

PDSA awards for three Scottish dogs



Three heroic and devoted Scottish dogs are to be honored by leading vet charity PDSA at a special ceremony in Edinburgh on 24 February 2017.

PDSA director general Jan McLoughlin said, “Between them, these three wonderful dogs have demonstrated extraordinary dedication, courage and character.” They have excelled in different ways but each story demonstrates the huge contribution that animals make to our lives. I feel incredibly proud to award Ozzy, Sweep and Sabby, three truly amazing dogs, with their PDSA medals.

“Each of their stories is unique and special, but they have all made a profoundly positive impact on the lives of people in Scotland.”

Police Dog Ozzy

Police Dog Ozzy will be awarded the PDSA Gold Medal – animal equivalent of the George Cross – for his bravery and life-saving actions disarming an armed assailant threatening to blow up a block of flats.

Nine-year-old PD Ozzy and his handler, PC Brian Tennant, were called to an incident at a flat in Falkirk, where a man had assaulted two people at knifepoint. On arrival the duo discovered the man had also severed a gas pipe and was threatening to blow up the building.

The occupants of the flats were evacuated, leaving PC Tennant and PD Ozzy able to enter the building. The armed assailant charged at them, shouting threats, while attempting to ignite

the gas with a lighter.

After warning the assailant, PC Tennant released Ozzy who tackled the man to the ground, allowing him to be disarmed and arrested.

Undoubtedly, PD Ozzy's intervention prevented the man harming himself, potentially others and causing extensive damage to the building.

Police Dog Sweep

Police Dog Sweep, a Field Working Spaniel, will receive the PDSA Order of Merit for outstanding devotion to duty while working as Detection Dog for Lothian and Borders Police.

During a career spanning 2007 to 2015, the 11-year-old dog was trained to detect drugs, firearms, cash and poison. In 2012 he became the UK's only Poison Detection dog, trained to find Carbofuran, a deadly banned poison, used to target birds of prey. He remained in this exclusive role until his retirement in 2015.

PD Sweep completed around 100 successful searches during his career, locating £512,000 of street drugs, £250,000 of cash and weaponry including shotguns, rifles and ammunition.

Sabby

Thirteen-year-old black Labrador Sabby (Sabakka) has been awarded the PDSA Order of Merit in recognition of her role supporting people with learning difficulties.

Sabby retired in 2016 after a distinguished 10-year career working with the NHS Lanarkshire Learning Disability Occupational Therapy Service team. During that time Sabby's warm and gentle nature has helped people with learning disabilities both in the community and within the inpatient facility. She has also taken an active role in programmes to help patients with extreme dog phobias overcome their fears.

Assistant Chief Constable Bernard Higgine said, "Police dogs play an essential role in supporting our officers in Keeping People Safe, as these awards demonstrate. Our dogs and their handlers perform many roles, whether it be searching for missing persons, searching out illegal drugs , money, poison or explosives. It is clear that they are brave and fearless teams and the awards to Ozzy amply demonstrate that."