

Caught in the Line of Fire

by Linda Tynan

Dogs as we know them have been around for 33,000 years. They were the first animal to be domesticated and have been the most widely kept working, hunting, pet animal in history. They have earned the designation of "Man's Best Friend" through their companionship, their ability to work in a variety of jobs and their undying loyalty - none more loyal than a Montgomery K-9 officer named Bodi.

Bodi, pronounced "body," an 11-year-old German shepherd was Cpl. R. E. Tucker's partner for five years, a job that Bodi took to heart. On December 14, 2011, Bodi and Tucker were in pursuit of a robbery suspect which involved a chase through the streets of Montgomery. Bodi and Tucker engaged the suspect and the suspect exchanged fire with police. Bodi was caught in the crossfire during the pursuit and was shot, but that did not stop him, he was determined to protect Tucker and did not retreat - he continued to go after the suspect and was shot two more times during the confrontation. Bodi did his job, he protected his partner and the suspect was apprehended. Frank



Dr. Robert Speight, Jr. with Montgomery Police Chief Kevin Murphey at a press conference after the surgery.

Raven, was charged with 20 years in prison for first-degree robbery, 20 years on first-degree criminal mischief, one-year for attempted killing of a police dog and one-year second-degree attempted assault.

Bodi was rushed to Taylor Crossing Animal Hospital where Dr. Robert Speight, Jr. and his staff were anxiously waiting his arrival. When they received the call that an officer was down, They prepared for the emergency, not knowing what they would be faced with. Even

though Bodi had been shot, he was alert when he arrived. "Everything was happening so fast, we received the call that Bodi had been shot and we geared up to do whatever we could to pull him through it," says Speight. "We were concerned about the vision in the right eye, but the next day we began to see signs that his vision was returning." Bodi required two surgeries, and lost his left eye as a result of the gunshot, but made a full recovery thanks to the artful hands of Speight and the excellent care during the arrival, surgery and after provided by the Taylor Crossing staff.

Taylor Crossing Animal Hospital has been working with the K-9 unit dogs for over 20 years, they are their personal veterinarians, so everyone at the clinic was concerned about Bodi's condition. The clinic was flooded with calls about the K-9 officer as the public became enthralled with the case and concerned for his well-being. Over the years they have seen all types

of emergency situations working with the K-9 dogs, but this one will always be remembered because of Bodi's fighting spirit.

In January, 2012, Bodi was given a retirement ceremony with the Montgomery Police Department and received the Purple Heart for his service. Bodi's loyalty, unconditional love and sheer determination to do what he had been trained to do is the ultimate example of why dogs have played such an important role in our lives. Later that year, Bodi passed away



Montgomery Police K9 Bodi, with his handler Cpl. R.E. Tucker. The two shared the MPD Officer of the Year Award in May



due to a sudden illness, but he will always be remembered as a hero. This "Officer's Best Friend" represented all the qualities in dogs we have grown to love and appreciate in our canine companions throughout the years.

Bodi after surgery. (All photos courtesy of Montgomery Police Department© 2011 All rights reserved.)