

Two new K9 graduates

Two new K9 graduates from the Bristol County Sheriff's Department could soon have protective vests, thanks to the fundraising efforts of a local business and a nonprofit organization.

Vested Interest in K9s Inc., is an East Taunton, all volunteer 501c(3) non-profit organization that raises money to buy bullet and stab protective vests for police dogs throughout the United States, has partnered with Dartmouth Dental's two locations in New Bedford and Dartmouth.

Dartmouth Dental, with hours from 8am until 8pm, has been raising funds for K9 protective vest through its "Helping Paws for Canine's drive." Patients and the general public can purchase dog paws, which are posted on the offices' walls. All proceeds going towards purchasing a ballistic vest which costs \$1006 each. The event will be held through Valentine's Day in hopes of collecting enough funds to outfit the two newest K9s who graduated from the K9 Academy in December of 2011 with the protective vests.

It is the third consecutive year that the dental offices have participated in the drive, said Jane Askew of Dartmouth Dental.

"We had a mini-competition within the offices last year. Each office was able to outfit a dog apiece," Askew said, adding that Dartmouth Dental previously raised money to purchase a vest for a Bristol County Sheriff's K9 named Sony.

"We've had fantastic support from our patients, staff, and doctors," she said.

"We'll be doing this through Valentine's Day. If by then we don't raise enough for both vests, the offices will kick in the rest to make sure that both law enforcement dogs will be vested."

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. outfitted 64 working police dogs with bullet and stab protective vests in 2011. President, Sandy Marcal states that networking with the communities and local businesses has been one of the keys to the organization's success. "In addition to hosting our own events, folks have generously donated their time and held independent fund raisers on our behalf to benefit the working dogs" she commented. The goal for 2012 is to provide vests for all the law enforcement dogs on the waiting list.

For more information about Vest-



Officer Brennan Bulgan of the Bristol County Sheriff's office and his K9 Axel.



Officer Gene Robinson of the Bristol County Sheriff's office and his K9 Billy.

ed Interest in K9s, Inc. call (508) 824-6978 or visit www.vik9s.org.

Lieutenant Jeffrey Williams and Sergeant Paul Douglas of the Bristol County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit greatly appreciate the continued efforts of Sandy Marcal of Vested Interest in K9's, Inc. and Dartmouth Dental in vesting the K9s who are protecting

and serving the citizens of Bristol County. It is extremely important that the K9s are protected during the performance of their duties just as the Officers who are handling them are. At times the K9s are faced with violent situations and being protected is imperative.

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