



Ft. Pierce Police Department News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

R. Sean Baldwin

Chief of Police

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Ft. Pierce, FL 34950

Fort Pierce police mourn the loss of canine officer Maverick

FORT PIERCE – There was something special about Maverick that most people, including criminals, recognized upon first encountering this canine, who at first glance had an intimidating presence, but was kind and good-natured.

During his six years as a member of the department's K9 Unit, Maverick stood out and it is that distinction which makes grieving his loss so difficult. Approximately two weeks ago, a tumor was discovered on Maverick's spine and after a biopsy was performed on June 20 to determine the nature of the tumor, Maverick's health quickly deteriorated. Tuesday afternoon Maverick's handler, Master Officer Christine Stockton-Davis with the support of the police department, made the difficult decision to have Maverick euthanized.

"He had a good career," said Stockton-Davis. "I will miss him."

A memorial service will be held 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 9, at Haisley Funeral Home, 3015 Okeechobee Rd.

Maverick, a black German shepherd, began his illustrious career with the department six years ago. Both Stockton-Davis and Maverick blazed a trail no other officer had traveled before. In 2002, Stockton-Davis became the department's first female canine officer and Maverick earned the distinction of being the department's first explosive detection canine.

During his career, Maverick's skill in bomb detection was summoned throughout the Treasure Coast and the State of Florida. For his 8th birthday last year, Maverick did a dignitary sweep of Governor Charlie Crist's airplane when it landed at the St. Lucie County International Airport. In 2003, Maverick and Stockton-Davis responded to some sort of a threat at Memorial Island in Vero Beach after the FBI apprehended a farmer in Washington, D.C. after a 48-hour stand off. The farmer indicated that there may be a bomb at the veteran's park. Locally, Stockton-Davis and Maverick were apart of the multi-agency sweeps of Mets Stadium during spring training and area high school graduations. In addition, Maverick apprehended more than 500 individuals throughout his career.

"Maverick was one of the best tracking dogs I had ever seen," said K9 Officer Robert Stagner, who has been with the department 18 years and 15 of those years has been with the K9 unit in some capacity. "That was one of the reasons why I chose him because he had an incredible hunt drive."

Chief R. Sean Baldwin said the department plans to find a replacement service dog for Stockton-Davis. In fact, it appears that an anonymous donor from our community has already provided the funding necessary for this purchase. It will cost approximately \$8,000 to purchase another canine.

"We are truly grateful for the support and generosity of our residents during this most difficult time," Baldwin said.

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