

Becker County Sheriff's Office K9 Durman Has Received Donation of Body Armor

Becker County Sheriff's Office K9 Durman has received a bullet and stab protective vest thanks to a charitable donation from non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. K9 Durman's vest was sponsored by Ashley Fletcher of Hawley, MN and embroidered with the sentiment "Gifted by Ashley Fletcher".

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc., established in 2009, is a 501(c)(3) charity whose mission is to provide bullet and stab protective vests and other assistance to dogs of law enforcement and related agencies throughout the United States. This potentially lifesaving body armor for four-legged K9 officers is U.S. made, custom fitted, and NIJ certified. Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. has provided over 4,210 vests to K9s in all 50 states at a value of \$6.9 million, made possible by both private and corporate donations.

The program is open to U.S. dogs that are at least 20 months old and actively employed and certified with law enforcement or related agencies. K9s with expired vests are also eligible to participate. There are an estimated 30,000 law enforcement K9s throughout the United States.

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. accepts tax-deductible contributions in any amount, while a single donation of \$960 will sponsor one vest. Each vest has a value of \$1,744-\$2,283, weighs an average of 4-5 lb., and comes with a five-year warranty. For more information, or to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call 508-824-6978. Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provides information, lists events, and accepts donations at www.vik9s.org, or you may mail your contribution to P.O. Box 9, East Taunton, MA 02718.

The Becker County Sheriff's Office received board approval to receive donations for a second K9 team. Donations came from residents, businesses, and civic organizations who felt strongly about a second K9 team in Becker County. Durman and his handler, Deputy Borth, became a team and after 12 weeks of intense training, the team began serving the residents of Becker County. Durman has been utilized on calls where he has aided in searching for missing persons, apprehension of suspects, and narcotics searches. Durman has a vital role with the Sheriff's Office and is a talented asset to Becker County and surrounding areas. Thank you to Ashley Fletcher and Vested Interest in K9's, Inc. for this safety equipment to help protect K9 Durman!