Local law enforcement participate in Active Shooter Training at MLHS

By Doris Song

The Gyp Hill Premiere

Nephi Richardson became familiar with the United States Deputy Sheriffs’ Association while still with the Kiowa Police Department. He suggested that Barber County law enforcement officers would benefit from the Tactical Entry/Active Shooter Training that the organization offers. Now with the Barber County Sheriff’s Office, Richardson was one of seven who participated in the training on July 16, 2014 at the Medicine Lodge High School/Junior High building.

Other officers from Barber County involved in the training included Sergeant Jay Morford, Officer Ryan McNeil, and Officer James Leonard with the Medicine Lodge Police Department; Chief Steven Johnson and Officer Warren Howerton with the Kiowa Police Department; and Deputy Aubrey English with the Barber County Sheriff’s Office.

The training course was taught by Mike Willis, the Executive Director/National Training Director of the organization and David Himers, Deputy Director/National Trainer. Willis is a former full-time law enforcement officer and Team Leader/Point Man for an active multi-agency SWAT Team. He has been training nationally for organizations since 1999. Himers is currently a full-time law enforcement officer serving on a specialty unit with over 20 years of police and security experience. He has been a national trainer since 2004 and trains recruits for his department.

Officer McNeil commented, “This training exercise also familiarized us with the high school building should a problem arise. It will also benefit officers when they do open door calls.”

The Tactical/Entry/Active Shooter Training is designed as an introduction to room clearing and combat tactics for officers and small units. The basic elements of dynamic, stealth, and response to an active shooter are covered. Weapons handling and safety are stressed during the training. The course encourages teamwork and trust and develops flexible strategies for the response to an active shooter or an high risk situation. The trainees were given instruction during scenario drills that covered a wide range of situations and how to handle them.

The course lays a foundation for future firearms and tactical training. Officer McNeil stated, “We will be doing another one later down the road.”

The United States Deputy Sheriff’s Association is a national organization funded by sponsors and donors which allow them to provide law enforcement officers across the United States with valuable life-saving training without cost. They are dedicated to officer survival training of the men and women who risk their safety for the safety of those in the community in which they serve.