
LINES FROM LINDA

GREENVILLE KENNEL CLUB HONORS FALLEN HERO

SGT. CONLEY JUMPER OF THE GREENVILLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT K-9 UNIT

BY LINDA AYERS TURNER KNORR



Sgt. Conley Jumper responded to a call to assist fellow deputies attempting to subdue a man during a traffic stop. When a scuffle broke out between the man and the officers, Sgt. Jumper was unable to disengage from the stopped vehicle as the man drove his car into traffic, pinning Sgt. Jumper between the suspect's vehicle and an oncoming 18-wheeler tractor trailer.

Even though he was critically injured, Sgt. Jumper signaled a thumbs-up to his fellow deputies as he was wheeled into the ambulance.

The accident, however, claimed his life. Greenville County Sheriff Hobart Lewis said, "What made Sgt. Jumper unique was his unwavering, loving, and cheerful attitude that couldn't help but rub off on those working alongside him."

The partnership between the Greenville County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit and the Greenville Kennel Club began in 2003.

Sgt. Jumper contacted Blake Roulette, then GKC Club President and a former law enforcement officer himself, to inquire as to whether the club would have an interest in assisting the Sheriff's Department with the purchase of some much-needed training equipment. Sgt. Jumper had the foresight to think outside the box, as the K-9 unit was required to be self-sufficient in raising funds for their equipment for the dogs as well as for ongoing training.



Sheriff Hobart Lewis, Cat Jumper, Jeanette Stribling, Dr. Robert Presley, Kris Harner, Rep. Jason Elliott, Gloria Askins Blake Roulette, and BIS Judge Michael Faulkner, surrounded by Greenville County Sheriff's Department K-9 Unit Officers. *photo courtesy of Bryan McNabb Photography*

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Sergeant Conley Jumper



SC Rep. Jason Elliott, Linda Ayers Turner Knorr, and Greenville County Sheriff Hobart Lewis



Thousands of people attended Sgt. Jumper's funeral service at Greenville's Bon Secours Arena.



Jackie and Stewart Mathis, shown here with Kat Jumper, were instrumental in planning details of the ceremony.

When then GKC President Roulette brought Jumper's request to the GKC membership, the vote was unanimous to join forces. Club members envisioned this as a perfect partnership. Thanks to Sgt. Jumper, the relationship has continued to grow tremendously!

Today, Blake Roulette is joined by AKC Judge Bob Vandiver, also a former Club President and Show Chairman (and just about everything else), as liaisons to the Sheriff's Department. The K-9 officers are included in most every aspect of the club; supporting shows, presenting programs for meetings, participating in club events, and even bringing their wives to participate in the annual Christmas parties. The club responds to their needs, purchasing dogs, equipment, training, etc.

Sgt. Jumper created a match made in Heaven and this year, the club honored him with a very special ceremony, dedicating their shows to him.

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Club Vice President and Show Chair Kris Harner introduced Officer Jumper's family members and dignitaries to the crowd while Judge Michael Faulkner marked his book for Best In Show.
photo courtesy of Bryan McNabb Photography



photo courtesy of Bryan McNabb Photography



South Carolina State Representative Jason Elliott, GKC President Jeanette Stribling, AKC Delegate Gloria Askins, and Greenville County Sheriff Hobart Lewis.



Blake Roulette, Rep. Jason Elliott, Sheriff Hobart Lewis, Cat Jumper with Ansley and Brian Osborne, and Dr. Robert Presley.
photo courtesy of Bryan McNabb Photography



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Hundreds of people poured into Greenville's Bon Secours Arena where Sgt. Jumper's American flag-draped casket arrived on a horse drawn carriage. His K-9, Tango, followed the casket down the aisle of the arena.

South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster presented a folded flag to Jumper's wife of 25 years, Sarah. His daughter, Catherine "Cat" Jumper, sat next to her mother, holding her hand as they later walked behind the casket.

The service was televised and the Greenville News reported: A procession of law enforcement vehicles seven miles long accompanied Jumper's body along Interstate 385 past hundreds of county residents who stood along overpasses or pulled to the side of the interstate to pay their respects. Fire engines hung American flags on overpasses from Greenville through Laurens County where Jumper was buried at the Pomaria Cemetery. (Ray L. Kelly, 37, of Medford, New York, faces a murder charge along with numerous others in the death of Conley Jumper.)

Members of GKC adored Sgt. Jumper and planned to put their hearts into making the July shows special for his family. President Jeanette Stribling and Show Chairman Kris Harner, and Assistant Show Chair Sue Dwelly, had all committees humming! Board member Sharon Smith was busy with former President Bobbie Fairbanks planning the flower arrangements. They incorporated cuttings from the gardens of Bobbie and AKC Delegate Gloria Askins into the arrangements. Sharon's work surpassed that of any dog show I've ever attended, including the most famous, in creating gorgeous flowers for the shows! Refreshments were ordered, including cake and cookies decorated with Sgt. Jumper's badge number, for all exhibitors and guests. And not long before the

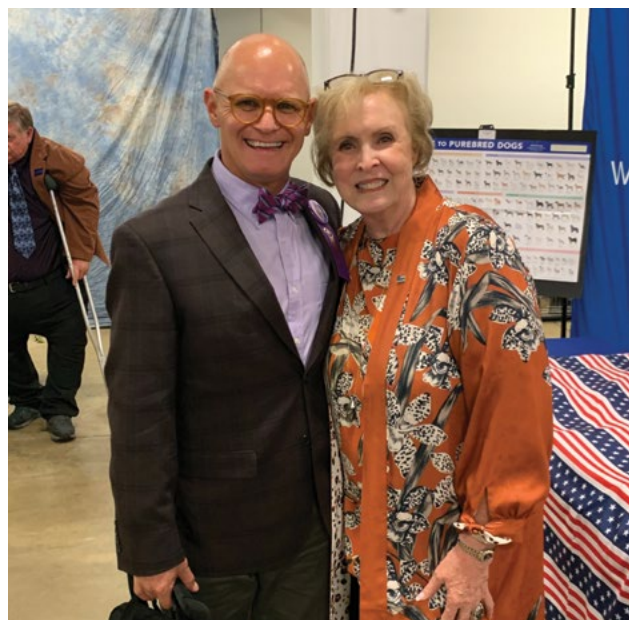
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Board Member Sharon Smith arranged all the flowers for the show. She incorporated cuttings from the gardens of Past President Bobbie Fairbanks and AKC Delegate Gloria Askins, making them even more meaningful.



K-9 officers were among the mourners at the graveside service.



Your Author and BIS Judge Michael Faulkner

event was to take place, Gloria Askins received the news that AKC TV would be filming the Groups and Best in Show on the very day that the Jumper family would be honored in a special ceremony.

As Judge Michael Faulkner paused to make his final decision, marking his judge's book with his choice for Reserve Best in Show and Best in Show, the audience stood at attention as scores of Sgt. Jumper's fellow officers filed into the ring carrying our American flag. They were followed by Cat Jumper, escorted by Brian Osborne, a very special family friend and former K-9 Handler and Supervisor with the GCSO K-9 Team, with his daughter, nine-year-old Ansley Osborne who referred to Conley as "Uncle Jumper," and Dr. Robert Presley, Chief of Staff for Upstate Vet and Veterinarian for the GCSO K-9 team.

Kris Harner was waiting in the ring to introduce GKC Club President Jeanette Stribling, AKC Delegate Gloria Askins, Law Enforcement Liaison Blake Roulette, and very special guests; South Carolina State Representative Jason Elliott, Greenville County Sheriff Hobart Lewis, Handlers from the Greenville County Sheriff's K-9 Unit, and Sgt. Jumper's daughter, Cat Jumper.

Speaking to Cat Jumper, Harner said, *"Your family already knows how special Conley was, but now, you, our community, and dog show fans around the country are hearing how much he impacted our community."*

The Greenville Kennel Club is just a small part of how he impacted this area. He helped our club find an important role in which we could support our community best, through our common interest; dogs. Our purpose is to protect the breeds that were developed over the centuries with a purpose to help people. Jumper used dogs to help perform his job, working with people. It was only fitting that we supported the Greenville County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit.

Since 2004, Sgt. Jumper and the K-9 Handlers and their dogs have attended our shows. Many of our exhibitors here today, and hundreds of dog show patrons, have had an opportunity to meet and chat with Sgt. Jumper and other K-9 Handlers.

We are forever grateful that our paths crossed. On behalf of the Greenville Kennel Club, it is my honor to present to you the Law Enforcement Flag enclosed in this engraved case, dedicating our 2021 shows in honor of Sergeant Conley Jumper's service."

God works in wondrous ways. I truly believe it was His will for the world to be able to share in Sgt. Conley Jumper's story by seeing him remembered and his family honored by the Greenville Kennel Club on AKC TV.

In these turbulent times in our world history, let us remember to pray for those in law enforcement, like Sgt. Conley Jumper, who put their lives on the line every day to protect us and our country.

God bless these courageous men and women, and God Bless America! ■