nearby area for burial.

[LINK to the entire Snyder Article](#)



Jasper and Piper check hundreds of pieces of metal debris but only one has the scent of human remains.



Kayle alerting along the side of the road.



Our first attempt to get to the Snyder grave location was not successful so we went in another way only to be confronted with a wall of mosquitoes.

## Goose Lake Military Aircraft Crash Project

Lakeview, OR, October 2014

Lake County Oregon was in the midst of one of the worst droughts ever recorded. Goose Lake, which lies across the Oregon-California border, is approximately 26 miles long, 9 miles wide and 27' deep when (rarely) full, was completely dry.

During World War II the airport near Lakeview was used by the military for training pilots. The final approach to the airport was directly over



Piper & Jasper  
Alerting at WWII airplane crash site



Even with the sand storm moving in  
Piper continues to check for human  
remains scent.



Another use for the screen wash.  
Asha gets a bath onsite!

Goose Lake. There were several accidents, resulting in the loss of the pilots' lives. Some remains were recovered, but not all. Because of the ongoing drought, debris from some of the aircraft was exposed and was being looted. This debris has been underwater since the mid-1940s. Research indicated that alkaline conditions will preserve remains.

One of our handlers was raised in Lake County and was asked by the Lake County Sheriff's Office if ICF would be able to search the aircraft debris for evidence of human remains. In October of 2014 Adela Morris and Jasper, Lynne Engelbert and Piper, and ICF's forensic anthropologist, Dr. Lorna Pierce worked the scene.

Battling an alkali dust storm whipping across the lake, the team, including Lake and Modoc Co. sheriff's deputies and other volunteers, began working the debris field which was widespread over the lake bed. The dogs alerted on only one piece of debris ... a starboard wing that would have been closest to the cockpit. Both dogs tried to get "into" the wing but settled for alerting as near as possible to the mud-filled section. It is assumed that there were still some remains imbedded there.

Officially, any remains with military aircraft crashes are designated a "military cemetery" and it becomes a federal crime to disturb them. The scene is now under the protection of the sheriff's offices in Lake County OR and Modoc County CA.

– Lynne Engelbert



Berkeley  
"Sometimes it's a dirty job, but then  
I LOVE MUD!"

*ICF is a non-profit organization in northern California for the advancement of research and education of Forensic Evidence and Human Remains Detection Dog teams.*

*www.HHRDD.org*

*(650) 503-HHRD (-4473)*

---

*Copyright © 2017 Institute for Canine Forensics, All rights reserved.*

**Our mailing address is:  
Institute for Canine Forensics  
P.O. Box 620699  
Woodside, CA 94062-0699**

Want to change how you receive these emails?  
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

