

[Home](#) > [Wellesley Townsman](#) > [Local News](#) >  [RSS Feed](#)

 [E-mail article](#)  [Graphic version](#)  [Most popular](#)

K-9 recruit welcomed to police department fold

By **Anne-Marie Smolski**/ Townsman Staff

Thursday, July 6, 2006 - Updated: **08:50 AM EST**

He ain't nothin' but a hound dog, but if looks mean anything, he'll soon be the most popular member of the force.

The newest recruit to the Wellesley Police Department arrived through the efforts of Animal Control Officer Sue Webb, who had heard about a collaboration between two groups to get bloodhounds into the hands of interested police departments. Six months after she filed an application, she got the good news.

The groups were the Child Protection Education of America Inc. and the Jimmy Ryce Center for Victims of Predatory Abduction.

According to their Web sites, CPEA was established in Tampa, Fla., in 2002. It assists law enforcement with sponsoring bloodhounds, case registration, photograph distribution and publicity of missing children cases. The JRC was established in Florida in memory of 9-year-old Jimmy Ryce, who was kidnapped, sodomized and murdered on Sept. 11, 1995. In addition to sponsoring bloodhounds for law-enforcement agencies to find abducted and missing children, the organization promotes public awareness of sexual predators and predatory abductions.

Hilary Sessions, executive director of CPEA, delivered the yet-to-be-named, 8-week-old male bloodhound to the Wellesley Police Department last Thursday. Accompanying Sessions was Charles Lehrbach of Brookline, N.H., who is on the board of directors of CPEA. "You wouldn't believe the number of people who wanted to touch this baby," Sessions reported, when asked about how her young charge fared on the plane trip from Tampa.

On hand to greet the pup were Animal Control Officer Sue Webb and Officer Deb Ordway. "I didn't sleep much last night in anticipation," admitted Webb. The bloodhound will make his home with her, and she'll be in charge of his training.

Sessions released the bloodhound from his crate to the delight of all. He took immediately to Webb, licking her hand while she petted him. Later, he fell asleep in her arms.

Food, water and a favorite toy were handed over to the animal control officer. At first, Webb will mix the bottled water Sessions provided with local water, allowing the dog's system to adjust gradually.

When Chief Terrence Cunningham came down to the lobby to meet the bloodhound and visitors, Sessions quipped, "This is your newest officer."

Cunningham warmly greeted the pup and scooped him up, while Sessions discussed her organization and the bloodhound with those gathered in the lobby.

The puppy had waited until the chief's arrival to make his mark on the spotless floor of the police station. Never mind. The chief reacted to the special delivery by saying, "It's fantastic. Look at him. I'd love to take him home. The big thing is, he's going to do a lot of good for a lot of people."

Bloodhounds can not only locate a missing child but can also be used to track a patient with Alzheimer's disease who has walked away from a nursing home, or just the ordinary person who gets lost in the woods.

What's more, the bloodhound will be an extension of the Wellesley Police Department. Eventually, he will be making his way to schools and to community events. It could be said that some children will grow up with the pup.

There is no cost involved in providing the AKC-registered bloodhound to the police department. That's because of what happened to little Jimmy Ryce, whose body wasn't found for three months after he went missing. Sessions' own daughter, Tiffany, disappeared at age 20 after going out for a jog in 1989. At the time, she was a student at the University of Florida at Gainesville. She has never been seen nor heard from since. In 2003, Sessions became involved with the CPEA as program specialist. In 2004, she became its executive director.

"If we had a bloodhound to track where they had last been, we might have our children today," Sessions said. She, along with Lehrbach, who went to school with Tiffany, are co-authoring a book about the young coed. It's slated to come out in February 2007.

Renowned for its scent-tracking ability, the bloodhound is the top dog as far as scent power goes. Training only enhances the dog's capabilities. All those wrinkles on a bloodhound actually serve a purpose - the folds capture scent.

The pup, which will weigh approximately 110 pounds at six months, will begin training immediately. He will be going to summer school for puppy obedience classes. Webb said that she is also going to expose him to all the animals she picks up in her day-to-day work. Her immediate plans were "to play with him, take him out in the woods, see what toys he likes."

She said that socialization, obedience, trailing and agility will all be part of the bloodhound's training - little bits of everything at the same time. Sessions said that dogs don't get bored that way, when the training is varied.

Webb will have to keep a log of all the work she does with the dog. At first, she and the pup will go back to a trail she has laid 12 hours later to see if he can find it. If that's successful, they'll go back 24 hours later to see if he can still find the trail.

In about a year, bloodhounds are partially trained. By two years, they're fully trained. They can be used sooner, but they're even more reliable after the second year of training, according to Sessions. Bloodhounds can be trained to search for anything, including drugs. Once the dog is fully trained, he'll get certified so that he can be used in court.

"I try to educate the public on how to protect themselves," Sessions said. In June, she was on hand in Tampa when Gov. Jeb Bush signed a child-protection bill, slated to go into effect on July 1. The legislation closed a loophole in a current law. The CPEA supported the legislation that a Tampa Police major had pushed for to make luring or enticing a child younger than 12 into a building or a vehicle or attempting to do so a first-degree misdemeanor punishable by up to a year in jail. The previous statute, a felony punishable by up to five years in prison, applied only to adults who had been convicted of a sex crime against a child. The new legislation was prompted by the attempt of a man to lure away an 11-year-old child last summer in Tampa.

The CPEA is also working toward having special driving licenses for sex offenders and predators. The licenses would have



The yet-to-be-named bloodhound looks up at his new boss, Police Chief Terrence Cunningham. (Kate Flock photo)

Herald Interactive Tools



[Recent articles](#)



[E-mail article to a friend](#)



[Graphic version](#)



[Get RSS feed](#)



[Search site](#)



[Sign up for home delivery](#)

a special background, which would be a heads-up for law enforcement when they stop a driver.

Sessions appeared to be very comfortable in leaving the pup with Webb. She said she definitely thought it was a good match.






We're so glad we were able to get a dog to a department that really wants one," she said.

For information about Child Protection Education of America Inc. visit find-missing-children.org.

For information about the Jimmy Ryce Center for Victims of Predatory Abduction visit jimmyryce.org.

 [E-mail article](#)  [Graphic version](#)  [Most popular](#)

Recent articles

-  [Liquid gold](#)
-  [Traffic study for country club project approved](#)
-  [Paying school administrators](#)
-  [St. James lot could soon be empty](#)
-  [Sushi sashays to top of local grocery lists](#)

Today's most read Town Online articles Updated 11:45 AM ET

1. [Summer family fun: New England: Maine resort offers swashbuckling good time for young pirates](#)(45833)
2. [Tennis, anyone?](#)(2734)
3. [Local events](#)(2627)
4. [Sports shorts](#)(2618)
5. [Sports in Brief](#)(2607)

Search the site



Enterprise-level broadband service provided by [Expedient: America's Largest All-Ethernet Network](#)

Wireless broadband service provided by [Towerstream](#)

[[contact us](#)] :: [[print advertising](#)] :: [[online advertising](#)] :: [[Browser Upgrade](#)] :: [[Jobs](#)]

Order Home Delivery Online: [Weekly papers](#) [Daily papers](#) or call **1.800.982.4023**

© Copyright of GateHouse Media and Herald Interactive, Inc.

No portion of townonline.com or its content may be reproduced without the owner's written permission. [Privacy Commitment](#)

bh.heraldinteractive.com: 0.008668:Thu, 06 Jul 2006 12:50:35 GMT cached