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NEWS RELEASE

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MONMOUTH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE K9 BLUE HAS RECEIVED DONATION OF BODY ARMOR

Monmouth County: Monmouth County Sheriff's Office K9 Blue, has received a bullet and stab protective vest thanks to a charitable donation from non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. K9 Blue, who specializes in explosive detection/patrols, vest was embroidered with the sentiment "In memory of Marie Jennings".

"This thoughtful donation will enhance the safety of our K-9 team. The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office is extremely grateful to Vested Interest in K9s Inc., for their generosity and dedication," said Sheriff Shaun Golden. "Members of our K- 9 Unit are called upon year-round to assist local police departments with narcotics detection, explosive detection and criminal or missing person searches and it's crucial they are protected while maintaining public safety."

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., established in 2009, is a 501(c) (3) charity 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. This potentially lifesaving body armor for four-legged K9 is U.S. made, custom fitted, and NIJ certified. Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has provided over 3,980 vests to K9s in all 50 states at a value of \$6.9 million, made possible by both private and corporate donations.

The program is open to U.S. dogs that are at least 20 months old, actively employed and certified with law enforcement or related agencies. K9s with expired vests are also eligible to participate. There are an estimated 30,000 law enforcement K9s throughout the United States.

The Monmouth County Sheriff's Office K-9 Unit presently consists of eight handlers and nine K-9s. The Unit includes two explosive teams, two explosive/patrol teams, three narcotics/patrol teams, one narcotics team and one tracking team. They are called on year-round to assist local police departments with narcotics detection, explosive detection and criminal or missing person searches. In 2019 K-9 teams were called out on 247 explosive searches, 292 tracking searches and 200 narcotics searches.

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Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. accepts tax-deductible contributions in any amount, while a single donation of \$960 will sponsor one vest. Each vest has a value of \$1,744-\$2,283, weighs an average of 4-5 lb., and comes with a five-year warranty. For more information, or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call 508-824-6978. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provides information, lists events, and accepts donations at www.vik9s.org, or you may mail your contribution to P.O. Box 9, East Taunton, MA 02718.

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