

# WESTLAND Observer

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TOM HAWLEY | STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chainsaw carver Milan Emil Szkipala works outside the Westland Veterinary Hospital on a German shepherd carving in honor of Westland police dog Zeke, who died in 2002.

## Carving honors police dog Zeke

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Westland police dog Zeke helped make the city a safer place before he died of kidney failure in September 2002. He had a nose for tracking down suspects, finding drugs and solving just about any crime that came his way.

Now, a 6 1/2-foot wooden image of the German shepherd will stand in front of the Westland Veterinary Hospital,

where he was treated day and night by owner Dr. Sharon Lawrenchuk.

"I just really wanted to do a memorial to Zeke and all the other police dogs, past and present, that have served without recognition," she said. She hired Milan Emil Szkipala, a Romanian-born woodcarver and Chesterfield resident who used Zeke's picture and a chainsaw this week as he created his latest work.

"I'm trying to capture the expression of the dog," Szkipala said, adding that

he planned to use a torch to produce different colors in wood from an old elm tree.

He estimated he would spend 30-40 hours working on the wooden statue, which he said weighs between 400 and 500 pounds.

Zeke's owner, Officer Grant Allen, stopped by the clinic Tuesday afternoon to sprinkle some ashes from the

Please see **ZEKE, A3**