



By
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At home, Lily is a goofball.

Tara Prosser's brave, search and rescue dog is actually afraid of the oven! When Tara cleans the oven, Lily hides in the closet until it's done. She doesn't like to play outside when it is raining and she simply hates getting a bath. But she doesn't mind getting wet if it's snowing. Lily enjoys leaping into the air to try to catch the flakes on her tongue. She's a smart girl, and thanks to Tara's expert training, Lily can even poop on command!

But when Lily is on a call, she is a different animal. She doesn't mind getting wet, no matter how hard it's raining, and the silly pup who is scared of the oven braves any dangers that come her way.

Lily eventually developed from a wild, gray pup following her instincts, to a polished professional—a real search and rescue dog.

Through Tara and Jeff's connections with other emergency workers, they were able to find dog owners in town who were interested in search and rescue (SAR) training. Tara's neighbors in Joplin could see the need for a rescue team in their rural community. Tara gathered a group of 10 handlers and 12 dogs to create Joplin's PAWS K-9 Search and Rescue team, a hodgepodge group of dogs consisting of an Irish Setter, a Doberman, a few German Shepherds and Labrador Retrievers and even a Jack Russell terrier, with Lily and Tara at the helm.

The team's trainers are an eclectic mix, including an emergency response (ER) worker, a UPS driver, a college student, a stay-at-home dad and a mail carrier. The PAWS K-9 Search and Rescue team travels together to training classes and

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demonstrations. They also host events to teach kids and community members about search and rescue work.

Lily's first successful rescue happened late one night when an elderly woman with Alzheimer's wandered from home.



The police combed the dark woods for hours before calling Tara and Lily. Tara used the woman's pillowcase to give Lily her scent, and off she bounded into the darkness, sniffing for a clue. Searching through the chilly night, Tara, almost ready to give up, gave the woman one last call.

"Barbara!"

The name echoed into the forest.

Tara and Lily heard a whimper, a squeak, really, but it was enough. Lily leapt into the thorny overgrowth of blackberry bushes, while Tara trudged behind, trying to break her way through, attempting to save her skin from the snagging thorns of each vine. She found Lily on the other side of the brambles, pointing like a bird dog beside the elderly woman.

But Lily's job isn't just to find people who are alive. Sometimes she searches for people who have died, solving mysteries and providing closure for families who are missing loved ones.

It is Lily's sensitive nose that gives her this superpower. Lily is not only able to sniff out missing persons in the deep, dark woods, she can also smell through water! For example, if some unlucky person dropped a cheeseburger to the bottom of a lake, Lily, floating in a boat with her trainer, Tara, could smell that cheeseburger, and then indicate to Tara exactly where it was sitting beneath the waves. Just as impressive, if that same unlucky person buried the cheeseburger and a tree grew over the place where it sat underground, Lily could smell the burger in the wood and the leaves of the tree that grew there!

While humans have a mere five million olfactory receptors, a Weimeranar has 220 million in its nose! In her work as a SAR dog, Lily uses every last one of hers.

Dig A Little Deeper!



In this chapter, we learned about the amazing sense of smell that dogs possess. Visit Purina's website at purinaproclub.com/sportingdog/SportingLibrary/tracking-a-dogs-keen-sense-of-smell, and learn more about the canine olfactory system. Create a wiki that explains at least five key facts about the sense of smell.

In the News: Lily is part of a team for search and rescue. She works with other first responders, such as police officers, firefighters, and EMTs. Locate a news story about a person in one of these professions. Read the story and find the author's claim, then list the specific evidence the author used to support the claim.

CCSS: R.CCR.1, R.CCR.2, R.CCR.3, R.CCR.4, R.CCR.5, R.CCR.7, W.CCR.4, SL.CCR.3, L.CCR.4