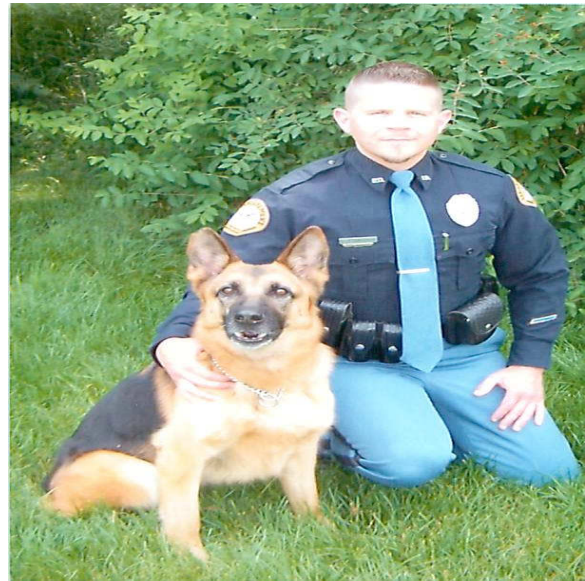


Clear Lake Police Department K-9 Unit

In June, 2007, the first ever K-9 program was established at the Clear Lake Police Department. Officer Ryan Eskildsen was paired with his new partner, a six-year old female German Shepherd born in the Czech Republic, where she received her initial training. Once in the United States, she received additional training at Mid-Michigan Kennels. She began her service as a police K-9 through a program offered by the Midwest Counter-Drug Training Center in Sioux City. The Training Center at one time offered K-9 partners and training for officers in Iowa at no cost. That program has been discontinued due to federal budget cuts. Fortunately for the Clear Lake Police Department, she became available when her former partner was sent to Iraq with the U.S. military. The Training Center provided the training that allowed Officer Eskildsen to become her new partner.

When the new K-9 came to the Clear Lake Police Department, she went by her Czech name, Bora. Over the summer, the Police Department held a fundraiser to help the new K-9 program with a contest to pick a new name. The winner of the contest was Sue Finnegan who chose the name Abby after her favorite childhood pet. The new K-9 program was started with donations from the Noon Lions Club and members of the community without the use of City tax dollars. In that sense, Abby is here as a result of the efforts of the entire community. For that we say "Thank you".

Since Abby's arrival, she has proved to be a great asset to the Clear Lake Police Department. She is available to assist officers in their daily duties. On one occasion Abby was used to locate a special needs resident of Opportunity Village that had wandered away. She also helped locate an injured bicyclist that was missing.



In addition to her police duties, Abby is quickly becoming the most popular member of the Clear Lake Police Department. She has spoken to many community groups including the Noon Lions Club, Clear Lake Rotary, Women's Christian Group, Elderberries, Girl Scouts, and the local grade schools.

Abby has also been of great value to neighboring departments. Within the first month of her arrival, Abby assisted the Mason City Police Department tracking an armed robber. Officer Eskildsen and Abby have worked with the Iowa State Patrol in drug searches on the Interstate. They have also assisted the North Central Iowa Narcotics Task Force with the seizure of many pounds of illegal narcotics intended for sale in our community and surrounding communities.

Abby's abilities are formidable. She has a nose thousands of times more sensitive than any human police officer. She can also outrun any officer by a wide margin. The Clear Lake Police Department is excited about Abby's ability to assist us in the coming years. She will help keep unwanted drugs off of our streets. Her unique tracking abilities will also help keep the most vulnerable from harm. We are confident that over time Abby will continue to be a very valuable member of the Clear Lake Police Department.

