For Release: August 8, 2018  Contact: mediarequest@mcso.maricopa.gov

MCSO K9 “Tarzan”

On August 4, 2018 at 9:07 PM deputies responded to a disturbance call at 11121 West Greer Avenue in Youngtown, Az. Deputies had responded to the same home for similar factors three times in the past 60 days. This was the second dispatched call to this address on that evening.

The first deputy on scene was advised by the residents that one occupant had fled from the rear of the home. As additional deputies arrived to assist, the first responding deputy retrieved his K9 “Tarzan,” controlling the K-9’s mobility by holding him on lead.

The deputy and K9 Tarzan were deployed to the rear alley behind the home, always accessing the public area. Once in the alley the deputy was exposed to an open and unsecured fence line. They were immediately confronted by a large, aggressive barking dog charging in their direction. The deputy gave several commands to the residents to restrain the dog. The adult female resident attempted to but failed to control or contain the dog.

The residential dog charged from the yard to the alleyway immediately attacking MCSO K9 Tarzan. The deputy attempted to, but was unsuccessful in separating the dogs as the residential dog first delivered strikes and injuries to Tarzan’s chest, then biting and locking onto his face.

Unable to prevent or control the residential dog attack on Tarzan, the deputy discharged his firearm to stop the attack. The residential dog succumbed to his injuries; MCSO K-9 Tarzan sustained injuries to his face and chest to include a broken tooth.

“The use of force in any capacity is an unfortunate yet necessary element of our job. We strive to preserve life of all in our community to include our animal population, said Sheriff Penzone. “These circumstances are extremely dangerous and challenging. MCSO K-9 Tarzan is a member of our organization, no different than any deputy providing public safety in our community. Once his life was threatened and in jeopardy, lethal force was justifiable to stop the assault. Although we have empathy for the resident of the home and sympathy for the loss of the residential dog, a secured yard and property restrained pet would have prevented this tragedy.”

As with all circumstances involving the discharge of a firearm by an MCSO employee, there is an internal investigation pending.

No further details involving this case will be released until the conclusion of the investigation.