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## New hound will keep troopers on the scent

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By Sarah Fortney  
News-Post Staff

State police in Frederick recently added a new member to their force, and she has four legs.

With a growing need for police search dogs throughout the state, Maryland State Police at the Frederick barracks decided to invest in a bloodhound search dog.

Trooper First Class Barry Stonestreet, of the local MSP barracks, has completed training with Jillie, a one-year-old bloodhound.

As of Dec. 1, Stonestreet and Jillie officially became a bloodhound tracking team.

"It helps us because of the call volume," said Sgt. Eric Fogle, of the special operations division.

On average, state police receive about 250 calls for bloodhound searches every year, Fogle said. Almost half of those calls require an actual search and they are often successful.

Though a search might not always end in success, the odds of finding a missing person are greater when a bloodhound is used, Stonestreet said.

Maryland State Police has one of the largest bloodhound units in the country, Fogle said, with a total of nine bloodhound teams.

The bloodhounds are mostly used for tracking and trailing, he said, including searches for missing children, Alzheimer's patients and lost hunters and hikers. They can also sniff down a criminal's track after a robbery, burglary or murder.

State police in Frederick bought Jillie from a breeder in Michigan for \$750, Fogle said. As part of her training, she had to run more than 100 tracks in different weather conditions and environments with a variety of smells -- and some distractions thrown into the mix.

Jillie had to pass a certification at the end of training, which included finding a victim using a trail that was about an hour old, more than one mile long and tainted by other smells.

Since Jillie completed her 10 weeks of training with Stonestreet, who had additional classroom courses on search management and high-risk tracking skills, the team has been requested three separate times to help search for missing people this month.

Though the calls did not require a search, it is still telling of the need for bloodhounds in the area, Stonestreet said.

And, Frederick is not the only community benefiting from the new bloodhound team, Fogle said. Agencies throughout Maryland and in surrounding states call on the state police bloodhound unit.

Maryland State Police helicopters often transport the bloodhound teams during emergencies, Fogle said. A bloodhound unit can arrive on a scene almost anywhere in the state within an hour.

Both Fogle and Stonestreet have several years of experience working with police dogs, which they believe are an invaluable tool.



Photo by Skip Lawrence

Maryland State Police Tfc. Barry Stonestreet with Jillie the bloodhound.

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## DID YOU KNOW?

- In 1977, a bloodhound helped put James Earl Ray, the man who killed Martin Luther King, back in prison after he escaped.
- Bloodhounds have 200 million olfactory cells, which pick up smell. Most dogs have 125 million to 150 million olfactory cells; humans have five to seven million.
- 175,000 adults and 797,500 children are reported missing on average each year; many of these cases involve a bloodhound search.
- Maryland State Police has six search managers and more than 50 troopers trained in basic search management.
- Maryland State Police is the lead agency for search and rescue in the state and recently trained six Frederick County Sheriff's Office deputies in basic search management and response procedures for missing people.
- Two state police instructors are also with the National Police Bloodhound Association and the National Law Enforcement Bloodhound Association, teaching other agencies across the country.
- Maryland State Police coordinates monthly training with other bloodhound teams throughout the state.

Information provided by Maryland State Police

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