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High tech cruising

By Kathleen Baglio Humphreys

LYNDEBOROUGH — All three of the town's police vehicles are being equipped with the latest voice-activated computers as a result of a \$30,000 grant awarded by Project 54.

Project 54 (named after the TV show, "Car 54, Where Are You?"), sponsored by the University of New Hampshire, the State Police and the Department of Justice, funded the project at 100 percent.

Each computer cost \$10,000 and allows law enforcement officers to quickly obtain crucial information from the National Crime Incident Center, a national database, and other sources.

Officers can run checks on people or motor vehicles by voice command and also turn on their sirens, radar or lights without touching a button.

"Anything officers do in their vehicle can now be done by voice," said Sgt. Mike Geha of the Lyndeborough Police Department. "Officers do not have to take their eyes off the road, it can all be activated by voice."

The computers can operate many vehicle functions, such as blowing the air horn or using the two-way radio. Police can also retrieve vital records, such as searching a license plate number quickly and without having to stop the vehicle.

So far the department's Ford Explorer has the new computer installed while the remaining two police vehicles are expected to be on the street fully equipped by the end of this week.

Training sessions on how to operate the new technology will be conducted in the next few weeks until the department is thoroughly trained. Sgt. Geha relayed a funny story about how he turned on the siren by voice when he was really trying to turn on lights.

"We are trying to catch up with the rest of the world. We take pride in this project, we are a small agency but these new computers put us on the same level as other departments in the state," he said.

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