



Saint Louis County

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Ross Litman
Sheriff

NEWS RELEASE

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Two new canines join St. Louis County Sheriff's Office

They can cover more ground and sniff out narcotics and other evidence faster than their two-legged counterparts, and in return want only to have a tennis ball thrown for them. And then thrown again.

Louie and Diesel are the two newest members of the St. Louis County Sheriff's Office. The German Shepherds, along with their respective partners, Deputies Ben Fye and Tim Officer, will be available to meet with the media and demonstrate their skills this Friday, May 16, at 6 p.m. at the Hermantown Public Safety Building, 5105 Maple Grove Road.

Originally from the Czech Republic, Louie and Diesel arrived in Minnesota earlier this year. The 1.5-year-old German Shepherds began an extensive training program with their human partners in April, which they are expected to complete in late June, earning them certification to begin working on patrol by July. Both are being trained as dual-purpose K-9s, meaning they will specialize in detecting narcotics and tracking humans – both missing persons and criminal suspects.

“In the short time they've been here, Louie and Diesel have already demonstrated particular skill and talent,” said Sheriff Ross Litman. “They've got great temperaments and are eager to work, which to them is play. They're very social and friendly, yet can switch to serious work mode when given the command.”

When they hit the streets, Louie and Diesel will be following in some pretty impressive footsteps. They will replace two other K-9s, Rico and Atrej, who are set to retire. The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office also has two other dual-purpose K-9s, Roscoe and Kilo.

Specially bred for law enforcement work, these K-9s are a significant investment for the Sheriff's Office. Each comes with a price tag of \$11,200, which covers the purchase and initial training costs.

The public will have an opportunity to meet Louie and Diesel, along with numerous other area law enforcement K-9s, at “Operation K-9” on June 5, from 4:30 to 8 p.m. at the Amsoil Center in Superior. Operation K-9 is the kick-off event for the Amsoil Northland Law Enforcement K-9 Foundation, which helps support the costs associated with K-9 programs for the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office, along with the Duluth Police Department, Douglas County Sheriff’s Office and Superior Police Department. The event is free and open to the public. Donations to the Foundation are encouraged to help defray future K-9 costs.

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