

# 2013 CONFERENCE — KANSAS CITY, MO

BY ED ALLEN



The Kansas City metropolitan area consists of 15 counties, stretches across two states and is anchored by 316 square miles that make up the largest city in the area, Kansas City, Mo. Kansas City is well-known for its rich cultural history, contributions to jazz and blues music and, of course, barbecue. With an urban area this large and consisting of so many surrounding suburbs and contiguous cities, it could only be supported by a tactical officers association of proportional size and complexity.

The Kansas City Metro Tactical Officers Association was founded in 1989 by Steve Smith of the Lenexa (KS) PD, and now consists of more than 1,000 members representing 75 different law enforcement agencies. Although Capt. Smith is now retired, he was no less enthusiastic in supporting the NTOA's conference. He and his successor, current KCMTOA President Sgt. Fred Farris, also from Lenexa PD, did an amazing job as hosts for the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our conference.

Long before NTOA staff and conference attendees arrived, Farris, Smith and more than two dozen representatives from the KCMTOA developed and implemented a very effective incident action plan for the conference. Partner agencies provided resources including personnel, vehicles



Trade Show





5K Fun Run and Barbecue hosted by Point Blank Enterprises



and technological equipment to ensure the safe and effective operation of the event. A fully functional command post equipped with a full line of communications and live-feed video surveillance of every training site was activated within the hotel and served as the hub of information each day.

This year's conference brought in a record number of more than 740 attendees from 44 states, seven Canadian provinces, Greece and Luxembourg. Conference activities began on Sunday with our two-day trade show featuring 215 exhibitors. Monday began with a business meeting and general session. Over the next two days, conference participants were able to attend tactical incident debriefs from

representatives of the FBI HRT and the Houston County Sheriff's Office on the Alabama bunker hostage incident; Gwinnett County PD on the Georgia firefighter hostage incident; and Massachusetts State Police on the Boston Marathon bombing.

Our 5K Fun Run and Barbecue took place on Sunday night and was sponsored by Point Blank Enterprises. In lieu of a starting whistle, this year's race began with a shotgun blast from NTOA Founder and Director Emeritus John Kolman from the top deck of a Patriot 3 vehicle. Race t-shirts were designed by Tactical Electronics. Prizes were provided by Gander Mountain Law Enforcement Division and included a firearm for best time, the first female

finisher and the 30<sup>th</sup> person across the finish line, in honor of our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Race participants and conference attendees who arrived on Sunday enjoyed a post-race barbecue held on the Barney Allis Plaza.

The enormously popular SWAT Call Out Dinners were held on Monday night in several local restaurants, and were hosted by generous sponsors. These dinners allow students to share a meal and conversation with NTOA board members or section chairs and dinner sponsors.

Tuesday morning brought the start of 17 practical training tracks at numerous offsite locations throughout the Kansas metro area and more than 20 seminar tracks held at the host hotel. In



## TACTICAL OPERATIONS CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW



First Place: Officer Curtis Weber, Lenexa (KS) PD



First Place Female: Officer Carissa Land, Shawnee (KS) PD



30<sup>th</sup> Place: Lt. Patrick Hengst, Wickliffe (OH) PD



SWAT Call-Out Dinners



light of recent events, practical courses such as Police Response to Active Shooter Instructor Certification filled up quickly. Seminars, including Team Leader Development, Training Management and Risk Mitigation continue to grow in popularity as a new generation of SWAT leaders develops around the country.

A phenomenal co-host night, generously hosted by Lenco Armored Vehicles, was held at the World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial, the only World War I memorial in the U.S. and the largest in the world. It was truly an honorable and fitting place for such an event. In addition to enjoying the local live jazz music and barbecue, conference attendees toured the museum and witnessed firsthand selected items from a collection of more than 75,000 WWI objects and documents. SWAT operators accustomed to the latest technology, armor, protective masks, uniforms and emergency medicine walked humbly through the museum trying to fathom what it would have been like to be in battle with the limited resources and equipment of that era. The odd pairing of past and present made for some very interesting conversations.

The week was brought to a close with our annual awards banquet and guest speaker, Commander Cort Traylor, a highly decorated veteran of the U.S. Naval Special Warfare (SEAL) who served with SEAL Team Six and Red Cell. Traylor was also an FBI HRT commander. NTOA Chairman Bob Chabali and emeritus board member Mike Foreman presided over the presentation of awards.

The NTOA TEMS Award was presented to Officer Paul Jerrothe of Aurora (CO) PD for responding to an active shooter incident at the Century Movie Theater on July 20, 2012, that involved



Co-host Night - World War I Museum at Liberty Memorial hosted by Lenco



mass casualties. Officer Jerothe provided medical assistance to numerous victims, ultimately saving many of their lives. Tragically, the suspect killed 12 people and injured 70 others.

The NTOA Unit Citation Award was presented to members of the Gwinnett County (GA) Police Department and the Arlington (TX) Police Department for two separate incidents. On April 10, 2013, Gwinnett County Fire Department personnel responded to a medical call. As they were assessing the patient's condition, they were taken hostage at gunpoint by the patient. The Gwinnett County SWAT team responded and after numerous attempts at a negotiated resolution, it was determined that the suspect's dialogue and actions were deteriorating significantly. Due to concern for the hostages' safety, SWAT personnel entered the residence. A gunfight ensued between the suspect and members of the Gwinnett County SWAT team. The suspect fired his weapon at the officers, striking Sgt. Jason Teague in the left forearm.

## **SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS CONFERENCE SPONSORS**

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# TACTICAL OPERATIONS CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW



Lifetime Achievement Award: Director Emeritus and former Chairman of the Board, Cmdr. Phil Hansen



TEMS Award: Officer Paul Jerothe of Aurora (CO) PD with Executive Director Mark Lomax



John Kolman Award of Excellence: Officer Steve Mescan of Pittsburgh (PA) PD



Excellence in Leadership Award: Chief Greg Allen of El Paso (TX) PD

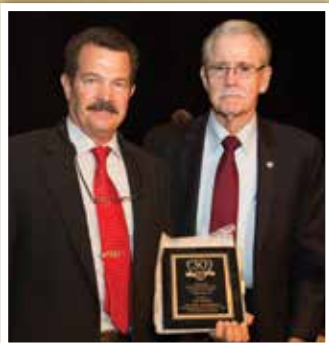


Unit Citation for Valor: Presented to Gwinnett County (GA) PD SWAT. (l-r) Sgt. Jason Teague, Lt. Greg Adams, Officer Nick Boney and Sgt. Jeff Johnston.



The NTOA Unit Citation of Valor: Presented to members of the Arlington (TX) PD

Award of Valor: Presented to Sgt. Jason Teague, Officer Nick Boney and Sgt. Jeff Johnston



Keynote speaker Commander Cort Traylor (ret.) with Ron McCarthy



Co-host Appreciation Award presented to Sgt. Fred Farris (l) and Capt. Steve Smith (ret.) of the Lenexa (KS) PD



Officer Justin Wardour of Muskogee (OK) PD won a GA Precision Gap-10 rifle in the firearms raffle.





Firearms raffle winners. Sponsors: Lewis Machine and Tool, Gander Mountain Law Enforcement Division, CORE 15 Firearms and Mossberg.



Lewis Machine and Tool donates \$5,000 to the NTOA James Torkar Educational Scholarship Program and Tactical Conference Scholarships.

#### Awards Banquet



He, along with members of the hostage rescue team, valiantly continued their successful efforts to save the five hostages.

On June 5, 2012, the Arlington (TX) Police Department SWAT team responded to a hostage incident involving one male suspect with a violent history holding two female hostages. As in the Gwinnett County incident, it was determined that the suspect's dialogue and actions placed the hostages in extreme danger. Members of the hostage rescue team entered the residence and a gunfight ensued. Officer Brian Graham was struck in the head. The team pressed forward to save the hostages and ultimately killed the suspect. Fortunately, Officer Graham survived his wound and has returned to work.

The NTOA Award of Valor was presented to Sgt. Jason Teque, Sgt. Jeff Johnston and Senior Police Officer Nick Boney, all from Gwinnett County (GA) Police Department, for the April 10 rescue of five firemen who were held hostage by an armed suspect.

Officer Steve Mescan was awarded the John Kolman Award of Excellence for his unselfish dedication to assisting members of the SWAT community across the nation by sharing his experiences and providing training. Mescan was instrumental in providing leadership to Pittsburgh SWAT personnel when they responded to a tragic incident resulting in the death of three Pittsburgh Police Department officers.

There were two special awards presented this year. Chief Greg Allen of the El Paso PD won an Excellence in Leadership award, and long-time board member and recently retired Chairman of the Board Phil Hansen won a Lifetime Achievement Award.



## SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

### AMTEC LESS LETHAL

**Charalampos Kazilas** - Hellenic Coast Guard (Greece)

### ATK

**Harold Altenes** - West Bountiful (UT) PD

**Sean Bergert** - Aventura (FL) PD

**Dean Elliott** - Grand Island (NE) PD

**Spencer Fomby** - Berkeley (CA) PD

**Edward Harmond** - U.S. Air Force

**Chad Hillars** - Marshalltown (IA) PD

**Patrick Hudgens** - Homeland Security Investigations (DHS)

**John Muhitch** - Annapolis (MD) FD/PD

**Mark Streker** - Santa Maria (CA) PD

**John Vonk** - Grand Canyon NPS (AZ)

### HORNADY

**Mike Sebastianelli** - Madigan Provost (WA) MO

### TACTICAL ELECTRONICS

**Michael Hougnon** - West Norriton Twp. (PA) PD

**Kye Richter** - Waterloo (IA) PD



Scholarship winners. Front row (l-r) Major John Vonk, Capt. Dean Elliott, Lt. John Muhitch, Officer Charalampos Kazilas, Sgt. Mark Streker. Back row (l-r) Sgt. Kye Richter, Officer Michael Hougnon, TSgt. Edward Harmond, Sgt. Spencer Fomby, Officer Harold Altenes, Capt. Mike Sebastianelli. (Not pictured: Officer Chad Hillers)

After the presentation of awards, raffle prizes were awarded. This year, a total of eight firearms were given away by Lewis Machine and Tool, Gander Mountain Law Enforcement Division, CORE 15 Firearms and Mossberg. All proceeds from both the banquet raffle and the 5K Run directly fund the James Torkar Educational Scholarship Program. In 2013, the scholarship committee awarded six \$2,500 scholarships to the children of NTOA members.

NTOA Executive Director Mark Lomax closed out the evening by announcing our Gulf Coast conference, to be held on Sept. 21-26, 2014, in Mobile, Ala. Watch our website for upcoming news about our 31<sup>st</sup> annual conference and registration. We hope to see you there! //

**CONFERENCE PHOTOS CONTINUED ON PAGE 106.**

**THANK YOU TO OUR PHOTOGRAPHERS:**

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