

Lake County Sheriff's Office



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John D. Idleburg
Sheriff

MEDIA RELEASE

Sheriff's K9 Dax Places Top-Dog at Regional Competition, Then Finds Missing Suicidal Man in Vernon Hills

This past week Deputy John Forlenza and K9 Dax traveled to Sterling Heights, Michigan, to participate in the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA) Region #19 Patrol Dog Trial. The duo brought home several regional titles following the certification/competition course.

The first two days, K9 Dax completed his annual/national certifications in tracking, narcotics searches (rooms and vehicles), and cadaver detection. For the final two days, K9 Dax participated in a trial where he competed in the areas of obedience, agility, scent work (suspect and article searches), apprehension, and apprehension with gunfire.

Deputy Forlenza and K9 Dax brought the following regional titles home to Lake County:

- 1st Place Patrol Dog Overall
- Tracking Exceptional Certification (first dog in Region #19 in 12 years)
- 1st Place Cadaver Detection
- 1st Place Criminal Apprehension
- Boris Award – Top Apprehension Dog (dedicated in memory of K9 Boris – Detroit Police Department)
- Invitation to USPCA's National Patrol Dog Field Trial – November 2019
- Top Finisher in Agility and Tracking

On their first shift back to work following the competition, Deputy Forlenza and K9 Dax were called to assist Vernon Hills Police locate a missing 51-year-old man, who threatened to harm himself, before fleeing his friend's home on foot. At approximately 5:30AM this morning, Deputy Forlenza and K9 Dax responded to the area of Route 45 and Buffalo Grove Road, Vernon Hills. The two initiated an immediate track. K9 Dax tracked the scene of the man for approximately one-quarter mile, before locating him unconscious in heavy brush next to the Indian Creek, just west of Buffalo Grove Road.

Paramedics were summoned to the scene and the man was transported to a local hospital due to his unconscious-state and for a mental health evaluation.

Sheriff John Idleburg said, “Deputy John Forlenza and his four-legged partner, Dax, have done it yet again! We are thrilled at the number of regional titles they bring home to Lake County. Only about one in 500 canines typically earn the Tracking Exceptional Certification and it’s been 12 years since the last time a Region 19 canine achieved this challenging certification. Those tracking skills were highlighted on their first shift back to work when they undoubtedly saved the life of a missing suicidal man, who they found unconscious. We are very proud of all of our Sheriff’s Canine Teams and believe they provide a tremendous service to the Lake County Community.”

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