

New narcotics-detecting canine “Joni,” graduates from Bristol County Sheriff’s Office

“Bristol County moved a step closer to drug-free correctional facilities and neighborhoods on Friday with the graduation of a new narcotics-detecting canine.

Bristol County K9 Officer Joshua Wunschel and his partner, K9 Joni (pronounced Johnny), officially completed the detection academy on Friday and were honored for their accomplishment before family, friends, and co-workers at a small ceremony.



Bristol County Sheriff's Office photo.

"Being a K9 officer is always something I wanted to do since I started at the BCSO," said Officer Wunschel, a Dartmouth resident who worked as a Corrections Officer at the Ash Street Jail in New Bedford and the House of Corrections in Dartmouth for almost 11 years before joining the K9 unit this winter.

“It’s been an amazing experience. The best part has been watching (Joni) grow.”

And grow he has. Joni is a 21-month-old German Shorthaired Pointer who tips the scales around 70 pounds. He is trained and certified to detect meth, crack, heroin, and cocaine, and is also trained on tracking missing people or people in distress. His favorite toy is any ball, and his favorite treats are Milk-Bones.

Officer Wunschel and Joni are available to assist local, state and federal law enforcement organizations if needed, but their primary purpose will be to keep drugs out of BCSO correctional facilities.



Bristol County Sheriff's Office photo.

“Our K9 team will be an integral part of our focus on keeping drugs out of our jails,” Bristol County Sheriff Paul Heroux said. “Officer Wunschel and Joni have done a great job in

training and we're thrilled to have them be part of this team."

BCSO Sgts. Michael Bettencourt and William Dillingham led the training academy with Sgt. Dillingham focusing on narcotics detection while Sgt. Bettencourt led the tracking portion. Both had high praise for Officer Wunschel and Joni.

"This milestone marks their relentless commitment to combatting the scourge of narcotics coming into our facility and to help safeguard our communities," Sgt. Bettencourt said at Friday's graduation ceremony. "Throughout their training, Officers Wunschel and Joni have exemplified the epitome of excellence, teamwork, and a shared mission to eradicate the grip of illegal drugs. With each exercise, they have displayed an unwavering determination to ensure that our facility and neighborhoods remain safe and free from the destructive influence of narcotics."-Bristol County Sheriff's Office.



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