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♦ Stories from officers who survived deadly encounters

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Virginia Beach Convention Center
1000 19th Street
Virginia Beach, VA 23451

HOST HOTEL:
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Virginia Beach, VA 23451
(757) 422-8900

Conference rate: $115 per night + tax with attendee code “NIN”

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEE:
$350 before March 9
Groups of four or more receive a $25 discount

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Welcome to Our New Magazine

Douglas Wright
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the National Criminal Enforcement Association (NCEA) and our staff, I would like to thank all of you for your continued dedication to and support of our cause for the past 15 years. As we embark on our 15-year anniversary, we can look back together and admire the hard work and many accomplishments each member has contributed to help build and sustain the legacy and memory of Captain Robbie E. Bishop.

The NCEA is an organization that works for its members, one of prestige and one where integrity, values and honor run deep among our ranks. We have a rich history that has evolved since our inception in 1999. Since 2004, we have tragically lost 11 NCEA members through line-of-duty deaths. Not one of these heroes will be forgotten. There is not a day that passes when I do not think of them. It is members such as these, who unselfishly gave their lives while protecting and serving their communities, that define the NCEA and help give us a purpose and a sense of direction.

It seems like only yesterday, but it was actually over a decade ago that the NCEA began sending out “hot sheets” and intelligence briefs to our members to help keep them in tune with the new and changing crime and trafficking trends. In 2005, these briefs were integrated into what was then our new website, after we built a secure means of intelligence sharing among our members. Next came our NCEA Life on the Edge newsletter, which was mailed out to our members. This was a tremendous asset, allowing us to recognize the incredible efforts and sacrifices of our membership while also conveying important case law updates, officer safety stories and more. We were able to keep our newsletter in production for nearly six years, but sadly, the economy took a nosedive and we were left with no other option but to end the publication of our newsletter in 2010. This brings us to 2015. We are now in the position to grasp a concept that was a goal of ours for years: to publish our own official magazine.

The NCEA is confident that our members will thoroughly enjoy the content, time, effort and expertise our writers will be offering in each issue. Our magazine is dedicated to educating, training and providing support to our membership and to all law enforcement and criminal patrol officers throughout the United States. This publication is the first of its kind, and you will find it to be high-impact, enjoyable reading. It is the goal of the NCEA to publish a magazine of our very own that will be the outlet of responsible journalism from the interdiction professional’s point of view, the one you have been waiting for so long to get your hands on. We hope all of you enjoy reading each issue of Criminal Enforcement: Life on the Edge. The NCEA will publish four issues of our magazine every year, and we will always be open to submissions of topics and articles for it. This publication will be one that each of our members will be proud to call their magazine.

In closing, I would like to remind you how important you all are and what a tremendous difference each of you makes every day you wear your badge and uniform. I know many of you may not hear this enough, so I want to remind you. As law enforcement officers, we have had our profession tested in a way probably not seen since the 1960s. We have experienced ridicule and disrespect on a nationwide scale. We are trained professionals who are all susceptible to being human beings once in a while. We must remain vigilant and not let our guards down. We must all persevere, place our personalities on the table and stand shoulder to shoulder as one team. We should all be reminded of why we chose this honorable profession, and what motivated us to seek and accept a position where we serve a public who will distrust, heckle and in many cases hate us. We must dig down deep and remind ourselves of why we chose to do what we do. We must stand tall, stay alert and exude professionalism on every single call for service, traffic stop or arrest we make. Our lives depend on this. Lastly, we must all remember that quitting is never an option — especially when our lives depend on it. None of us should ever take the propensity of violence or imminent peril that is inherent in this profession for granted, especially knowing that there is a distinct possibility of someone robbing you of your life and keeping you from going home to your family. NCEA

“Once again, remember that safety is a priority in searching any vehicle out here for narcotics. No load is worth your life. No load out there is worth your life.”

— Captain Robbie E. Bishop, End of Watch January 20, 1999

Douglas Wright has served the NCEA in an official capacity since its inception, and has been the executive director since 2003. Douglas is a 19-year veteran of law enforcement and currently serves as a police lieutenant for the Summerville Police Department in South Carolina.
Interdiction Leadership and a Vision for America

James Cook
BOARD CHAIRMAN

It has been 15 years since the inception of our organization. Over the past decade, we have grown from a small Southeastern U.S. group into an association with members spanning three continents. We have successfully implemented the only professional certification for interdiction officers, and through the efforts of our members and partners we have organized the largest proactive criminal enforcement conference in the world. These accomplishments have not come without many challenges.

Governments at all levels, along with a host of nonprofits and private companies, have seen their legitimacy undermined as a consequence of poor performance, scandals or even collaborative attacks on their credibility. Agencies, officers and organizations have made blunders that have garnered a national spotlight. A series of attacks on law enforcement interdiction practices has been launched through the media as a direct result. Rather than focusing these attacks on the individuals deserving criticism and sanction, a tremendous injustice has been perpetrated against America’s entire law enforcement community. Our attackers have purposely avoided looking to the greater good and are only served by their egos and self-interest.

As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stated, “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” Through all the criticism of past trials and tribulations, we have stood strong and weathered the storm of criticism leveled and directed at the integrity of our profession — for, as our chaplain says, “This too shall pass.” Therefore, we thank those who have stood by us through these trying times, and we say that our profession will adapt and overcome these challenges.

On a very positive note, we have recently undergone and successfully participated in a full audit of our finances and practices by the Internal Revenue Service to maintain our 501(c)(3) status. We are proud to say that we passed with flying colors. We have always been a true nonprofit that supports our members, the law enforcement community, and law enforcement education and training. We provide training throughout the year and receive funding outside and apart from government agencies and vendors. Given these facts, the audit outcome was never in doubt.

John M. Bryson states in Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations, “Organizations that want to survive, prosper, and do good and important work must respond to the challenges the world presents.” Meet these challenges we shall! As Bryson wrote with Barbara C. Crosby in Leadership for the Common Good, “Clearly it is a leadership challenge to inspire and mobilize others to take collective action in pursuit of the common good — producing wise, small or big changes in response to the situation at hand.”

We recall that famous admonition, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29:18). As such, we are moving forward and again taking the lead in the interdiction community! We will be expanding our low-cost training offerings to agencies throughout the country, we are introducing our Criminal Enforcement: Life on the Edge magazine, we are expanding our peer support program, we are creating regional networking groups through the leadership of new regional coordinators, and we will begin accepting applications for our NCEA Instructor Development Program, which is a mirror of the historic FBI Instructor Development Course.

In closing, we vow that we will continue to provide a vision and mechanism so that all of the law enforcement community can meet the challenges that the world presents and succeed so that our citizens and families are protected. The major trends and events facing the United States must be met head-on if we hope to survive as a society. The tools for addressing these challenges begin with knowledge and understanding. Some of this knowledge and understanding is fostered through our skills development and support programs. Other knowledge and understanding comes from networking and training provided by your agencies and others. Regardless, we must set our differences and egos aside for the benefit of the citizens we took an oath to protect. In this spirit of cooperation, the NCEA and our friends at the National Interdiction Foundation are calling for a summit of law enforcement professionals to attend a national plenary on the issues of highway interdiction, intelligence sharing, and training of law enforcement personnel and agencies. This event will occur during the summer of 2015 in Pearl, Mississippi, and all are welcome to attend. Further details will be posted on our website in early May. NCEA

James Cook

James Cook is the NCEA Board chairman and assistant director. He served in law enforcement for 20 years, finishing as a detective lieutenant with the Clinton Police Department. He is the managing partner of the Grey Knight Group, NA, a national consulting firm. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in public policy and administration at Walden University.
Robbie Bishop would display the words “motivated and dedicated” on the screen during every class that he taught. He would say, “Guys, I am gonna tell you right now — the only way to be successful out there is to be motivated and dedicated.” The words always ring true when we think about the type of officer that Robbie was. When he worked at Woodstock Police Department, he set the record for the most DUIs in a single month. When he worked out on I-75, he knocked off 11 kilos — the most north of Atlanta at the time. In Butts County, Georgia, he hit 85 kilos, the second-highest seizure in a car in Georgia. Then, after knocking off $935,000 in Lowndes County, he went to I-20 (which was believed to be the hardest road in Georgia at the time) and hit three tractor-trailers in 10 days, totaling over 4,500 pounds of marijuana; one seizure was on Super Bowl Sunday. These were just some of his accomplishments.

He really worked hard at being “the best of the best.” Robbie won all of his cases — local, state and federal. The number reached over 500. Robbie worked hard to take criminals off the streets. He spent up to 20 hours in a patrol car running up and down the road. Some days, he would refuel his patrol vehicle three times in one shift. During a shift, he would say, “I am just going to pull one more over.” This usually meant that there were still another couple of hours of that shift remaining.
A PASSION FOR TRAINING

Training law enforcement officers around the country became another of Robbie’s passions. He wanted to hit the road and assemble interdiction classes in jurisdictions that might not get trained to look beyond a traffic stop. He taught in classrooms with holes in the floor, or where there was no air conditioning, or when only seven people showed up. None of that discouraged him or lessened his presentation. There were times when he and his partner, Bruce Parent, would not make any money at all, but they were able to train officers, promote officer safety and display trafficking trends.

To make classroom presentations exciting, he used motivational videos, including “Living Life on the Edge.” Instructors around the country who took his class or respected his teaching would provide videos that he would show during class and methodically explain the stops. He also did that with his own stops. “Cantaloupe - Tomato Man” was an excellent video that he used because it illustrated every aspect of a traffic stop — start to finish, including the interview after the arrest. Today, we see in-car police video on social media and the news every day. Before 1999, very few police agencies had in-car cameras. Robbie and Justin started to assemble training videos in “walkaround” format. Robbie would walk around the seized vehicle, mention the indicators and then show the contraband. The first training video was “Drug Interdiction Part I and II.” If you attended an American Public Safety class, you would receive this training video along with “Living Life on the Edge.” We still get emails from law enforcement officers who watch “Living

Continued on page 8 ➔
Life on the Edge” before walking out the door to begin a shift. Many of them exhausted their VHS tapes and would call or email to get another copy or just to get a DVD copy.

SAFE AND SMART
American Public Safety always included officer safety. Robbie discussed the importance of a backup weapon. He was not worried about his main duty weapon malfunctioning — he was preparing for a close-quarter fight where the backup gun would save his life. Robbie carried a backup weapon in his weak-hand cargo pocket. In the event that he was fighting the perpetrator for his primary weapon, he could reach into his pocket and stop the threat.

Robbie also taught officers to “Never Search Alone.” During his classes, he included traffic-stop videos where a backup officer would save the primary officer. He would have demonstrations in class explaining where to stand and how to handle being a backup officer if working in a two-man team. He would include demonstrating the responsibilities of the backup officer with positioning and indicators to watch for during the stop.

Another part of his class would concentrate on defending the case in court. Robbie wanted the students to understand that a court case begins when you step out of the car. He emphasized that once the drug smugglers and/or dealers were arrested, the court preparations would begin, and the officer would be required to face a defense attorney and defend the arrest. To win the case and put the criminal in jail, Robbie discussed building a case methodically and including the totality of the circumstances. He used the image of a ladder, and each thing learned during the stop was a rung on that ladder.

Robbie truly wanted everyone to do their part to rid the country of illegal narcotics. Secondary crimes that enter communities — theft, domestic violence, child neglect — are a result of drug abuse. He believed that one of the best ways to combat these crimes was to stop the smugglers.

HOPE AFTER TRAGEDY
In the weeks leading up to Robbie’s murder, he and Bruce Parent were planning an American Public Safety class in Villa Rica, Georgia, in February 1999. They assembled a two-day class and had many people commit to attend the class. Robbie was on the phone inviting as many officers as possible so that he could be proud of his home state of Georgia. Unfortunately, the class did not take place as planned. On January 20, 1999, Robbie was killed at the 18-mile marker on westbound I-20 in Temple, Georgia.

At the funeral, talk started about how Robbie was “the interdictor” that LEOs in the southeast learned from and networked with nonstop. Friends of Robbie discussed how
future interdiction officers would not have the chance to get this knowledge and wanted to find a way to carry the torch. We, the founding members of the National Interdiction Association, focused on continuing his vision of creating a group of interdiction officers who worked together and networked traffic stops across the country.

Bruce Parent asked me if he could still hold the class in Robbie's memory, and I did not even hesitate to say yes. This class was the beginning of NDIA/NCEA. The first class had approximately 130 people, and almost all of those who attended joined the organization. Within days of the class, Eddie Ingram finalized the process of setting up the National Drug Interdiction Association. Eddie formed this organization with Chief Maddox, Brian Flemming, Bruce Parent, Justin Webb and Tim Ingram. In the summer of 2000, I accepted the position of executive director. In September of that year, Eddie, Cliff Meyer and I attended a conference in Albany, New York, hosted by Brian Rossiter and featuring Mike Lewis. It was at this conference that we decided that NDIA/NCEA would host the first annual Winter Conference.

THE VISION LIVES ON

The mission of this organization has always been to continue Robbie’s vision of networking and training officers to remain safe and return home at the end of each shift. This became a pilgrimage of Robbie’s following the shooting in Robeson County, North Carolina, in 1998 — making an impact on law enforcement communities to network and coordinate with other agencies and officers throughout the country to eradicate what Robbie referred to as “secondary” crimes. Officer safety was a priority to Robbie, and he often refused to train officers who did not practice passenger-side approach. We wanted to offer effective training that would benefit and prepare officers on traffic stops with the knowledge that would allow them to utilize safety and prepare for taking each traffic encounter to completion.

Today, Robbie’s motivated and dedicated vision continues. What began as quarterly Hit Sheets submitted by members has now evolved into the NCEA forum, where members can share detailed information from personal traffic stops in a safe and secure environment. The NCEA forum provides access to highly trained, motivated officers across this great land. NCEA members post not only on the organization’s website but also via social media, which is now the digital “Wanted” poster.

As I write this article, I am reminded of how important NCEA members are to me. In the early part of 2015, Jeffrey McGee will once again enter a courtroom and request a mistrial based on an appeal granted by the state of Georgia. This information was shared on the NCEA website and Facebook. I cannot begin to tell you how important the outpouring of support from the NCEA family was to me. I know that the membership will continue to be supportive — not only to me, but to all members who are in need. For this I am extremely grateful. I am proud of the many achievements this organization has made and, with this magazine, I know that the future is bright. Thank you all for your dedication, your motivation and your continued support. REB314.... The fight continues. NCEA

Lisa Bishop Webb

Lisa Bishop Webb became the second executive director of NCEA and moved the organization forward by holding the first annual Winter Conference. She also finalized the organization’s charter before appointing Douglas Wright in 2003. She lives with her daughter and husband in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, and is an elementary school teacher.

Justin Webb

Justin Webb was one of the five founders of NCEA in 1999 and continued to be secretary until leaving NCEA in 2009. Justin has produced over 50 law enforcement training and motivational videos since 1989, and retired from the Cherokee Sheriff’s Office as a lieutenant over the Reserve Unit in 2012 after 23 years of service.
A quick search on YouTube can turn up a ton of results for tactical vehicle defense. Some of the tactics seem really cool — or really stupid, depending on your perspective. If you’re playing Nerf Wars with the neighborhood kids, then all those tactical rolls and hiding behind car doors can be really cool. If you’re talking the real deal out on the street, shooting it out with bad guys, then those tactics look really stupid.

They look really stupid because most of the tactics in those videos use the vehicle as cover. In reality, your vehicle offers very little in the form of cover. Most handgun rounds can penetrate the vehicle and go from one end to the other. Rounds can be bounced off of windshield glass, and off of various parts of the cruiser.
Maybe back in the day when Pete Malloy and Jim Reed were working the beat, police cruisers had some ballistic stopping power, but not the lightweight cruisers of today. Yes, I’m old; if you don’t know who Reed and Malloy are, look it up. Add “Adam-12” to your online search, and while you’re at it, look up Jack Webb — he’s done more for law enforcement than any of those in Hollywood.

**COVER VERSUS CONCEALMENT**

But let me get back to the topic at hand. Your vehicle offers you very little cover, if any at all. I’ll make it simple for you: the engine block, steel wheels, door posts and axles are your only cover; the rest is concealment at best. The engine block, steel wheels and axles will stop handgun and most rifle rounds. The door posts will stop most handgun rounds and some rifle rounds. The problem is that most officers are bigger than an engine block, steel wheel, door post or axle. However, you’d be surprised at how small you can make yourself when you’re getting shot at.

The rest of the cruiser is simply concealment. If you’re unfamiliar with the difference between cover and concealment, I’ll sum it up this way for you: Cover is what you hide behind when you’re getting shot at, like a big tree, a concrete building or an engine block. It offers you ballistic protection. Concealment is something you hide behind when you’re playing hide-and-seek with your kids — a bush, a curtain, a car door. It offers you no ballistic protection.

**SEE FOR YOURSELF**

Don’t believe me? Then go to your local body shop and ask to see a door skin. They call it a door skin because it’s a very thin piece of sheet metal that goes over the door frame. The door gets its strength from its rigidity, not from the thickness of the material.

Still don’t believe me? Then ask your local body shop for two doors that are beyond repair to take out to the range for shooting. Prop one of the doors up downrange, and at a safe distance, pop a few rounds through it. You can try some 9s, .45s or .40s; you can even opt to try some .38 rounds or .380s. All will go completely through the door, unless they hit the window mechanism or the door’s small reinforced areas. The window mechanism or reinforced areas may deflect the round, or they may not. The question is whether you’re willing to bet your life on a little piece of metal that may or may not deflect a round.

After you’ve punched a number of holes in your door, line the two doors up as if they were on your patrol car. The distance doesn’t have to be exact, just close. Now fire your rounds through the first door and see if they penetrate the second door. How many of those rounds penetrated and exited through the second door? Imagine if you were on the other side of that second door, thinking you were safe. You’d be in for a rude surprise.

Now turn one of your doors sideways, stand at an angle of 25 degrees or less to it, and skip rounds down the side of the door. Rounds can easily be skipped down the sides of any vehicle using the doors or fenders. You can also skip rounds off of the hood and truck lid. By standing at an angle of 25 degrees or less to the windshield, you can even skip rounds off of that. My favorite is skipping a one-ounce 12-gauge shotgun slug off of the windshield. That’s always an eye opener in class. Because of the composition of the front windshield glass, it is a much harder material than the rest of the vehicle’s glass. The front windshield is made of laminated glass, while the side and back windows are made of tempered glass that will shatter completely when hit with a round.

Although your cruiser offers very little in the way of cover, if that’s all you’ve got, it’s better than nothing at all. If your cruiser door is all you have to hide behind, then by all means, use it. Just don’t rely on it to save your life if other, more solid cover is available. That’s why on every traffic stop you should be looking for secondary cover — a big tree, a brick wall or whatever else might provide you with solid ballistic protection. You might even want to consider planning out your stop locations in areas where there is additional cover, should you need it.

If you’d like to learn more about cover and concealment, how to shoot through a windshield, or how to skip rounds off of a vehicle, pick up a copy of my book, *Advanced Patrol Tactics*.

**Michael T. Rayburn**

Owner, Rayburn Law Enforcement Training

Michael T. Rayburn has been involved in law enforcement since 1977, and is the author of five books. He is a former adjunct instructor for the Smith & Wesson Academy, and is the owner of Rayburn Law Enforcement Training. He can be reached at www.combatgunfighting.com.
The men and women of the Virginia State Police extend a hearty welcome to the members of the National Criminal Enforcement Association and the 2015 National Interdiction Conference.

VSP takes great pride in fulfilling its mission to serve and protect the Commonwealth of Virginia. With more than 80 years of service to its citizens, the Department also strives to improve the quality of life for all those living in, working in and visiting our great state. On our highways and within our communities, VSP is recognized nationally for its superior enforcement, investigative, educational, technological and analytical resources.

VSP divides the Commonwealth’s 42,767 square miles into seven geographical field divisions for patrol and investigations. The administrative headquarters is located in Richmond.

A full-service, nationally accredited agency, the Department has roughly 2,000 sworn and civilian personnel assigned to our uniform patrol divisions, Safety Division, Aviation, Criminal Intelligence Division, High-Tech Crimes Division, Virginia Fusion Center, Counter-Terrorism and Criminal Interdiction Unit, Help Eliminate Auto Theft Unit, Insurance Fraud Unit, General Investigations Section, Drug Enforcement Section, Sex Offender Investigative Unit, Professional Standards Unit, Executive Protective Unit, and Bureau of Administrative and Support Services.

VSP is renowned for its extensively trained and certified arson, bomb, violent crime, forensic, interdiction, white-collar and Internet crime...
investigators. The Department also features such specialty units as canine, tactical team, tactical field force, search and recovery/SCUBA, motors, Honor Guard, Color Guard, crash reconstruction, crime prevention, critical incident stress management, and a Pipe and Drum Corps.

Located midway between New York and Florida, Virginia is the gateway to the South. The Old Dominion is an American icon. From the rivers of John Smith's explorations and the wilderness of the early westward pioneers, to serving as the birthplace of eight U.S. presidents and playing a major role in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, to the hallowed grounds of the Pentagon on 9/11 and into the present, there is no mistaking the historical significance of Virginia.

The Commonwealth is bordered by Washington, D.C., the nation’s capital, and Maryland to the north; the Atlantic Ocean to the east; North Carolina and Tennessee to the south; and West Virginia and Kentucky to the west. Virginia boasts the Alleghany and Blue Ridge Mountains, the great Shenandoah Valley, a central piedmont with rolling hills, and an extensive coastline along the Atlantic Ocean.

So join us this March in Virginia Beach for the 2015 National Interdiction Conference. See what Virginia has to offer you, both personally and professionally. NCEA

For more information about VSP, please visit

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It’s popular to say “There is no such thing as routine” in law enforcement, and while it is actually a warning to avoid falling into complacency, it is often interpreted to mean that, since our profession typically deals with unique issues, we simply don’t fall into the trap of doing things routinely. But is it true? Can everything become routine to the point that we stop paying attention and just go through the motions, or worse, develop truly dangerous bad habits?

RISKY JOBS

What makes some professions riskier than others? Timber workers, for instance, suffer many more fatalities per capita than law enforcement. It is the routine nature of their work, with dangerous equipment in an often unfriendly environment, that kills them. Falling limbs, heavy timber and a massive chainsaw all create a dangerous mix, but after several hundred trees the lumberjack’s mind may begin to wander when it should be paying close attention to the job at hand — and that can be fatal in a split second.

The danger is not to novices, but to veterans who have had time to be “de-trained” by routine and develop bad habits. Unfortunately for experienced timber workers, they don’t have the equivalent of dash cameras to evaluate their habits. They count on supervisors to give them feedback if bad patterns start to form. The problem with habits is that they are often invisible to the habituated, since they are performed at an unconscious or subconscious level. This means that without feedback, they become more and more ingrained.

TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR SAFETY

The role of coaches, supervisors and sergeants is to give feedback to prevent the development of bad habits. The coach looks for the things players
do that weaken their techniques. Good sergeants give immediate feedback when they see a bad habit forming in an officer’s behavior. The quicker the feedback to the action, the greater the training effect.

What you do repetitively is your training. Regardless of what you were taught in the academy, what you do on your next traffic stop, search warrant or field interview is what you are training to do in the future. If you have a bunch of bad habits and your officer safety is terrible, who is responsible? Not the academy staff or your in-service trainers. Even though sergeants should give feedback to stop bad habits, it’s not your sergeant’s fault that you have bad habits. The first major step in preventing dangerous traits is taking control of your own training and your own performance. In psychology, this is called “locus of control,” and winners know that the center of control for their lives is found within themselves. Your safety is not your sergeant’s or your training staff’s responsibility; it’s yours!

CHECK YOURSELF

As you’re making your 10th traffic stop today, are you thinking about that off-duty job you took at the arena, and wishing you could blow it off because you are so damned tired? Or are you focused on the vehicle and its occupants, that pedestrian who has stopped to watch, that truck approaching that has failed to dim its lights and all the other potential threats? Routine will whisper in your ear, “Don’t worry — you’ve done this a thousand times and nothing has ever happened.” Some may call this complacency and will say it’s why you get hurt, but complacency is merely a symptom of the power that routine has to erase good training and habits, and replace them with bad ones.

Have you stopped slicing the pie on building searches, stopped surveillance on a target house prior to a warrant, stopped wearing body armor on hot days? Did you have a habit of putting on a seat belt until that senior officer told you it was “not tactical” to wear one? If this made you stop your habit of wearing a seat belt, then that advice was effective yet misguided; wearing a seat belt is statistically the most effective step you can take to maximize your chance of surviving until tomorrow.

What about your other habits? Do you still practice good techniques and officer safety steps, or has routine trained you to relax and be sloppy, reckless or careless? The proof we have about the deadly nature of routine is the simple fact that the average officer killed by both accidents and assaults has over 10 years on the job. According to the FBI’s latest data, officers killed accidentally averaged 41 years of age; the rookies, it seems, still do what they were trained to do and have not yet developed deadly habits.

So, then, we all agree that there is no such thing as routine in law enforcement. We have to act as if every stop, contact and action has an incumbent risk that we have to compensate for with our mindset and our actions. Let’s keep routine from hurting our fellow officers, diminishing our performance and taking our lives!

Dave Smith
Former police lieutenant Dave Smith is an internationally known speaker, writer and law enforcement expert who now owns his own training company. His signature course is “The Winning Mind,” and he co-instructs the unique “Mindset Bootcamp” with Lieutenant Colonel Dave Grossman. He is the author of the popular book In My Sights and can be reached via www.jdbucksavage.com or www.facebook.com/JDBuckSavage.
Supporting Those Who Protect and Serve

EVEN SUPERMAN CAN HAVE A ROUGH DAY

BY KENNY STACY

We live in a culture that has shifted morally, and a small minority with a big impact on the lives of others. This produces a “me”-centered mentality where everyone is entitled to what they want. This selfishness cannot function when a culture stands upon values that are immoral and provide no guidance, accountability and oversight. Tragically, we live in a culture that has shifted morally, and a small minority with a big platform no longer value the men and women who seek to protect and serve this great nation. I want to assure you, brothers and sisters of NCEA, that I truly value you and your work across the country.

I am grateful to be a small part of such an elite family of law enforcement officers represented in NCEA. I am honored to be your chaplain and cannot wait to serve you and your families. In this first edition, I would like to share with you my journey of developing a passion to help officers and their families. I remember the day when I first discovered that law enforcement officers deal with life just like I do. I was invited to be an OHP’s ride-along in Northeast Oklahoma. I can’t tell you how elated I was to ride with one of Oklahoma’s finest. I remember sitting in that shined-up black-and-white and hearing 480 say we will be 10-8, and off we went to protect and serve the people of Oklahoma. I remember meeting up with 480’s partner at the time, and during their conversation I heard his partner say, “Man, I am having a rough day.”

I recall thinking, “That’s not right; how can Superman have a rough day?” I know that may sound like I am lacking in common sense, but I envisioned all law enforcement officers as being superhuman. I thought you had every part of your lives squared away and could handle any situation, whether it was when you went 10-8 or back 10-7. It was at this point nine years ago when I began to gain tremendous respect for you. I realized that you are striving to balance yourself, your families, your hobbies and your careers the very best you can. I mean, let’s face it: Our culture is not a prime environment for expeditious growth in these areas, as it would rather make you the bad guy than respect and submit to your authority. With this gained respect, I asked myself a question: “If you are concerned with protecting and serving me and my family, then who is concerned about protecting and serving you and your family?” At that moment, I realized my passion was to be that person. So, by God’s grace, I have set out to serve you and your families, support your work of protecting and serving others, and share in all the seasons that you walk through. I am thankful to be part of an organization that seeks to train and support you and your efforts of serving and protecting the people of this great nation. I am praying for you and am ready and willing to serve, support and share as you fight the fight. I am proud of each of you; keep up the outstanding work, and if you need me, I am just a phone call and plane ride away.

One Family, One Fight
Romans 13:1-5 NCEA

Kenny Stacy
Chaplain

Kenny Stacy lives in Northeast Oklahoma with his wife of 11 years, Amber, and two children, Ruthie Jane (6) and Anderson Ray (2). Kenny is the pastor of FBC Salina, chaplain of NCEA and chaplain of the Mayes County Sheriff’s Office. He is pursuing his doctoral work from Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in critical incident and family counseling.
Throughout my life, I have had a high level of respect for public safety personnel. However, I now realize that I had once been as guilty as anyone of looking at police officers like small children look at their parents: “They are big and strong and are going to take care of things, so I don’t have to worry about it.” On April 19, 1995, that perspective changed. Why should we expect human beings to run into a bombed building, work tirelessly for days on end to recover the mangled bodies of victims (including children) and not be impacted by that experience? Since that moment, the focus of my career has been on trying to help law enforcement officers remain emotionally healthy as they move through their careers. The purpose of this article is to share some keys that I have learned over the past 20 years about the emotional well-being of officers.

First of all, you are human. Prior to becoming a law enforcement officer, you were just like the rest of the general public. You did not forfeit your humanness to become a cop. In fact, it is your compassion and concern for the welfare of others that make you a good cop. Just as it is important to wear body armor to protect yourself physically, it is necessary to wear emotional armor to protect from injuries to your psyche. However, it is still possible to experience wounding. Occasionally, incidents pierce your armor, and that is because you are not a machine. Allow yourself to be human and talk about the emotions that come up throughout your career. The more you talk about an experience, the more your brain can process it, which decreases the probability of it coming up and slapping you in the face later.

Second, just as it is necessary to take off your uniform and body armor when you get off duty, it is also essential to remove your emotional armor. It can become very comfortable to continue to wear it off duty. It becomes another form of self-protection. However, that emotional shield serves as a barrier to emotional connections with others. Over the years, I have seen countless law enforcement families that have become so disconnected from one another that the relationships dissolve. Your friends and family members are your support system. That support helps you get through those difficult times. It is helpful to develop some sort of ritual that represents the transition from cop to family member (e.g., working out, taking a few minutes to decompress before engaging in family activities, doing a hobby). This can allow you an opportunity to switch gears emotionally, so that you can continue to connect well with those close to you.

The third key: balance. The nature of your job is to respond to situations where something bad has happened or is likely to happen. If your entire focus is on the job, then everything in your life is centered on “bad.” That leads to cynicism, burnout and depression. In order to be healthy physically, emotionally, interpersonally and spiritually, you must allow yourself opportunities to experience the world not from a cop’s perspective. Give yourself opportunities to smile, laugh and relax. Become involved in things that give your life meaning, but are unrelated to work (e.g., church, volunteer organizations, your children’s activities, hobbies). It is very helpful to start thinking about and planning for what you want to do after retirement, whether you have one year or 18 years on the job. It is essential that you retire to something, not from something. If you do not start balancing your life now, when you retire you will have nothing. This is a major factor that leads to a shortened life for retired officers. Remember, you have many roles in life in addition to being a law enforcement officer (e.g., mother, father, sister, brother, son, daughter, athlete, hunter, fisherman, etc.). Allow yourself to fully experience each of these.

**RESOURCES**


We’ve all heard it, and most of us have even said it: “Ignorance of the law is no excuse!” But that doesn’t necessarily apply to police, at least when there is a reasonable misunderstanding of the law. Such is the ruling in the recent United States Supreme Court case of Heien v. North Carolina, 574 U.S. ____ (2014). In this case, the court upheld as valid the search that led to a drug conviction, even though the moving violation for which the traffic stop was initiated was ... well, not a violation after all.

THE INCIDENT

On April 29, 2009, a Surry County, North Carolina, Sheriff’s Office deputy initiated a traffic stop for a faulty right brake light on a Ford Escort traveling north on I-77. The deputy observed this defect when the Escort braked for a slower vehicle traveling in the same direction. Upon stopping the vehicle, the deputy found the driver, Vasquez, behind the wheel, and the passenger, Heien, lying across the back seat. The deputy pointed out the reason for the stop (tail light) and informed the driver that if his license and registration checked out, he would only receive a warning. The license and registration came back clear, but while waiting on the information, the deputy noted that Vasquez was nervous. In addition, Heien continued to lie across the back seat the entire time, and the two occupants gave inconsistent answers about their destination. This caused the deputy to ask the driver if he would be willing to answer some additional questions, to which he agreed. The deputy asked Vasquez if the men were transporting any contraband, and he responded, “No.” When the deputy asked if he could search the vehicle, Vasquez and Heien, the actual owner of the vehicle, consented. A search of the vehicle revealed a sandwich bag containing cocaine. Heien was charged with attempted trafficking in cocaine.

THE CASE

Heien’s suppression motion was denied by the trial court, which concluded that the faulty brake light gave the deputy reasonable suspicion of a moving violation to initiate the stop, and the consent search was held valid. Heien pled guilty with the right to contest the suppression ruling on appeal. The North Carolina Court of Appeals reversed the conviction, finding that the initial stop was not valid, as the vehicle code requires only one working brake light, which Heien’s Escort had. 1 So it turns out that the violation that formed the basis for the stop was not a violation at all. The Court of Appeals ruled that because the reason for the stop was not based on a valid moving violation, the stop was “objectively unreasonable” and violated the Fourth Amendment.

On appeal filed by the state, the North Carolina Supreme Court reversed, holding that the deputy could have reasonably, if not mistakenly, read the vehicle code to require both brake lights to be in working order (366 N.C. 271, 737 S.E. 2d 351). Another code section requires “all originally equipped rear lamps” to be functional. 2 The court held that the deputy’s understanding of the vehicle code, while mistaken, was reasonable, and the stop was therefore valid: “An officer may make a mistake, including a mistake of law, yet still act reasonably under the circumstances.... When an officer acts reasonably under the circumstances, he is not violating the Fourth Amendment” (Id., at 279, 737 S.E. 2d, at 356).

Heien appealed the case to the United States Supreme Court, which affirmed the conviction. Chief Justice Roberts, writing for the eight-member majority, stated, “[t]he question here is whether reasonable suspicion can rest on a mistaken understanding of the scope of a legal prohibition. We hold that it can.” The court recognized that the Fourth Amendment does not require perfection, only reasonableness. The particular brake-light provision had never been construed by a North Carolina appellate court, and because of the ambiguity of the vehicle code, the deputy’s legal mistake here was understandable. And while the stop would not support a conviction for a faulty brake light, that violation was not on appeal. The

2 Every motor vehicle “shall have all originally equipped rear lamps . . . in good working order.” N.C. Gen. Stat. Ann. 20-129 (d).
The point the court made here is that the officer reasonably believed a violation occurred, and even though that belief turned out to be wrong, the consent search that followed was not tainted by the good-faith error of law.

court stated in conclusion: “It was thus objectively reasonable for an officer ... to think that Heien’s faulty right brake light was a violation of North Carolina law. And because the mistake of law was reasonable, there was reasonable suspicion justifying the stop.”

THE IMPACT

It would be tempting to celebrate this decision as a sign that the courts are relaxing the sometimes hyper-technical analysis of the sufficiency of indicators of criminal behavior, second detentions, canine alerts or consents to search on a traffic stop. After all, it is rare to get eight of the nine Supreme Court justices to agree on lunch, much less a Fourth Amendment issue. But this case involves a peculiar set of facts not likely to be replicated anytime soon. Without conflicting or ambiguous brake-light statutes, the result here, and in the future, would probably be different. If not for the good-faith nature of the deputy’s mistake, Heien would have a strong argument that the original seizure was not based on reasonable suspicion of a moving violation. Heien agreed that officers are entitled to the benefit of the doubt on a factual assessment, especially in a dynamic and rapidly evolving situation, but not an error of law. To hold otherwise, he argued, would discourage police from learning the law so that they could routinely claim ignorance. The court rightly rejected that simplistic and cynical argument. The point the court made here is that the officer reasonably believed a violation occurred, and even though that belief turned out to be wrong, the consent search that followed was not tainted by the good-faith error of law.

With much of the recent public discussion of police and police tactics cast in a negative light, it is refreshing when the court recognizes that police officers are human and subject to all the same frailties and limitations as the rest of the population. The court here affirms that the Fourth Amendment does not require perfect police, only reasonable police. But don’t take too much comfort here, as this too shall pass.

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1 A traffic stop for a suspected violation of law is a “seizure” of the occupants of the vehicle and therefore must be conducted in accordance with the Fourth Amendment. Brendlin v. California, 551 U.S. 249, 255-259 (2007).
Police officers have been criticized for negative attitudes that leave citizens feeling as if the majority of law enforcement officials “don’t care.” In the late 1990s, some agencies decided to develop a community-oriented policing model that attempted to address this issue. They have increased officers’ presence in schools, on bicycles and in public service roles in an attempt to build positive relationships between police and communities. However, a negative connotation still remains. Studies have shown that the majority of citizen complaints are about an officer’s attitude or that they were rude. A new era of policing is now taking place. Officers must always understand that they are being watched or recorded and must maintain a professional image. A customer service model of policing may assist in gaining the public trust and forming more partnerships in the communities we serve.

In 2013, while attending the Columbus State University Command College, I completed a study of the lack of customer service-based philosophy in law enforcement. I sent research surveys to 248 law enforcement agencies across the United States. Of those, only 98 (39.5%) responded and participated in the research. This result was astonishing, considering the fact that 71% of the law enforcement agencies surveyed consider customer service as part of their organizational mission, and 54% even train their officers on a customer service-based model. It is important to state that 8% of the agencies surveyed indicated that they were undecided about whether they train officers on the customer service-based model.

Why is it important to deliver a customer service-based policing model to the citizens we protect? Because the public deserves to receive the highest degree of service. Our patrol cars display the mottos of “serve and protect” or “dedication to service.” Our mission statements clearly contain an element of service-based law enforcement. Our citizens deserve the best service we can give them. In order to complete this task, we have to reassess how law enforcement agencies operate. Are they placing too much emphasis on issuing traffic citations, rather than issuing warnings and educating the public on the dangers of breaking the traffic laws? Is the public thinking of law enforcement officials as revenue generators instead of public servants? Are we hiring the most qualified applicants, or hiring officers based on relationships within the agency? There is a need and a desire to promote a customer service-based model in our profession. In future articles, I will discuss how to develop training programs, the importance of hiring the best applicants and how to obtain buy-in from our agencies.

In closing, I have one final thought: Show appreciation to your loved ones. They are there for you when you have a good day and a bad day. Our profession is a great one, but don’t allow it to become your identity! God bless you!

Robert Prause
Retired State Trooper

Robert Prause is a retired state trooper from the Michigan State Police and works for the Gordon County Sheriff’s Office in Georgia. He has a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice from Columbus State University and graduated from the CSU Georgia Command College and the FBI National Academy. He is a member of the NCEA and has earned the prestigious Royal Knight Award from Desert Snow.
SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT BENEFITS FALLEN AND DISTRESSED OFFICER FUND

By Lieutenant Chad Payne

On Saturday, August 2, 2014, the NCEA held its first annual Shoot for the Blue softball tournament. The double-elimination, one-pitch tournament was held in Macon, Georgia, at Central City Park. We had six teams enter the tournament, consisting of 10 players each. Players were all ages, male and female, law enforcement and non-law enforcement. The purpose of this event was to raise money for the Fallen and Distressed Officers Fund.

The Monroe County Sheriff’s Office took home the first-place trophy. Coming in second was the Social Circle Police Department. The Lamar County Sheriff’s Office came in third, and taking fourth place was the Dooly County Sheriff’s Office.

NCEA Executive Director (and awesome softball slugger) Doug Wright was on hand to present Sheriff Brad White of the Lamar County Sheriff’s Office with an award for his outstanding support of the softball tournament.

Also on hand was the daughter of Captain Robbie Bishop, Lauren Bishop, who presented the Monroe County Sheriff’s Office with the winning trophy and a check for $500. The check was then donated back to the Fallen Officers Fund by the Monroe County Sheriff’s Office.

The second annual softball tournament will be held in April 2015 in Jackson, Georgia. Anyone who would like to enter a team for this event, please contact Lieutenant Chad Payne by email at cpayne@ncea314.com.

INTRODUCING THE NCEA INTERDICTION CERTIFICATION

As you are aware, the NCEA offers the largest interdiction conference in the world and advanced training in criminal enforcement, as well as providing networking opportunities. What some of you probably are not aware of is the fact that the NCEA has an Interdiction Certification Program. This program provides a certification and recertification process for officers involved in proactive criminal enforcement. The program is based on professional competence, knowledge and experience.

The certification process includes three levels: Certified Interdictor, Senior Interdictor and Master Interdictor. The criteria are different at each level, but hinge upon years of proactive criminal enforcement experience, criminal arrests and, at higher levels, the ability to recognize and locate hidden compartments. Qualifying points are required and are based on education and professional training. All applicants must undergo extensive background verification, provide three professional references and complete a law enforcement ethics course.

The NCEA Board of Directors has waived the multi-year membership requirements for members seeking certification through 2015. Additionally, any applicant who meets the eligibility requirements for certification prior to December 31, 2015, will be grandfathered into the highest level of certification for which they are eligible. This means that if you qualify as a Certified, Senior or Master Interdictor, you can apply for that certification. No test will be required as long as the application and fees are received prior to December 31, 2015. After that date, applicants will be required to take the certification exam.

For more information, visit www.ncea314.com and click the Certification tab, or email certprogram@ncea314.com.
Standing beneath the massive branches of a nearby sycamore tree, listening to the shrill scream of Arlington’s Old Guard, I was feeling the dull vibration as they carefully carried the flag-draped coffin of another fallen soldier, Sergeant Major Wardell Turner, to a solemn resting place, an awe-inspiring experience to those present. On this cold wintry day, January 5, 2015, I stood with seven Wicomico sheriff’s deputies and dozens of military commanders, including the secretary of the United States Army, John McHugh. We were paying honor and tribute while preserving a magnificent display of choreographed respect and military honors, built over hundreds of years, to ensure that we remain in the future what we are today: the greatest land power the world’s ever seen.

One week earlier, on December 27, I joined 25,000 law enforcement officers in New York City for the funeral services of NYPD Officer Rafael Ramos, another fallen hero. When a police officer is killed, it’s not an agency that loses an officer; it’s an entire nation. I’ve attended an inordinate number of funerals during my 31-year career in law enforcement, but it’s important to attend to show solidarity for the rank and file. These two funerals have caused me to reflect on the perilous dangers facing American law enforcement during our embattled role in criminal interdiction.

Highway drug and criminal interdiction by sheriffs’ deputies, state troopers and police officers across this country produces a significant amount of the annual total drugs seized and criminals arrested by the United States. Recognized as an effective and imperial supply reduction strategy, it is also the most impugned domain of drug enforcement, under fire from numerous complaints of racial profiling from special interest groups and minority coalitions. These accusations are often based upon tautological interpretations of motor vehicle stops and arrest statistics. Contemporaneous allegations of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies have taken on the character of a national offensive. The attorney general has vowed to end racial profiling within federal law enforcement entities. Interdiction by American law enforcement is based on well-established criminal profiles of persons actively engaged in the importation and distribution of the bulk flow of drugs and currency. Racial profiling is illegal, as it should be.

However, within these drug markets, cultural familiarity, fraternal associations and hometown loyalties generate distribution networks bound by race and ethnicity. The National Criminal Enforcement Association calls for a renewed rational and focused response to any accusations of racial profiling and its adverse impact upon law enforcement’s moral and social obligation to reduce the bulk transportation of drugs and criminal activity on our highways. Remedies include greater drug and criminal interdiction training, the establishment of a national plenary on the issue of highway criminal and drug interdiction, greater levels of support from federal drug intelligence and training agencies, and a stronger intelligence component in state drug interdiction efforts.

I’m convinced that we have within our association diamonds of perfection. I’ve personally worked with some of the finest interdiction troopers and deputies this country has to offer, and many of them remain members of the NCEA. As we renew our commitment to press this fight, let’s examine just a couple of things. In this next year, ask yourself this question: What are you going to be remembered for? I know you’re alive, but are you living? Stay focused. Keep your eye on something great. This is your shot; now let’s go make it happen! 

Michael A. Lewis
Sheriff, Wicomico County

Michael A. Lewis is a 30-year veteran of law enforcement and criminal interdiction, and a charter member of the NCEA. He is currently serving his third term as sheriff of Wicomico County, Maryland. He also chairs the Wicomico County Narcotics Task Force and co-chairs the Maryland Legislative Affairs Committee in Annapolis.
REMEMBERING THE FALLEN

“Our fallen officers died in service to justice, and in defense of the innocent. They will never be forgotten by their comrades, they will never be forgotten by their country.”

— PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH, MAY 15, 2004
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