



PENTAGON FORCE PROTECTION AGENCY
OFFICE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
Release No. 11-001

April 14, 2011
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Semper Vigilans: A Day in the Life of a PFPA K-9

*Story by Aldo, with assistance from Police Sgt. Sarah Lagasse, Pentagon Police Department
Photos by Shannon Giles, PFPA Public Affairs*

This is the Pentagon: Arlington, Virginia. I work here. I'm a cop. It's the day watch with the Pentagon Force Protection Agency (PFPA). My partner is Sgt. Sarah Lagasse. My name's Aldo. I'm a K-9 officer.

The time is oh-two-thirty hours. The morning alarm goes off. Because I'm a K-9, Lagasse lives with me, along with her husband, three civilian dogs and two civvie felines. Lagasse, the civilian dogs and I begin the day as we begin all others, with a walk outside.

Oh-three-thirty hours: After Lagasse grooms herself, we depart the home; a three-level colonial, garage in the rear, access from the alley, Ladysmith, Va. Our destination: The Pentagon. It's one of the most heavily fortified buildings on the planet. Working there is an awesome responsibility. Like my fellow PFPA K-9 officers, I specialize in explosives detection.

It's a job for which I received my initial training at Vohne Liche Kennels in Peru, Ind. back in 2008. Following basic training, I began 12 weeks of instruction with Lagasse at PFPA.

After certification as a military working dog, I went on the job and have been at it for more than three years.

Oh-four-thirty hours: We arrive at the Pentagon. A brief walk and rest break precedes morning roll call at oh-five hundred.

Oh-five-thirty hours: Following roll call, Lagasse and I report for duty at the Pentagon's Remote Delivery Facility (RDF). Our job: work with other K-9 teams to search the endless parade of delivery vehicles. The trucks bring tons of supplies and wonderful-smelling food.

They also haul away the tons of foul-smelling refuse. Some trucks are more fun to search than others.

Oh-eight-hundred hours: After watch at the RDF, Lagasse and I take a break. As a Golden

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Retriever, I would love to spend this time in hot pursuit of the many species of water fowl that frequent the Pentagon reservation, but Lagasse, who worries too much about the condition of her uniform, doesn't share my enthusiasm for the chase. So we limit ourselves on nice days to spending a few minutes outside, near the Pentagon Library and Conference Center to play in the grass.

Oh-nine-hundred hours: We go on call, ready to respond as needed to search packages, vehicles in parking lots, and various Department of Defense buildings throughout the region. During visits of dignitaries we are often entrusted with their safety and security by performing searches of their limos and hotel rooms.

I enjoy the search. I've been trained for it, it's in my nature and, while it may seem like a lot of work, the rewards are significant: I play an active role in the defense of the nation and if I find explosives, I get to play with a ball!

That's right, if I successfully detect explosives, I'm rewarded with some time playing with my very own, special ball. So I've gotten really good at finding explosive materials. I'm so good that I once alerted on some nitroglycerin heart medication. It wasn't explosive, but nitroglycerin is a key component of dynamite. I got to play with the ball!

Eleven-hundred hours: Patrol at the Pentagon. Our beat takes us around the river, onto the plaza, and into the building. Inside, Lagasse is often stopped by passers by and asked about me. She tells them things like my birthday -- Oct. 8, 2006 -- and that I'm the only Golden Retriever on the force. I don't do autographs, but Lagasse carries a supply of trading cards with my picture that she gives to my adoring fans.

Fourteen-hundred hours: After we patrol, our day is almost done. Lagasse and I take some time to exercise with the ball. I get a quick brush of the coat before we clock out. Then we begin the long trek home. Lagasse drives. I ride in the back. It's padded and air conditioned for my comfort.

In 2016, when I'm 10 human years old, I'll be eligible for retirement. The K-9 division and I will determine if I stay on the force for another year, or if I give up work. I enjoy my job, so I'm not sure how I'll feel about retirement. But when the time comes to turn in my badge, I'll have the option to stay with Lagasse. She takes good care of me. I think I'll keep her. But for now, I work at the Pentagon: Arlington, Virginia. I'm a cop.

- PFPA -

NOTE TO MEDIA: Below is a sampling of photos that are available as high-resolution .jpg files upon request.

Contact Paul Taylor, Pentagon Force Protection Agency, paul.taylor@pfpa.mil, 703-695-4618

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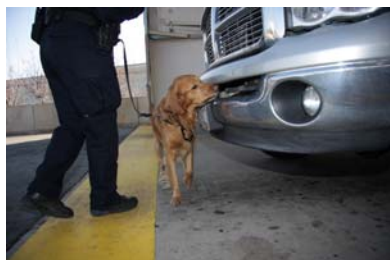
A Day in the Life of a PFFA K-9
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K-9 Officer Aldo takes a moment out of a busy day of explosives detection to pose for a photo in front of the building he protects, the Pentagon.



Physical fitness is an important part of life for all law enforcement officers including Aldo who enjoys his exercise time.



At the Remote Delivery Facility, Aldo searches an in-coming vehicle to ensure there are no explosives onboard.

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A Day in the Life of a PFPA K-9
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Aldo has taken his partner Sgt. Sarah Lagasse (right) under his wing and is helping mold her into a fine law enforcement officer.



Meet Sgt. Sarah Lagasse and Aldo of the Pentagon Force Protection Agency's K-9 unit. Aldo, the unit's only Golden Retriever, turned four (human) years old last October. He specializes in explosives detection and can often be found on duty checking out delivery vehicles arriving on the Pentagon Reservation. Aldo and Lagasse have been partners since he joined the Pentagon Police Department about three years ago.

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