



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

Martin O'Malley
Governor

Anthony G. Brown
Lt. Governor

Gary D. Maynard
Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Mark Vernarelli (410) 339-5065

DOC K-9 Officers Win Numerous Honors From U.S. Police Canine Association

Unit To Be Honored Saturday, 3/21 in Greenbelt

TOWSON, MD (March 19, 2009)---Maryland's highly-respected Division of Correction K-9 Unit, already recognized worldwide for its cell phone detector dog and in-house breeding programs, will be honored yet again this Saturday night, March 21, when numerous officers and their dogs receive honors at the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) Region III (Mid-Atlantic) banquet in Greenbelt.

The USPCA is a professional law enforcement canine training and certifying association, made up of hundreds of Police Dog Trainers and handlers from the entire North American continent, including Mexico and Canada. The DOC K-9 honors to be handed out this weekend reflect the outstanding performance of the Maryland DOC officers in competitive events which featured more than 100 state, local, and federal police and correctional teams from four states and the District of Columbia.

Maryland's DOC teams won second place (out of 127 total teams) in the Detector Dog competition, which featured K-9 teams trying to locate drugs and contraband hidden in vehicles and buildings. Sgt. David Brosky and his K-9 Riley, Sgt. Michael Duncan and K-9 Chase, and Sgt. Mark Flynn and his K-9 Briar shared this honor. Third place in the same category was also claimed by Maryland DOC: Sgt. Craig Blank and his dog Ruger; Sgt. Brian Kyle and Cayenne; and Sgt. Eric Kretzer and Cayman.

Three DOC teams also broke the top ten in individual events: Sgt. Eric Kretzer and Cayman finished third; Sgt. David Brosky and Riley finished sixth; and Sgt. Brian Itnyre and Shadow placed ninth.

In addition, two Maryland DOC K-9 teams placed in the top six in the grueling Iron Dog three-mile obstacle course and timed run.

---more---

In addition, two Maryland DOC K-9 teams placed in the top six in the grueling Iron Dog three-mile obstacle course and timed run. Sgt. Wendell Stockton and Sgt. Louis Foppiano won those awards with their K-9s.

In the USPCA Patrol Dog competition, DOC K-9 Sgt. Chris Caudell and his dog Bull won first place in the novice division. Sgt. Dennis Dieterle and his dog Rex won second place in the obedience category.

In what amounts to a first in U.S. canine history, the mother Labrador in Maryland DOC's breeder dog program, Cayenne, and two of her puppies, Cayman and Ruger, competed together as a team and won third place in the overall team award.

The DOC K-9 Unit is a critical public safety component. Its members reduce violence at more than 25 institutions statewide by reducing the amount of contraband, which often fuels fights and disturbances. Patrol dogs also maintain security for staff and inmates. Along with other increased security measures being utilized by the Division, the K-9 Unit has helped intercept or recover 20% more cell phones in 2008 compared to 2007 and 70% compared to 2006. Additionally, serious assaults by inmate on staff (those needing more than basic first aid) dropped 32% from 2006 to 2008 over the same time period. And serious assaults by inmate on inmate dropped 28%.

Maryland's DOC K-9 Unit has led the nation in cell phone detector dog training, becoming the first in the nation to train and employ its own cell phone detector dogs, and was the first in the nation to breed its own K-9s and train the puppies from shortly after their birth.

The unit has also trained K-9s for dozens of law enforcement agencies (including some that won certification from USPCA); provided special training for a Maryland Department of Agriculture bee disease-detecting dog; and is currently working with Texas to "swap" a trained cell phone detector dog for a trained bloodhound.

All of these innovative efforts provide better dogs and increase the safety of the public, while saving Maryland taxpayers thousands of dollars annually.

###

www.dpscs.state.md.us