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NEWS RELEASE

DATE: October 5, 2009

TO: All area news agencies

FROM: John McDonough

RE: Death of K-9 Officer Anjia of Three Rivers Police Department

It brings me great sorrow to announce the death of K-9 officer Anjia from Three Rivers. Anjia was bred and trained in the Netherlands and then imported to Mid-Michigan Kennels in 2003. After completing her training in Lansing, Anjia found her home with Deputy Matt Stark of the St. Joseph County Sheriff's Department. In 2004 and 2005 Anjia was used in the Battle Creek area as a drug detection dog at local schools. When Matt was hired in 2006 as an officer at the Three Rivers Police Department Anjia came along with him and became the department's second K-9 along with Officer Hicks' K-9 Bedo, this gave the city and the county a K-9 officer available every night.

Anjia was instrumental in numerous narcotics cases including Marijuana grow operations, Methamphetamine labs, and Cocaine distribution rings as well as a large number of possession and delivery cases. Anjia keyed officers into a Chicago man who had set up a cocaine distribution business in Three Rivers on March 9th, 2008. The investigation started with her indication of the suspect's car on a traffic stop. Anjia was also responsible for the capture and arrest of many fugitives. She captured felons that had run, and prevented even more from making the decision to flee. On July 20th, 2009, a suspect that had escaped from jail was spotted in Three Rivers. The man ran from police until Anjia gave a stern warning bark. The fugitive responded by turning and running to officers with his hands in the air.

Anjia was well known around the county. She made many appearances at social functions, schools, demonstrations, and fundraisers. Anjia usually spent this time with a child's arms around

her neck in a big hug. She went nose to nose with auto thieves, perpetrators of vehicle pursuits, violent felons, and home invaders with an impressive reputation of success. Anjia was recognized for her achievements as co-recipient of the Police Officer of the Year Award in 2008 and a certificate of commendation from the City of Three Rivers.

Her toughest battle was with an auto-immune disease that was diagnosed in September 2009. Anjia left us on the morning of September 30th 2009 at the age of 8 1/2 years old.

Officer Stark and Anjia were always available to help out their county. Even though they were officers from Three Rivers, they made themselves available to all county agencies and helped to apprehend criminals, assist in investigations, search for missing persons, and keep our county safe. Anjia will be sorely missed. K-9 officers are an extremely important part of law enforcement and community safety and thus essential to keep all of us safe. This safety comes at a cost and in order to get and train a dog with these specialized skills \$10,000 is needed. That is why I am asking the community for help. In this tough economic environment Law Enforcement is one area that is experiencing tremendous cuts and replacing Anjia will be impossible without the support of everyone. This is why I, along with other County Law Enforcement Officials, am asking businesses as well as the community to help raise the money. I have started by donating \$1,400 from drug forfeitures and hope that the rest of the money can be quickly raised. If you would like to donate money or learn more about the effort please mail donations to the Three Rivers Police Department at 333 W. Michigan Ave, Three Rivers, MI 49093 or call at (269) 278-1235.

Thank you for all of your support and I look forward to introducing our newest K-9 later this year.

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