

Retiring K9 Jago took a bite out of crime

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The shepherd collared 122 suspects during nearly 10 years on the Beaverton force.



TIMES PHOTO: JAIME VALDEZ - Mayor Denny Doyle gives a chew toy to K9 Jago as handler Officer Ken Magnus watches. The council honored the retiring Jago on Tuesday night for his nearly 10 years on the force.

Beaverton Police K9 Officer Jago has collared 122 suspects.

The one that his human handler Officer Ken Magnus fondly remembers is the time they both raced after a suspect on a foot pursuit.

The man, an angry 6-foot-3 and 230 pounds, turned to Magnus with his fists up and spewing threats – until he saw Jago. The hulking suspect gave up and knelt.

“Hurry up and arrest me,” he told Magnus. “Just keep that dog away from me.”

Magnus chuckled at the thought.

“I didn’t even get my uniform dirty,” he recalled. “He would’ve fought me in a heartbeat, but he didn’t want to fight the dog.”

At this moment in the story, Jago was

rolling onto his back for another belly rub.

A few minutes before, the [Beaverton City Council](#) had presented Jago with a Certificate of Commendation for his retirement after nearly 10 years on the force. He seemed more impressed by the chew toy Mayor Denny Doyle handed him.

Jago was the department veteran among Beaverton’s four-legged team, although former K9 officer Pascha served nearly 11 years in the 1980s and 1990s.

11/11/15 Jago Retirement



“It’s not normal” for a K9 officer to spend a decade on the job; most police dogs serve five to seven years, although some leave not because of their health but because their human partners change assignments, Magnus said.

Jago almost didn’t make it beyond his first year of service.

As a trainee, the German shepherd born in the [Czech Republic](#) was known as Mr. Perfect because he did everything so well. It probably didn’t hurt that Magnus’ own parents were dog trainers and he had his eyes on a K9 handler job since joining the force.

But a year into the job, Jago was chasing a suspect and jumped over a 2-foot wall, which turned out to have a 6-foot drop on the far side. Jago landed hard on pavement and injured a leg.

A week later, the dog could hardly walk. A year’s worth of veterinary visits didn’t solve the problem until he became the first dog in Oregon to undergo a stem cell replacement therapy previously used on race horses, Magnus said.

The treatment worked like a charm and just one year later Jago won the agility part of the Washington County Sheriff’s Office’s annual Police K9 trials.

“The fact that he worked this long has been awesome,” Magnus said.

Only recently has Jago, who is now 11 ½, started slowing down. He wore his uniform one last time for the council meeting. He will live out his life as Magnus’ companion dog.

Magnus himself is moving into a new role as well, becoming the Beaverton Police Department’s first full-time high-tech detective working closely with the FBI on cyber crimes.

For Magnus, it feels right that he is transitioning from barks to bytes.

“It would be hard to replace him,” he said, “because he’s such a perfect dog.”

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