



OFFICE OF
Steve Boyer

KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF

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Sheriff's Office welcomes latest recruit

Port Orchard, Wash. -- Kitsap County Sheriff Steve Boyer and deputies, officers, support specialists and staff recently welcomed a new recruit to the rank of the sheriff's patrol division.

Although still young at age 2 ½, sheriff's K-9 "**Ajax**" is now fully trained, full of enthusiasm, and is on the road working with his handler, Deputy Joe Hedstrom. Ajax was certified for patrol operations earlier this month and began patrol duties May 9.

"Our K-9 patrol and narcotics dogs are fully involved members of the sheriff's office team," said Sheriff Boyer. "And they are members of our family, too. While we cannot provide them with pay raises, retirement pensions and the like, we can provide them with the best possible training, veterinary care and protective equipment available."

Profiles:

K-9 Ajax

Breed: German Shepherd

Born: Nov. 10, 2005 in *Slovenská republika* (Slovakia or the Slovak Republic)

Arrived in United States: September 2007

Weight: 75 lbs.

Color: primarily black with brown highlights

Kennel: Von der haus Gil Kennel & Police K-9 Academy, Wapakoneta, Ohio

Certifications obtained:

- Washington Administrative Code requirements for police canines.
- International Police Working Dog Association.
- American Police Canine Association.
- National Association of Police Canine Handlers.

Handler: Deputy Joe Hedstrom

A native of Kitsap County, Deputy Hedstrom joined the sheriff's office in February 2003 after completing basic law enforcement training through the Federal Police Corps Program.

After completing field training and his probationary period, Deputy Hedstrom worked as a patrol operations deputy until he was selected for a specialized assignment as a speed enforcement officer in the sheriff's traffic unit, from January – November 2007.

Deputy Hedstrom has voluntarily participated in K-9 training for many years, often acting as a quarry for police K-9's and their handlers. Following an extensive application and interview process this past winter, Deputy Hedstrom was selected as the next sheriff's office K-9 handler in February. He left for Ohio shortly afterwards to meet his new 'partner' and begin an intense six-week K-9 handler training regimen in conjunction with Ajax's training.

Another two-week period of solid training followed his return to Kitsap County before both handler and K-9 were certified as ready for operations in the field.

Deputy Hedstrom is a 1995 graduate of Olympic High School. He earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Washington State University in 2000.

K-9 Ajax will reside with Deputy Hedstrom and his family.



Sheriff Steve Boyer greets K-9 Ajax and his handler, Deputy Joe Hedstrom, upon their return to Kitsap County from the police K-9 training academy in Ohio.

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