



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Special police horse to retire Wednesday**

One of KCPD's most beloved Mounted Patrol horses will retire with a special ceremony Wednesday, Aug. 7.

Sergeant Major has worked at the department for more than six years and is the longest-serving horse to retire. He will be honored at 10 a.m. Wednesday at the Mounted Patrol stables, located at 7331 Oakwood Dr., in Swope Park. This is only KCPD's second formal horse retirement ceremony. The first was in 2008.

Sergeant Major is retiring because of a duty-related injury. On July 23, 2011, Sergeant Major helped conduct a car check on armed suspects in Westport. Mounted Patrol officers took four people into custody and recovered four illegal guns in that incident. But during the incident, Sergeant Major stepped off a curb in such a way that he tore tendons and ligaments in his ankle. After treatment and rest, Sergeant Major returned to duty, but the injury continued to plague him. Although the horse continually pushed himself to his limits, officers and the department veterinarian decided it was time for him to retire.

The 17-year-old quarter horse will return to the woman who donated him, Susan Davis of Cameron, Mo. He is well enough to enjoy the pasture life but can no longer keep up with the rigors of patrol work. Officers said they will miss Sergeant Major greatly.

"If we had room, all of us would take him," Officer Clark Collings said.

Sergeant Major has been the horse on which all Mounted Patrol officers have trained since 2007.

"He taught us all how to be police officers on a horse," Officer Chad Fenwick said. "Everybody loves him."

Sergeant Major also has been the primary horse used in the Mounted Patrol's youth riding program. This program teaches urban-core children riding and horsemanship. Youth riding participants will be present at Sergeant Major's retirement ceremony Wednesday.

Sergeant Major has earned some notoriety in other ways, as well. He was the first to take advantage of a 2010 city ordinance that made it a crime to assault police animals. An 18-year-old punched the horse in the face while he was trying to break up a large fight in a Ruskin park. The teen received a \$2,500 fine and two years of probation.

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