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City of Wylie
Public Information Office

EDITORIAL

Martin & Carlo: Partners for Life

Wylie, TX, April 15, 2008 – Loyal, obedient, friendly, sociable, strong but silent, are just a few of the words Officer Brenda Martin uses to describe Carlo, the City of Wylie’s K-9 and Martin’s partner on the street. Their story began more than eight and a half years ago when Martin was selected to be Wylie’s first K-9 handler.

The City contracted with Garland K-9 Officer and consultant Dennis Morrow to help with the selection of a dog that was right for the department and one that was a good fit for Martin’s personality. Jeff Butters, Assistant City Manager and former Police Chief recounted with a smile how he described Martin to Morrow, “Talkative, outgoing and a little ornery.”

Carlo was handpicked from Czechoslovakia and the match has been an obvious success, forming one of the most decorated K-9 units in the State of Texas. The pair was awarded Top Dog and Best Overall Team at the 2005 Region 20 United States Police Canine Association Certification Trials and numerous second and third place finishes throughout the years. Carlo has also been instrumental in an untold number of drug detections and suspect apprehensions.

“Carlo has been a tremendous asset to the Wylie Police Department,” said Butters. “He gives us the ability to quickly deploy a search and tracking component that we didn’t have before the K-9 unit. He is an important and beloved part of the Police Department family.”

K-9’s use their keen sense of smell to track criminals, sniff out illegal materials, search buildings, and do other jobs human police officers can’t do as well or are too dangerous for a human to perform. A dog’s sense of smell is not only 50 times more sensitive than a



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human's, but it is also very selective. They have the ability to discern a specific scent even when there are dozens of other scents present.

A good nose is not a K-9's only advantage. The simple presence of Carlo or his intimidating growl motivates many criminals to surrender peacefully, instead of running or fighting. When a conflict does arise, dogs are faster and stronger than most humans, able to catch a fleeing criminal and clamp down with powerful jaws to apprehend the suspect until other officers arrive.

Martin says that Carlo is more than just a partner on the street. He is an inseparable friend for life. Since day one he became a member of Martin's family that includes Angel, a Himalayan/Siamese cat Martin rescued from a house while on the job; Midnight, a large black barn cat; and Tasha, an eleven year old German Shepherd adopted from the Garland Animal Shelter.

Carlo quickly learned his place in the family. Tasha is the boss at home and handles backyard security. When strangers are walking down the Alley, Tasha is there to inspect while Carlo relaxes on the porch or in the doghouse. He obviously learned to leave his work at the office. While Tasha handles backyard security, Midnight is in charge of the house. After a hard days work, upon arriving at home, Carlo has to acknowledge Midnight's presence in the doorway before he is allowed to enter the house.

Each day when Carlo hears the sounds of Martin preparing for duty, he runs in circles, anticipating the days work. But after more than eight and a half years of service, Carlo is nearing retirement, exceeding the average length of service for a K-9 by four years.

Martin says she dreads the day that she will have to explain to Carlo that he is not going to work anymore. But that day may be more challenging for Martin. When asked how she will feel without Carlo by her side, all Martin could say with emotion in her voice is, "It will be a sad day, a very sad day."



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