

OUR TOWNS

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KAREN KERCKHOVE / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Youngsters are attracted to Jake, an Aurora Police Department K-9 dog, during a 1996 demonstration at Fox Fest. Jake died Wednesday.

Police pay final tributes to beloved K-9 partner

■ **Officer 'Jake' dies at 13:** German shepherd was expert at sniffing out drugs in vehicles

By **Matt Hanley**
STAFF WRITER

AURORA — At night, Jake the 95-pound German shepherd, could play with John Giles' children, fetching and licking like a family pet.

But when it was time for Aurora police officer John Giles to start his shift, Jake turned from plaything to partner.

"Jake was good around kids but when it was time to go to work, it was like flipping a switch," Giles said. "As soon as I'd start putting on the uni-

form, he'd start pacing back and forth."

Jake, who retired from the police force in 2003, died at the veterinarian's office Wednesday morning. He was 13 years old.

Aurora police credit Jake with seizing tens of thousands of dollars in illegal narcotics, tracking and capturing dozens of criminal suspects, and uncovering numerous guns and other weapons.

And somehow, Jake could stand still and docile in an auditorium full of elementary school students who all wanted to pet him.

"Jake had a unique temperament," Giles said.

Jake, like other police dogs, lived and worked with one handler. He was trained at the TOPS Kennels and Training Facility in Grayslake to

serve as protection, conduct building searches, and sniff out guns or narcotics. It was in drug searches that Jake made his mark.

After an officer made a traffic stop where he suspected the driver had guns or drugs, Giles and Jake would be called. Jake would then walk the perimeter of the car, sniffing at the seams in the vehicle. If he smelled drugs — "alerted", in police jargon — he'd bite and scratch at the area of the car. Once, he found three kilograms of cocaine hidden in the false ceiling of a van; another time he found \$15,000 in cocaine and \$5,000 in cash in a car stopped on the West Side of Aurora. Because Jake sniffed the drugs, officers had probable cause to search the car without a warrant.

All together, Jake is credited with spotting 200 pounds of marijuana and

100 kilograms of cocaine between December 1995 until he retired in January of 2003.

"K-9s play a critical role in so many aspects of police work, and Jake was one of the best," said Police Chief Bill Powell. "His efforts really made the community safer, and I'm sure, ended up saving more than one life."

But with arthritis crippling Jake's leg and back, Giles made the difficult decision to have him put down Wednesday morning. Dr. Jack Schaefer, the Aurora Animal Hospital veterinarian who had taken care of Jake since he came out of the K-9 training school in 1995, was there as Jake closed his eyes permanently.

"That was the hardest thing I ever had to do," Giles said. "He was the best partner I ever had to work with."



FILE PHOTO
Bob Golden makes leg lamps reminiscent of, but not identical to, the one made famous in "A Christmas Story." He sells them at his wife's store, Lu Lu and Me, on Jefferson Avenue in downtown Naperville.

A leg to stand on?

Lamp maker suing rival over movie-inspired piece

By **Meg Dedolph**
STAFF WRITER

A Naperville man who makes leg lamps like the one in the movie *A Christmas Story* is suing a competing leg lamp maker in California.

Robert Golden started making leg lamps, modeled after the one that gave young Ralphie's mother a conniption in the movie, doing business as Leg Lamp Factory. He sells them online and at Lu Lu and Me, a gift shop on Jefferson Avenue in downtown Naperville.

In the movie, based on Jean Shepherd's short stories, the family's father — who never wins anything — wins a lamp, which turns out to be in the form of a shapely woman's leg, clad in a fishnet stocking and a high-heeled shoe, topped with a fringed lampshade.

Brian Jones, proprietor of Red Rider Leg Lamps, based in San Diego, also sells lamps like the

one in the movie. In October, Golden filed a lawsuit against Jones in federal court in Chicago, accusing him of copyright infringement.

Michael Mazza, a Glen Ellyn lawyer representing Golden, said the people involved in the lawsuit will appear before a judge in Chicago on Jan. 9 for a settlement hearing.

If Golden and Jones do not reach a settlement then, Mazza said he expects the case will go to trial sometime in 2007.

The lawsuit arose after Golden, who registered his lamp design with the U.S. Copyright Office in 2005, discovered Jones' lamps on eBay in October. Golden contacted the Internet auction site and had Jones' lamps pulled from the sale listings. Jones said in the lawsuit that this cost him about \$100,000.

As funny as some people find the lamps, they're serious money. Golden's lamps sell for \$179 to

\$249, and in 2005 he expected to sell 1,000 of them.

But if the lamp first appeared in a movie, how can anyone legally make and sell copies of it?

"He didn't copy the one in the movie," Mazza said. "He did something different than the one that was in the movie. They're both leg lamps, but to leg lamp connoisseurs out there, there are pretty obvious differences."

In other words, put one of Golden's lamps next to one of Jones' lamps, and people can see they're different, he said.

"He took the general idea of a leg lamp from the movie — you can't copyright a general idea — and to people who just give it a passing glance, they look similar."

However, if you put one of Golden's lamps next to one of Jones' lamps, the differences are harder to see, and that's the distinction the case is based on, Mazza said.

FOX CURRENTS

Warm meal perfect for cold, snowy night

Conservation and environmentalism, the protection of our natural resources and outdoor ethics. What's it all about?

All of it can be traced back to a simple reason: Survival.

Catch too many fish from a pond? There won't be much left next spring.

Shoot too many grouse from a covert? It might be years until they repopulate.

The passenger pigeon was shot-gunned into oblivion and the plains bison was almost hunted into extinction.

Conservation is rooted in a great tradition: Food for the table. All sound environmental practices evolve from a simple reality, that we need to make certain that game (food) remains plentiful so we could survive.

Game feasts are a holiday tradition throughout the rural United States where hunting is not a recreation but a ritual that is passed from generation to generation with near-religious fervor. In fact, it dates back to prehistoric times, long before man turned to the plow and to raising animals to put a meal on the table.

Rubbed venison roast, smoky wild duck with plum wine sauce, seared salmon or blackened channel catfish — what's your favorite on the grill?

Of the many recipes we receive from readers, most are actually very simple and would fall into the "Home Style" category. Solid, rich, hearty meals like mom used to make.

Meals that were judged by how they tasted, how they filled you up and which were considered a rare compliment if they covered the plate.

As the year winds down and we anticipate the coming of the new season, I thought I'd share the best recipe I've read. I've got others. Yet, this is a great recipe for a snowy weekend when the kids are off skating or at the grandparents for the weekend and you can spend the day watching these ingredients bubble together into a scrumptious stew. If you've a cabin "up north," this is one for the first heavy snowfall when there's no place to go, no one coming over and you've got your favorite CD on repeat!

I realize most people do not hunt these days. They can buy venison from a game meat purveyor like Game Meats by Czimer's, which can provide every imaginable game from buffalo or venison to trout, smoked

pheasant, bear and boar and a hundred other game delicacies (Czimer's is on 159th Street, west of Bell Road and east of nearby Lockport: (708) 301-0500).

By the way, I won't divulge who the author was. She was a wonderful writer, with strong roots to the Fox River Valley by marriage, and this was one of the last recipes she sent before passing on to other pastures.

Lynn's Venison Stew

4 slices bacon, 3 pounds venison cut into about 1-inch cubes, ¼ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon pepper, 2 cloves garlic, minced, 6 cups thinly sliced onions, 4 tablespoons flour, 1½ cups beef (or venison) broth, ½ teaspoon dried thyme, 1 bay leaf, 1 can beer (your choice!).

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. On the stovetop, in a large Dutch oven or braising pan, cook the bacon until crisp.

Remove bacon, leaving drippings in the pan — let bacon dry on paper towel, then crumble it up. With heat at medium-high, add venison, salt and pepper to the pan and brown well on all sides, about 3 to 4 minutes. Add the garlic, stir well and cook about half a minute more.

Remove the venison with a slotted spoon and set aside in a bowl. After a minute the juices will start to release, then, while holding the meat in the bowl (with your hand, a spoon or a small plate), pour off as much liquid as you can back into the pan.

Lower the heat to medium, add the sliced onions to the pan, cover and cook 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Stir the flour into the onions, continuing to stir for two minutes until well mixed.

Add the venison broth and stir well.

Add the thyme, the bay leaf and the beer, stir again and bring to a low boil.

Return the venison and crumbled bacon to the pan, stirring well to mix it all up.

Cover the pan and place in the oven.

Cook at 325 for 2 hours, stir well, then lower the heat and cook at 300 for about another hour and a half.

Lynn liked to warn that, "...it will be so tender it will melt in your mouth! Wonderful served over thick egg noodles."

She didn't lie!

Here's to the coming new season and to the new year — make a resolution right now to keep a couple for the table! That's the only way conservation, proper stewardship of our natural resources and outdoors ethics makes sense.



Bob Maciulis
FoxCurrents

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