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**“Protecting Those
Who Protect Us”**

*Your donations provide
BULLET AND STAB PROOF VESTS
for Wisconsin Police Dogs*

News Release

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AT&T Wisconsin Pioneers Donate Protective Vests for Two Madison K9 Police Dogs

Donations Part of Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog's Mission to Provide Protective Vests for All Canine Officers Across State

MADISON, Wednesday, July 10, 2013 — The AT&T Wisconsin Pioneers H.W. Schroeder Life Member Club today donated bullet proof and stab proof protective vests to two police dogs in the Madison Police Department's K9 unit as part of the Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog project. Receiving the vests were Officer Rose Mansavage and her K9 partner Officer Falko, and Officer Henry Wilson and his K9 partner Officer Boris.

“Police dogs provide a great service to our communities, from apprehending dangerous criminals to locating evidence to helping remove illegal drugs and weapons from our neighborhoods,” said Pam Clapper, President of the AT&T Wisconsin Pioneers. “The least we can do is make sure they have the protective vests that can save their lives in the line of duty. We are very proud today to donate vests for two Madison K9 officers.”

The goal of Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog is to provide a bullet proof and stab proof vest for every police dog in Wisconsin. Ninety-five percent of all law enforcement agencies and police departments do not have the funds necessary to purchase body armor that can save the lives of their police dogs.

Through donations, Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog has helped provide protective vests for 229 K9 police dogs across the state since 2005. In February 2012, Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog met its goal of vesting every police dog in the state, but the need continues as vests wear out and new dogs are added to K9 units.

“Every day, police dogs carry out their dangerous work to keep us safe, and they deserve the same level of protection as their human partners,” said Donna Morgan, President and Founder of Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog. “Thanks to donations from generous community partners like the AT&T Pioneers, we have been able to vest nearly every dog in Wisconsin, but there are more still out there in need.”

Currently, there are four police dogs in Dane County and 13 police dogs statewide that are still in need of protective vests. Each vest costs between \$840 and \$1,200.

Individuals interested in donating can do so online by visiting <http://www.wivestadog.org/help.asp>, or by mailing donations to Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog at 4459 Rockingham Drive, Janesville, WI 53546.

"Police K9s protect officers and citizens. They are talented and brave...yet innocent," said MPD K9 Sergeant Chris Boyd. "They need the same protection provided to police officers. The bullet proof vests provided by AT&T are greatly appreciated and will be used whenever K9s Falko and Boris are put in harms way".

K9 Officers Falko and Boris are part of eight dogs in the Madison Police Department's K9 unit. All of the dogs are dual-purpose dogs, trained in both narcotics detection and patrol work like building searches and tracking. All of the costs of the patrol K9 teams (except for officer salaries) are provided by community donations. A nonprofit organization – Capital K9's – staffed by community volunteers raises funds to support the unit. To find out more information about Capital K9's, please visit www.capitalk9s.org.

"K9 units are an important part of police work and crime prevention, and these brave police dogs should have the protective vests they need to save their lives," said State Rep. Dianne Hesselbein (D-Middleton). "Thanks to the generosity of community partners and organizations like Wisconsin Vest-a-Dog, police departments are able to provide much-needed body armor for their canine officers."

The H.W. Schroeder Life Member Club of the AT&T Pioneers is a local organization of employees and retirees who volunteer their time to various community causes. Last year, the Club also donated funds to provide a vest for Town of Madison Police Officer Tony Pucillo and his K9 partner Officer Brando.

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