

Our Hometown Hero

By Nicole | August 11th, 2011 | [Dog](http://vpihamboneaward.com/category/dog/) (<http://vpihamboneaward.com/category/dog/>), [Hambone Nation Blog](http://vpihamboneaward.com/category/unusual-pet-mishaps/) (<http://vpihamboneaward.com/category/unusual-pet-mishaps/>)

Aug
11

It's not uncommon to see dogs around the VPI (<http://www.petinsurance.com/jv.aspx?extcmp=smd-ebiz-PR0001-hambone>) office, but today's visit from a Belgian Malinois was a very special one. Tarzan and his handler, Officer Donny Lee, are members of the police department in Brea, Calif., where our company is headquartered. While all pets are near and dear to our hearts, we have incredible respect for those that risk their lives every day to keep us safe. It is with this in mind that our Employee Contribution Committee elected to donate a bullet and stab proof vest to our local [K-9 hero](http://www.ci.brea.ca.us/article.cfm?id=1256) (<http://www.ci.brea.ca.us/article.cfm?id=1256>), Tarzan.



According to Officer Lee, Tarzan was born in Holland and bred to partake in a national competition as a protection dog. After a very elaborate training program, Tarzan received his KNPV certification and was sent to the United States to continue training for drug detection and police canine patrol functions. The courageous canine works four 10-hour shifts each week and is often needed to search for armed suspects or illegal narcotics.



"Tarzan and I are subject to being called out for any incident where our skills and training can be useful," said Officer Lee. "Often times, those incidents are considered high-risk and can include joining the SWAT team in tactical situations. Tarzan is often the first officer to enter a dangerous situation and the vest will provide him with a level of protection that will help ensure his safety and well-being."

Our donation was made possible through an organization called Vested Interest in K-9s, Inc., a nonprofit dedicated to providing protective vests for police dogs across the nation. According to its website, most law enforcement agencies do not have the funding required to provide safety vests for their [K-9 officers](http://www.petinsurance.com/healthzone/pet-articles/pet-owner-topics/Police-Dogs.aspx?extcmp=smd-ebiz-PR0001-hambone) (<http://www.petinsurance.com/healthzone/pet-articles/pet-owner-topics/Police-Dogs.aspx?extcmp=smd-ebiz-PR0001-hambone>). Here at VPI, we know just how much trouble dogs can get into when they aren't fighting crime or saving lives, which is why we feel it's important to provide whatever protection we can - be it a bullet proof vest to our hometown hero or pet insurance for the brave [search and rescue dogs](http://vpihamboneaward.com/riley-and-bailey-%e2%80%93-two-911-hero-dogs/) (<http://vpihamboneaward.com/riley-and-bailey-%e2%80%93-two-911-hero-dogs/>) that served our country in the wake of a national tragedy.

As a thank you for the service provided by these courageous pets and their owners, we offer a 5 percent discount to military, police, firefighters and other sworn officers, and we're very proud to call 170 police department dogs nationwide members of the VPI family.

[← Onyx and the Backyard Bear](http://vpihamboneaward.com/onyx-and-the-backyard-bear-2/) (<http://vpihamboneaward.com/onyx-and-the-backyard-bear-2/>)

[Trouble is Spelled: R-O-S-I-E](http://vpihamboneaward.com/trouble-is-spelled-r-o-s-i-e/) → (<http://vpihamboneaward.com/trouble-is-spelled-r-o-s-i-e/>)

[tella Friend](http://tella friend.socialtwist.com:80) (<http://tella friend.socialtwist.com:80>)

Ω



Shirley F.
Hutton

August 12, 2011

3:04 am

Can you please send me more information about these vests and the company that makes them. Also, are these able to keep from slowing the Canine Officer down? Someone told me this is why they have not been used more, in the past. Thanks so much!
Shirley Hutton



Ruthie Player
August 12, 2011
3:12 am

We have a group here in Lexington County South Carolina called Heroes Vest Fund Inc. that raises funds to supply any K-9 Officer in the state of South Carolina with the protective vest that it needs. I think it is a wonderful thing to really get the public involved where they can see the importance of the vest and also can come to different events to see the K-9 Officer and the Handler receive the vest :0-)



Wonderful
Tony Drude
August 19, 2011
4:13 am



Nicole
<http://petinsurance.com>
August 12, 2011
3:32 pm

Thanks for your interest, Shirley! That is a great question and one our VPI'ers also had during the officers' visit. Officer Lee informed us that the vests are very lightweight but also that he takes extra precaution with Tarzan in the heat. You can learn more about the vests from the Vested Interest in K-9s, Inc. website:
<http://www.vik9s.org/vests-2/new-vest-page>
<http://www.vik9s.org/vests-2/new-vest-page>
