

# Institute for Canine Forensics

est. 1997

Non-invasive Remote Sensing of Human Remains  
Specializing in Historic and Pre-contact Burials



## Memory from 2007

*Pictured above is Eva Cecil and her working partner, Nessie. The goal of this project was to search around the footing of a railroad bridge that needed to be replaced in a known Native village site. (Before the project, Eva and Adela had*

*to take a class to get a certification to work around railroad tracks.) We also ran the dogs on the soil that had been moved in the process to make sure no human remains had been disturbed.*

## Traveling with Our Dogs

We had a saying in search and rescue "getting to the search area is half the battle." Doing historical work is not as bad, but it has challenges. We love having and driving our cars to projects, as they are our mobile offices and hold everything we need. The dogs know their home away from home and its set up with their comfort and safety in mind. But sometimes its more efficient to fly. When we fly we need to bring:

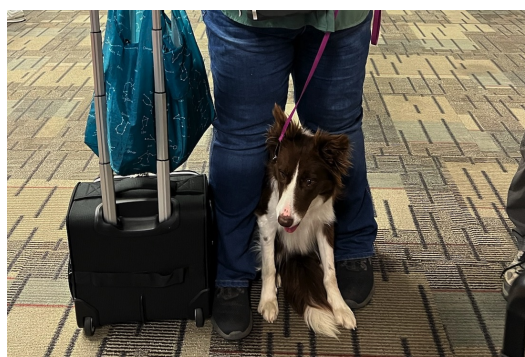
- our personal things
- our and the dogs' search gear
- our dogs' supplies (food, etc.)
- emergency supplies (e.g. human and K9 first aid kits)
- and, or course, our dogs

We do not casually arrive at the airport with our dogs. When we purchase our tickets we notify the airlines we are traveling with a working dog and ensure they are listed on each handler's ticket. We carry several documents, work orders, certification, vaccination / health records, a letter from ICF introducing the certified team, and our dogs' identification cards. Our dogs are in vest with visible logos and badges so they stand out as working dogs, not pets.



*At airport waiting to be picked up. Lynne and Piper, Adela and Zia, Clío.*

It's much easier to go with other team mates to help navigate the airport maze. We can send one person to get food or use the restroom and have another person keep track of luggage and the dogs. Everything must be organized so each handler can carry their own luggage and manage their dog.



*Keeping the dogs out of the foot traffic at the airport. Piper, Clío and Zia*

Our job in the airport (besides getting on the right flight) is to protect our dogs. Airports are stressful enough for humans and even the most experienced and calm dog will feel stress in an airport. Airports contain thousands of stressed out people, constant loud noise, zooming suitcases on wheels, smells, and just general chaos. It's exhausting for both humans and dogs. Our job is to keep a

safe as possible an environment for the dogs. That means many things, making sure they don't get stepped on, tail run over and most important not letting well meaning people get in their space. Even social dogs find it exhausting to have so many people want to touch them. Our dogs are not there for other people's enjoyment. Each individual handler will handle the public differently, we are polite and answer questions but we don't encourage people petting our dogs.

When making arrangements with the airline our dogs are listed under service / search / detection dogs and as such they fly in-cabin. They don't get a seat of their own; they fly at our feet (which can be a challenge on a full flight.)



After we have survived the airport and flight the next challenge is to navigate the rental car and finding the hotel. In some situations we are asking our dogs to work the same day we arrive.



*Zia and Clío in their crates in the rental car.*

We travel with soft sided crates for the vehicle this ensures that the dogs have their own space and also it helps keep the rental car cleaner. Its important that

the dogs feel like they have a safe space to relax, traveling in a unfamiliar car and new locations can be stressful.



*After working hard it's back to the hotel for sleep. Piper and Clío*

For the hotel we carry our own top sheet to cover the bed, once again to help keep the bed clean. It's an interesting dynamic being on the road working with your dog. We find they want to be close to us, even dogs who don't usually sleep with the handler likes to be close to them. Their normal sleep cycle has changed and we are asking them to work long hours. They get into a rhythm of sleeping when they can and working longer hours than usual. We pay attention to the dogs to make sure they are not working too hard and that they get enough break time and sleep. Our older working dogs still want to do it all and never quit. So its the handlers job to read the signs when an older dog needs to take breaks.





*Piper snoozing at break time. (Yes, she sleeps with her tongue out!)*

You can always tell the experienced working dog as they take advantage of any down time and can fall asleep in an instant for a short nap. During a lunch break on a recent project Piper was out like a light for a quick snooze and then back to working. We also find that they need almost twice the amount of food that they regularly get.


Our dogs work hard for us and it's our responsibility to care for them and pay attention to their needs.




~Adela~





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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. Call, email, or check us out on facebook or our website. (You can find past newsletters there, too.)

Please feel free to pass this newsletter along to anyone who might be interested.

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