

Police Dog Demonstration Held at BOCES Campus

Nov. 17, 2009 (New Hartford, N.Y.) – Members from area law enforcement agencies, including Deputies Anthony Sege, Tom Larkin, and several other deputies and officers, visited the OHM BOCES campus to perform a training demonstration with their police dogs. Joanne Daley's New Visions Veterinary Science and Animal Science classes and Richard Marchitelli's Criminal Justice classes attended this fabulous demonstration.

Required to continually condition their dogs, officers train the first and third Tuesday of every month and prefer various locations to provide the dogs with new situations. Deputy Sege said the construction on the BOCES campus was a great opportunity for the dogs' training.

The dogs showed off their obedience skills both in response to verbal and non-verbal cues. The dogs demonstrated a "bark and hold" type of skill, where, when a criminal is apprehended, the officer instructs the criminal to stand still and commands the dog to "hold" the criminal in place by barking. The dogs also demonstrated a "bite and hold" type of skill, where, when an apprehended criminal attempts to escape, the dog is commanded to "take down" the criminal. This can be accomplished either by biting the suspect's arm or biting the suspect's back while tackling. The "suspects" were obviously officers and were wearing protective gear. One officer even shot blanks out of a gun to make it more realistic for the dog. Students LOVED this demonstration and several wanted to don the "bite suits" and be attacked by the dogs. Of course, they were not allowed.

The dogs also demonstrated searching for explosives and drugs. A fake explosive was set on the wheel well of Mrs. Daley's car as a plant for a dog to find. When the dog smelled the explosive, he sat. They are trained to sit when finding explosives and scratch when they find drugs. It is hoped that they never get these two skills mixed up! There were not any drug sniffing demonstrations; however, the deputies did show the students how the odors are stuffed into the dogs' toys to motivate them to search for similar scents.

