



# ***MORTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE***

*Kyle L. Kirchmeier, Sheriff*



## **News Release**

For Immediate Release

March 26, 2019

Contact: Morton County PIO (701) 426-1587

Website: <http://www.co.morton.nd.us/>

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### **Morton County Sheriff's Office K9 Mako has received donation of body armor**

**Mandan, N.D.** – Morton County Sheriff's Office K9 Mako has received a bullet and stab protective vest thanks to a charitable donation from non-profit organization Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. The vest was sponsored by an Anonymous Sponsor and embroidered with the sentiment "In honor of handlers of First Special Forces Group."

Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. is a 501c(3) charity located in East Taunton, MA 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. The non-profit was established in 2009 to assist law enforcement agencies with this potentially lifesaving body armor for their four-legged K9 officers. Since its inception, Vested Interest in K9s, Inc. provided over 3,300 protective vests in 50 states, through private and corporate donations, at a value of \$5.7 million dollars.

"Protective vests are law enforcement's first line of defense," said Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier. "Making sure our K9 partners have the same protection as we do is very important to us. We are very grateful for the donation of this critical equipment."

The program is open to dogs actively employed in the U.S. with law enforcement or related agencies who are certified and at least 20 months of age. New K9 graduates, as well as K9s with expired vests, are eligible to participate.

The donation to provide one protective vest for a law enforcement K9 is \$950.00. Each vest has a value between \$1,744 – \$2,283, and a five-year warranty and an average weight of 4-5 lbs. There is an estimated 30,000 law enforcement K9s throughout the United States. 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 tax-deductible donations of any denomination at [www.vik9s.org](http://www.vik9s.org) or mailed to P.O. Box 9 East Taunton, MA 02718.

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