

Police dogs essay



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Police Dogs Break Ratliff Animal Science AY105-02 12-12: 50 Cute, fun, loving, cuddly, outgoing; these are only a few words to describe the animals that we have come to know and love as a part of our families. Dogs have been man's best friend for hundreds of years and were the first animal to be domesticated because they are great as companions, highly intelligent, and were found to be very useful in human's everyday lives. Even though they made excellent house pets they were highly successful at working side by side humans as well.

They are not limited to being just best friends, but they have been found to be protectors and saviors as well, to their owners, other people and even other dogs too. One type of working dogs in particular that needs to be recognized for their tremendous efforts, and hard work is none other than police dogs. There are many dogs that will help humans in time of need. For example there are guide dogs, search-and-rescue dogs, and bomb-or-drug-sniffing dogs just to name a few. They really dedicate themselves to the jobs that they live to do.

But few dogs are asked to go above and beyond to lay their lives on the line to protect and serve as much as police dogs. These dogs are trained to do specific things. The basic description of what police dogs do is to guard their handler, and assist him in numerous tasks, such as finding, intimidating, and holding suspects, or investigate the scene of a crime. Some can even be trained specially for detection work. It is interesting how on one hand they are a loving member of a family, then when it is time to do some police work they can take down and attack humans so easily.

In order to lead this type of life style this dog has to have some very important traits that other dogs may not have. They must come from intelligent, strong, dedicated, and aggressive but obedient lines of dogs, and while even the trait to be too aggressive is not very desired the strongest traits that police dogs must have are self-control and obedience. Police dogs are usually members of the working dog breeds. The dogs today come from a long line of purebred working dogs that were bred because of their high intelligence and strength.

There are other breeds that have traits that could greatly contribute to police work as well such as hunting dogs or herding dogs because of skills like hunting and tracking for instance. There are several dogs that qualify for police work and are known for their bravery and drive. The German Shepard is the most common and most popular dog for police work. Lab Retrievers, Belgian Malinois, Doberman Pinschers, Akitas, Terriers, Boxers, Spaniels, Bloodhounds, the Bouvier de Flandres, Rottweiler's, Collies and Dutch Shepherds have been known to also be used for different types of police work.

K-9 police work is more than just brute strength and skin prickling growling. Tracking down or smelling for drugs, weapons, evidence, cash, bodies, criminals; holding on to criminals; and even protection work are all a part basic everyday life. Just the presence of a having a police dog by the officers side can prevent physical harm from being inflicted upon the police officer by the suspect/criminal, ultimately leading to lesser chances of the officer getting harmed in any way.

Police dogs today are not bred or employed to be vicious animals towards people in any sense; in all actuality most are trained or supposed to be trained to enjoy their work as hard as that may seem. What happens is it all starts off as fun and games. Chasing and grabbing is introduced to them as games when they are young pups to get them use to it. They usually play these types of games only when the handler or in other words a police officer, gives the right command for them to do so.

The goal of the games is not for the dog to actually “bite” its opponent but more to merely hold on to it for as long as possible till the officer it works with gives the dog the command to let go. This tactic is mostly to insure that the suspect/criminal does not get away until the officer can catch up and take care of him/her their self. This grab is strong and hard. There is always a large possibility that the suspect/criminal can/will be bitten if they attempt to fight off the dog but when thinking about it even the dog “gripping” onto the suspect will inflict a bite.

They would not be able to hold the suspect as well if they did not apply pressure into their grip. Before any dog has to be turned loose, they try to intimidate the person first by giving them a warning that if they start to run, the dog will be released and will chase after them. A barking tactic is also used to scare the person into not running away. Even in a case where the officer and dog seem to have the upper hand, there are many situations where the tables can be completely turned. Both the officer and the dog are trained to work together as a team.

They must be able to fully trust and understand one another especially when they are placed in extremely dangerous and stressful situations. It is the responsibility of the officer the dog is being handled by to only use the dog when the situation absolutely calls for it. Any other way would be very inappropriate and would be a terrible miss use of the animal. Not being responsible could also put the dog in more of harm's way which can take a definite turn for the worst. Going into depth of the most popular and common of the police dogs the " the German shepherd only came into being a little over 100 years ago.

A German shepherd enthusiast, fascinated with the intelligence, strength and agility of the country's native sheep dogs, established the breed, which spread throughout the world when Allied soldiers saw how the Germans used them as messenger, tracker and guard dogs during World War 1. After the war, the name German Shepherd Dog (Deutscher Schäferhund) was dropped in favor of the Alsatian Wolf Dog (After the Alsace-Lorraine German/French border region), as it was thought that the word " German" would make the breed unpopular, and Alsatian continued to be used for the breed until the 1970s. Your Best Friend: The Dog, pg. 50. The other types of working dogs that are used a lot more than the rest of the working breeds in police work are the Belgian Malinois (very similar to the German shepherd), the Doberman, Boxer and Rottweiler. One main reason they are under the German shepherd or Belgian Malinois could be because of factors such as tolerance for instance. That can be directed towards weather and other such factors. Based off of observation with their fur coats being shorter they do not do as well in colder climates or seasons and police duties are year round.

Still the loyalty, obedience, and ability to react quickly in certain situations, make the Doberman a great breed for police dog training. The brute strength of a Rottweiler, along with their intelligence and protective nature, makes them popular to some and in case there are no German shepherds around Rottweiler's are great substitutes for getting the job done. The same goes for the boxer with it being fearless, loyal and strong they are also respected to be a strong guard dog and used in police work.

This topic was found to be interesting and unique because dogs are one of the few animals people can really rely on to be there no matter what.

Humans can rely on dogs to be more than great companions and friends.

They have traits of loyalty, fearlessness, loving, strong, dedicated, and intelligent. The list could go on but more than any pet they will stick by your side till the very end. Dogs were also found to be great at being put to work.

Their senses are far better than humans. They have Excellent hearing and smelling. According to facts. randomhistory. om a dog can locate the source of a sound in 1/600 of a second and can hear sounds four times farther away than a human can. Also Touch is the first sense the dog develops. The entire body, including the paws, is covered with touch-sensitive nerve endings.

Dogs have a wet nose to collect more of the tiny droplets of smelling chemicals in the air. When it comes to their smelling abilities a dogs sense of smell is 50 times for sensitive than a humans. Some dogs can smell dead bodies under water, where termites are hiding, and natural gas buried under 40 feet of dirt.

They can even detect cancer that is too small to be detected by a doctor and can find lung cancer by sniffing a person's breath. It does not hurt that dogs

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can be trained to do just about anything so this makes them perfect for doing work. A good example of something a police dog can be trained to do is known as “ Aggressive alert” which the most common of the alerts it is taught to them. Aggressive alert is what the dogs do to show indication of an odor or substance that they are trained to detect by vigorously scratching and barking at a particular item. Another alert that is taught to police dogs is called “ Passive alert”.

The dog will sit when it smells the odor that it is trained to detect. Passive alert is common when it comes to explosive detection canines and narcotic detection canines. I feel that there are many pros and cons to having police dogs on the force. I personally like the fact that we have dogs involved in police work to a certain extent. Where some humans lack the stamina to run and catch up with a suspect that has decided to give an officer the chase, the police dog can make up for what he/she lacks. Dogs are great runners and if exercised properly they can almost run for miles.

This makes them great at catching up with suspects to get a good grip on them and hold them until the officer can catch up and give the dog the command to let go. Also by using the dog it allows for the officers to refrain from using bullets if they are not exactly necessary, and unlike a gun, a dog almost never misses. This could lead to saving more lives whether innocent or not. I also think that the dogs really have been one of the best decisions that the police force could have made when it came to looking for better ways to do their job in multiple aspects.

This is really in consideration to the dog's senses being way more sensitive than that of a human. Since we are unable to smell certain things that are not very pungent or in close range to our noses our dogs can definitely smell what we cannot especially particular breeds of dogs that have a better sense of smell than others. There was one particular instance that I can personally say caught my attention. I had an open bag of cookies in my purse and there was a beagle puppy and a boxer puppy in front of me allowing me to pet them.

Instantly the beagle puppy could smell the bag of cookies that I had in my purse sitting behind me before the boxer puppy could. It was so amazing to me to see how the dog reacted to the smell of the cookies. From previous knowledge of beagles I know that they are also working dogs and are great for smelling things and hunting things down. Police dogs are notorious for sniffing out drugs among other things. I remember being in high school and middle school and they would have days where they would bring police dogs in to smell the lockers of students to check for drugs.

They always made sure students stayed in the class room for safety reasons I'm sure. They are also good for being used in airports where people are constantly coming and going from other states and countries so it is highly important to know what people have on them when boarding or getting off of a plane may catch things that the metal detectors, x-ray like machines and security guards may miss. Their highly sensitive noses can also be used to track down one specific person, leading to a faster take down of suspects as well as finding those who are in need.

Some cons of police dogs are the actual harm they can cause a person while trying to catch and hold them while they wait for their trainer. They can inflict puncture wounds and if they grip the wrong part of the human body can lead to some pretty serious damage. There may also be case where the dog may attack the wrong person. Even though police dogs are extensively trained and are trusted partners police officers, they still possess canine instincts. A dog gets overexcited or becomes frightened may bite a handler, a suspect or a member of the public that is completely innocent.

Police departments cannot make guarantees that these out of hand attacks will not happen, and it is possible for police agencies to be taken to court by the victims and forced to pay compensation for any damages caused by the out of control dog. Depending on how well the dog has been handled it does run the possibility to become aggressive. Another down fall is that police work can be beyond dangerous, and dogs are also susceptible to being injured or even killed while on duty. There have been cases where dogs have been killed by suspects that may have wielded knives and guns.

Some people may view this as a disadvantage of using police dogs since the animal does not have a choice in terms of a career and emergency care is not all ways a call away for our canine companions especially at certain hours of the night. Mainly I do believe that having dogs doing police work does good than it does bad. There are more positives to adding dogs to the picture than negatives. Works Cited 1. " Police Dogs. ", German Shepherd Police Dog Breeds. Izoxx, n. d. Web. 05 Oct. 2012. . 2. " The Dog" Your Best Friend. Pg 50. London: Carlton, 2010.

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