

KEYSTONE REVIEW

The Official Magazine of the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE

Issue 1



KEYSTONE CHALLENGE



SEPTEMBER 16-19, 2016
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KEYSTONE REVIEW

Issue 1

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KR Publisher's welcome



Greetings PA ZERT members (and beyond)! I'd like to introduce you to the premier issue of the KEYSTONE REVIEW; a monthly or bi-monthly (depends on participation from our members) publication focused on updates on our very own KEYSTONE CHALLENGE event, as well as containing a couple tidy little educational articles from time to time. The KEYSTONE REVIEW's purpose is to share Squad information and training AAR's, highlight our generous KEYSTONE CHALLENGE sponsors, discuss the KC Modules more in depth, notify the membership of upcoming events (open range events, meet & greets, range clean-up dates, as well as approved ZERT 2-day training classes and 1-day clinics being held in Pennsylvania). We will also be publishing AAR's from our various ZERT approved classes and clinics.

This publication is digital, in format, which allows us to put all our sponsors financial support into our great KEYSTONE CHALLENGE, in September! And yes, this publication has been created/produced with HQ's knowledge...because that how we do things in Pennsylvania...with both our state member's support and HQ's knowledge and blessing. That being said, this magazine has been produced solely by Heather Hiller, one of the Pennsylvania State POC's and the co-creator of the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE. Any comments and criticisms should be directed to me, not HQ, as they don't have a horse in this particular race. Please do feel free to download and post the KEYSTONE REVIEW to your personal FB page and use it to generate new ZERT members as well as recruit new members for your Squad! Remember... only ZERT members may actually compete in the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE!!!

A couple details of interest, in regards to the 2017 KEYSTONE CHALLENGE:

1. Our judges/instructor roster (to date): Mistr White and Tim MacWelch will be our Survival Module judges/instructors. Mr. Chris Cook will be our First Aid Module judge/instructor. Mr. Ignatius Xindel will be our Firearms & Team Movements Module judge/instructor. As we sign on our additional judges/instructors, we will publish that information in future issues of the KEYSTONE REVIEW.

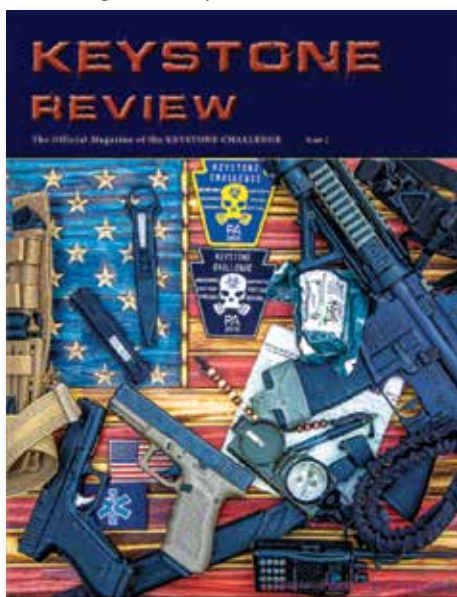
2. The 2017 KC will, again, be held in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania. We have a 100-acre chunk of mountain that has been made available to us this year! The event dates are September 15-16th for the Competition, and September 17-18th for the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE Tactics Class.

3. We are STILL looking for a few more valued sponsors for this year's event. We need to pay for our judges and the rental of the facility.

I hope everyone enjoys this premier issue of the KEYSTONE REVIEW! And always remember what the PA ZERT "zombie" is... it's a lack of training and preparedness!!! So get out there and train...always be learning and perfecting those skills!

I'd like to take a moment to introduce our newest KEYSTONE CHALLENGE Judge: Chris Cook. Mr. Cook will be judging our First Aid Module at this year's KEYSTONE CHALLENGE. Mr. Cook, who is an active advanced level medical provider, has over 30 years of field care in CONUS and OCONUS environments. Mr. Cook has and continues to provide various types of training, both medical and non-medical, for the Military and Government, as well as State and Local entities.

- Publisher/Editor: Heather Hiller (ZP168) (PA POC & KEYSTONE CHALLENGE Co-creator and Logistics Officer)



KEYSTONE REVIEW

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2017 KEYSTONE CHALLENGE

SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

The 2017 KEYSTONE CHALLENGE is currently looking for a few great sponsors! Heather Hiller and Lou Vit, event creators and organizers, belong to the world-wide organization; ZERT. Heather & Lou are the Pennsylvania State POC's/Admins for ZERT are responsible for assisting our PA members (300+) with training, etc. In 2015 we created the ultimate training event, to challenge and motivate our PA members; the Keystone Challenge: a 2-day competition pitting 6-10 person squads against each other in a "survival-based" scenario event. In 2016, the event was 4 solid days with squads competing in firearms proficiency, fire-team movements, survival skills, emergency first aid, land navigation abilities, etc. The 2-day competition was followed by 2 long and grueling days of non-stop training classes... correcting some of the mistakes seen during the competition.

This year, we have 9 squads scheduled to compete, with at least 3 coming in from out of state (Maine, West Virginia and New York)! Last year we were very fortunate to have a retired Marine (counter intelligence/HUMINT Officer), "Mistr White", and Tim MacWelch (20+ year survival instructor, author of several best-selling books and a contributing writer for OffGrid Magazine) come in to teach a SERE/ Wilderness Survival class the day before the competition. The day after the Keystone Challenge, we had Mr. "X", a retired Army Squad Leader (SF ODA), and "XP001" (the creator/founder of ZERT) come in to teach an advanced Squad Tactics class. These three fantastic instructors, plus 1 or 2 more, have already agreed to come back to our event in 2017...to teach and judge the Keystone Challenge! In order to pay for this amazing 4-day event, we are looking for event sponsors. Competitors must pay for the tactics class following the competition (not the competition)...that money goes directly to the instructors and not to us the event organizers. An event this large costs a lot of money to hold (insurance, grounds maintenance, prizes, portable bathrooms, etc).

We have four different sponsorship options:

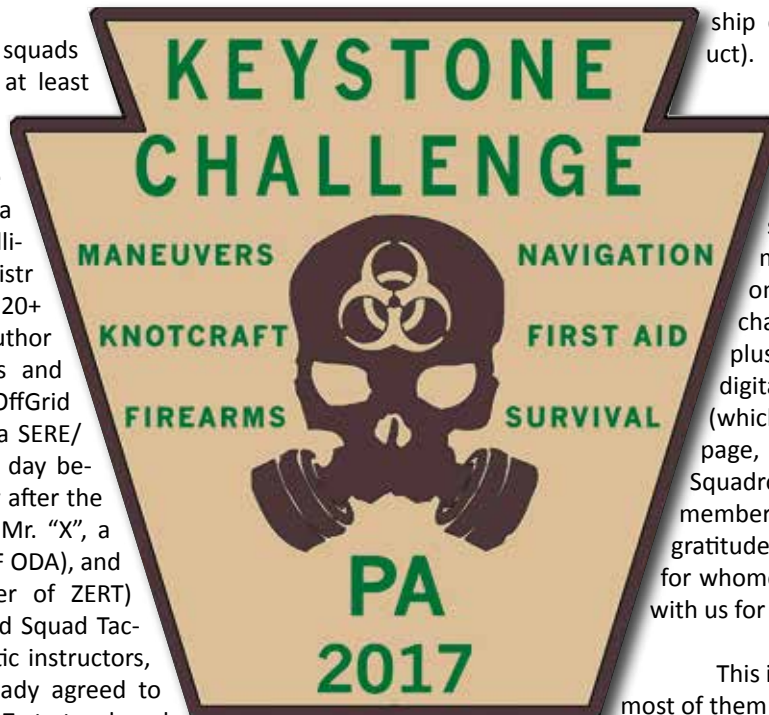
1. Squad Sponsor: \$200.00, plus we invite you to attend the event and demonstrate your products, all weekend, to the competitors and class students during their breaks.

2. Module Sponsor: \$200.00 cash, plus \$200.00 worth of product/swag that we can give away in the event drawing (which costs the competitors nothing). We also invite you to come out and demonstrate your products, all weekend

long, to the competitors/students during their breaks.

3. Survival Sponsor: \$2500.00, plus we invite you to join us for the weekend to display/market/demo your products. This sponsorship will pay for our Survival Judges to attend and teach a 2-day Survival Class to all the competitors, during the competition.

4. Keystone Challenge Sponsor: \$4000.00, plus we invite you to join us for the weekend to display/market/demo your products. This sponsorship will pay for all the expenses incurred during the Keystone Challenge (liability, property rental, portable bathrooms, water, targets, vehicles used during one of the modules, etc), as well as our Medical & Communications Judge. This sponsorship can be split 50/50 (cash/product).



All sponsorship options come with an Internet banner and direct link to your web site from our event website, numerous mentions and "pushes" on our FB page and in our group chats, banner display at the event, plus a half-page display ad in our digital KEYSTONE REVIEW Magazine (which we post on the PA ZERT FB page, on our website, and on the Z Squadron FB page which has over 4000 members), and our VERY appreciative gratitude! Plus...one heck of a great time for whomever you send up to "hang out" with us for the weekend!

This is a GREAT group of people! And most of them have spent a great deal of money on gear and training in order to make it to the competition! They believe in their abilities, the quality of their equipment, and in always bettering themselves. They also enjoy having fun! They have worked their tails off, all year, and this is their big weekend to show off their skills, learn new skills and share information with each other!

Here is a link to our event web site. I hope you will find some time to take a peek...and if you have ANY questions, please know that I'd love to hear from you. My phone number and email address are below. <http://www.88dragon.com/keystone.html>

Thank you for your valuable time and consideration!
Heather Hiller & Lou Vit (Keystone Challenge Organizers)
(570) 435-5088
info@88dragon.com

KEYSTONE CHALLENGE

MANEUVERS

NAVIGATION

KNOTCRAFT

FIRST AID

FIREARMS

SURVIVAL



PA
2016

By Heather
Hiller
Photography:
88 Dragon
Design Studio

Greetings PA ZERT (and neighbors)! As many of you know, when Lou Vit and I originally came up with the idea to hold a "survival" event...our goals were rather clear-cut, but simple. We wanted ZERT members to become more active in the state activities, and we wanted all the PA members to become better prepared for any sort of man-made or natural disaster. Additionally, some of you know about the reading material I was eyeball deep in...and the inspiration for many aspects of the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE I found within those many pages.

In only a year...PA ZERT has managed to impress the hell out of me! Last year there were only four squads, consisting of an average of 4-5 people. The event was only 2 days. This year we had 50 attendees; including competitors, students, volunteers and judges. We had competitors as far away as Maine and Ohio, with additional competitors coming in from NY and NJ. This year, 2016, the event was four VERY long and grueling days...for members who are NOT accustomed to pushing the limits of their comfort and stamina. You, the competitors, got tired, wet, hungry and worn out. You

pushed yourselves WAY beyond your comfort zones...from setting up rough camps in the dark, to eating plants, to collecting water out of a stream for drinking, to gearing up and hiking around our 17 acres, to performing fire team maneuvers under the sharp eyes of our highly skilled judges, to killing rabbits to eat over a bonfire.

Most of you started your weekend on Friday, September 16th with a long day learning survival skills from Mistr White and Tim MacWelch. You learned to build shelters out of everything from tarps to plastic bags. You discovered what wild "weeds" can be eaten, how to build snares for critters, how to cover your tracks, what berries are safe vs poisonous, and how to start fires with minimal tools. A couple of you even had a valuable lesson in watching where you walk so as to avoid booby traps (NOT set up by me, for once!). And once this incredible class was finished, we all jumped in our vehicles and raced to our little farm to begin opening ceremonies for the big event; the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE.

By the time we cut you all loose to set up your camps, it was black outside. Yeah...I planned this around a full moon...but that certainly didn't make it a walk in the park! All five squads, despite the night skies and less-than-optimal-conditions (no trees), still managed to build and secure great campsites for themselves. I'm sure there was griping to be heard...but not a bit of it drifted to my ears. Next morning, after sleeping on the cold ground, you were all up by dawn and getting

ready for your campsites to be judged, for radio check in and verifying your start times. Despite a bit of confusion, everyone managed to get out and on track to all the modules. I have no way of expressing how proud I was of all of you, as I watched the individual squads (some made up of people who'd only met face-to-face the night before), moving in formations around the property as you negotiated your way through the modules. You tackled a Communications (HAM) Module that taught you just how chaotic comms can be when you have a large number of people all trying to talk on radios at once. You tested yourselves at the Medical Module...some of you demonstrating skills you'd only just learned weeks ago. As if the confusion of the morning wasn't enough...you managed to get through the Land Navigation Module without "the map" (which is still MIA!). Right on the heels of Land Navigation, you bounced into having to tie a plethora of knots for Mistr White. I know many of you were puzzled at having to demonstrate this skill...but that's what survival is all about...adapting, adjusting and overcoming obstacles. You successfully overcame the Knot Module! I'm sure, by now, that some of you were a bit frazzled. Did you get a break? Maybe a tiny one...but then it was on to the Fire



Team Module...where Mr. X and XP001 and Jason Kling (the medical trauma judge) pushed everyone's knowledge, ability to work under stressful time constraints, overcome and deal with numerous "casualties", and created an atmosphere of chaos and disorder. Not only did you have to deal with your judges; you had to deal with my cursed booby traps, cranky barn inhabitants, screaming peacocks, poor lighting, finding all your assigned "loot", and to top it off...you had to catch a darn rabbit and figure out a way to transport it alive. You left "the barn" only to find yourselves in the very new predicament of actually killing that



Challenge in Review

rabbit, dressing it out and then cooking and eating the rabbit to the standards of the Survival judge. Did the day wear you out? Oh I know it did...but you broke bread with Todd and I and all the judges and volunteers, sat around visiting for a few hours, sang happy birthday to Lou and Aaron, then dispersed for the evening. We weren't done with KC16 though! Next morning we sent all of you to the range, to shoot NSS in front of the Firearms judges, and garner those last few points for your squads. After a VERY short break, awarding the Sons of Liberty Squad the first place prizes (compliments of our sponsor Strongside Holsters), and giving the other squads some of the amazing items donated by USA Shooters Supply...we were on to our next event for the KC16 weekend...the TACTICS class with Mr. X and XP001.

The scheduled TACTICS class was, I'm sure, a gamble for most of the students. We kept the description vague, because the instructors told me they wanted to work on subjects that they'd been able to see were weak points during the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE. So what did the 2-day TACTICS class cover? Well, day one, Mr X and XP001 split the large class. Half the class went back over to our little farm and worked CQB

ing to the little farm for CQB. All students met back at the big farm for a late lunch, and to switch instructors as we'd done the day before. Every student not only fine-tuned their CQB skills, rifle skills, pistol skills...but also got their toes wet with the PSD lessons. Class wrapped up around 7PM, with some students blowing off steam by shooting exploding targets that sponsor Sure Shot Exploding Targets had donated. Of course...we had to REALLY end the day by shooting a half pound container of the product, causing someone's car alarm to go off...and creating a dramatic sense of haste...to get the heck out of there!

Was it an incredibly long and strenuous weekend? You bet! Did everyone love every minute of it...oh I highly doubt anyone really loved sleeping on the ground or killing the rabbits. But did anyone complain or give up, despite their exhaustion? HELL NO!!! And did the rain slow us down on Sunday...again, HELL NO! And do I feel like all the ZERT members who attended the KC16 are the best that ZERT has...HELL YEAH!!! You guys are friggin unbelievable! You make me proud to know you. I throw challenges at you, and instead of griping or hiding...you come right back at me and ask for more! You guys have given me a family I can feel honored to hang out with. You've also given me something I've been missing for quite a few years...a feeling of brotherhood. So thank you! Thank you for being loyal and passionate about your training/learning/fellowship! You are all family!

For those of you who have never taken one of our ZERT classes, nor attended the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE...let me just tell you this...our students and competitors NEVER leave feeling like they haven't gotten full value for their investment...quite the

opposite! Almost every student, of a ZERT-instructed class, will tell you that they KNOW they received far more than what they paid for! ZERT has a cadre of instructors that I would pit against anyone out there! You know what the biggest difference is between ZERT instructors and non-ZERT instructors? ZERT instructors are 100% approachable and down-to-earth! Every last ZERT instructor we've invited to teach at our farm has exceeded our expectations, hopes and standards in their scope of knowledge, ability to transfer that knowledge to their students, and inspire perfection of the skills. All students have walked away knowing that they are now better prepared to responsibly and effectively use their weapons during an emergency. ZERT instructors give their students every bit of knowledge the student can absorb...plus some!

A huge THANK YOU to the following judges and instructors during the KC16 event: Mister White (Survival class and Survival, Land Nav and Knots Judge), Tim MacWelch (Survival class co-instructor), Jeff Jackson (Medical Judge), Jason Kling (Trauma Medical Judge), the Lycoming County HAM club (for judging the Comms Module), and Mr X and XP001 (judges of the Fire Team Module and Firearms Module, and instructors for the 2-day TACTICS class). Pennsylvania ZERT appreciates the value and now friendship of all of you! And a HUGE shout out to all our incredible 2016 sponsors:

<https://www.facebook.com/570USAShooters-Supply/>
<http://www.sureshotexplodingtargets.com>
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And Tom Domke with [RIGHT AT HOME](#)

AND...we can't wait to see all our old friends, as well as make new ones, at KEYSTONE CHALLENGE in 2017!!!

for half the day. The other half of the class stayed with XP001 and worked on rifle skills. Then Mr X brought his students back to the large farm and worked the other students on pistol skills, while XP001 taught an abbreviated course of Personal Security Detail. Class ended around 6:30-7:00...and though some of us met for dinner, others were just so wiped out from three long days...I'm sure they went to their hotels and crashed! Next day, at 8:00AM, we were all back at it, with the opposite group of students head-





2016 Keystone Challenge Competitor AAR's

Jon Arneson (CENPA BAWGS Squad)

These are my thoughts for the 2016 KEYSTONE CHALLENGE: The whole event



was outstanding. Fun and good training. It is hard to believe that you can get that many people together and have them all get along. The modules were good, I think next year the land nav should have people interacting with the map and compass more, perhaps a compass course, which I know would have been difficult with that size of area, but maybe next year. The first aid topics were good and covered a realistic array of things that would be found in a bug-out situation. The instructor/judge was knowledgeable and friendly. The radio section tested the limits of my knowledge, lots of questions, almost as many as the technician test itself. I liked the judge... he was the quintessential HAM enthusiast. The tactical module is of course what I will remember the longest. It was a surreal experience, going into an unknown situation with people I barely know, all of the observers standing around and at times walking between us like specters that we were supposed to ignore and focus on the scenario. It was like a weird dystopian movie. Michael really made that scenario work for us, he was quietly following orders but seemed to be the guy who accomplished the most. I think he found all of the items we were searching for. I know the booby traps were going to be there, and none of the traps really surprised me but I could not get it in my mind that I needed to look for them. It is so ingrained in my head that I am looking for combatants that I couldn't focus on other threats. We will definitely have to train on that this year.

The rabbit was a good element, definitely outside of my expertise. We are

lucky we had Tyler for that (if you have not watched the video of him gutting the rabbit you need to, it was impressive). The end of day BBQ was great and I wish we had stuck around longer to socialize.

Brian Beasley (MISFITS Squad)

Friday Mistr White and Tim MacWelch kept us busy in nature's classroom, giving us a concise and thorough crash course in wilderness survival, and evasion. The experience and knowledge of the instructors was enthralling, and filled a significant number of pages in my notebook with pure gold. We covered shelter, all the way from clothing (Wick, Warmth, Weather,) to primitive and man made shelters for any season (BLISS: Blend, Low Profile, Irregular Silhouette, Secure, Small and secluded). It was clear from the beginning that these guys really knew their stuff, because their lessons were filled with useful tips and 'hacks' they'd learned over time. We learned how to identify insects that are safe to eat, and how to prepare them. We discussed water, fire, and the mental processes of survival in serious depth. We learned trapping, foraging, and herbalism. Last but not least we got a thorough run-down on survival kits.

ZERT training events never fail to amaze. My trip, from Maine, would have been worthwhile just for this class. Many thanks to both Mistr White, and Tim MacWelch. Saturday the Keystone Challenge tested competitors on their technique and execution in 7 areas: Survival, Navigation, Knot-craft, First Aid, Communications, Fire Team Movements, and Firearms proficiency. Each of the modules was judged by one or more well-qualified experts. Mistr White judged survival, navigation, knot-craft, and also field dressing technique. Fire Team movements were judged by Mr. X and XP001. The First Aid and Communications modules were the only two modules judged by non ZERT instructors. These 'guest judges' were well qualified experts, and they didn't disappoint.

Sunday and Monday we went back to school. XP001 taught rifle technique, and

PSD, Mr. X taught CQB and Pistol technique. As always, the ZERT training was unparalleled. Mr. X's CQB class in particular was not to be missed. We spent about 6 hours drilling under his instruction, clearing the Hiller's barn. By the afternoon, building clearing was beginning to resemble a choreographed dance, with sweat-drenched ZERT members filling and flowing through the barn. We were still pissing off Mr. X, but much less than before. Many students had little or no experience in CQB, and with that one class had every student developed the ability to clear a building as a team with competence. Those who had already had formal training learned just as much, if not more, and had opportunity to discuss different techniques and approaches. Mr. X's comprehensive understanding of the subject, coupled with his intense interest in student success created an ideal learning environment, and an invaluable morning of class.

The Keystone Challenge was an overwhelming success, and a comprehensive survival competition. ZERT training events



never fail to provide a fire-hose of invaluable information, and the Pennsylvania ZERT squadron leads by example. KC17 promises to be even more challenging, and more educational. The only constructive criticism I have heard, or been able to come up with, would be integrating the separate modules into 1 single wilderness mission per team, and really throwing people to the wolves, so to speak. I'm grateful for the experience, and the new knowledge. I left feeling both humbled and inspired.



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SMOKIN' GUNS

By Heather Hiller
Photography: 88 Dragon Design Studio



Bryan Edward (from MD), Jon and Philip Arneson (father and son team from CENPA BAWGS Squad), GP and Travis Smith (from SON's Squad), and Todd Hiller (of Rejects Squad). 2 of our guest ladies; Ms. Wertman and Mrs. "E" had never shot firearms before, while our third; Mrs. Oakes, had some limited experience. Both Oakes and Wertman brought their own new handguns, which neither had ever fired before. Mrs. "L" got an introduction to handguns on a couple of my (mostly stock) Glocks, as well as Mr. Brown's very sweet Glock Zev Dragonfly w/ a Trijicon RMR.



On April 9th, 2017, six ZERT members, myself, Instructor Brown, and 3 female non-ZERT members gathered, on a beautiful sunny day at a local farm, to participate in an "Introduction to Handguns" event for our 3 female guests. Mr Brown was our official Handguns 101 Instructor for the day, with the rest of our ZERT Brothers in attendance to assist and demonstrate a HUGE selection of firearms to the ladies. ZERT members who attended and helped out:

As with all PA ZERT range events,

Todd and I brought out all the Hiller and PA ZERT targets, allowing all the shooters ample opportunity to work on marksmanship...both with visual hits on paper as well as auditory hits on MGM Steel. After working on their Handgun



101 technique with Instructor Brown, the women took a break and spent some time on the firing line with Jon Arneson and Bryan Edward. Oakes and Arneson tried out a couple different handguns, before settling on Oakes 1911, while Wertman and Edward contin-

Photo Shoot



ued working with Wertman's new Glock 26. Wertman and Oakes continued to show improvement, especially after a ton of dry-firing to work out their "twitches".



Meanwhile, Instructor Brown continued working with Mrs. "E", eventually transitioning her to his Select-fire Bushmaster Kittkat with a SilencerCo Suppressor.



And yes, Mrs. "E" DID have a HUGE grin on her face when she pulled the trigger... and everyone's heads snapped around at the suppressed sound of rapid fire. By the end of the day, Wertman and Oakes each had the opportunity to try their hand at shooting rifles. Edward brought out 2 Ruger 10/22's for the ladies to shoot. Oakes spent time shooting a gray-finish Ruger 10/22 Magpull Hunter X22 stock (cut down for the take-down version), with Kidd charging handle, GemTech Mist 22 integrally suppressed barrel, Vortex Strike Eagle 1-6 Scope, Harris Bipod, Ruger BX-25 mag. Wertman enjoyed shooting Edward's lighter Ruger 10/22 (in tan) with a Magpul Hunter X22 Stock, Kidd charging handle, TacTical Solutions SBX barrel, SilencerCo Specter 2 Suppressor, with a Vortex Sparc 2 and Ruger BX-25 magazine.

Some of the other weapons brought out and enjoyed during the day:

Travis Smith brought his Glock 19 with a 3.5 pound trigger connector by Ghost Industries and Trijicon night sights, a Glock 34 Tactical with a 3.5 pound trigger connector by Ghost Industries, and a stock Glock 21, a Sig Sauer 1911 tac ops with VZ grips, a Diamondback AR-15 with 18" barrel with a latchless charging handle by Strike Industries, and a Century Arms Ras 47 with stock Magpul pistol grip and stock.

Continued on page 26



PENNSYLVANIA ZERT

A Host's Outlook on the April 2017 2-Man Team & Vehicle Tactics Course

By Heather Hiller

Photography: 88 Dragon Design Studio

It's tough for me to write class AAR's. Usually by the time the class is over and our home is empty of guests, and I've spent numerous hours picking up spent casings at the range, I just want to crawl into bed and pull the blankets up and over my head and not think about anything ZERT for a while...usually. This class was shaping up to be no different, leading up to the class. Being the "Logistics Queen" certainly has its low-points, when one takes into consideration the vast hours that going into the preparations of a class; making sure everyone finds a suitable hotel, making sure the class remains "sold out", getting targets squared away and repaired, policing the class group chat, fielding questions between students and instructors,



renting and arranging the rental, delivery and removal of the class vehicles, clearing the needs of the various property owners, renting "The Hall" so we have a dry place to meet and eat, organizing Saturday's lunch-



es and a dinner meet and greet for almost 40 people, making sure everyone is legal, getting everyone to sign and return the property liability waivers by our lawyer's deadline, inspecting the property for hazards (which changed overnight this year), making sure the instructors have landed and are safely in route, making sure all the students have arrived



at their lodging and aren't having issues, and this class had a couple additional challenges...as I'd decided I was actually going to take this class (from start to finish), rather than be the photographer. So I also needed to make sure my camera gear was all set up and "bomb proof" for my catch photographer, as well as make sure all my shooting gear was gtg. I'd wanted to practice some maneuvers before class...but that never happened due to work and class preparations. Thankfully my husband, Todd, was able to read the study PDF to me one evening while I was doing some work for one of my clients.

The night before the class, I was absolutely exhausted (swore I'd never do this again), so Todd suggested we head to town, meet up with Kevin Perdue and Jayson Kyle for a quiet dinner at a local specialty pizza place. This was exactly what I needed...to



get out of my office and away from client deadlines, stop thinking about the class, stop worrying about our pregnant mare...just chill out and stuff my face with pizza while visiting with our WV friends. We finished dinner and headed home,

to await the arrival of all our long distance house guests, get our gear in order, and

What's so great

hopefully get to bed at a decent hour. Our guests started arriving around 8:30PM with the last ones showing up around 11PM. Our NJ guests arrived bearing an absolute ton of yummy snacks, straight from (the Italian side of) NY...but we were so tuckered out, we had to cut the evening short and head to bed, leaving all our guests to entertain themselves.



ZERT TRAINING

I've been asked "What's so great about ZERT classes and instructors". That's a difficult question to answer, for me. I've heard and read at least a hundred AAR's from students from various classes, and they all expound upon the quality of the instructors, the caliber of the course material, and the skills (new and refreshed) everyone walks away from a class with. But when I ask myself what I left the 2-Man Team & Vehicle Tactics class with...my answers are a bit non-traditional. Here are some slightly unique points, from the observation of a host/event organizer:

1. ZERT members come to classes wanting and willing and ready to learn everything you throw in their direction. If these were my students, I'd be beside myself with excitement over these guys and gals openness to learning. Not once did I hear any student say "I can't", or "No", when asked to try new techniques. Not once did I hear any excuses. Ask the students to get down in the mud and shoot around edges of vehicles. HELL YEAH! Ask the students to shoulder up to the vehicles and push them through the tall grass and wet soil? HELL YEAH! Heart and spirit...that's what our ZERT members have...in excess!

2. ZERT Instructors: Aaron Mauldin (XP001) and Ignatius Xindel (Mr X) both have been to PA and taught

home any time due to their professionalism, respect, and dedication. I know instructors. With my background, not only have I spent thousands of hours being taught, I've also been on the other side of the podium. These two gentlemen know their shit...and most important, they have the ability to get their knowledge into our skulls!!! They each have teaching methods 180



degrees opposite from each other; Mr X is enthusiastic and expressive, while XP001 is calm and "whispering in your ear". One of them is in-your-face blunt, while the other gets into your subconscious. Both styles work...very well.

What did I get out this course on a personal level? I can't begin to cover everything... briefly. I will, however, highlight a couple of the high points of my learning experience.

1. After hitting slide-lock, at the exact same time as my team partner/husband, four times in a row during team maneuvers, I've learned that perhaps being so "in-tune" with your partner could have a negative side, if you both go empty at once! So reload, BEFORE you go dry!

2. A gunfight, near a vehicle, is a



damn good way to get yourself ventilated and dead...if you're at it a while. POV's suck for concealment, and the idea of having to bail out of one while shooting to save your life...doesn't even make my top 1000 on my bucket list. Remembering to stay low, shut doors, not muzzle yourself, not muzzle your partner (especially while in the vehicle), mechanical offset when shooting a rifle on its side, not turning your head into a bobber (target) while trying to see over the trunk and hood of the vehicle...ALL lessons I learned...and pray I never have to use in real life!

3. Muzzle/bullet language. What's this? It's body language, but using

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about ZERT Training?

classes for us previously. As a PA ZERT host/organizer/POC/Mother Bear, I have to state that not only do these two gentlemen have an open invite to return and teach again (and again) due to their knowledge, proficiency, subject matter expertise, and ability to effectively share that knowledge with students, they also know they are welcome in our

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the sound of your partner's firing rhythm to tell how far they are from you, when they are moving, how many rounds they have left, if they are reloading, etc. You don't have to see/watch your partner, during a firefight, in order to know their status. You DO have to listen to their "muzzle/bullet language".

Some of the more humorous moments of the class (and we always have these moments), were some quotes I remember hearing: "OH MY GAWD... you were the rodeo queen," "Chunkets and nitbits", "Good thing all the bad guys are cardboard!", "Banger's snatch chat", "Those were the meanest strippers I've ever seen!", "Do do like X do do", and we learned that someone has really bad timing when eating a TastyKake! From a medical point of view, I now know I should always carry a supply of Imodium for the class...it's safer that way.

So would I take another ZERT class? OH, HELL YEAH! Better question, for me, would I host another ZERT class/event? Without pause or regret!!! These guys are

the family I never had...brothers and sisters I've grown to greatly care about. The students and instructors and the friendships made these past years...they make it all a blessing and gift!

Heather Hiller ZP168



Class AAR's can be found on the following pages.



Student AAR's on the April 2017

2-Man Team & Vehicle Tactics Course

Charlie Pensari (New Jersey):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR
Montoursville, PA
Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X

Regarding the 2-man team/vehicle tactics class 22-23 April, 2017, I learned a lot that will potentially enhance my survival as a LEO. It dispelled the long held notions of using the car for cover/concealment. It filled in holes from



a similar class I took last month when we took distant shots with rifles oriented sideways over the hood and trunk, accounting for mechanical offset at 50 meters. The 2-man tactics portion was especially helpful; again, filling holes left from recent active shooter drills. This was an excellent way to invest this years clothing allowance. This class was an excellent return on investment of my time and money. So many academies fail to teach these basic skills; leaving departments and officers unnecessarily open to liability. But hey, if ZERT is gonna make it available, I'm not gonna fail to take the opportunity. Yeah, the zombie thing might sound goofy to most cops, but ZERT is doing more to prepare patrol than admin and academies are. I guess those are my zombies. And failing to prepare is preparing to fail. These guys have real world experience they're willing to share. Take advantage of it. Be safe. 1*

Matt DeLong (607 Squad - New York/PA):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR
Montoursville, PA
Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X

This was my first ZERT class and I was unsure of what to expect and nervous. Once I arrived, several members as well as Heather Hiller, greeted me. I relaxed a bit, and met a couple of my local 607 crew, and my partner for the weekend. When XP001 and Mr. X arrived they greeted everyone and shook everyone's hands. It was a great way to start out the weekend. The first session on the range was handgun drills, and then some 2-man tactics with getting out of a vehicle with cover fire and concealment. Learning shooting tactics and concealment tactics was great and I learned a lot to take back home. We also learned 2 person tactics with moving toward and away from targets as a team. On day 2 we again began with drills but this time with rifles and handguns...transitioning drills from rifle to pistol and back again, and malfunction drills. In the afternoon we worked on shooting around vehicles while using them as concealment, shooting through glass and seeing how different types of rounds penetrate the vehicles. All in all this was a great class,



learned a lot and came away with a lot of new skills to practice. The instructors were great and truly love what they do! Thank you for a fantastic weekend and breaking me into ZERT. I will be back for more!!!

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Kevin Perdue (West Virginia POC):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR

Montoursville, PA

Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X & guest instructor Mr. Brown

This was my first official Z.E.R.T. training class and, well, I'm hooked. Both XP001 & Mr. X are outstanding instructors. They both pull off the 'impatiently patient' style of instruction beautifully. They give just enough of an impatient sense to get you a little rattled, giving the illusion of a real world scenario, while holding back & being patient enough to let you learn safely at the same time. Both days, the entire class spent the morning, on line, working on making sure we were proficient with our weapons. Day one we focused on handgun only, and day 2 was acclimating ourselves with moving between our primary (rifle) and secondary (pistol) weapons. After the lunch break, my partner & I started in XP001's group, at the vehicle portion of the class. XP001 did a great job of explaining what was expected of us, and then running through the exercise himself, so that we had a clear understanding of what we were supposed to do during each portion. We were able to move at a decent pace, while learning what was expected without being rushed. XP001 & Mr. Brown worked well together, with 001 being primary, and Mr. Brown assisting & offering input/insight in several cases. Side note: shooting through the windshield, from the driver's seat, was fucking awesome! After a short break, mid afternoon, the 2 groups switched, and we



picked up Mr. X's 2-man tactics portion of the class. This was probably the more intense portion of the whole experience. Mr. X gives off a mixture of (occasionally) intimidating intensity, & comedy relief.

Working through the bounding exercises (something I haven't done in well over 20yrs) with my partner was intense AND a blast. The anticipation of waiting for the call to contact, not knowing if the reaction was going to be a forward assault, or a retreat, was exhausting & energizing at the same time. Day 1 was handguns only, but day 2 was rifle & handgun. This definitely made it more interesting. Scenarios where the primary (rifle) would fail, which necessitated a transition to secondary (pistol), while the partner bounded, and then getting primary back into action before bounding again. Referencing XP001's live feed 'rant' a few weeks ago, I thought that I was 'over myself'. I thought that I was humble, and recognized that I wasn't nearly as good as I'd like to think I am. This humbled me even more. I definitely have a renewed motivation to get out to the range more, work on my marksmanship skills, and practice the exercises (to the extent that I can at my local range) and become way more proficient than I currently am. I will definitely be taking more classes! ZP355, WV POC

Jon Arneson (CENPA BAWGS - Pennsylvania):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR

Montoursville, PA

Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X

This was my first ZERT class, and after meeting XP001 and Mr. X at the 2016 Keystone Challenge, I anticipated quality teaching in a fun environment and was not disappointed. The first half of day one was pistol training that was on par with my police academy training (although much more time compressed) and the rifle training on day two was much better, and more practical, than Army basic training. Two man tactics was live fire maneuvers. My biggest take away from that section was allowing the gun to do the talking instead of calling out "moving", "move" etc. Day two of 2 man tactics was quite exciting as we bounded towards and retreated from

targets in 2 man and 4 man groups. Round count for the AR was set at 300 and I fired 296. A note for those preparing for future classes; I have fired tens of thousands of rounds out of my various home built ARS

and generally have a lot of confidence in my builds, however this class put stress on my weapon far beyond my usual shooting. I had three parts literally fall off of my rifle and the weapon got dirty enough and hot enough that the competition trigger was...umm, lets just say...I had some reset problems. Tighten down everything



and locktight it! There was much debate about how important vehicle tactics were to practice. My feeling is this, yes cars are bullet magnets and you need to get away from them but I feel this training was important and relevant. Under fire you cannot just hop out and stroll away like you are at the grocery store or you will die. These exfil techniques will allow you to get out quickly and return fire effectively. XP001's ballistics tests were very informative. People can tell you all day what they think will happen to a round fired through a windshield or through a door. Forget their debates! I have now seen it myself. XP001, Mr X, Todd Hiller and Heather Hiller, Lou Vit, my training partner Tom Domke all the great people in Pa ZERT, there is almost no better way to spend a weekend!

Bryan Edward (Maryland):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR

Montoursville, PA

Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X

To start things off, it hurts to think about how much money I've spent out of my own pocket on training throughout my short time in a career field where this stuff directly applies. With that being said, this course was a great investment and I'd recommend taking a course, with these two instructors, to anyone. It was clear right away that both instructors are very passionate about teaching and have the ability to keep the students interested, and

more importantly interested throughout the entire class. Even in a pretty large class, over 30 people, I felt like I had individual attention. Because of that individualized attention I have learned some new tricks that I will be able to take with me forever. Anyone who is serious about training and improving their skill-set's, has taken or should consider classes. Many times those classes include topics of instruction where the content was repetitive or you've done something very similar in other classes. Repetition is just as valuable if not more valuable than learning something new. Shooting and tactics are perishable skills and without constant upkeep you will start to lose what you're not using. I signed up hoping to learn something new but expecting to get repetitions, but I got more than that. I learned some stuff that I can practice on my own and take with me, and felt like a better shooter than before the class started.

Day 1 the instructors took a brief look at each student's basic skills, allowing them to gauge how advanced they would be able to take the class. We focused only on pistol the first day and while there was instruction, there was still plenty of time on the trigger. One of the things I liked a lot with these instructors was that they demonstrated the drills prior to students doing them. With such a large class and large range of skill sets, when an instructor is able to demonstrate a drill, at a level that truly shows they know what they are doing and that they have done this a time or two, it builds credibility not only to what they teach but their ability as instructors. These guys are fucking legit.



Day 2 we incorporated our rifles with our pistols. We were able to focus on transitions to our secondary weapon from our primary, as well as switching our primary from strong side to support side. This is

something that takes lots of reps to become smooth, but because of the individualized attention I can honestly say I felt a noticeable improvement in my own abilities as well as noticing improvements in my fellow classmates. It's not everyday you get to shoot through a windshield and they provided us with the opportunity to do it, do it safely, and do it with instruction. They were able to advise in regards to ballistics and the effects shooting through glass and steel have on bullets. Fantastic. Overall it was a great class, put on by great instructors, and involved great people. I met some friends and saw some cool guns and kits. Some real nice setups people were running, but material things can be taken from you in the blink of an eye, shit happens in life, but knowledge can never be taken. It's invaluable, and I'd be lying if I say I didn't learn anything or didn't get my monies worth from this class. It wasn't my first class and it definitely won't be my last. I'd recommend this class to anybody who has a basic concept of gun safety and knows their own weapons and kit well, so you can actually focus on the tactics and vehicle manipulations. Keep on training and stay safe. -ZP335D

Steve Freeman (Rebels Squad - Pennsylvania):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR
Montoursville, PA
Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X

Just completed the Two-man/vehicle team tactics in Montoursville Pennsylvania. All I can say is that Mr X and XP001 did not let me down. Like WOW! These guys really are the best instructors and teachers. And this is the reason why: If you perform a drill wrong they don't just tell you the correct way to do it and they explained why and what the benefits are. They don't expect you to do something without knowing why you're doing it they go into great detail and explain what the purposes are of doing the drill the correct way and the benefits and the rewards of being more prepared and doing things correctly. They are very serious at what they do. They want all of us to be prepared and be the best that we can be at being prepared. But they make the whole thing so much fun that you want to do things the correct way. Anybody who knows me



knows I'm not a rifle guy but this year at class I felt so much more comfortable with the rifle and it's because of these guys and what they've taught me that I feel a lot better and confident in my skills. These two are such a great asset to all the brothers and sisters of ZERT their awesome. In conclusion I would like to say a thank you to the Hiller's. At one point in time all of us who have gone to the classes in Williamsport were strangers. We didn't know anybody else and we went there as newbies... but you leave class a part of a family and that's in part because of the Hiller's. From day one I've never felt like an outsider. I've always felt like family I want to thank them and thank ZERT.

Chris Monego (Sons Of Liberty Squad – Pennsylvania):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR
Montoursville, PA
Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X & guest instructor Mr. Brown

This would be my 5th ZERT class and the 3rd with Mr X, but my first with the MAN himself Mr XP001. So I knew to expect a jam-packed training schedule but with each and every class you can see the improvements and the application of new ideas and updated concepts but this never takes away from drilling the fundamentals. Even though I know that each iteration is a fundamental that is then build upon until a point you are executing complex combinations of those drills. I am always amazed how quickly I and the other students are able to execute this in a live fire situation while at the same time doing so in a safety-first environment. This is a testament to the instructors that ZERT recruits and their ability to take real work experience and somehow drill them into our thick brains. No matter how many times I take classes from Mr.X I still think I can "G2" my way through a drill and know what I am

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going to do before I execute. No matter how good I think I am Mr. X has done this enough to know when to change it up and screw up my plan, which is exactly what I need to adjust and execute. I may be a jarhead and so it might take me awhile to



realize the errors of my ways, but this last class I did more listening and less “G2ing” and that is my recommendation to all that take the classes. What really set this training apart from the prior ones was this one emphasized teamwork with a partner, sure other classes were focused on teams but this one had the same 2-man team through the whole class. I was fortunate to pair up with my friend Chris Jones who I have trained with but never to this level. This is a humbler guys and gals, our first runs were ugly (mostly me) but there is a real sense of pride that after Mr X “corrections” we started to flow much better. We already had decent communication but Mr. X was able to build on that can make the other aspects just click. I left that class with a true sense of pride that Jones and I were able to execute on complex 2 man tactics with little verbal communication, little hesitation and at the end a much better flow. You work with someone you trust them but you never put that trust to the test like having your partner firing live rounds near you. Which brings me to my final statement about Mr X, if you are prior service then his training style will not surprise you but if you are not, just remember he has to control a group in complex drills in a live fire environment, so if he yells and has to put hands on, know it is for your best interest and for the interest of safety. Thank you Mr, X I hope you are teaching the Long Range class because you will see me there. Now let me tell you about the MAN XP001, not only does he come from a wealth of knowledge both from prior

service but also current contract and executive protection. XP001 does this with humor and serious knowledge you can only get from those who live/lived through it. In this class XP001 was focusing on vehicle tactics, which went over the fundamental of fighting in and around vehicles, but then goes several steps further and goes over when not to fight from vehicle and then demonstrates the science of what he teaches by actually putting rounds through various parts of the car. Not only was his instruction valuable, but the entire experience is truly once in a lifetime. We have all seen the videos but until you draw a pistol while navigating seat belts and then placing your muzzle over the steering while engaging steel through windshield then you will never truly know what it is like. At this portion of the class I was introduced to Mr Brown who was assisting with the course. He was engaging and great at getting the best out of the us even when we were struggling to get hits, I hope to see more of Mr Brown in follow up classes. By the end of the second day I was toast but I had once again had a once in a lifetime experience and came away a better shooter with a few more tools in my toolbox. There is nothing negative I have to say about this class, only a few suggestions. #1 a text copy available only to those that take the course of 2 or 3 simple drills that we can take home and practice such as the 4 point draw. #2, This is more of venue thing, setup a hydration station near the line for static drills, that is so much to go over there is little time to walk off the line to grab more water. On the subject of venue, 3 of the 5 classes have been at the property of this last class. The Hillers property, when it is said that ZERT is about the members this could not be more true than a spectator venue provided by, managed by and supported by what must have been 100s of man hours to prepare all provided by ZERT members Heather and Todd Hiller. So big shout out to my friends the Hillers. I am already prepping for class number #6 Chris Monego Z852 – Out.

Chris Jones (Sons Of Liberty Squad – Pennsylvania):

April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR
Montoursville, PA
Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X

So I just got back from another great ZERT training class in Williamsport, Pa on

Vehicle & 2-Person Team Tactics April 22 and 23rd taught by none other than XP001 and Mr. X. This is not my first class nor will it be my last, they seem to get better every time I go and Mr. X continues to improve his teaching style at every event. We started out with a weapons handling refresher including things like the now drill, tactical reloading and just listening to directions which also let both instructors get a feel for how evolved the students are which will gave them a comfort level in how far they ramp up the class instruction. While you may be thinking, great, that’s a waste of time, I assure you it’s not. There was a good amount of rusty techniques out there, as most of us don’t have access to the backyard range to get in enough live fire practice time. By lunchtime everyone was moving smoothly and we could break up into two groups with each group working with Mr. X or XP001 with the cars or in the field. Mr. X had come up with a drill that involved a two-person team moving through an open field with markers placed on the ground that would represent cover. At a point determined by Mr. X he would yell out a direction and number of targets



which the team would engage and would need to determine if they could assault the 1 or 2-man target or if they were outnumbered by the 3 man target and break contact while bounding forward or to the rear while firing and communicating. It was well liked by the students and I highly recommend it. The only problem I really had was that I knew I was supposed to bound when I heard my partner start firing from his point of cover and he was running his suppressor which made it a little hard to know when to move! XP001 was on the other side of the field with several of the cars and the students worked on exiting from the cars pulling pistols and firing from the V or around the car. He also was able to show what was usable as cover (not

much) and what concealment really was. He also was able to demonstrate how bullets might hit something like the hood and skip in some very interesting ways. The second day found us with our rifles slung from our shoulder and some of the same drills from the day before which we quickly moved through. From there we moved back to our same groups from the previous day and split back up with the instructors. Mr. X once again had the field set up as before but this time we did the same drills but worked with two 2-man teams with Mr. X acting as the fire team leader. It was loud and a bit confusing but everyone quickly ironed out the issues and we were moving across the field pretty good. XP001 on the other side had moved the cars to some other positions and set up his side so we could get the feeling for shooting through the window and around the car. He was also able to demonstrate the effect window glass has on the direction the bullet travels when it hits glass and what you should try to do when you encounter this. The other drills included hitting steel targets at 50 yards while shooting from the outside of the car and exposing yourself as little as possible which meant you were shooting your rifle sideways depending on which end of the car you shot from to keep a low profile. It was wet the first day, muddy as hell the rest of the weekend but I'm looking forward to the next class!

Todd Hiller (Reject Squad – Pennsylvania):
April 22 -23, 2017 Class AAR
Montoursville, PA
Instructors: XP001 & Mr. X & guest instructor Mr. Brown

The morning started with some required paperwork and a quick overview then progressed to some basic handgun drills to gauge skill levels in this 30-person class. Emphasis was placed on safety and correct form and procedure over speed. The shooting started with the Mr Blue "NOW" drill. This was performed student-by-student and supervised by XP001 or the grizzled face of Mr X trying to add a little more stress to your first trigger pulling of the day. After that we covered dry firing, trigger reset, holster / re-holster and reloading. It was a great warm up to the afternoon's lessons. After lunch we split into two groups: vehicle tactics with XP001 or two man team tactics with Mr X. This was my 3rd class with X. I love his style of

instruction...he can play to the group with comedy, surliness, and intensity depending on what he is trying to get across. He sprinkles both "what if" scenarios and his real life experiences into his teaching to really get his point across. We did two man team movements using handgun only. We were taught bounding forward and assaulting through a target as well as breaking contact and more importantly...when to break contact or attack. We learned to



communicate between teammates both verbally and with our guns. It was intense, exciting and challenging. I loved it! After our time with X was over we moved to vehicle tactics with XP001. Here we learned what a true bitch fighting in a vehicle is. It's tight, awkward, frustrating and just a downright pain the ass. But...at least now I have a fighting chance. If you don't get this eye opener of a class, and the occasion presents itself you really should jump at the opportunity. XP001 went over how to maneuver your handgun in the car safely, how to block the door so it doesn't come back at you, how to get out of your seat belt, and the best way to exit the vehicle. We ran several pistol drills that had us firing from the car and exiting and using the car for cover.

Day 2 brought our rifles into the mix. We started by running the same types of drills with rifle that we had done with handgun the previous day. First thing was the "NOW" drill then a "NOW" drill with rifle transitioning to handgun. We worked on transition from primary (rifle) to secondary (handgun) and other rifle drills until lunch. After lunch we again were split into two groups. I again started with Mr X. We worked on bounding with our partner and also breaking contact and the same type of drills from Saturday but putting our rifle into the mix. Toward the end of our session he put us into 4 man teams and he

acted as squad leader for our attack and return to SP (starting position). He worked on adding stressors to challenge us as we made our moves to show us how easily circumstances can make any plan go to shit and how knowing basic two man tactics can save you. It was just an awesome experience. Everyone in our group walked away with some incredible knowledge. It's now up to us to continue to practice and get better. My group's last session of the day was back in those damn cars with XP001. God I hate cars! If I thought pistol was awkward it had nothing on a rifle in your car. Nevertheless XP001 showed us the best ways to maneuver that big rifle in such a confined space. We ran drills as driver and passenger. The passenger had their rifle up front while the driver used his pistol to fight back to the trunk to get his rifle in the fight. We also were taught how to shoot getting as low as possible and using the

car to support a steady shot. XP001 finished the day by shooting through the car with both pistol and rifle in various spots to show us how vulnerable we really are behind a vehicle. My biggest takeaway... a vehicle is a poor excuse for a fighting platform. If you can get away from it and make your stand you should do it. The vehicle part of the class was a very humbling experience. I don't know if anybody is a graceful gazelle when they're trying to unhoster a handgun or maneuver an AR in the front seat of a mid-sized sedan while seat belted but I sure know I'm not! The car was a bitch... but I am 1000% more likely to be able to survive an encounter while stuck in a vehicle. XP001 taught us all some valuable skills that I pray I never need. But I'm still gonna practice for that day should it ever come. This was my 5th ZERT class. I have attended classes with Mr X, Mr Blue, BA Baracus, Mistr White and XP001. Every class was different but one thing was the same: outstanding instructors that really care and are down to earth and relatable. The curriculum has been great and the value could not be better. I highly recommend taking a course with ZERT.

ZP167



WEAPON RETENTION BASICS

CONCEALED PISTOL

By Heather Hiller and Jeremy Brown
Photography: 88 Dragon Design Studio

For the majority of us, firearm accuracy plays the starring role in our daily firearm concerns, as it should. We all spend countless hours at the range perfecting our ability to get all rounds grouped into a tidy hand-span sized pattern on our selected paper target. If we are truly lucky, once in a great while we get to test our skills while moving, during inclement weather, or together with some form of physical exertion test. All of these firearms skill-builders are just a part of what makes us responsible weapons owners/carriers. In addition, those of us who carry concealed must also practice drawing our weapon from our concealed position...not a skill that occurs naturally. So many variables come into play when having to un-holster your handgun from a concealed position; is your gun in a bag, do you carry at your 1:00, 3:00, 6:00, or 9:00 positions, maybe you carry in a cross-draw location or ankle holster, etc. Do you have numerous layers of clothing on with which to contend with? How often do you practice safely drawing your weapon from its concealed position...daily, weekly, monthly, yearly... ever? During a crisis, it won't matter how tight your grouping is on a paper target, unless you can safely, swiftly and effectively draw that weapon, under pressure, and place your sights solely on the threat.

One more piece of the responsible concealed carry pie is weapon retention. Retention begins and ends with you. Weapon retention is comprised of a multitude of details, and this article will highlight most of those details, by suggesting you ask yourself a series of important questions regarding your holster and your awareness.

WEAPON HOLSTER:

So how is your weapon actually secured in its concealed position? Do you carry your handgun floating loose in a purse or backpack? Is your weapon attached to your body somehow, and if so...do you have a secure belt, belt loops and holster to safely retain it? What level of retention is your holster; level 1, 2, or 3? Does your holster have any built in security features; thumb-lock, index finger release, flap, snap, etc?

AWARENESS:

How aware are you of the people around you? If you're out with your family, what percentage of your attention is on your family and what percentage is on the crowd around you? If driving, are you watching other vehicles or pedestrians when you're stopped at a light? Are you aware of other people around you carrying weapons?

PREVENTION:

Every concealed carry person should know how to prevent someone from removing their weapon from their person!

1. AWARENESS - as we alluded to above, being fully aware of your surroundings is of utmost importance. This certainly doesn't mean you need to walk around all wall-eyed, head swiveling about like you're watching invisible butterflies! You don't want, or need, to be at level red all the time. Asking yourself the questions we presented above is a good start to your personal awareness. Watch eyes and body position of those around you. Be aware of people actively looking in the area of your weapon. Listen for disturbances



in the crowd. Be aware of vulnerable positioning (no cover/concealment). Learn to use windows and reflective surfaces to check out your surroundings...but don't stare! Be smart...not scary and creepy.

2. DISTANCE -

Three primary keys to remember when contemplating a solid safety

"barrier" (cover) between yourself and possible threat

A. Reactionary gap - a reactionary gap is 1/4 second, and it's the amount of time it takes an aware person to react to a threat. Now imagine you're not aware of your surroundings.



B. "Blading" - blading is the act of positioning your body so that your weapon and strong arm are away from a potential threat.

C. Risk reduction - always try to keep at least a reactionary gap distance (or arms length) between yourself and strangers (360 degrees).

3. CONCEALMENT -

How good/effective is your weapon concealment method? In the winter months, concealment is rather easy due to the bulky clothing most people wear. But, how do you pull off effective weapon concealment during the warmer months? Do you carry your weapon concealed in a bag, backpack, or (gasp) fannypack? How secure is your bag, if that's where you carry during warmer months?

4. HOLSTER -

How is your weapon holstered, when you're carrying concealed? I know a woman who liked to carry her little snub-nose revolver Willy-nilly in the bottom of her purse...no holster of any type. Her excuse..."I don't have a round chambered". This isn't the article to get into THAT reticular discussion, other than to say..."Please always use some sort of holster to contain your handgun." There are

endless styles of holsters (IWB, OWB, sleeves, etc, made with leather, neoprene, Kydex, etc) with countless more retention systems (tension, thumb break, hood, index release, etc). When shopping for a holster... keep two thoughts in mind:

A. How easy is it for me to operate and access my weapon, and
B. How easy is it for someone to disarm me?

5. PLACEMENT OF GUN

- So how effective is the placement of your weapon, and how easy

would it be to disarm you from that placement position? Do you carry cross-draw, at 12:00, 3:00, 6:00, 9:00, ankle, etc? Effective carry placement should always be chosen based on the two factors mentioned above under "HOLSTERS". 6:00 might be perfect for you...but is it also ideal for someone wanting to relieve you of your handgun? Another factor to consider; if you use a belt holster... how strong are your belt loops?

6. BODY POSITION -

How well are you concealing your handgun? For ladies, do you carry a handbag on the same shoulder as your weapon, or on the opposite shoulder? Does your bag cover your weapon if you use an IWB or OWB holster? For everyone, do you always make sure no one comes up close on your "gun side"? If you shake hands or hug someone, have you just presented that person with the opportunity to feel and/or grab your weapon? I know I'm a "hugger"... so I've had to retrain myself to hug with the opposite arm, so I'm not "driving" folks hands straight to my weapon. Do you automatically blade yourself to a perceived threat? Do you try to always keep one hand empty, in case a need arises for you to swiftly pull your weapon? And here's an inter-

Continued on page 22

Continued from page 21

esting question: when out with friends or family, do you utilize their body positioning to help conceal that you have a handgun?

We've asked a load of questions in this article...because we want you to be thinking about the answers to all those questions when you plan to carry concealed. Knowing your answers to all the above questions, on a conscious level, helps make you a harder target to someone intent on disarming you.

REACTION TO THREAT:

Someone has just made an active move towards your handgun! Now what?

1. RED FLAGS -

First, always be alert to the signs that someone has seen and is intent on your handgun. Is he/she looking directly at your concealed carry position? Is this person sidling closer to you? Does he/she look nervous? How strongly are they eyeing up your weapon position? If you've answered yes, in your mind, then you need to immediately take steps to make yourself a much harder target.

A. Start by blading yourself to the sub-

ject, with your weapon away from the person.

B. Create a barrier to the subject...use cover and distance to avoid anyone attempting to get closer to your weapon. Cover is defined, here, as an object you can place between yourself and your attacker, in order to limit possible physical contact.

2. AGGRESSIVE PHYSICAL CONTACT -

An attempt has been made to grab your weapon....remember, protect yourself and your handgun at all costs! If someone, with ill-intent, has made physical contact with you or your weapon...be aggressive about defending your handgun and your self!

A. As soon as someone grabs for your handgun:

- Make your weapon secure by placing



2017 Pennsylvania ZERT Training & Event Calendar

APRIL 22-23rd, 2017

2-ManTeam/Vehicle Tactics
Lycoming County, PA
Instructors: Mr X & XP001

JUNE 10-11th, 2017

Long-Range Rifle Class
Lycoming County, PA
Instructor: Chuck

JUNE 24th, 2017

Pistol Tactics Clinic
Lycoming County, PA
Instructor: Wick

JULY 8th, 2017

Rifle Tactics Clinic
Lycoming County, PA
Instructor: Wick

AUGUST 6th, 2017

Team Tactics Clinic
Lycoming County, PA
Instructor: Wick

SEPTEMBER 15-16th, 2017

KEYSTONE CHALLENGE
Lycoming County, PA
Judges: Mistr White, Tim
MacWelch, Chris Cook, Mr. X,
& tbd

SEPTEMBER 17-18th, 2017

KC17 Tactics Class
Lycoming County, PA
Instructors: Mr X & tbd

OCTOBER (tbd) 2017

Emergency First Aid Clinic
Lycoming County, PA
Instructor: Chris Cook

Contact person for all events:
Heather Hiller
(can PM on FaceBook)

All classes and clinics (except
the Emergency First Aid
Clinic) may be booked
through the ZERT website:

[https://zertnation.com/
training-events/](https://zertnation.com/training-events/)

your draw arm firmly over your weapon and pushing it forcefully into its holster,

- Blade your body/weapon AWAY from the attacker by twisting away from him/her,
- Create distance by backing away or using cover,
- Raise your support hand towards the attacker in an attempt to push or strike,
- Yell "NO! STAY AWAY!" loudly and with great authority.

B. If an attacker puts hands on your weapon:

- Clamp your draw hand, HARD, on top of their hand,
- Violently twist your body (concealed side) away from the attacker,
- Use your support arm/hand to strike your attacker in the face or throat as you spin your body away (use your momentum),
- And yell, VERY aggressively and loudly "NO! GET AWAY!"
- If you happen to have a sec-

ondary weapon (knife*) in your support hand pocket, NOW is the time to use it if your proficient with it. A well placed blade, as you're swinging your support arm towards your attacker's head, can be quite a deterrent.

** Ideally, a flip-style knife, and*



make sure you can quickly draw it and effectively operate it with your support hand.

- Quickly distance yourself from your attacker.
- C. Remember the keys to surviving a physical attack on you or your weapon (in no particular order):
- Extreme violence of action!
- Fight!
- Draw your weapon to defend your life, when your life is in danger!
- Flight...if it is safe to do so.

The world we live in is increasingly dangerous. The subject of weapon retention may seem irrelevant...until someone has targeted your weapon and intends to relieve you of that weapon. Sadly, that's when most of us suddenly wish we'd spent some quality time learning how to keep what's ours! *Please remember...ALWAYS practice all retention techniques with an unloaded weapon!*

Squad Training News



607th SQUAD (New York) 15 APRIL 2017

Regular members in attendance:

- Aaron Southard
- Trevor Davis
- Braden Ainsworth

Supporting members in attendance:

- James "Jimmy" Brimmer
- Christopher Vosk

Event was based around a party for the soon birth of Trevor's second child. Opportunity was taken to perform Skeet shooting to maintain rapid target acquisition on a moving target at various ranges. To this



end defensive shotguns were utilized rather than proper trap or skeet guns. Also to add an edge of competition

ious current preparations and plans. We also were able to talk to another individual who, upon hearing the level of actual preparedness and training of the team, expressed interest in furthering his education and refreshing knowledge he was taught in the USMC. When asked about various skill sets various positive items were mentioned such as canning and land navigation. Further contact will be established to evaluate if individual can be trusted enough to be brought into group fully.

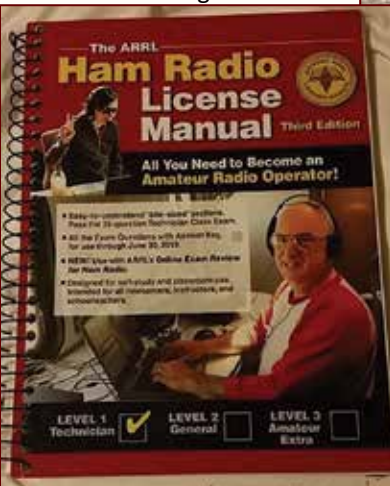
Discussions regarding fur and trapping indicated that the cost of raccoon fur is on a sharp increase.

When discussing the shortcomings of our group from KC16 we indicated that our largest shortfall was HAM communications. Vosk indicated that he was already studying for his exam and that his study booklet was already in the mail. As of the writing of this report the book has arrived and he has begun further preparation for the exam.



discussed most of the keystone challenge first aid topics. We practiced applying tourniquets, triangle bandages and Israeli bandages. In the communications segment we went over Q codes, established a frequency plan, and established a format for our weekly check-ins so that we won't talk over the top of each other anymore. We also talked about the difference between Ham speak and tactical radio etiquette and when to use each. We had a new member present "Seth" so he was briefed on the group and brought up to speed.

Saturday March 18th, 5 members of the Bawgs traveled into Snyder County to look at a potential range site. The site offers a 450 meter range and a small pistol range. We may use it once or twice but we deemed it to far away to be used regularly. -Jon Arneson (Squad Leader)



to the shooting it was turned into a single elimination tournament followed by a double elimination tournament.

The winner of the single elimination tournament was Brad and Jimmy won the double elimination tournament. Please note that over half of the competitors were not members of the 607th or supporting elements thereof.

After both tournaments concluded we all ate and let the non members trickle out prior to discussing next keystone and var-



CENPA BAWGS SQUAD (Pennsylvania)

Sunday March 12th, 6 Bawgs got together at Zulu site for training. Topics included first aid, and communications. During the first aid training we

SONS OF LIBERTY SQUAD (Pennsylvania)



2016 Keystone Challenge winners the Sons of Liberty has been hard at training for the 2017 season. Starting right out the gate with a Meet and Great for team members in Dec 2016 to discuss the



training for the next year. We set up training on each of the modules with a meet scheduled for each month leading up to the 2017 Keystone Challenge.

January found the team going over the Knots and Ham radio communications portion of the competition with Team Leader Chris Jones going over the knots required for the module with the team, He also went over the Ham radio communications module and encouraged the team to look into getting their Ham License as well.

February was followed up with the members reviewing the First Aid section with our team medic Nick Bartoni. Nick was able to go over each of the topics with the members as well as going over individual IFAK contents and setting a common location for each team member to wear their tourniquet in the event it was ever needed in the field.

March was a training event not on the Keystone but just as important. Eric Limbach showed us some of his knowledge in personal defense by going over some basic blocks and defensive moves.

April was set aside for the team to prepare for the ZERT training the bulk of the team was going to attend later in the month on Vehicle Tactics and 2 man movements. Two of our members who served with the Marines, Chris Monego and GP Verberg were able to work with one of Travis Smith our other members Travis Smith to procure some space at his uncles rural property so we could go over the movements that we expected to use during the training class later in the month. We used the video and handout provided by ZERT



to prepare for the class. This allowed us to get in and out of a vehicle with our weapons and shake out our gear which turned out to be very useful.

May Training: Keystone Challenge Squad, Sons of Liberty out training for the 2017 Keystone Challenge on Sunday. We covered Navigation at Valley Forge Park and even found our way back to the parking lot. New member Tommy Solami stopped by to introduce himself and is looking forward to the next event. Squad members in attendance: Chris Jones, Chris Monego, Eric Limbach and Pete Kelly.

What's in store after this? We will con-



tinue to hold monthly meetings as we have additional topics to go over as well as reinforcing some of the things we have learned from the past.

SQUAD 14 "WOLVERINES" (Pennsylvania)

Prepared By: Yuhri Miller Z22844

1. The following is information regarding the training session that took place on 15 February 2017.
 - a. The following members of Squad 14 "Wolverines" (York Co.) attended this training session
 1. Squad Leader Ronald Openshaw Jr. Z4367
 2. Todd Shamer Z22370
 3. Josh Waltermeyer Z17550
 4. Yuhri Miller Z22844
2. Training Session Location
 - a. Stewartstown, PA (Hopewell Fish and Game)
3. Duration of Training Session
 - a. 0900 – 1215
4. Training Session Purpose
 - a. "Range Day"
 - b. Practice basic pistol skills
 - c. Diagnose causes of inaccurate pistol shooting
 - d. Correct and reinforce pistol skills
 - e. Practice NSS Pistol Drill
5. Specific Information Covered On This



Training Session

- a. Yuhri Miller's sight was adjusted after a consensus was formed that the pistol shoots low and left
- b. Talked about front sight focus
- c. Talked about several different sight configurations from different manufacturers
- d. Talked about and demonstrated pistol malfunctions
 1. Out of battery
 2. Feed failure
 3. Jam clearing
- e. Discussed KC 2016 what worked and what didn't and how to increase our readiness for KC 2017
6. Made Plans for the next training session
 - a. Session will take place at Squad Leader Ronald Openshaw Jr.'s home
 - b. Next session will be a discussion on
 1. Needed/Not Needed gear
 2. Radio Operations/ HAM radio license testing
 3. IFAK's



Continued from page 11

Jon and Philip Arneson brought out their 300 BLK 8" barrel SBR with Eotech, a USP Tactical with Gemtech suppressor, a Glock 19, an LMT piston AR with all Magpul furniture, and a Springfield XD in 9mm. GP brought his Beretta 92fs, a Smith & Wesson 460xur Magnum, a Bushmaster carbine 15, and an M1 Garand.



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KEYSTONE CHALLENGE

SQUAD REGIONAL DIRECTORY

ESTABLISHED SQUADS:

Squad 1: REJECTS:

Squad 2: KEYSTONE RAIDERS:

Squad 3:

Squad 4: 607th (Northern NY):

Squad 5: GHOST SQUAD:

Squad 6:

Squad 7:

Squad 8: NIGHT STALKERS:

Squad 9: ARCHANGELS:

Squad 10: SONS OF LIBERTY:

Squad 11:

Squad 12: HEADHUNTERS

Squad 13: MISFITS 1:

Squad 14: WOLVERINES:

Squad 15: RUNNING REBELS:

Squad 16: CENPA BAWGS

Squad 17:

Squad 18:

Squad 19:

Squad 20:

2017 HOST squad

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: Aaron Southard)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad contact: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leaders: Chris C. Jones)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: Kirt Schwabe)

(Squad is made up of members from across the state)

(Squad Leader: Ronald Openshaw)

(Squad Leader: Michael Davenport)

(Squad Leader: Jon Arneson)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: none)

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Squad 23: (NEW ENGLAND) MA/NH/VT

Squad 24: (NEW JERSEY)

Squad 25: (M.O.V.) WV/OH/PA

(Squad Leader: none)

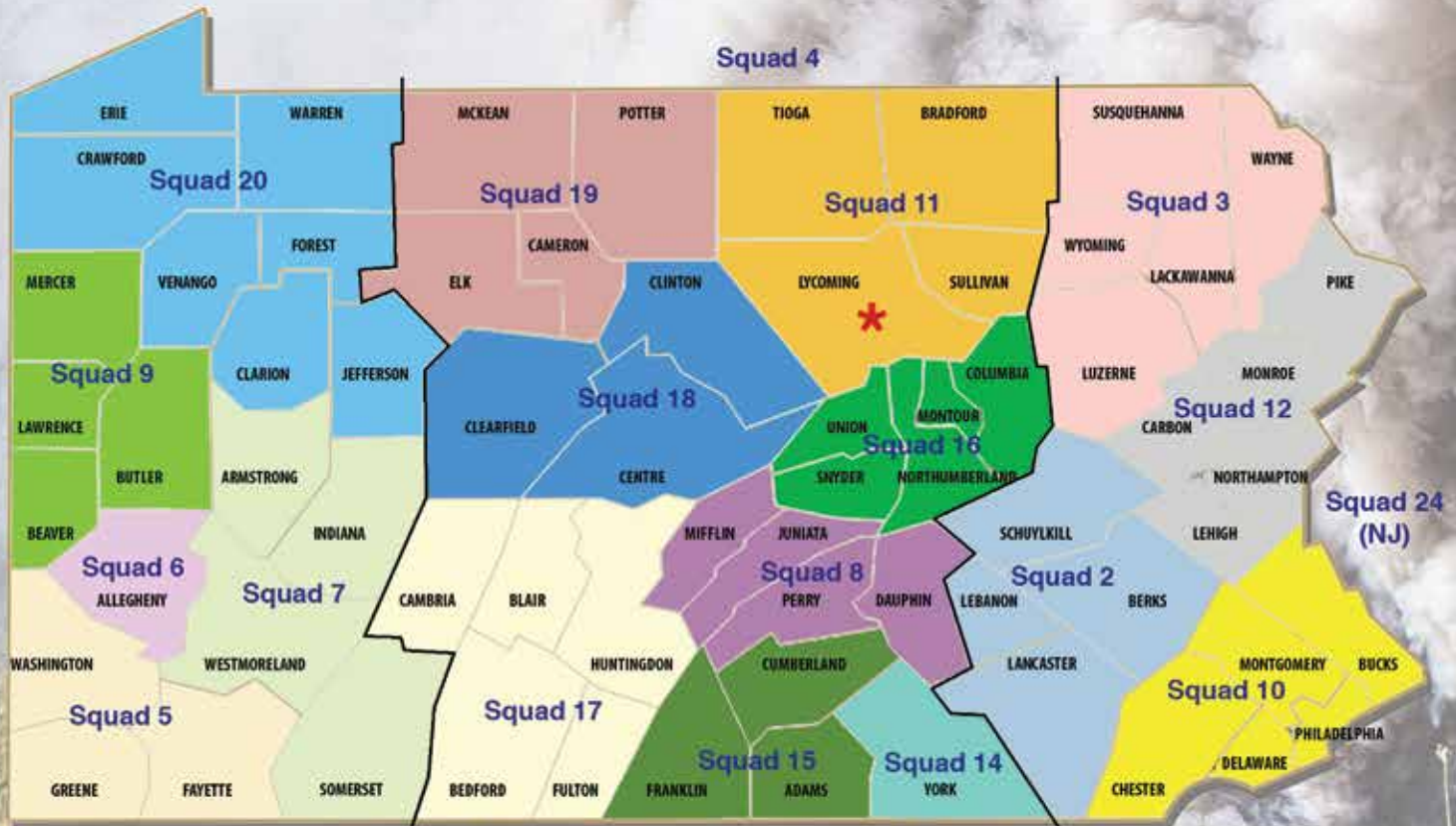
(Squad Leader: none)

(Squad Leader: Kevin Perdue)

squad is not full

squad is not full

squad is not full



Squad 25 (Members from OH, WV & SW PA)

KEYSTONE CHALLENGE

INTRODUCTION

2017 marks the 3rd year for the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE! In the spirit of “pay it forward” training, making sure people are trained and prepared in the case of a natural/man-made disaster, and building stronger morale and ZERT spirit, Lou Vit and Heather Hiller (PA POC’s) are continuing the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE program started in 2015. The KEYSTONE CHALLENGE is a friendly competition/learning experience within the state, as well as from surrounding states. We’ve established regional squads and each squad should contain a minimum of 6 members, in order to compete. 2016 was the first year we opened up the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE to neighboring states! We have high hopes that more states will see the value of this training/competition, and field Squads to compete with us this year. All Squads are responsible for filling a full Squad (up to 20 members), finding coaches willing to work with them on learning skills, and getting all their training done in time for our year-end competition. All Squad members must be ZERT members, and must be on the PA Roster. Each Squad should have a medic, a communications person, someone who knows firearms and can teach the other squad members (for NSS/IW/Triple-S), a “coach” who knows how to teach small team maneuvers, an outdoor person (who can teach the others survival basics) and even a self-defense/tactics person. The coaches should have either a legitimate military or law enforcement background in squad/team movements.

Our goal for this event is to get more people trained and better prepared to work together in case of a real-life natural and/or man-made disaster. An additional benefit to the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE is networking with other ZERT members, the brotherhood/sisterhood, challenging your self to learn new skills, and having a great time!

On **September 15th-16th, 2017**, we will be holding a two-day testing event; the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE. This will test the Squads in the following areas: Team Movements, Firearms, First Aid, Knot-craft, Navigation, Communications, and Survival. **IMPORTANT:** Only 12 members from each Squad will be able to compete...so pick your very best members!!!

On **September 17th-18th, 2017**, we will be hosting an advanced level Firearms/Squad Maneuvers class, taught by one of the highly trained ZERT Instructors. Squads do NOT have to attend the training event, in order to compete! However, Squads will be assessed a fee to compete, if none of their Squad members are taking the class. This is a paid training event.

If you are interested in getting help setting up the Squad in your “zone”, please feel free to reach out to Heather and she’ll assist you with finding ZERT members near you. If you want to see if there is already a Squad in your area, please review the “Squad Regional Directory” (page 9 of this issue), to see where we already have a Squad established.

Deadline:

1. Event Registration: August 1st, 2017 (In order to compete in the September 15th-18th, 2017 event, all Squads must be registered with Lou and Heather by this date). In order to register for the event, you must have an established Squad with the minimum required bodies (6). On a case-by-case basis, we can allow changes to be made to the Squad after registration. Registration is \$350.00 (see exceptions on the Squad Requirements page, Section 24...can be found on the website).

Though this is **NOT** a ZERT event, Lou and Heather have been given a conditional blessing (sanctioned) to run with this. The entire program must go through Lou and Heather. Do NOT contact anyone at Headquarters about any questions you may have about this event. Again, this is NOT a ZERT event!

Thank you,
Heather Hiller & Lou Vit (Keystone Challenge Organizers)
<http://www.88dragon.com/keystone.html>

KEYSTONE CHALLENGE

MODULES

The 2017 KEYSTONE CHALLENGE will test the Squads in the following areas: Team Movements, Firearms, First Aid, Knot-craft, Navigation, Communications, and Survival. Our goal for this event is to get more people trained and better prepared to work together in case of a real-life natural and/or man-made disaster. An additional benefit to the KEYSTONE CHALLENGE is networking with other ZERT members, the brotherhood/sisterhood, challenging your self to learn new skills, and having a great time! The successful Squads have learned to delegate specific members, within their Squad, to perfect and master specific Modules. It is the responsibility of the Squad members to teach each other all the modules. Remember...this is a "pay-in-forward" concept. Squad members may not charge fellow Squad members for instruction. The following is a brief outline of each module:

COMMUNICATIONS MODULE

The 2017 Communication portion of the Keystone Challenge tests the individual and Squad's knowledge of various communication methods (HAM, hand-held, hand signals, etc)
(Judges: TBD)

FIREARMS MODULE

The Firearms portion of the Keystone Challenge utilizes the ZERT Triple-S (Selection Shooting Standards) Exercise to test two (2) members from each squad on firearms marksmanship ability. All ZERT Triple-S rules will apply.
(Judges: Mr. X & TBD)

FIRST AID MODULE

The First Aid portion of the Keystone Challenge will test squad members on their knowledge and effective use of basic First Aid skills. Squad members will be expected to both show practical usage of techniques, as well as describe treatments for a number of the medical issues listed below. The Challenge judge for the First Aid portion may select a total of six (two for each squad member) techniques and/or medical issues to test the squad members on any day of competition. The testing will happen throughout the event, and will be spontaneous and practical. Squad members are expected to know how to treat the various medical issues, on the spot. This is emergency first aid...so be prepared for anything!
(Judges: Chris Cook)

TEAM MOVEMENTS MODULE

The Team Movements portion of the Keystone Challenge will test the entire squad on their ability to methodically, efficiently, safely and effectively work as a squad to navigate through a potentially unsafe area, locate and secure a safe camp location, and establish functional "scouts" to locate camp resources. Emphasis should be placed on keeping a low profile and maintaining Squad safety from detection.
(Judges: Mr. X & TBD)

SURVIVAL MODULE

The SURVIVAL MODULE of the Keystone Challenge will test the entire Squad on their ability to establish a safe and secure base camp, build shelter for the Squad, build and sustain a camp fire, tie knots throughout the camp-building process, locate and purify water for cooking and drinking, feed the camp, and establish a safety perimeter.
(Judges: Mistr White & Tim MacWelch)

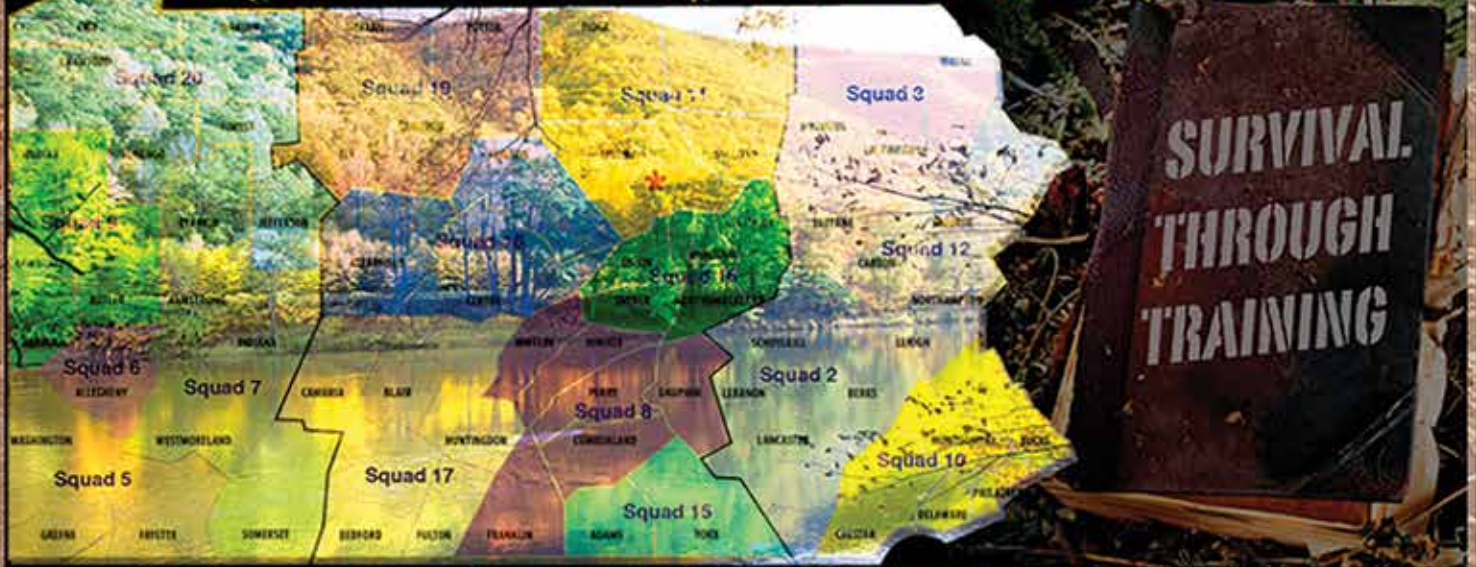
Full description of the modules may be found on our website, listed below.

Thank you,

Heather Hiller & Lou Vit (Keystone Challenge Organizers)

<http://www.88dragon.com/keystone.html>

KEYSTONE CHALLENGE



HOME

MODULES

PHOTOS

SPONSORS



Welcome to the **KEYSTONE CHALLENGE** Modules page!!!

<http://www.88dragon.com/keystone2.html>

MODULES

The **KEYSTONE CHALLENGE** will test the squads in the following areas:

Team Movements, Firearms, First Aid, Knotcraft, Navigation, Communications, and Survival.

IMPORTANT: Only 12 members from each squad will be able to compete...so pick your very best members!!!

- **KEYSTONE CHALLENGE** - all about the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **SQUAD REQUIREMENTS** - requirements for 2017 Keystone Challenge Squads
- **SQUAD MAP** - 2017 Keystone Challenge map of squad locations
- **TEAM MANEUVERS MODULE** - Description of the Team Movements module of the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **FIREARMS MODULE** - Description of the Firearms module of the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **SURVIVAL MODULE** - Description of the Survival module of the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **NAVIGATION MODULE** - Description of the Navigation module of the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **FIRST AID MODULE** - Description of the First Aid module of the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **COMMUNICATION MODULE** - Description of the Communication module of the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **KEYSTONE CHALLENGE EVENT RULES** - Event rules for the 2017 Keystone Challenge
- **HOTELS & RESTAURANTS** - Williamsport area hotels and restaurants