

## HORSIN' AROUND

## Nine new mounted unit deputies graduate academy

By SHARON GREENE Special to The Oakland Press

Nine new and proud mounted deputies graduated from the intense 12-week Oakland Police Reserve Academy on Saturday in a ceremony at the Oakland Community College Auburn Hills campus. This was the largest graduating class of mounted unit officers to date.

The new recruits learned the basics of criminal, civil and procedural law, traffic enforcement, accident investigation, patrol tactics, firearms and professional policing and report writing.

Deputy Toby Johnson, class president, spoke to the assembly and reflected on the experience of the academy.

"We know the importance of keeping physically fit, mentally alert, morally straight and preparing for the unexpected. And, we also confirmed and embraced the rules of ethics, integrity, fairness, respect, justice and compassion needed to be a successful and professional peace officer."

The cadets were told that their lives could be put on the line in service. Toby Johnson spoke on behalf of the graduates.

"We are men and women of selfless courage with a nobility of purpose to serve and protect."

Pastor emeritus Dahan Tootokian of the Armenian Congregational Church of Southfield provided an invocation and benediction asking for God's protective hand to watch over the new recruits.

Capt. Michael Johnson, commander of the Rochester Hills substation for the Oakland County Sheriff's Office, gave the commencement speech. He congratulated the graduates and stressed the importance of the role they will play.

"There is no greater need than right now as so many departments are shrinking. And with many officers being laid off, we need as many qualified volunteers and reserve officers as we can get. We've lost 3,000 full-time police officers in Michigan alone due to economic cutbacks.

"We can't provide enough community manpower to patrol our parks, the Dream Cruise and other local activities without our reserve officers," he added.

"With the nine new mounted officers, we will have a total of 28 mounted reserve deputies serving in Oakland County."

Oakland County Sheriff, Michael Bouchard, offered his heartfelt congratulations to the new deputies.

"First off, I am pleased and proud of the men and women who have joined our team and I am especially appreciative because of the challenging times we face due to diminishing resources and increasing demands.

"These officers perform out of the goodness of their hearts in an effort to give back to the community they serve — specifically the mounted unit that allows us to field a large professional group at a very low expense to the taxpayers."

### FYI

For information or to apply for a reserve deputy position, contact Sgt. Matt Snyder at 248-858-1664. For information about the reserve mounted unit, contact Sgt. Kelly Sexton 248-858-1597. Send comments to [sharonlgreene@hotmail.com](mailto:sharonlgreene@hotmail.com).



SHARON GREENE



Special to The Oakland Press/SHARON GREENE

Nine new Oakland County mounted unit deputies graduated Saturday from the Oakland Police Reserve Academy including Kevin MacRitchie (top row), Bill Terian (middle row, from left), Christina Chilva, Jerry Kolb, Adam Mott and Rachelle Lanier (front row, from left), Nina Kowalski, Jim Roberts and Toby Johnson. Capt. Michael Johnson of the Oakland County Sheriff's Office (far right) was at the ceremony.