

From the Office of the Sheriff: "K-9 Units Fielded"

In a first for the Dodge County Sheriff's Department we have acquired and fielded two K-9 deputies this month. Paige and Ziva are currently working with Master Trainer Jean Frost and their selected handlers Deputy Enright and Deputy Fairman, with training directed towards drug detection and tracking. Paige and Ziva are both pure bred black Labs which were purchased locally and have received rave reviews thus far from their trainer.

Deputy Enright has partnered with Paige, a 10-month old lab purchased from a very reputable breeder from Horicon. Paige had received significant obedience training before we made the purchase, so Paige is well on her way. Deputy Fairman has partnered with Ziva, a 14-month old lab who was brought to our attention by the Dodge County Area Humane Society. Both K-9s have integrated well into the homes of their handlers and their families.

Many people have asked why black Labs and not German Shepherds. Great question. Our focus is on drug detection and tracking. I had no interest in fielding intimidating looking dogs many departments employ in an offensive/defensive manner. As nice as it would be to have a K-9 deputy to send into a building to flush out a bad guy, the very limited number of such occurrences in Dodge County does not support the expense. We are focused on drug detection and drug interdiction.

Of course having a K-9 deputy is just half of the equation. The handlers are due our credit and appreciation for taking on such a huge responsibility. Deputies Enright and Fairman were selected after an extensive application and interview process. Captain Molly Soblewski led the competitive effort which included both written and verbal requirements and culminated with a visit to the deputy's home to speak to their spouse and children. Both handlers have exhibited the drive, determination, and commitment it will take to be successful handlers.

Whether it is the care, feeding, or training, the K-9 deputies will be required to work with their partners every day. Beyond the daily requirements there will be endless community events directed towards community outreach. The handlers also agree to 24/7/365 availability for use by the Sheriff's Department or any other county law enforcement agency who may be in need of K-9 services. Our focus will also be directed towards conducting drug interdiction within the county, conducting traffic stops and walking the K-9s around the vehicle in order to detect the presence of illegal drugs within. We look forward to the tracking component as well. Whether it's a lost child, an Alzheimer's walk away, or a driver fleeing from deputies; Paige and Ziva will be available to track these folks down, saving precious time.

Other applications we look forward to include assisting our partners in the Department of Corrections conducting drug detection checks within our four state correctional facilities, as well as our own detention facility. Our Multi-Jurisdictional Drug Task Force is also looking forward to both K-9s as we will save significant time when conducting search warrants of houses and property. These dogs will accelerate those searches saving valuable financial resources. Both K-9 deputies will be officially sworn in at the Dodge County Fair on August 19th and are scheduled to be certified by mid-October. To support our K-9 Program we will be selling shirts at the fair which state "Support your Local Paw Enforcement". Thanks for listening, tnhls@co.dodge.wi.us.