

Didion: Donates to Columbia County Sheriff's Office K-9 fundraising campaign

Posted on Thursday, Oct 8, 2020

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Sun Prairie, WI – Didion is honored to support the Columbia County Sheriff's Office efforts to add a fourth K-9 unit to their team with a \$5,000 donation. Didion's gift helped to push the Sheriff's Office over their goal of \$20,000, which now allows for a \$20,000 matching gift from an anonymous local business.

"We feel it's part of our duty as an area business to support local law enforcement in their efforts to safeguard our neighborhoods. It benefits our employees and their families both where they live and work," said Riley Didion, President of Didion. "I am so proud of our team and the impact we have around the world with the food we help produce to manufacturing and donating hand sanitizer to, now, helping keep our local communities safe."

Since it's considered a specialty unit, most law enforcement agencies do not include K-9s in their general budgets. It costs about \$40,000 to purchase a police dog, get the necessary initial training for the dog and handler, acquire and install special equipment in a squad car, maintain certifications, and care for the dog.

"It's overwhelming the amount of support we have gotten from our communities and businesses, like Didion," said Deputy Derek Jesko, Columbia County Sheriff's Office Deputy and K9 handler. "Our K9 program is only operable because of community donations, so donations like this one are critical for us. We are so grateful and humbled by Didion's and the community's response."

The Sheriff's Office would normally hold a golf outing to raise ongoing funds to support the program but cancelled this year's event due to the pandemic.

Even though the department has reached its initial goal, the need to maintain the program persists in covering ongoing expenses like continued training and the dog's veterinarian bills. If you are interested in contributing, you can do so by contacting Lieutenant Cory Miller at 608-742-4166, ext. 3305.

From left to right:

Columbia County Sheriff's Deputy Ron Stage, Captain Jason Kocovsky, Deputy Derek Jesko, and K9 Artus

Didion representatives: Derrick Clark, Mark Nehls, Riley Didion