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For Immediate Release
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Carlsbad Police Department's K-9 Program Back in Business

The Carlsbad Police Department's K-9's unit will be back in business for the first time in nearly a decade, thanks to the initiative of the C.O.P.S. organization, the Anti-Drug/Gang Coalition and Police Chief Kent Waller.

"The renewal of the K-9 program is an important part of our commitment to keeping our community safe," said Carlsbad Mayor Dale Janway. "The effort by the Carlsbad Police Department and Ruidoso Malinois is very much appreciated."

According to Police Captain Jonathan Moyers, the handlers, Officers Rory Preece and Norman Bowie, are in the process of completing an 8-week training program with the two newest members of the Carlsbad Police Department, canines Alf and Aris. Preece and Bowie were selected to become the department's K-9 handlers after interviewing with Chief Waller.

"This K-9 unit will be a great addition to the Carlsbad Police Department and the citizens of Carlsbad," Waller said. "Special thanks to our Citizens Offering Police Support (C.O.P.S.) members, especially Shawn Mitchell and Paul Trone, and to the Carlsbad Community Anti-Drug/Gang Coalition, especially Chair Dick Doss and Executive Director Joana Wells, as well as to other citizens who supported this program. These very generous groups provided donations that paid for the dogs, the training and all of the equipment."

These handlers and other officers are training with Irene Howcroft, of Ruidoso Malinois, an organization specializing in the breeding and training of Belgian Malinois. This breed of dogs are directly imported from Europe, and are a popular choice for K-9 units. The Carlsbad Police Department held a public demonstration on the 4th of July at the beach, showing the community the training and capabilities of the new K-9 units. While members of the public were allowed to visit with the dogs, Captain Moyers stressed that the Alf and Aris have a job to do.

"These dogs are not toys" Moyers emphasized, but added that Howcroft's training style does mean the dogs are considerably more public-friendly than many K-9 units.

Carlsbad has not had a full K-9 program since 2008. Once the incoming K-9 unit has completed its training, the dogs and their handlers will assist with drug searches and other activities. The July 4 demonstration, for example, included mock scenarios involving apprehending escaped prisoners and finding potentially illegal substances hidden in vehicles and suitcases.

Technological developments over the past ten years have also made Carlsbad's K-9 unit all the better. For example, a "hot pop" attachment to a police vehicle will help if the car becomes too hot by automatically setting off a siren and rolling down the windows if the temperature inside reaches a certain level, allowing the dog to cool off.

Moyers said training will likely be complete by mid August, at which point Alf and Aris will join their two-legged officers in serving and protecting the public.

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Captions:

K-9PhotoA – "Carlsbad Police Department Officer Norman Bowie and K-9 Alf finish their July 4 demonstration at the Carlsbad Beach area. The dogs will assist members of the Carlsbad Police Department with a variety of tasks, including chasing down escapees and drug sniffing."

K-9PhotoB – "Carlsbad Police Department Officer Rory Preece and Aris visit with members of the public on July 4, 2017. The Belgian Malinois dogs will soon provide support to the Carlsbad Police Department."