

2012 CONFERENCE — SEATTLE, WA

By Ed Allen

SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

AMTEC LESS-LETHAL SYSTEMS

Richard Campbell - Wise County SO
Gerald Machurick - Miami Gardens PD

ATK/BLACKHAWK!

Jerry Burns - Lake Havasu City PD
Ian Douglas - Mesquite PD
Robert Graziano - El Paso County SO
Dale Laskowski - Dunwoody PD/
North Metro SWAT
Iain Narra - DHS BCBP
Mike Phillips - Nampa PD
Robert Scrivner - Garden City PD
Michael Sebastianelli - Dept. of Army
Med Center
Steven Thomas - Riviera Beach PD
Ruperto Ventura - Puerto Rico State Police

HORNADY

Matt Watson - Warren County SO

POLAR

Henry Williamson - U.S. Secret Service/
U.S. Marine Corps Reserve

SAFARILAND

Thomas Dewitt - Florida Highway Patrol
Marshall Emerson - Scott County SO
Chad Farstveet - Winnemucca PD

TACTICAL ELECTRONICS

Angela Ellison - Fischers PD
Jason Jarvie - St. George PD
Walter Shadle - Fremont PD

In 1852, the town of Dewamps was renamed in honor of one of the city founders and local Suquamish Native American Chief, Noah Sealth. Seattle, as it became known, began its rich and diverse history as a maritime seaport serving the fishing and timber industries. Modern Seattle is now home to over half a million residents, as well as corporate citizens like Boeing, Microsoft and Starbucks.

Despite the city's rather notorious reputation of unrelenting rain, the NTOA 2012 Tactical Operations Conference was welcomed with mid 70-degree weather and clear skies nearly every day. NTOA staff and the Board of Directors arrived early for business meetings and set-up of the conference and quickly agreed that we had waited too long to visit our friends in the Northwest region.

Our co-host for this conference was comprised of a team of officers from Valley SWAT team, the Seattle Police Department, the King County Sheriff's Office and the Washington State Tactical Officers Association (WSTOA). Valley SWAT team is comprised of members from the cities of Auburn, Federal Way, Kent, Renton, Tukwila and the Port of Seattle.

Successful tactical training conferences rely primarily on one critical element: the enthusiastic support of the local co-hosts. This team lived up to that expectation. Leading the campaign to bring the conference to Seattle was Sgt. Jeff Selleg, of the Port of Seattle PD. Sgt. Selleg and his fellow board members from the WSTOA did an outstanding job throughout the conference.

On Saturday, staff and volunteers began to welcome the 668 registered attendees and 194 vendors. Student attendees represented 39 U.S. states and Puerto Rico, six Canadian provinces and Singapore. At registration, attendees were provided their student package and itinerary for the week, along with a 5.11 backpack





5k Run and Barbecue hosted by 5.11



First place: Marty Stein from Victoria, Canada, with a time of 17:35.



Second place: Blake Davis from South Portland, ME, with a time of 17:48.



Third place: Tom Finan from Atlantic County, NJ, with a time of 18:57.



Team X.T.R.E.M.E.

loaded with a 5.11 knife, flashlight, hat and pair of socks.

Among the students were 20 conference scholarship winners who attended both practical or seminar tracks. Scholarship applications were submitted earlier in the year by individual members and recipients were selected by a review committee. Our generous sponsors covered tuition and lodging for the winners. Without this valuable partnership with our sponsors, many of these officers would not have been able to attend. Scholarship winners were eligible to attend any of the practical or seminar tracks that were available.

NTOA member Matt Watson received a scholarship from Hornady and was very grateful to not only attend, but also to get one of the last available seats in the Tactical Precision Long Rifle class. Robert Graziano was able to attend the Police Response to Active Shooter Instructor Certification course and said, "Without the scholarship from Blackhawk!, none of the training for me would have taken place! Thank you!"

A short walk from the host hotel, the Westin Seattle, was the Seattle Trade and Convention Center. On Sunday, the vendor show opened to attendees eager to see the latest in tactical products and reconnect with friends in the tactical law enforcement sales industry. Attendees tried on the newest versions of tactical uniforms and clothing, operated tactical robots and handled weapons, breaching tools and the newest innovations in equipment.

On Sunday evening, our popular SWAT Call-Out Dinners were held at various restaurants in downtown Seattle. Eleven sponsoring vendor companies took groups of attendees to dinner to participate in roundtable discussions and enjoy sharing stories.

On Monday evening, attendees made their way around the waterfront to the Annual 5K Run, held at Jack Block Park. T-shirts were sponsored by Danner Boots and water bottles by Tactical Electronics. All proceeds from the 5K entry fee were donated directly to the NTOA Educational Scholarship fund. In 2012, the money in this fund allowed



SWAT Call-out Dinners



the NTOA to award six \$1,000 college scholarships to applicants who are children of NTOA individual members.

All three winners of the 5K Run received TRX Fitness Systems for their



SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS CONFERENCE SPONSORS

Lenco Armored Vehicles
 5.11 Tactical Series
 Tactical Electronics
 ATK/BLACKHAWK!
 Hornady
 Law Enforcement Targets
 BattleWare Technology
 Polar
 Amtec Less-Lethal Systems
 Safariland
 Combined Systems
 Point Blank Enterprises
 Danner
 U.S. Armor
 NSCA
 Lion Apparel
 Tex-Shield
 Blade-Tech Industries
 TRX Training
 Omni Explosives



impressive performances. Additional prizes were awarded by our post-run barbecue sponsor, 5.11, for the first runner to finish wearing 5.11 boots, t-shirt or hat. 5.11 also generously treated attendees and runners to a complimentary barbecue prepared and served by their staff, as they have done for many years. And what would our run be without the Team X.T.R.E.M.E. guys running in full tactical uniform, vest and yes, gas masks!

Monday morning was all business. The annual NTOA business meeting was conducted at 0800, while the remaining attendees checked in at registration. Promptly at 0900, the General Session was convened and attendees

were welcomed by Port of Seattle Police Department Deputy Chief Rod Covey and Seattle Police Department Assistant Chief Paul McDonagh. Attendees also had an opportunity to meet the new NTOA Executive Director, Mark Lomax, and to hear an overview of the week's agenda. After General Session, the vendor show continued throughout the day, and several incident debriefs were offered.

On Tuesday morning, hundreds of tactical operators mustered in the lobby, grabbed some infamous Seattle coffee and waited for one of the many buses to take them to their off-site practical tracks, which included the traditionally

popular classes like Less-Lethal/FSDD/Chemical Agent Instructor, Advanced Tactical Carbine, Hostage Rescue Techniques, Tactical Precision Long Rifle and Resolution of Barricade Subject. Other practical tracks that continue to grow in popularity each year are the Specialized Tactics for Operational Rescue and Medicine (STORM), Police Response to Active Shooter Instructor and Tactical Shield. These hands-on courses were conducted throughout the greater Seattle area, consuming almost every conceivable firing range available, as well as several law enforcement training classrooms and abandoned structures throughout King County.



Just as the lobby cleared and the excitement settled, the second wave of attendees descended from their rooms to make their way to the seminar tracks being held in the hotel. Seminar speakers covered a vast array of topics from leadership to tactical fitness programs to combining CNT and tactical functions.

After the first full day of training, first time attendees realized that this conference was not all fun and games. Training time is taken seriously and the NTOA instructors take advantage of every available minute. But when the work day is done, the second most important benefit of the conference occurs and that is peer networking.

Tuesday evening brought the first Co-host Night, sponsored by Point Blank Enterprises. Attendees were greeted at the door by Point Blank staff at Garage Billiards, which is part bar/restaurant, part pool hall and part bowling alley. Throw in a bunch of hungry and thirsty SWAT operators and you can imagine the entertainment that ensued. Kudos to all those who had the nerve to bowl in front of this crowd! Thanks again to our Director Emeritus, Mike Foreman, and all the great folks at Point Blank for a fun evening.

Wednesday brought another round of coffee, buses, seminars and practical track training. Everyone began to settle



Lenco Co-host Night - Seattle Museum of Flight

into a rhythm. New friends were being made, old friends were reunited. Formalities of rank were dismissed and first names were exchanged freely. There was no mistaking that a SWAT conference was in Seattle, as SWAT team and NTOA shirts could be seen at every coffee shop and restaurant within a few blocks of the hotel.

The second Co-host Night was hosted on Wednesday evening by Lenco Armored Vehicles at the Seattle Museum of Flight, a fitting site considering Seattle's connection to the aircraft and space industry. Attendees enjoyed food and drinks under the wings of over 150 aircraft, representing the history of flight in this country for nearly 100 years.

Thursday night is always bitter-sweet, as it marks the beginning of the end of the conference. NTOA instructor Randy Watt, serving as the Master



of Ceremonies, began with a brief welcome and requested that a moment of silence be observed for those who had lost their lives in the service of our communities and the nation. While attendees were served dinner, they enjoyed a slide show of pictures capturing the week's activities and raffle prizes were awarded. Grateful thanks to our raffle sponsors this year, which included Surefire, Broco, Trijicon, ATK/Blackhawk!, Remington, Smith & Wesson and Doublestar Guns.

The keynote speaker for the event was Dr. Kathy Platoni, Colonel, Medical Service Corps, U.S. Army. Dr. Platoni is a nationally recognized expert and author on the subject of post-traumatic stress disorder. Dr. Platoni has served our country for over 32 years in both active and reserve status and deployed to assignments in Guantanamo

Awards Banquet





Keynote speaker, Dr. Kathy Platoni, Colonel, Medical Service Corps, U.S. Army



Co-host Appreciation Award presented to Sgt. Jeff Selleg, Chief Colleen Wilson and Deputy Chief Rod Covey of the Port of Seattle PD (l-r)



Awards (l-r)

NTOA Award of Valor: Corporal Peter King of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for his heroic efforts in saving the life of his partner who had been shot. (left)

The NTOA TEMS Award: Deputy Roger Schreuder II of Niagara County Sheriff's Office for his diligence to the TEMS concept, foresight and aggressiveness in training and the practical application of his medical skills for his ERT. (center)

The Spirit of NTOA Award: Debra Stoe of the National Institute for Justice, Office of Science and Technology for her support of research and standards development projects that directly benefit the tactical law enforcement community. (right)

The NTOA Unit Citation of Valor: Greensboro, NC Special Response Team for their conspicuous gallantry and valorous actions during a tactical operation in March 2012. (not pictured)

Bay, Cuba; Bagdad, Iraq and Kabul, Afghanistan. Despite this impressive list of accomplishments, it was the moving account of her harrowing personal involvement in the 2009 Ft. Hood active shooter incident that claimed the life of several of her close friends and fellow soldiers that touched the audience the most. Dr. Platoni shared advice with the audience about how to recognize and manage the stress associated with professions like ours.

Next on the banquet agenda was the annual awards ceremony. Awards were presented this year by NTOA Board Directors Jim Torkar and Bob Chabali.

As the conference continued to wind down, we once again realized what a great decision it was to come to Seattle. Each year the conference is held, the association adds a new group of contacts, members and friends. Seattle earned their spot on that long and distinguished list.

We are excited to announce that we will celebrate NTOA's 30th Anniversary at the 2013 Tactical Operations Conference to be held in Kansas City, Missouri on September 22-27! Watch our Web site for upcoming news about the conference and registration. //

Photos courtesy of Patrick Lanham, Rebecca Crawford and Stanley Eng, Vallejo PD.