



HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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American Legion #69 Auxiliary gives \$9,000 to HCSO K-9 Fund

AVON PARK -- When you can shock five cops, you know you have done something special.

In an overwhelming display of support, the American Legion Post 69 Women's Auxiliary presented a \$9,000 donation to the Highlands County Sheriff's Office K-9 Fund on Monday, March 13.

Members of the K-9 unit who were on hand to give the Auxiliary a demonstration of obedience, narcotics detection and suspect apprehension, were stunned at the amount.

"This is above and beyond anything we could have expected," K-9 Unit Sgt. Kyle Albritton said. "We are extremely grateful for this donation and for the Auxiliary's continued support of our unit. Our last two dogs were both purchased with money from the K-9 Fund, which comes strictly from community donations. This donation alone is enough to purchase another dog when that time comes."

Auxiliary President Mary Striecker said the unit works hard all year to raise money for a variety of causes. Monthly dinners are held, as well as other fundraisers.

"We work hard for it all year long," Striecker said. "Our members are great people and they give from the heart. We are very proud of our women."

The Auxiliary also raises money for Ridge Area Arc, Heartland Horses and Handicapped and many other veterans' charities. "If we find a charity in need of help, we will pitch in and help," Striecker said.

The K-9 Fund was started in 2010 with a \$50 donation from Clarice Carter. Monday's donation was the largest single gift in the fund's history.

"We are overwhelmed by the generosity of the American Legion Auxiliary #69, Major Mike Brown said. "Their kind support will go a long way to providing our K-9 Unit the needed resources to perform their duties.

"Our K-9 teams are some of the best in the country and give the Sheriff's Office an edge when dealing with life and death situations."

Striecker said the money is raised through a combined effort of all 472 members of the Auxiliary.

“Our unit is very special,” she said. “We are very proud of what we do and very proud of our sheriff’s office and all they do.”



K-9 Deputy Chris Bates and Kylo Ren, K-9 Sgt. Kyle Albritton, Mary Striecker, Major Mike Brown, K-9 Deputy Mike Parker and Benji, K-9 Deputy Steve Worley. Kylo Ren and Benji were both purchased with money from the K-9 Fund, which comes strictly from community donations.



Photo #2: K-9 Deputy Chris Bates and Kylo Ren demonstrate suspect apprehension with Deputy Steve Worley.