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Contact:

depressoffice@dep.nyc.gov, (845) 334-7868

Department of Environmental Protection Receives Protective Vests for Six K9 Thanks to Charitable Campaign for Police Dogs

The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced Thursday that six K9s assigned to its Bureau of Police and Security have received ballistic vests thanks to a national Groupon event that has raised more than \$335,000.

Each of these brave police service dogs—Mycal, Kadan, Bingham, Maximus, Ecco and Kille—have graduated from two 12-week courses that includes schools on explosives detection, patrol and tracking. These highly trained service dogs and their police officer partners are an important part of the DEP Police Division, which was established more than 100 years ago to protect New York City's water supply system, including more than 2,000 square miles of watershed land across nine counties, hundreds of miles of tunnels and aqueducts, 14 wastewater treatment plants, laboratories and treatment facilities. The K9 units conduct security inspections, explosive sweeps, and provide tracking assistance for DEP Police and local law enforcement. In addition, the K9 teams are often called upon for demonstrations at schools and other civic organizations in watershed communities.

The DEP K9s received their vests through the "Occasions" campaign for Groupon Grassroots, which outfitted police K9s with bullet and stab protective vests. The campaign ran from Feb. 15 through March 5. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. was the nationwide non-profit organization and charity partner selected by Groupon Grassroots to participate. The online \$10 donation suggested interested

More Information

NYC Department of
Environmental Protection
Public Affairs
59-17 Junction Boulevard
19th Floor
Flushing, NY 11373
(718) 595-6600

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persons purchase a Groupon (a tax deductible donation) through the secure website where all funds were allocated to purchase ballistic vests for our four-legged crime fighters who put their lives on the line for their communities and their partners.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. will be providing over 350 law enforcement dogs nationwide with the protective body armor in memory of K9 Rocco of the Pittsburgh Police Department, who sacrificed his life in the line of duty in January 2014. All vests will be embroidered with the sentiment, "In Memory of K9 Rocco, Pittsburgh Bureau of Police."

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has also announced its 7-inch 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.

In 2013, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. partnered with Groupon and was named as one of "The Best of 2013" campaigns. In just one week the nonprofit raised \$155, 537.33, which provided ballistic vests for 163 law enforcement dogs in 30 states. There are an estimated 30,000 police dogs throughout the United States.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. is a 501(c) (3) charity located in East Taunton, Massachusetts, 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 1,317 law enforcement dogs in 49 states with protective vests since 2009 at a cost of over \$1.2 million.

The organization orders the U.S. made vests exclusively from distributor Regency Police Supply in Hyannis, Massachusetts, which also does the custom embroidery on the body armor.

New K9 graduates as well as K9s with expired vests are eligible to participate. The program is open to law enforcement dogs who are U.S. 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 and event listings are via the website: www.vik9s.org.

DEP manages New York City's water supply, providing more than one billion gallons of high quality water each day to more than 9 million New Yorkers. This includes more than 70 upstate communities and institutions in Ulster, Orange, Putnam and Westchester counties who consume an average of 110 million total gallons of drinking water daily from New York City's water supply system. This water comes from the Catskill, Delaware, and Croton watersheds that extend more than 125 miles from the City, and the system comprises 19 reservoirs, three controlled lakes, and numerous tunnels and aqueducts. DEP has nearly 6,000 employees, including almost 1,000 scientists, engineers, surveyors, watershed maintainers and other professionals in the upstate watershed. In addition to its \$70 million payroll and \$157 million in annual taxes paid in upstate counties, DEP has invested more than \$1.7 billion in watershed protection programs—including partnership organizations such as the Catskill Watershed Corporation and the Watershed Agricultural Council—that support sustainable farming practices, environmentally sensitive economic development, and local economic opportunity. In addition, DEP has a robust capital program with nearly \$14 billion in investments planned over the next 10 years that will create up to 3,000 construction-related jobs per year. For more information, visit nyc.gov/dep, like us on Facebook, or follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/nycwater.

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