



Wausau Police Department

The Informer

February, 2020

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Testing, Testing Please!

Last week we had our second on-site accreditation visit from the Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accreditation Group (WILEAG). We will get word about our official accreditation status after the WILEAG board meets. I want to jump back to December of 2016 to discuss our first on-site accreditation visit and the purpose behind accreditation.

When I started with the Wausau Police Department in 2000, there was talk of achieving accreditation status. The new policies that were developed at the time would identify the accreditation standards we were striving to meet. It was until well more than a decade later that we were able to achieve the momentum as a department to become accredited. It is no small task. So why do we go through the hassle?

First and foremost, accreditation requires us to know, understand, implement, and follow the best policing practices. A good example is during our December, 2016, accreditation visit, accreditors found our evidence room did not separate drugs from the other evidence. These evidence items are more sensitive in that they are more likely to be

misappropriated and, therefore, should be kept under a second layer of security.

We had about 12 members of our department working for about 12 hours straight to go through every piece of evidence, sort it, and move it to another secure storage area within the evidence room. In total, 2400 items of evidence from 731 cases were relocated. It was quite a feat! In fact, the assessors believed there was no way we would be able to get that piece done for accreditation. This assessment led to a remodel of our evidence room.



A small percentage of law enforcement agencies achieve accreditation status because it is difficult to accomplish. It requires a significant amount of staff time and is not easy. When we achieve accreditation status, we are able to tell our community that a board of directors from the accrediting body has evaluated our department and determined we meet every standard. This inherently builds trust in our community.

In addition, the process of accreditation requires us to keep our policy manual up to date. For the first decade of my employment at Wausau PD, we had policies that were dated in the 1990's. Our profession changes much more quickly than that and it is imperative our policies remain current. Accreditation requires our policies to be reviewed and revised regularly.

Finally, our vision is to be regarded as the standard of excellence in policing. If we are to achieve our vision, we must be able to have assessors from across the state of Wisconsin formally evaluate our agency and give us a thumbs up. During our 2016 on-site visit, one of the accreditors acknowledged "there were no grumbles, period" and said this was "very refreshing." It was actually mentioned several times during our 2016 accreditation debrief. Attitude is so much in life and I'm proud of the people we have working here.

Next month, I'll share more about our on-site visit from the assessors for this current accreditation visit. Until then, be safe and be well.



"Whatever happens, take responsibility." Tony Robbins

"I shall continue to do what I think is right, whether anybody likes it or not." Harry S Truman

"Some people want it to happen, some wish it would happen, others make it happen." Michael Jordan

"People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude." John Maxwell

Acknowledgements & Other News

Freezin' For A Reason

February 22nd was the Polar Plunge to raise money for Special Olympics. Officers Nick Stetzer and Ben Price, along with Lieutenant Nate Cihlar all took the plunge. Not to be outdone, Lieutenant Felder spent the entire time in the water, as part of the Marathon County Dive Team.



K9 Astor Gets His Vest



Thanks to the generosity of Wisconsin Vest A Dog, K9 Astor is now protected on his calls. We cannot thank them enough for their continued support in protecting all of our patrol K9s! To help them continue their mission, you can make a donation on their website - www.wivestadog.org.

Acknowledgements & Other News

Thank you to the Grand Theater!



K9 Rio

A big thank you to the Grand Theater! It is important for our patrol K9s to practice their skills in a variety of scenarios and locations, and the Grand Theater was kind enough to let us use their facilities to train!



Officer Peterson and K9 Max

Save the date!

There is one more opportunity for Paws & Protect - a great, inexpensive opportunity to have your cat or dog vaccinated for rabies, and microchipped! You can also take care of your pet license at the same time!

March 7, 2020, 8 am-12 pm

This event will take place at the Wausau Department of Public Works, 400 Myron St.



PAWS & PROTECT

- ◆ **Free**– Rabies vaccines
- ◆ **\$10**– Microchips implanted
- ◆ 2020 Licensing for cats & dogs must be paid for

Animals MUST be on a leash or in a crate



Department Spotlight

Therapy K9s

The K9s at the Wausau Police Department are one of the public's favorite parts of our department. And who can blame them? Last month, we talked about our patrol K9s, and now we will talk more about our therapy K9s.

A therapy dog is a single purpose dog - they have one function - to provide comfort and support. Therapy dogs are trained to provide comfort and affection to individuals in hospitals, retirement homes, hospice, schools, or other situations that will support those in need. Dogs that become certified must be well tempered, obedient, well behaved around other dogs and strangers, and well socialized. They generally must pass tests and be certified. Our therapy dogs work in the schools, work with victims of crime (they traveled to Barron County to assist the schools during the Jayme Closs incidents,) and, as a added benefit, bring cheer and cuddles to the staff at their locations and at the police department that they visit.



K9 Badge - The Pioneer of the Therapy Dog Program

Our therapy dog program was piloted by SRO Nick Stetzer in Fall of 2017, after a year of research and training for K9 Badge. In schools, the therapy dogs are successful as a tool for de-escalation and relationship building. SRO Stetzer trained with Badge on his own through the American Kennel Club and Badge joined him at Wausau East. This pilot program was so successful and supported by Wausau School District that Wausau PD acquired K9 Theo for Fall of 2018 at Wausau West. Theo's litter mate and fellow therapy dog Alvin, was acquired by North Central Health Care to work with their clients, and is currently stationed with Stacy Rozelle, the NCHC member of our CART team. Most recently, our Mental Health Therapist, Kristen Seidler, had her personal pet, Soco, trained as a therapy dog, and he is in the process of transitioning into full time support

here.

Q: Have you trained your dog from a puppy?

A: Badge and Soco are the personal pets of SRO Stetzer and Kristen Seidler, respectively. Theo and Alvin were in training for about two years at iK9 in Anniston, Alabama before their handlers trained with them and brought them back to Wausau. They both live with their handlers, SRO Schremp and Stacy Rozelle, respectively.



K9 Soco On Test Day

Department Spotlight

Therapy K9s



K9 Theo and His Chewed Up Pillow

Q: Are the therapy dogs always calm and well mannered?

A: K9 Theo: No! When Theo is at work he understands his environment and knows how to act. At home, Theo acts like a normal dog. He gets to play with SRO Schremp's other three dogs, and even gets to sleep on SRO Schremp's bed. Theo can be pretty naughty at times - he enjoys chewing up pillows, dog beds and blankets. K9 Alvin: No - Alvin knows in the morning when his therapy vest goes on he is going to work and he has his calm demeanor. Once Alvin gets home and the vest comes off, he is energetic, playful and even is

told no when he gets into mischief, such as biting at the coffee table (he is naughty at times, just like any regular dog.) K9 Badge: Every morning I ask Badge if he is ready to go to work and he gets really excited. He whines until I put on his therapy vest. If I am not able to bring him to work with me, he lets me know he is very angry by barking a lot, blocking the door, etc.

Q: What type of dogs are they?

A: K9 Badge is a flat coated retriever, and K9s Theo, Alvin and Soco are golden doodles.

Other fun facts about each:

K9 Alvin has a 4 month old house mate, Odin and Alvin can be very jealous at times and will nudge his way in, if he feels Odin might be getting too many pats or snuggles. Alvin loves to be right next to people and wants all the snuggles for himself.

K9 Theo came from a litter of three male doodles, named Alvin, Simon, and Theodore (Theo.) They were all purchased by iK9 and were trained there. When SRO Schremp went to Alabama to get Theo, he trained with all three brothers and was matched with Theo after training. Alvin was fortunately purchased by North Central Health Care. Simon was purchased by NASCAR driver Jeff Earnhardt and was donated to a veteran in Florida.



K9 Alvin and His Little Brother, Odin

K9 Soco really likes going up north to the cabin and running around and hanging out on the dock, soaking up the sun.

K9 Badge sometimes gets to go to work with his mum, Emily, at WSAW Channel 7, instead, just for fun.