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City of Oak Park Receives AceWatchDog™ System and Monetary Donation in Memory of Retired Oak Park Public Safety Officer Bill Shuttleworth

May 21, 2018, Oak Park, Michigan – The Oak Park Public Safety Canine Unit received two donations in memory of Retired Oak Park Public Safety Officer Bill Shuttleworth. Officer Shuttleworth’s family provided a monetary donation to the Oak Park Public Safety Department as well as a donation to Project Paws Alive, a nonprofit organization that provides vital equipment to law enforcement and first responders nationwide. They, in turn, used their donation from the Shuttleworth family to donate an AceWatchDog™ System, complete with a one-year AceK9 subscription, to the Oak Park Public Safety Department.

“Any time we receive donations in honor of someone we try and put that money back into their local community. In speaking with Bill’s wife, we learned of his involvement with the local canine teams and with her approval we contacted the Oak Park Canine Unit to inquire how we could best honor Bill’s legacy with this donation,” said Project Paws Alive President Cheryl Allen. “We were delighted to learn that we can leverage our partnership with AceK9 to provide this vital AceWatchDog™ system to Canine Mase.”

Officer Bill Shuttleworth joined the Oak Park Public Safety team on January 24, 1973 and retired on January 22, 1999 after 26 years of service. He was a decorated officer and highly regarded by the Department. During his tenure, he expressed an interest in the creation of a canine unit and for the development of a citizens’ academy. Sadly, Retired Officer Shuttleworth passed away on March 8 of this year.

“We wish to express our sincere condolences to Officer Shuttleworth’s family,” said Public Safety Director Steve Cooper. “We are honored to receive such a generous and thoughtful donation in his memory.”

The AceWatchDog™ system is a device manufactured by AceK9. It has a custom web application that communicates with the Department’s Hot-N-Pop Pro unit to alert canine handlers when the temperature in their patrol vehicle gets too hot for the canine’s comfort. The device also monitors the vehicle’s engine and the air conditioning system. Canines are often kept in their vehicles while their handlers are attending to business elsewhere. If the vehicle is too hot, the engine stalls, or the air conditioning system fails the AceWatchDog™ system will send information, warnings and alerts in the form of text messages, automated voicemails, and/or landline calls directly to designated phones, tablets or computers.

“Although Mase is very intelligent, talented and intuitive, he does not have the ability to inform us when he is too hot or too cold while on duty inside his vehicle,” said Public Safety Director Steve Cooper. “This wonderful device adds a layer of protection and assurance for our team that our canine counterpart is comfortable and safe.”

“We certainly appreciate the kind and generous donations from the family of Officer Bill Shuttleworth and our friends at Project Paws Alive,” said City Manager Erik Tungate. “Unbeknownst to most, there are many incidental but necessary expenditures that are required for the proper care of a canine who is charged with serving and protecting our community. With the support of organizations like Project Paws Alive and through thoughtful donations by families such as the Shuttleworth’s we are able to secure a higher level of safety for our team. We are very grateful.”

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About Project Paws Alive: Project Paws Alive, Inc. is a nationwide 501(c)(3) nonprofit whose mission is to provide vital protective K9 equipment such as stab and bullet protective vests, first aid field trauma kits, cooling vests, and heat alarms to law enforcement, firefighters, search and rescue teams, and military canine units throughout the United States. They rely solely on donations and sponsorships. For more information on Project Paws Alive or to inquire about how to make a tax-deductible donation, please visit www.ProjectPawsAlive.org.

About Oak Park: The City of Oak Park is situated on the southern-most border of Oakland County, Mich., and serves as a suburban ambassador to Detroit. Incorporated as a city in 1945, Oak Park’s current population exceeds 29,300 and is home to more than 900 local businesses, including corporate headquarters.

About the Oak Park Public Safety Department: The City of Oak Park Public Safety Department is one of the first in the nation to combine police, fire and medical first response. Our officers perform in all three disciplines. The Department takes great pride in utilizing conventional and non-conventional avenues in its quest to protect and serve the members of the community, including programs such as the Oak Park Public Safety Citizens Academy, Canine Unit, Ice Cream Patrol, Community Block Club, and educational programs. We take great pride in, and enjoy, a long-standing, supportive and mutually respectful relationship with our community members.

About Mase: Oak Park Public Safety Canine Officer Mase is named after Officer Mason Samborski who died in the line of duty on December 28, 2008 in Oak Park, Mich. Mase, a Belgian Malinois, was 16-months-old when he joined Canine Handler Officer Michael Hodakoski and Sargeant Joseph Meier in June 2017 to become the Department’s first Canine Unit. He received extensive training at the Vohn Liche Kennels, a full-service canine training facility for highly trained police service handlers, police dogs and military personnel. Canine Officer Mase assists with community and educational demonstrations, evidence recovery, track and search, and drug enforcement. In addition, he and handler Officer Michael Hodakoski are called upon, on demand, for situations in the City of Oak Park and for back-up in surrounding jurisdictions when specialized skills are required.

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