

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **Humane Society of Berks County Partners with Area Police to Provide Veterinary Services to K-9 Officers**

The Humane Society of Berks County (HSBC), the leader in animal welfare, announced that it has partnered with Spring Township Police Department to provide free veterinary services to the department's newest officer, a one-year-old Belgian Malinois dog named Dzeus. "Police working dogs like Dzeus risk their lives every day to protect police officers and to make our communities safer," said Karel Minor, HSBC Executive Director. "In recognition of that fact, the HSBC has committed to providing the best level of veterinary care to Dzeus throughout his career."

Recently acquired from a specialty breeder in France, Dzeus is partnered with Spring Township Police Officer Eric Goss. The dog is trained to detect illicit drugs and to track hidden suspects in addition to his patrol duties. Officers Goss and Dzeus train daily to improve the dog's already impressive skills. Dzeus has been trained in the "passive indicator" method, rather than the more common "aggressive indicator" method. The HSBC strongly endorses the "passive indicator" training method for law enforcement dogs.

The veterinary services provided to Dzeus are similar to veterinary care provided to pet animals, but are tailored to the demands of Dzeus' police work and provided at no cost. "Police dogs and their handlers have a difficult job to perform under very stressful conditions," explains Minor. "Dzeus needs to be at the top of his game every day, and that means that our veterinary staff is carefully monitoring his health and ensuring that he is protected as fully as possible. This includes everything from basic vaccinations and wellness exams, to round-the-clock trauma services, should the unthinkable happen."

Dzeus already received his initial examinations by Dr. Kelly Bendixsen, one of the HSBC's staff veterinarians. The dog was subjected to a full physical exam to establish a baseline for future

treatments. “It’s important to know exactly how healthy Dzeus is,” said Bendixsen. “This way, if he suffers an illness or an injury, we’ll be well prepared to treat him.” Bendixsen added that Dzeus appears to be completely healthy.

Dzeus left his first appointment with a special reward for his patience – a Kong Havaball rubber toy provided by the staff of the HSBC. “It’s the least we can do,” Minor said. “After all, even K-9 officers need a little play time.”

The Humane Society of Berks County has extended this offer of complimentary care for K-9 law enforcement to other police forces in the region. “Local and State police have always been and continue to be there to assist us in our cruelty law enforcement efforts,” said Minor. “This is one small way we can provide police, as well as the municipalities and tax payers they serve, with a token of our appreciation for the exceptional work they do.”

The Humane Society of Berks County serves all of Berks County and surrounding communities. It is a private, non-profit organization funded through donations and service fees. In addition to enforcing Pennsylvania’s animal cruelty laws for all of Berks County, the Humane Society provides adoption services, spay and neuter services, humane education, pet behavioral counseling, veterinary services to the general public, and helps stray, injured and mistreated animals. The Humane Society is located at 1801 N. 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Reading, and 1201 Ben Franklin Highway E., Douglassville.

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Attached photos (3) may be used freely and without attribution for purposes of coverage of this press release.



**Spring Township K-9 Officers Eric Goss and Dzeus.**



**Spring Township K-9 Officer Dzeus.**



**Humane Society of Berks County Staff Veterinarian Kelly Bendixsen examining K-9 Officer Dzeus with the assistance of Officer Eric Goss.**