

2 towns add dogs to police forces

By Jeff Simmons
Correspondent

The two newest members of the Allendale and Mahwah police departments eat dog food — and their partners don't bat an eye.

The new recruits, Axel and Brut, are German shepherds. Born in Germany and trained in California, they were flown to Bergen County last week.

But jet lag apparently hasn't dissuaded them from getting an early start on crime fighting.

Axel already has sniffed out some stolen photographic materials. Brut chased a burglar into police custody. Both helped control crowds last weekend at a labor dispute in Wyckoff.

The dogs are also undergoing rigorous 10-hour training sessions daily. Last Monday, they searched for an intruder at a vacant building at the former Darlington Seminary in Mahwah. They found him within 30 seconds.

Police said the same search conducted by an officer would take about 15 minutes.

Allendale is still attempting to raise enough money to support Axel.

Police said the dogs cost \$4,500 each. There were additional expenses for equipment and the trainer, who flew to New Jersey to acclimate the dogs to their surroundings.

In Allendale, \$4,500 has been raised by a 10-member committee. About \$5,500 more is needed, said Patrolman Andrew Baum, who handles Axel. Mahwah does not need additional funding because it received a sizable donation from Faberge Inc., which paid for Brut in return for naming him after its men's cologne.

"Using a dog can be a benefit in any number of situations," said former Councilman Thomas Bruinooge, who headed the Allendale committee. Bruinooge asked for donations to the Allendale K-9 Committee, P.O. Box 104, Allendale, N.J. 07401. He said funds will be held in trust for Axel.

The municipalities are insuring each dog's life for \$500,000, the same coverage given its officers, Baum said. The municipalities are the beneficiaries in the event either dog is killed in the line of duty, police said.

See POLICE, Page C-5



Mahwah Patrolman Edward Simms and Brut, with Allendale Patrolman Andrew Baum and Axel.

Staff photo by Jeffery A. Salter