



## News Release



Kansas City Field Division

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[www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov)

### **ST. LOUIS GAINS ATF EXPLOSIVES DETECTION CANINE**

ST. LOUIS — Marino F. Vidoli, Special Agent in Charge of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives' (ATF) Kansas City Field Division, announces the addition of a new explosives detection canine to ATF's enforcement team in St. Louis. Andi, a 15-month-old chocolate Labrador retriever, is fresh out of training with her partner, veteran Special Agent Alan Leah. Andi is the first ATF explosives canine in St. Louis and will join Kansas City Field Office veteran Special Agent Canine Handler (SACH) Randy O'Dell and his Explosive Detection Canine, Roxi.

Andi recently completed a rigorous 16-week training program at ATF's National Canine Academy in Front Royal, Va. The National Canine Academy's trainers worked with Andi for the first six weeks of her training, teaching her to detect trace amounts of all types of low explosives, such as smokeless and black powders, and high explosives, such as dynamite and TNT. SACH Leah joined her for the last ten weeks where they trained as a team. All ATF canine handlers are special agents and are specifically trained as certified explosives specialists, having specialized training and experience in post blast scenes and explosives recognition, handling and disposal.

ATF trains both explosives and accelerant detection canines. The dogs are trained for a variety of federal law enforcement agencies, including the FBI and the U.S. Marshals Service, as well as state and local law enforcement agencies. ATF has also trained and certified several hundred dogs being used in foreign countries. The explosives detection canines are trained and capable of finding improvised explosive devices, commercial and military explosives, explosives residue, post blast debris, firearms, ammunition, spent shell casings and fireworks. ATF-trained canines provide law enforcement investigators with a very important tool in explosives, firearms and arson investigations. Once the dogs are trained and certified, they undergo a re-certification process each year.

ATF's canine program, which began in 1986, uses only Labrador retrievers. The dogs are supplied by the Guiding Eyes for the Blind, the Guide Dog Foundation and Puppies Behind Bars. Andi was raised by the Puppies Behind Bars organization.

ATF's canines, both explosives detection and accelerant detection, are trained by using the food-reward system. Due of their tremendous sense of smell, the canines are first taught to identify the base odors from explosives or accelerants. They are then taught to sit down when they smell the base odor. When a dog properly identifies an explosive or accelerant odor and sits, it is rewarded with food.

ATF-trained dogs have been used successfully in a variety of situations including bomb and gun investigations, as well as in the more traditional protective search and sweep responsibilities. SACH Leah and Andi will work primarily on firearms trafficking investigations and search warrants, where Andi will be able to sniff out firearms. The team will also assist with explosives incidents.

For information on ATF and its programs, go to [www.atf.gov](http://www.atf.gov). To read more about Kansas City Field Division investigations, click on the Field Divisions tab and click on Kansas City and press releases.



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