

Maryland



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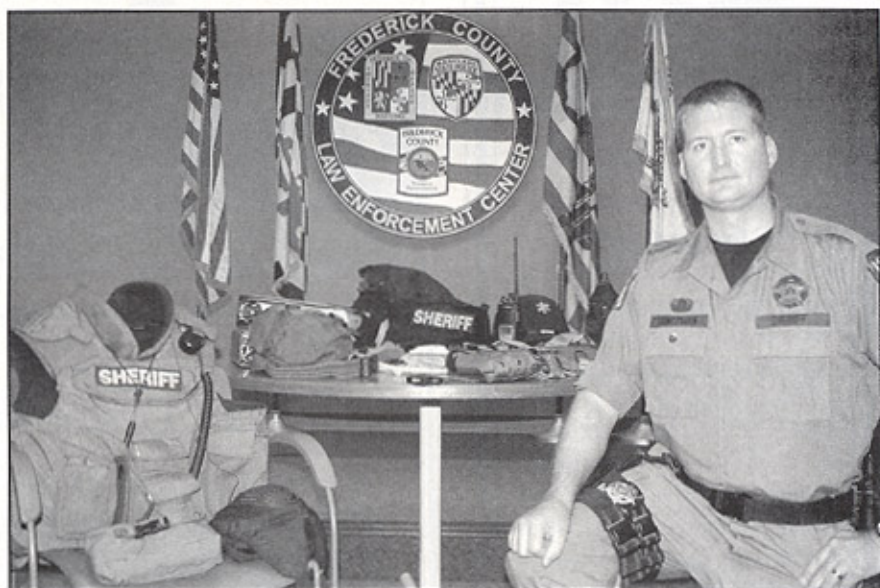
Deputy Gets Schooled in Tactical Medicine

By Corporal Jennifer Bailey
Frederick County Sheriff's Office

While some people travel to sunny Palm Springs, California, for leisure vacations and to play golf in what's known as the "golf capital of the world," others go there for another purpose. From April 27 to May 10, Sergeant Keith Bowerman traveled to the desert oasis, lugging with him his tactical gear, vest, gas mask and weapons, to attend courses in basic and advanced tactical medicine hosted by the world-renowned International School of Tactical Medicine (ISTM).

The school is a law enforcement agency based program that offers the student an opportunity to learn about complex tactical medicine through hands-on training, firearms instruction and personalized attention, much of which is augmented with scenario-based training. Bowerman said, "This training experience surpassed all the other law enforcement training that I have attended. It involved long 12 to 14 hour days, live fire drills and real life tactical rescue scenarios."

Bowerman joined the sheriff's office Special Services Team in 1997 and has played many roles, including being an extra person on perimeter security and driving the emergency response vehicle. Then, in 1999, he was named the team's first tactical medic. The position of tactical medic is a good fit for him because he was already an advanced life support provider (ALS medic) for Frederick County. Also, in early 2008 Bowerman taught an in-service course



Sergeant Keith Bowerman displays his tactical gear.

to deputies about providing medical aid to themselves and other deputies if faced with life-threatening bleeding or other serious injuries.

Over the years, Bowerman has provided care to team members as well as suspects and citizens. Needs have ranged from dislocated ankles and broken bones, to a suicidal subject who shot himself, to team members with lacerations. Most recently he assisted with the treatment of a suspect who was shot multiple times.

In 1999, he attended a basic tactical training course but he continued looking for more extensive training opportunities. In 2008 he discovered ISTM. After learning that the school's fundamental goal is officer survival, and hearing about the top-notch faculty of doctors and law enforcement professionals, he set his plan in motion.

ISTM offers training to law enforcement, fire and EMS providers at the federal, state and local levels and to military personnel and Department of Defense contractors. In fact, Bowerman trained with people from all over the world. He met doctors from Antarctica, contract soldier medics from South Africa and Coast Guard medics from Alaska. The school taught

many new conventional tactical medicine aide techniques, such as using new equipment for airways and bleeding control. The class had about 30 people in it.

A "homeland security" grant covered the \$4,000 course fee and the agency paid for lodging, ammunition, airfare and food. According to Bowerman, his class day started at 7 a.m. sharp and often continued until 7 p.m. or later. "The school was very tough," he said. "Drinking lots of water was a must. We shot hundreds of rounds of ammunition from a handgun and MP5 submachine gun in the desert heat. Our final practical scenarios were conducted inside an abandoned downtown mall."

During his stay, Bowerman said there weren't many opportunities for sightseeing, but that Palm Springs did experience some significant incidents. "There was an earthquake, a mountain fire and a sand storm that shut down the highway. It was reported that wild coyotes were attacking local children and a homicide occurred two blocks from my hotel," he said. "It was an exciting two weeks and I'd recommend this training to anyone wanting to learn about tactical first aid. All in all it was an awesome experience; one that I will never forget."



Bowerman participates in training exercise.

TRAINING

What Is Tactical Medicine?

From www.tacticalmedicine.com

The International School of Tactical Medicine is a law enforcement agency based program at the Palm Springs Police Department Training Center in California. The school offers a dynamic

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and complete tactical medicine training program. Since the inception of the program in 1996, more than 1,300 graduates from more than 650 different agencies have completed the program.

Clients include the U.S. military, Department of "Homeland Security," U.S. Secret Service, Department of Defense contractors and many state and local law enforcement, fire department and EMS agencies. Students also come from agencies in Canada, Europe and around the world.

The ISTM faculty is comprised of physicians and law enforcement professionals. All physicians are residency trained and board certified in their specialty, published authors, hold faculty appointments at teaching hospitals and medical schools and are engaged in the full time practice of emergency medicine, surgery and critical care medicine. In addition, they are tactically trained and sworn law enforcement officers and serve as tactical physicians on SWAT teams. The law-enforcement faculty members are experienced police officers that are firearms and tactical instructors.

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