



Public Information Release

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Bloomington Police Department K9 Barney has been awarded a bullet- and stab-proof vest

The Bloomington Police Department's K9 Barney has been awarded a ballistic vest thanks to a nonprofit organization, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., and an anonymous donor who provided \$950 for the vest.

About K9 Barney

K9 Barney is a four-year-old Belgian Malinois who is trained in both patrol and narcotics work. He was partnered with Officer Michael Vonderharr in 2013. Officer Vonderharr has been a K9 handler with the Bloomington, MN Police Department since 2004. K9 Barney was purchased from a kennel in Slovakia and received our patrol and narcotics training through the St Paul Police Department in 2013. K9 Barney likes spending time with the family, chasing his kong ball and playing with the other family dog. K9 Barney dislikes Michael's retired K9 partner and taking baths.

Who is Vested Interest in K9s Inc.?

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., is a 501c (3) charity located in East Taunton, MA., whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. Each vest costs \$950 and has a five-year warranty. The nonprofit was established in 2009 to assist law enforcement agencies with this potentially lifesaving body armor for their four-legged K9 officers. Through private and corporate sponsorships, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., provided over 1,349 law enforcement dogs in 49 states with protective vests since 2009 at a cost of over \$1.2 million dollars.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. announces their 7" plush stuffed German Shepherd K9 Hero, "Cesar," and company ambassador of Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., now for sale online for \$15 at www.vik9s.org. Proceeds from the sales will provide bullet and stab protective vests for police dogs actively working without the potentially lifesaving equipment.

The organization orders the U.S.-made vests exclusively from distributor Regency Police Supply in Hyannis, MA. This company also does the custom embroidery on the body armor. Vests are manufactured by Armor Express in Central Lake, MI.

New K9 graduates as well as K9s with expired vests are eligible to participate. The program is open to law enforcement dogs who are US employed, certified and at least 19 months of age.

For more information or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call 508-824-6978. Tax deductible donations accepted via mail to: Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. P.O. Box 9 East Taunton, MA 02718, or via the website: www.vik9s.org.

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Photo follows on next page.

Attribution: City of Bloomington, MN



Officer Michael Vonderharr with K9 Officer Barney