



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 9, 2009

Palm Beach Gardens Police Department Acquires New K-9

A new member of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department has joined the force when "K9 Czephr" officially partnered with Officer Shane Burn after an extensive 24-week training course.

Czephr was purchased by the Police Department with funds raised by the Palm Beach Gardens Police Volunteers, Inc. which is a non-profit entity holding IRS 501c3 status.

Czephr, a German Shepherd born in Hungary is trained in tracking, finding narcotics, searching buildings and articles, and providing protection for his partner. He can sniff out marijuana, crack and powder cocaine, heroin, black-tar heroin, and methamphetamines. The dog lives with Officer Burns at his home and travels with him at work.

The team is on call 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Czephr's commands are in German and he also follows hand signals from Officer Burns. He has different collars for different tasks, a way of letting him know what he is supposed to be doing. His rewards are a chew toy or a ball, not food.

Officer Burns has been a member of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department since May, 2005. Prior to joining Palm Beach Gardens he was a Sergeant with the Pahokee Police Department. Officer Burns joins three other K9 teams in the Palm Beach Gardens Police Department – K9 Eros with Officer Bobby Wummer; K9 Alan with Officer Mike Stelicha; and K9 Willy with Officer Mark Zakian.

"K9 teams are a vital asset to any police department. They are able to track suspects who have fled, search buildings that a suspect may be using as shelter, apprehend fleeing suspects, protect their handlers, and in Czephr's case, detect narcotics," said Stephen J. Stepp, Palm Beach Gardens Chief of Police. "In addition the dogs also provide a wonderful community relation benefit by performing K9 demonstrations at local schools and community events."

The mission of the Palm Beach Gardens Police Volunteers is to provide funding for innovative police department projects, not available from the city's budget, that serve the community, improve communications, and foster excellence in policing. For more information about the foundation visit their website at www.pbgpv.org