UAPD adds bomb-sniffing K-9

By Holly Wells

Campus police will soon welcome a bomb-sniffing Labrador retriever to its family. The dog will be trained to sniff out explosives, including bombs and materials used to make bombs.

“The dogs are trained to detect over 19,000 different types of explosives through scent recognition,” said Mike Conto, a member of the Tucson Police Department bomb squad and partner of Bliss, a black Labrador retriever. UAPD is getting the dog through a governmental agreement with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. ATF will provide the canine and 10 weeks of training for officer Kyle Morrison. Sgt. Eugene Mejia, UAPD spokesman, said this is the first time ATF has assigned an explosive detection canine to a university.

“With this explosive detection canine, we will have a total of six dogs at UAPD,” he said. Mejia said four of the dogs are trained in patrol, search and rescue. They are at Mount Graham. The other dog is a dog detection dog, which is assigned to the Counter Narcotics Alliance. Morrison, said although the dog will be assigned to the UA campus, it will be at ATF’s disposal.

“After training, I will be a certified federal officer,” he said. “(The dog and I) will be able to be deployed to anywhere in the world.” Mejia said the dog will help UAPD watch out for potential terrorist attacks.

“The importance of having this canine is the potential of us being a target,” he said. He said the UA could be a possible target for terrorists because of the large-scale, highly populated events that take place on campus.

Study finds students would support $25 fee

By Dana Crudo

A student activity fee between $25 and $30 will likely appear on the March ASUA elections ballot. Preliminary survey results released yesterday show that students would support a fee to bring big-name concerts and speakers to campus.

In the survey conducted by an independent marketing group, 84 percent of students supported a $25 fee and 23 percent supported a $50 fee. Forty-four percent of students said they would want the money to go toward more concerts, while 26 percent wanted more speakers.

The idea for a student activity fee came from the Collaboration Board, which includes representatives from the Associated Students of the University of Arizona, the University Activities Board, the Parabellum Council, the Interfraternity Council, the Residence Housing Association and the Graduate and Professional Student Council. ASUA Sen. Nick Bajema, who is on the Collaboration Board, said the idea for the fee came after students told him they wanted more events on campus.

Even though elections are less than one month away, details regarding the structure and amount of the fee have yet to be determined. Greg Billings, University Activities Board president, said the size of the fee depends on programming and student support expenses.

But Bajema said it’s not likely the fee would be higher than $25 to $30 per year. If a $25 fee were approved, more than $1 million would go into a fund for campus programming that