

## Veterans and Animals

If you want a good friend that will love you unconditionally, will never judge you, and die to protect you, then get a dog. Cats are without exception, another source of unconditional love. Perhaps a little quieter than dogs (sometimes) but none the less, true companions. Over the course of the last 7 years, it's become obvious to me that animals of all kinds return far more love than I could ever give in return. The word animal itself means "Living Soul", and these beautiful beings are examples to all of us of what living in the moment truly means. They don't worry about the past or the future, and they sure as hell don't bitch about how bad they've got or what they don't have.



As we used to say back in "The Land of the Little People" (the Nam), "Feel'in good is good enough!" and when conditions went from bad to worse, we'd say "Ain't nothin but a thing...ain't nothin". Standing out with my cattle friends in the rain or snow, they just "Tuff it out!"... Ain't nothin. That's a good thing to remember when the world turns to shit at times. If it ain't life threatening, then it truly "Ain't nothin".

Having talked to hundreds of Combat Veterans over the years, I find it interesting that we all feel pretty much the same on the subject of Friendship. Animals are about the best examples of such Friendship that I know. It's also interesting to me, how many Combat Vets run animal sanctuaries like I do, or take in numbers of animals that have been abandoned or abused by human assholes.



Guess it's sort of our way of giving back a little life that we all had to take in war. I'm not real sure, but it does feel good to know that because of you, a loving animal has a little longer to live in this world, will get a little love they never had, and a chance to be a real important part of your life. Let's face it, left to itself, the world would be a beautiful place. It's humans that turn it into a shit hole. Just feels good to help old Mother Nature out a bit, by takin good care of some of Her animals.

Animals are even being used in some hospitals to help out patients. My good friend, Billie Russel, a retired Army, Command Sergeant Major, from the 7th Medical Battalion told me a story about one such hospital that brought in a dog. These Combat Troops loved it!

Trouble was, the Soldiers would open up and actually tell the dog all their traumatic experiences, and told the clinicians to "Eat shit and die". Pissed all the shrinks off! But the Troops loved the dog being there and were actually happy, so was the dog.



So if you don't like humans much, like I used to, maybe go and volunteer at an animal shelter or sanctuary, get a dog or two from the local animal control folks, or start up an animal rescue place of your own. Somehow the money always seems to come. That is, when you're workin for others, and not bein a greedy son of a bitch, taking advantage of the weak or disadvantaged.

