

Elks offer three-year support to DARE

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Robinson says after 23 years working in law enforcement the DARE program allowed the shell around his inner self to disappear.

"Don't let your hard heartedness prevent you from shedding a tear," he said, emotions welling up in his eyes.

He said any program

can have the best guidelines, top notch training but it is the person running it, the individual, who is going to make the greatest difference.

"The DARE program has made me a better person, a better father, a better husband and just a better citizen," he says.

Staff Sergeant Gerry Gourlay says there is a lot of pressure on detach-

ment commanders like himself to utilize resources the best they can.

"Often times it is the DARE program that is questioned by superior officers so it is very important for DARE officers and mentors to keep this program in the best light."

In Yorkton, he has received much positive

feedback about the program. He says one of the side benefits of it is it puts RCMP officers in a different light in the eyes of children.

"They get to know the officers by their first name and have a really good working relationship," Gourlay says, adding, DARE officers are special because they want to work with youth and be in the schools.

The graduation was also the occasion to recognize long term support of the DARE program by the Saskatchewan Elks Association.

Chairman Bruce Schwanbeck, made a \$10,000 contribution

towards the program, the first of a three-year overall commitment of \$30,000 to train DARE officers.

The money for the program is raised through a joint effort of the RCMP and the Elks who annually host the Peace 100 snowmobile derby.

"This is about our ninth year that we're going to be doing this," says Schwanbeck. "It's very important. If it takes \$10,000 to save one child's life it is worth it because it's worth a lot more than that."

The graduation ceremony saw Military Police from CFB Suffield and Dundurn, and municipal

police officers from Prince Albert take the training. It will undoubtedly have a broad positive impact.

"It's going to get bigger. It has to with all these new drugs out there. I just hope we can carry on and I will do my best to ensure it is," Schwanbeck pledged.

The ceremony wrapped up with a surprise appearance by students from Dr. Brass who gave each officer their DARE Bear (a tradition of the program). It proved to be a very moving and memorable moment for all graduating officers.

Many shared hugs and shed tears of joy from the experience.



PRESENTING A CHEQUE FOR \$10,000, Sask. Elks Chairman Bruce Schwanbeck (left) says it is the first of a three-year commitment of \$30,000 to the DARE program. Accepting the cheque is Insp. Jim Templeton, commanding officer of "F" Division.