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NEWS RELEASE

METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Service, Integrity, Leadership, and Fair Treatment to All

May 26, 2011

Two Canines and their Officer Partners Graduate from “Canine School”

The Metropolitan Police Department, City of St. Louis (“the department”) will host a graduation ceremony on Friday, May 27 at 10:00 a.m. in honor of two police officers and their canine partners who successfully completed the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Canine School. The ceremony will take place at the department’s headquarters at 1200 Clark Avenue.

The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Canine School, run by the department, is located in north St. Louis County. In addition to the department’s canines and their officer partners, the school is open to officers throughout the metropolitan area. Each canine is trained alongside his or her officer partner for 14 weeks and receives instruction in obedience, aggression, searching and at least one specialty such as explosives or narcotics. It is only after this training is complete that the canine is “ready for duty.”

Officer Vince Kleinigger is a 15 year veteran of the department and he and his new canine partner Lacy will be assigned to work on the Metrolink. Lacy, who is specially trained in explosives, has the distinction of being the only Labrador and the only female canine in the department’s unit. The second officer and canine who will graduate tomorrow are from the O’Fallon, Missouri Police Department.

Officers and their canine partners develop special bonds as each canine also lives with his or her Officer partner. Canines travel in specially equipped patrol vehicles with sophisticated temperature controls. The vehicles are also equipped with a special “bail out button” that allows the dogs to be released if his or her officer partner is under attack. The department currently has 11 canines that assist officers with suspect tracking, explosives, narcotics searches and other tasks, helping to solve and prevent crimes. The department’s canine unit, formed in 1958, is one of the oldest and most well-respected canine units in the country.

WHO: Metropolitan Police Department’s Canine School
WHAT: Graduation of 2 Officers and their Canine Partners
WHEN: Friday, May 27 at 10 a.m.
WHERE: Police Headquarters, 1200 Clark Avenue, Sixth Floor

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