

K9 officers receive 3 days of intensive training in Tahoe

By Kathryn Reed

A strong police presence was seen throughout various parts of South Lake Tahoe earlier this week.

Thirteen police dogs and their handlers from about a half dozen California law enforcement agencies were in town for an advanced training course March 4-6.



K9 officers spend three days training in South Lake Tahoe. Photos/Matt Morrison

South Lake Tahoe Police Department's two dogs participated, too. This is the first time the department has hosted an advanced training. As host, the dogs and handlers attend for free.

The three-day class was taught by instructors from Vigilant Canine Services International.

While training is part of every day life, a course like this is more intense.

One session had the dogs at Lake Tahoe Airport working with helicopters from the CHP and Reno-Tahoe Helicopters.

“Dogs can get squeamish around loud noises and propellers,” Sgt. Josh Adler explained. “This gets them acclimated.”



SLTPD Officer Ryan Wagoner gets his dog used to the helicopter.

Dogs had to climb into the helicopter with it running.

“After that we exposed the dogs to tear gas. They aren’t affected by it, but you need to know if they are or not,” Adler told *Lake Tahoe News*. The officers all had masks on.

One scenario required the dogs to find a bad guy while tear gas was in the air.

Multiple searches were conducted throughout the training.

Dogs also had to work around firearms.

Annual certifications are required per Police Officer Standards and Training. The dog and handler must pass as a team.