

Delaware County Sheriff's Office

**280 Phoebe Lane Suite #1
Delhi, New York 13753**

Craig S. DuMond
Sheriff



Timothy M. Buckley
Undersheriff

PRESS RELEASE

September 1, 2020

Delhi, New York –

On Monday August 31, 2020 the Delaware County Sheriff's Office held a K9 Monument dedication ceremony in remembrance of K9 Osman Steele. The monument will not only honor our beloved "Ozzie" but also all future K9 members who are fallen while in service to the Sheriff's Office and People of Delaware County.

The ceremony was opened by Sheriff Craig DuMond speaking on the bond between a K9 and their handler, describing the bond as "eternal and a trust between them in a nameless language". Major John Demeo, K9 Ozzie's handler, described his relationship and partnership he shared with Ozzie, describing it as an "inspiration to me as well as many others in Delaware County". The Major emotionally reaffirmed his feelings of loss for his former partner saying "Ozzie, your abilities, strengths and loyalties – to your very last breath – will always be with me."

Sheriff DuMond indicated K9 Ozzie and all the agency's K9s are required to possess remarkable qualities as police dogs. They are required to possess the unusual ability to go from a school with elementary kids petting them and pulling on their ears, and then immediately go into work tracking down a criminal. They must have the canny ability to turn that off and on, and that's really special and unique. "You don't find that in many police dogs", the Sheriff indicated.

Sheriff DuMond remarked, "Even though we are deeply saddened by Ozzie's untimely passing, we are encouraged and uplifted knowing that our K9 program is strong and will go on. Deputy Karcher and K9 Eli are currently in training now and our awesome Delaware County community has continued to very generously Bless us with significant donations to continue our program well into the future. This is a true testament to the work and honor that Major Demeo and Ozzie accomplished and I am completely confident that Deputy Karcher and Eli, as well as future teams, will continue that tradition of excellence well into the future and beyond".

Sheriff DuMond also issued "Super Star awards to Dr. John Davis of Valley Veterinary Services for his "generous partnership and honorable commitment to the Delaware County Sheriff's Office and for providing impeccably professional services," as well as Erica Ressel for her "professional service, compassion and empathy in caring for our beloved K9 Osman Steele."

The Deputy Sheriff's Benevolent Association also presented Ressel with \$500 from the new K9 Ozzie Memorial Scholarship Fund. This is an award that was made to a person pursuing continued education in veterinary medicine.

Sheriff DuMond presented a third Super Star award to Paul Decker of Hall, Peet and Decker Funeral Home for donating the monument, which stands beside similar memorials for fallen Delaware County law enforcement officers and firefighters. "Without Paul Decker's help and support, this monument and today's memorial ceremony simply wouldn't have been possible"... "We are in deep gratitude for his contributions and support", DuMond said.

Donations to the Delaware County Sheriff's K9 program can be made via checks payable to the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, attention K9 Fund, and mailed to 280 Phoebe Lane, Suite One, Delhi, NY 13753.