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UNIT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

ST

FALL, 2015

COURTEOUS VIGILANCE



**Meet Fallon - DPS's
newest and perhaps most
interesting canine**

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Photos with this story by Jim Jertson



A detective with the Computer Forensics Unit can be seen here interacting with Fallon.

DPS welcomes highly remarkable, lovable canine to its ranks

The canine not only sniffs out digital evidence, but also springs into action to lift spirits when she senses emotional distress among employees

by Kellen Chavez

A new member of the Arizona Department of Public Safety interrupted a routine unit meeting at the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) on Oct. 26 to greet all of those in attendance.

Guided by two handlers from an organization called Power Paws, as well as DPS Sgt.

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Looking after his buddies

The Department's newest canine, Fallon, can be seen here keeping a caring, watchful eye on members of the Computer Forensics Unit at the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) in Phoenix.



Fallon can be seen here lifting the spirits of detectives assigned to the Computer Forensics Unit at ACTIC.

Fallon . . .

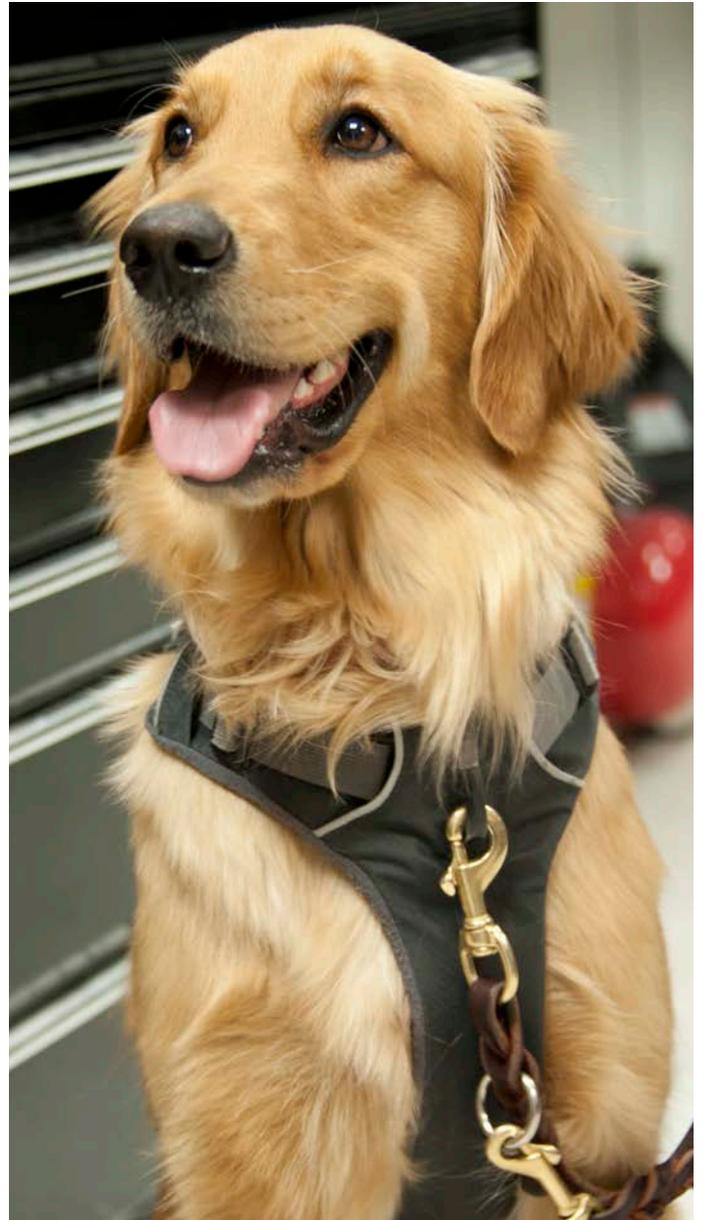
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Marcia Johnson and Trooper Thomas Olszak, Fallon is not the typical DPS new hire. She is a Golden Retriever and at a little under two years of age, exudes a youthful playfulness in her face and approach to people that immediately raises the spirits of anyone who comes into contact with her.

That undeniable presence was one of the primary motivations behind bringing her to work at ACTIC.

Computer forensic detectives at the ACTIC have a difficult job as is but on a regular basis they are, as part of criminal investigations, required to access hard drives and other digital-storage devices that possesses the most horrific examples of sex crimes against children.

The burden of having to examine such evidence



as a necessary precursor to carrying out proper justice can have a significant lasting emotional impact on detectives.

Fallon's presence, and trained skill set, will seek to alleviate that stress. She is not merely a friendly, beautiful, effervescent young dog but is trained to sense emotional distress from people within a given environment.

If Fallon senses such distress, she will engage the person until he or she acknowledges her in a positive manner.

Beyond her morale-boosting presence in the forensic computer lab, Fallon is also trained in recovering digital evidence.

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Fallon is shown above with DPS Sgt. Marcia Johnson and DPS Trooper Thomas Olszak. Johnson and Olsak are Fallon's official handlers and caretakers.



Besides sensing emotional distress, Fallon (shown above) is also capable of sniffing out digital evidence during the service of search warrants.

Fallon . . .

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In today's digital age, nearly every criminal case, no matter the crime, involves some type of digital storage device. It can sometimes take detectives days to locate a hidden storage device that a suspected criminal has gone to great lengths to hide.

While Fallon cannot determine the contents of a digital device, she can use her trained heightened senses to alert detectives to areas where they have not looked yet.

For example, there was a pause in her introduction at the ACTIC meeting and those in attendance wondered what had suddenly made her so preoccupied.

One of her handlers noticed and laughed it off that she was actually

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Fallon is shown above posing with some of her squadmates from the Computer Forensics Unit.

Fallon . . .

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alerting to the computer inside the meeting room typically used for presentation projections.

The program Fallon is part of has been called the DEAK-9, digital evidence alert K-9.

In another facet, Fallon can respond to a scene where maybe detectives have rescued a child victim. In this situation, Fallon can be utilized with the child as a comforting mechanism before detectives have to question the child victim.

DPS first became aware of the possibility of such a program after the Phoenix Police Department tried to start their program with a trained Golden Doodle, named Paisley, at ACTIC.

The Computer Forensics Unit is a collaborative effort that involves the work of law enforcement offi-

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Fallon is shown above getting a belly rub from DPS Sgt. Marcia Johnson.



Fallon is shown above making her rounds within the Computer Forensics Lab at the Arizona Counter Terrorism Information Center (ACTIC) in Phoenix.

Fallon . . .

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cers from many different agencies and Phoenix PD had recognized the burden placed on these detectives.

Paisley's presence inside the

and propose a DEAK-9 for DPS.

Paisley is now owned by the FBI in Phoenix and works out of their building.

Johnson said, "[Fallon's presence] is a pilot program. We have

She added that DPS had researched other agencies who would be able to provide such a specifically trained canine, such as the Connecticut State Police, but the overall costs of the dog as well

Fallon is a fully accredited service dog and, in total, is trained to respond to more than 90 different commands. Johnson and Olszak will need to train Fallon on a daily basis to ensure she remains sharp for the purposes needed within DPS.

as those associated with flying out the dog's two sworn handlers for the necessary training proved to be far too much.

lab lifted spirits to such a substantial degree that DPS began looking into acquiring a similar dog of their own.

Sgt. Jerry Barker and Det. Eric Oldenburg of Phoenix PD were the driving force and lead researchers with this innovative program. It was with their help that Sgt. Johnson could move forward to research

some measurable goals that we're looking at. We're looking at positive or negative effects on current caseloads, calls for service in computer forensics and in EAP, evidence that she will recover if we serve a warrant, overtime hours and how it affects us in terms of vet bills, food, toys and finally the morale of the unit."

Enter Power Paws, an organization that trains Labradors and Golden Retrievers to be skilled assistance dogs. They provide these dogs to military veterans suffering from PTSD, diabetics in where the dog can sense blood-sugar emergencies, individuals with mobility limitations, and law enforcement

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Fallon . . .

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agencies such as DPS.

“Power Paws has a heart to serve law enforcement. They really want to help law enforcement officers. They do a lot of training for animals for military veterans. That’s their heart, to give back, and also to people with disabilities,” Johnson said.

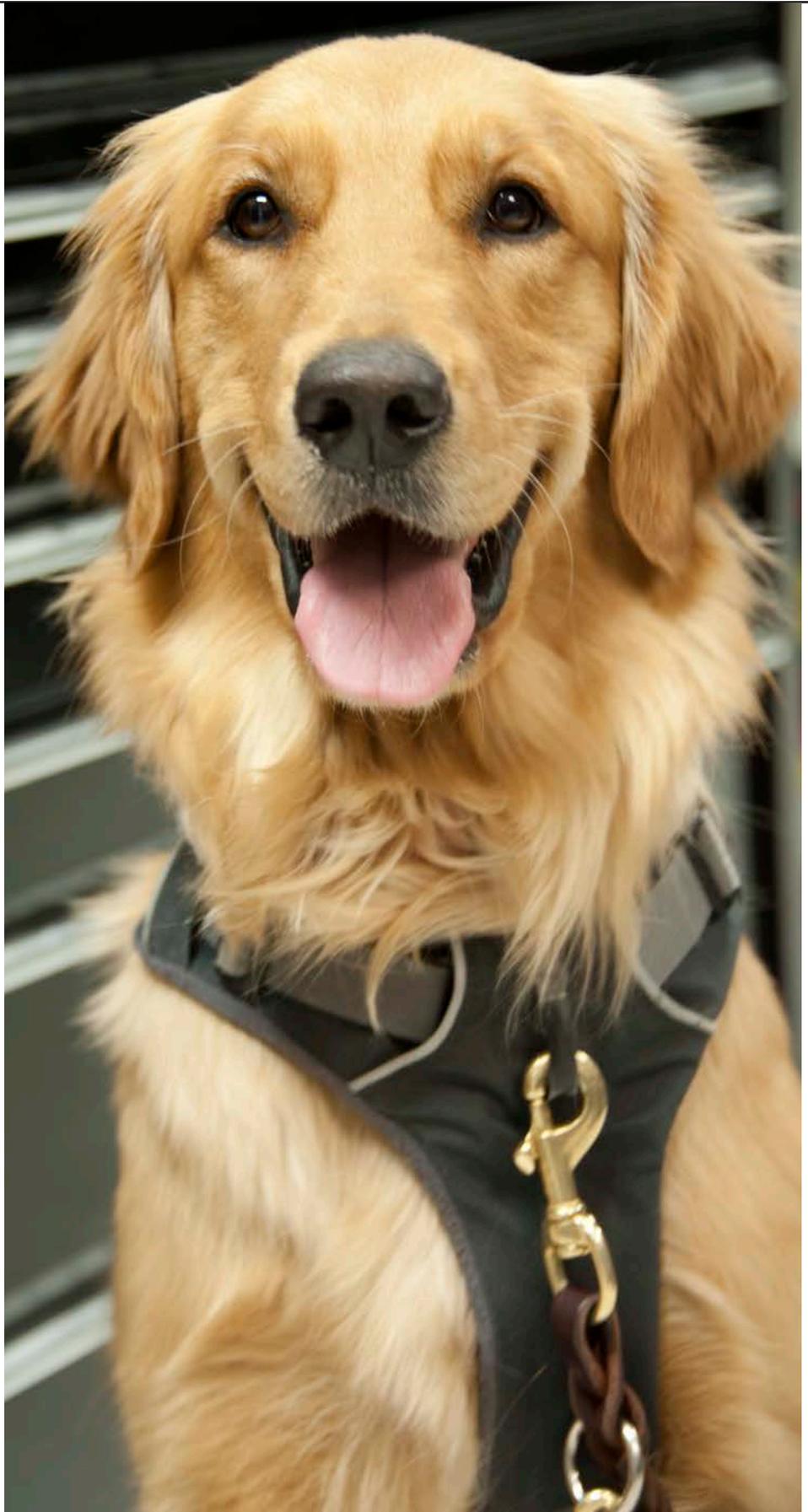
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Johnson said, “She will not stay in the car, she will always be with us where ever we are. If we’re in court, she will be with us at court. If were in the office, she’s with us in the office.”

Fallon will possess a badge number just like any other DPS canine, but as a Golden Retriever she is not a “bite” canine, which is to say that she cannot be used in the same manner as other DPS canines.

The ability to locate and alert to digital devices, however, provides the agency with a unique asset that its traditional canines do not possess. In a recent high-profile case, Johnson said the digital evidence that implicated former Subway spokesperson Jared Fogle in his child pornography case was located by a specially trained canine.

DPS would like to give special thanks to the 100 Club and For Those Without A Voice, who provided the funding for the acquisition of Fallon. DPS would also like to thank Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) for their support and maintenance funding of Fallon.



Fallon can be seen here showing off her warm, inviting and friendly demeanor.