

# The Protection Ranger

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The Newsletter of the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, Fraternal Order of Police



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## Special Officer Safety Issue

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*Although we should be safety conscious all year, with the busy summer season on top of us the Ranger Lodge thought an entire issue of The Protection Ranger devoted to officer safety would be a good idea to remind people to "be careful out there." As several of our members here have done, it's not enough to learn lessons for yourself, you owe it to your colleagues to share those lessons so we can all learn from your experience. Thanks to everyone who's contributed! If anyone else out there has more tips or an incident you think we can all learn from, send it and we'll publish it in the next issue.*

As we go to press, we just learned that Lodge President Greg Johnston was involved in an accident during a pursuit. Fortunately, Greg's OK and the motorcyclist who hit him sustained only moderate injuries.

Again: **Let's be careful out there!**

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### Training to be a Warrior & Post Traumatic Stress for Cops

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*Editor's Note: In July 2005, a seasonal patrol ranger and a supervisory ranger were involved in a fatal shooting with a suspect armed with a deadly weapon. The suspect died in the incident. The ensuing investigation found that officer use of deadly force was both reasonable and necessary. One of the involved rangers has written this account of training that he thought was critical to being mentally and physically prepared for critical incidents. He also makes a number of important observations and guidelines for maintaining mental health in the post-incident aftermath.*

#### **Critical Incident Intensity**

Have you seen the movie *United 93*? It is intense. In the movie the passengers have to decide when to escalate their use-of-force in order to save themselves. In Law Enforcement we train over and over again about how and when to escalate use-of-force appropriately to save ourselves and others when it becomes necessary. We hope against all hope that our training will take over and save us when we need it to. The thing we cannot prepare for is the INTENSITY.

#### **Training takes over**

Being one of the involved rangers in the 2005 NPS shooting incident, I can tell you that the intensity is a secondary issue. You will do as well as you will do. The primary issue is how well you are trained. When your critical incident happens, there may not be time to think. You need to be so well trained that your training will take over, and you will act correctly on an intuitive level. If you under-escalate in a deadly force situation, you will fail. If you over escalate, you will fail. You need to be trained to the point of complete comfort and sureness in your abilities to deal well under escalation-of-force pressures.

#### **Warrior Mentality and readiness**

Park Rangers are assaulted more than any other classification of federal law enforcement officer. It's not a matter of "if" you will be assaulted with force – in today's modern Park Service, it is simply a matter of "when." If your level of training is dependent on our under-funded agency's limited programs, then you need to supplement your training like I did: outside the agency. You must be your own preventative program. You need to develop warrior mentality and proficiency for yourself personally, before you need to use it. It may come as no surprise that many L.E. Rangers are not interested in the concept of being a Warrior. I do not believe that you must wait for a use-of-force encounter to find out if you are a true warrior.

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## **The Life Changing Moment**

The 2005 ranger-involved shooting took place at a dark campground during a domestic dispute call. The rangers were called in on an overtime call. The shooting occurred with an armed suspect at a distance of six feet. Does this sound all too familiar? It should, because statistically, as we are taught, these types of incidents happen at close range. I guarantee you, there was no time for thinking. Training took over. The stress comes afterwards, when you realize what just happened. You better be able to say that your training took over.

## **Many Cops don't have a Warrior Mentality**

**COPS PREPARE TO FAIL:** It's true. Warrior mentality is rare. Cops get comfortable. In the average line-of-duty shooting incident, the officer only hits the target 15% of the time, and that is for close range shoots.

Why cops fail:

- Many become lazy and don't train to proficiency.
- Many don't wear all their defensive gear, or don't wear their vests.
- Also, lots of cops have egos.

Authority won't save you, only proficiency will. Don't become a statistic and part of the 4 in every 15 cops who leave a deadly encounter injured or dead. Remember, "The will to survive is not as important as the will to prepare to survive." Why? Because your training will take over.

## **Trouble after the incident from the non-Warrior class cops**

Did I mention that there is a definite "non-warrior class" within Park Service Law Enforcement? Those who would have you lighten up because we are a humanitarian agency first. Many in park managements are more interested in "No Complaints" than officer safety. Staffing levels are cut to dangerously low levels, in some cases to accommodate other priorities not essential to officer safety. But the Park Service is not alone in this

phenomenon, especially as it relates to non-support for post-shooting officers.

"COP EAT COP SYNDROME" is prevalent in all law enforcement circles: It refers to other officers' hostile treatment of shooting-involved officers. Not only does a post-shooting officer have to deal with bureaucratic stress and red tape for getting support, as well as his own PTSD symptoms, but he or she also has to deal with a phenomenon called Cop Eat Cop syndrome. It sounds odd, but the shooting involved officer who should be regarded as a hero and welcomed back with honors is often picked on. The abuse takes many forms, but is usually psychological in nature.

## **Scrutinizing of Shooting Involved Officers**

Some fellow officers and supervisors resort to scrutinizing the involved officers and watching for flaws. Cops are suspicious by nature, but this goes beyond that. Police psychologists have documented that cops either don't like the vulnerable nature of a shooting-involved officer, or more frequently have deep personal issues with how to relate to a shooting-involved officer. Some officers take the shooting involved officer's event personally. They respond out of anger or jealousy that they were not the one involved. Officers perceive themselves as strong and pick on other's perceived weaknesses or apparent superiority.

Being in the WARRIOR CLASS is its own reward: There is no recognition for becoming a member of the Warrior Class. Police firearms instructor Mark Kowack has experience with cops who return to work after a shooting. Kowack attests that an officer who has survived and done well in a shooting event, belongs to the "Warrior Class". Kowack also acknowledges that some officers who have not been involved in shootings, belong to the Warrior Class. But the problem lies within each officer's perception of himself. Some fellow officers feel that by their association with the shooting involved officer they have something to prove. Some Park

Service managers also feel they have something to prove after these types of incidents. Because no officer really knows how he will do in a life-threatening encounter until he is tested, it brings out the ultimate insecurity for some cops. Kowack says that among those cops he trains, the Warrior mentality is truly rare. Usually those will be the cops who support the shooting involved officers 100% of the time. Others, due to their own insecurities and inability to relate, will feel the need to find fault.

Statistically, fellow officers feel more threatened when one of their own actually wins in a gun fight than if one of their own loses in a gun fight.

## **After-Incident Health for Yourself**

After a traumatic incident, you will finally be able to "come down." It may take minutes or it may take months depending on circumstances and bureaucratic stresses. This will be the time when you finally begin to decompress. This is the Post Traumatic Stress phase of your incident.

Portland Police Department's officer PTSD program manager John Anderson states that, "NOBODY gets out of a shooting incident unaffected." If you feel totally unaffected, then the truth is that it hasn't hit you yet.

## **Post Traumatic Stress**

What is Post Traumatic Stress like for shooting involved officers? It is different for each individual. But always it is the mind's way of processing an experience that was too INTENSE, and often too COMPRESSED, to catalogue as a normal event. There are some common themes. PTSD, which stands for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, is not really considered a "disorder" unless it becomes debilitating to the officer in a lasting way. Post Traumatic Stress is a normal reaction to a very intense and very abnormal event. The human mind has trouble processing the event and so it goes through a sometimes prolonged

grieving process (similar to when you lose a loved one or family member).

The early stages of normal post traumatic stress sometimes produce perceptual distortions and then later strong feelings associated with the event. This is because the event was "traumatic." The process of PTSD preventative therapy helps the officer normalize his feelings and move on. The real problem with prolonged PTSD is that a person stays stuck in the experiences or has hyper emotions of the event. This, for example, could be as simple as a person that keeps hurrying everywhere even though the urgency of the traumatic event is gone. But PTSD will also likely bring up every unresolved issue in the shooting-involved officer's life. All previous traumatic losses will come forward for reexamination. In the case of a shooting, the officer also has to deal with feelings about the loss of safety, loss of innocence, loss of control. It can become overwhelming because there is a lot to heal all at once.

### **Something to Care about**

You better have something you care about outside your job. The Brotherhood of cops is fickle. If you are involved in a line-of-duty shooting, get ready for lots of politics. Park managers careers are made and broken on the management of big incidents. Your incident will be an opportunity and a challenge for them. You may feel betrayed by your managers. Take care of yourself first, then channel you anger and sense of betrayal into an opinion. Have something to say.

After-incident anger and frustration is caused by not having a voice. Your agency may be good at making you "invisible." So speak up, help educate and inform others. The FOP is a great place to start.

- A note about agency dealings surrounding your incident: In the end there will be too much to guess about what is going on

around you and with others reacting to you or the event.

- You may reach a point of burnout, first, and need to turn to what you love apart from the NPS.
- Choose your own route away from feelings of betrayal. It doesn't mean leaving the agency, it just means finding your own center.
- Additionally (and this may be frightening), one thing that post shooting post traumatic stress will do for you, is to temporarily cause you to lose direction. So take time out to focus on centering. At all cost, give yourself the best care of yourself while you are healing.

### **The Nobility of Saving Lives**

Protecting the welfare of ourselves and others in harm's way is at the core of our profession. None of us ask for use-of-force events to come into our lives. But the increasing prevalence of these types of duties has forced us to be interested in the education of ourselves as Warriors. We are not like city cops in many regards. We are a unique agency. The NPS has room for Warrior L.E. Rangers in it's ranks. Let's teach NPS L.E. Rangers about how to care for themselves and each other in the ever-increasing number of Park Service use-of-force encounters.

- Trust with one eye open.
- Follow your gut and your training.
- Be able to say, "My training took over and I did the right thing."

### **Be a Warrior Ranger**

Those who claim to be hard core (for hard core's sake) are not Warriors. Warriors are respectful of all life. True Warriors do not exclude, they include. They do not withhold information for the sake of keeping all the power to themselves. They share their knowledge of how to stay safe with other rangers so that everyone may benefit, and go home safely at the end of the day. You'll spot them. I am confident that there are many in the NPS and, hopefully, more every day.

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## **Perceptual Distortions During a Critical Incident** by Alexis Artwohl, Ph.D.

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86% Diminished SOUNDS. You did not hear sounds at all, or the sounds had an unusual distant, muffled quality. (This applies to sounds you ordinarily would obviously hear, such as gunfire, shouting, nearby sirens, etc.).

83% TUNNEL VISION. Your vision became intensely focused on the perceived threat and you lost your peripheral vision so that you had reduced ability to see other things around you.

78% AUTOMATIC PILOT. You responded automatically to the perceived heat, giving little or no conscious thought to your actions.

70% HEIGHTENED VISUAL CLARITY. You could see some details or actions, with unusual clarity and detail.

63% SLOW-MOTION TIME. Events seemed to be taking place in slow motion and seemed to take longer to happen than they really did.

58% MEMORY LOSS FOR PARTS OF THE EVENT. After the event you came to realize that there were parts of it that you could not remember.

52% MEMORY LOSS FOR SOME OF YOUR ACTIONS. After the event you came to realize that you could not remember some of your own actions.

43% DISSOCIATION. You did not seem to experience certain aspects of the event, or there were moments when you had a strange sense of detachment as if the event were a dream and not real or as if you were looking at yourself from the outside.

31% INTRUSIVE DISTRACTING THOUGHTS. You had some thoughts not directly relevant to the immediate tactical situation pop into your head, such as thinking about loved ones, later plans, etc.

23% FALSE MEMORY. You saw, heard or experienced something during the event that you later found out had not really happened.

17% FAST-MOTION TIME. Events seemed to be happening much faster than normal.

15% INTENSIFIED SOUNDS. Some sounds seemed much louder than normal.

9% TEMPORARY PARALYSIS. There was a brief time when you felt paralyzed and unable to move.

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## FLETC Training and Improved Skills

Prashant Lotwala, LAME

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Alas, I have finally finished close to nine months of training between FLETC and my field training at Delaware Water Gap. People have asked me what has been the major difference between my performance now and prior to FLETC and field training. One of the biggest differences I feel now is more confidence in my ability to make better decisions, especially when it comes to law enforcement. Prior to the training, I did have that confidence. The training I just completed has validated and enhanced my confidence.

One of the most important things that I have learned during FLETC is the case laws and proper defensive tactics. During law enforcement contacts prior to training, I always second guessed myself when it came to searches, seizures, making arrests on probable cause and other important

aspects of this job. FLETC helped place all the pieces that I already possess into a complete understandable picture. I took that complete picture and applied it during my field training to help ensure that all the pieces were in the right spot, with assistance from experienced field training rangers at Delaware Water Gap NRA. With the combined training, I was able to make mistakes without getting injured or killed. I was able to use various law enforcement techniques and see what suited me while discarding techniques that failed me.

The second positive thing I take away from training is defensive tactics. Looking back prior to FLETC/field training, I am amazed on how many times I let my guard down during contacts and how many times I missed the red flags from aggressive contacts. I feel extremely lucky that I was not injured prior to this training. There have been instances where I did not use enough force where I could have and should have, but luck was on my side during those instances. Unfortunately, luck does run out, but I may not need as much luck anymore thanks to the defensive tactics at FLETC. Defensive Tactics at FLETC was outstanding with extremely knowledgeable instructors.

Nine months was a long time with a lot of sacrifices given up by my family and I, but at the end it was absolutely worth it, especially when the knowledge and the hands-on experience will keep me much safer. Looking back the last few years, I have no idea how I or any other seasonal was able to work as a law enforcement Park Ranger without the proper tools from FLETC/field training.

On a final note: with summer already here, I am encouraging all law enforcement rangers to stay updated with defensive tactics even if you must practice on your own time. Muscle memory is the key and constant practice will ensure that when you need to use defensive tactics, it will be second nature and you will not have to

think about it, but instead you will be able to instantly act when the bad guy attacks.

Please stay safe this summer and always keep an eye on your brothers and sisters in the law enforcement community.

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## Safety Tips from Your Buddies

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The Lodge put out a request on the FOP Forum discussion and among rangers asking for safety tips from the field. Here's some of them:

- Keep your butt in the patrol car and wait for the return on the tag before going to talk to the driver. Yeah the tag may not be wanted, but don't end up like the VA Trooper who was killed by a violator who thought the trooper already knew who he was.
- Tell your dispatcher where you are when you answer on the radio. When you go missing they have a starting point.
- You can always call off your backup. It's a lot harder to get them after you are in deep shit.
- Know when not to make the contact.
- Pay attention to the little voice. The little voice knows.
- When you become interested in someone or something - there is usually a really good reason. Even if you couldn't figure out the reason, the bad guy knows you're watching him and may go away.
- Don't let peer group pressure prevent you from doing the right thing safely ("If I call for backup, the other guys will think I'm a wimp").

- Safety doesn't have to be some feel-good catchphrase to make WASO think that they're doing something. Hold your park, Region & WASO responsible for proper equipment, training and evaluation of safety standards. You will likely have to keep hammering on it, but it's our responsibility as rangers to demand safe working conditions. It's the Agency's responsibility to provide what we need.

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## Officer's Fight for Life Yields 9 Crucial Survival Lessons

From: 10-8:Life on the Line  
with Charles Remsberg  
*PoliceOne.Com*

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The 25-year-old gangbanger was a significant player in the life of Chicago P.D. Officer Candace Milovich-Fitzsimmons for less than two minutes. In that flicker of time she says he changed her approach to policing forever.

He wanted to kill her, she believes, but instead he was the one who died, leaving a legacy of lessons that she's convinced will help her survive for the remainder of her career-and can help other officers better face the mean streets as well.

"I didn't go looking for this," she told PoliceOne in an exclusive interview recently. "It found me."

If her sergeant had been a bit indulgent, she wouldn't have confronted those watershed moments at all.

At about 10:45 one chilly Monday night last November, having just transported a prisoner for a tac team, Milovich-Fitzsimmons and her young partner, Matt Blomstrand, were hanging around their district station on Chicago's Northwest Side, hoping to get cut loose from duty since only 15 minutes remained of their shift. "Too early to check off," their sergeant said. "Get back out there." So they did, Milovich-Fitzsimmons driving.

As they approached an intersection a few blocks away, a black Ford Explorer caught their eye up a side street. "It was going about 5 or 10 miles an hour," Milovich-Fitzsimmons recalls, "jerking back and forth like someone was jiggling the steering, and the horn was blowing like a maniac."

A domestic, they figured...and kept going. "Then our conscience got the best of us, and we went looking for that car." They quickly found it on a dimly lit street in a neighborhood predominately of small, single-family houses.

As they swung in behind, a male jumped out of the rear passenger-side seat, ran a few yards, then apparently changed his mind and ran back, trying to climb back in as the SUV stuttered forward in a jerky series of stops and lurches.

No brake lights signaled the stops, and the third time the vehicle abruptly halted the squad car rear-ended it.

What the officers had interrupted would be revealed only after Milovich-Fitzsimmons endured the most violent encounter of her 10 years as a Chicago cop. According to what police later pieced together, the male who'd been trying to reenter the vehicle and two cholos inside were members of the vicious Spanish Cobras street gang. The other occupant was a 33-year-old man who a few minutes earlier had been walking up to his front door from work, carrying a jug of milk for his family.

He was hailed by a young male pedestrian with a cane who insistently asked him for a ride somewhere. The mark had a "bad feeling" about the guy, so rather than risk the safety of his family he decided to "sacrifice" himself, and agreed. As the two approached his Ford Explorer, two more individuals leaped from the shadows, pushed the victim into the SUV and took off with him. Their original plan apparently was to hold him for ransom.

Inside the car, the assailants reportedly took \$350 and a cell phone from the victim, then started taking turns beating him with their fists and the cane. Investigators believe they changed their mind about their crime plan and instead decided to drive to a desolate industrial area in the district and there murder the man.

The herky-jerky movement of the SUV was caused by the desperate victim grabbing the gear-shift lever and jamming it in and out of PARK.

Immediately upon the collision with the squad car, the gangbanger outside the Explorer and the one who'd been driving bolted. Milovich-Fitzsimmons radioed in a foot pursuit and beat feet after the driver. Blomstrand was delayed in exiting their unit because the crash had jammed his door. By the time he crawled out through his window, Milovich-Fitzsimmons had disappeared into the darkness. Blomstrand, with less than three years on the job, focused his attention on the two running vehicles, the beating victim who tumbled out of the SUV in a bloody heap, and the cholo inside who was trying to climb out through a rear door.

Milovich-Fitzsimmons, meanwhile, was sucked into a worsening series of clashes with the driver.

First she caught up with him on a parkway along the street and shoved him to his hands and knees. She had hold of his coat but before she could get a body grip, he pushed up, easily pulled out of the jacket and took off

again. "That's why gangbangers never wear their coats closed," she told PoliceOne. "And they tend to wear a couple, so if they wiggle out of one they still have an outer garment."

The foot chase continued down an "extremely dark" gangway between two bungalows. Milovich-Fitzsimmons caught the driver again in an alley behind some garages and pushed him against a wrought-iron fence. "Get down on the ground!" she yelled.

Instead, "he whips around and starts fighting." During the tussle, her shoulder mike popped off, swinging around her legs out of reach for calling for help.

Milovich-Fitzsimmons felt no panic. Through a decade's experience, the 39-year-old, trim, blond officer with a tough-but-fair reputation was accustomed to scrapping with suspects and had never encountered a situation she couldn't control. "I was thinking very clearly, giving basic commands to myself to stay in the fight," she recalls. "I couldn't understand why he was so violent, though." Unaware of the kidnapping, she thought she was dealing just with a run-of-the-mill hot car.

At a point when Milovich-Fitzsimmons grabbed her adversary by the shirt, he tripped and fell to the ground. "Stay down!" she yelled. He raised his hands for a moment, "teetering on his ass" and looking beyond her, evidently checking for her partner. Then he lunged toward her, grabbed the butt of her holstered S&W 9mm and used it as leverage to pull himself up.

"I could feel the top strap unsnap and the holster open," Milovich-Fitzsimmons says. "It was the first time my weapon had ever been threatened. I thought, 'I'm in big trouble here.'"

What she calls "Neanderthal thoughts" guided her-Reach here! Do this! "Very loud, very basic, like

someone yelling at me in my head." She fought to keep her gun in her Level II holster while the 'banger continued to yank at it with one hand while trying to smash her in the face with his other.

Finally she managed to break away from him and pull her gun. "Get on the ground!" she screamed. He lunged for her again. She squeezed the trigger and fired a round, "the first time I'd ever shot my weapon on duty. As soon as I pulled the trigger, I knew it was a good shoot."

Yes and no. The round went through the suspect's left hand and through his sleeve-then, incredibly, ricocheted off his forehead and ended up in the doorframe of a nearby garage.

Blood streaming down his face, the attacker grabbed again at Milovich-Fitzsimmons' semi-auto. She beat him with it, directly on his wound, but he was unfazed. He shoved her against a row of garbage cans and fled across the alley into a vacant field, which soon became the third-and worst-scene of the progressive fight.

Milovich-Fitzsimmons holstered and secured her S&W, took out her cuffs and went after him. When she caught up to him, he'd fallen to his hands and knees. "I thought, 'Game over' and I moved in to take him into custody. Color me wrong.

"All I could see were his wrists-major tunnel vision. I heard that voice in my head, Wrist...cuff." But when she got close, the suspect tackled her and although she beat him with the handcuffs, he took her to the ground. The cuffs flew from her hand.

"We grappled all over the place," she says. "I was punching him, kicking him in the face and chest, twisting his balls for all I was worth. He never flinched...just got angrier." She drew her gun but couldn't get a shot. Seven inches taller and outweighing her by nearly 90 pounds, the suspect pinned her, smashed her in the face and

fought again for control of her weapon.

"His hands were like hams," she says. "He was able to bend my wrist so the gun was pointing right against my throat. I got scratches from the muzzle." A weight trainer - "I'm stronger than I look" - Milovich-Fitzsimmons first managed to push the gun off target, then turn it toward him. She pulled the trigger, but nothing happened. The suspect was clamping the slide so it couldn't move.

The muzzle twisted back and forth as the officer fought desperately to save her life and the suspect fought to take it. "It seemed like an eternity. I fought with everything I had but I couldn't stop him. I was physically spent. I knew I couldn't hang on much longer."

Then the voice in her head came back. "Loud as day," three names echoed in her skull: Jake...Alex...Eddie. Her three sons.

"I can't give up!" she told herself. Despite her exhaustion, she continued to keep the muzzle away from her head and body until she glimpsed "my angel"- a man in a blue uniform shirt-running toward them from the alley. He was a responding officer whom her partner had sent in the direction he'd last seen her run as she pursued the suspect fleeing from the collision.

"Shoot this motherfucker!" she screamed. "He's got my gun!"

Almost at contact distance, the officer fired four fast rounds. One grazed Milovich-Fitzsimmons' right hand. Three hit the suspect. He collapsed, dead, on top of her.

"By then," Milovich-Fitzsimmons says, "I think I was slipping into shock. I could hear voices but I couldn't respond to them or move or even open my eyes. And I couldn't stop shaking. I was vibrating from head to toe."

From the moment she radioed in the foot pursuit until the backup officer called in the fatal shooting, only 1 minute 45 seconds elapsed. What happened during that brief time “changed me tremendously,” says Milovich-Fitzsimmons, whose husband and sister are Chicago P.D. sergeants. She enumerates the mistakes she believes she made and the lessons she learned:

1. “When we were fighting in the alley and I shot, I should have kept shooting. When I had firearms training in the academy, we shot once, holstered and waited for the next instruction. We talked about two to the chest and one to the head, but we didn't do it. You perform like you train. My greatest regret is that I didn't light him up in the alley when I had the chance. I won't stop short like that again. If I'm justified in shooting, I'll shoot and keep shooting and not look so much to other avenues.”
2. “When I reholstered my weapon, I de-escalated prematurely, going for my cuffs. I should have made a greater effort to grab my radio and get help. I should have anticipated that the fight might not be over yet.”
3. “When we were fighting, I used constant verbal commands. Yelling at him took a lot of energy, exhausted me. We're required to give verbal commands, but I would limit them more and concentrate on physically overcoming my adversary.”
4. “Would I carry an extra gun? Absolutely not. I was in the fight of my life to retain just one. What if I'd had a backup gun in an ankle holster when I kicked him and he'd grabbed it? It's hard enough to hold onto one gun without having to keep track of two.”
5. “The first thing I said when I finally went off duty that night was, 'I want a different gun, a .45.' I went to the range and tried several weapons. I ended up

selecting a Sig-Sauer 9mm. It's light, with an easy trigger pull. I shot a tight group the first time I fired it. I'm going to the range more often now. I want to feel more comfortable with a gun. It wasn't second nature to me when I needed to use it.”

6. “I find myself less tolerant to resistance from suspects now. If someone gets jumpy, I throw the cuffs on them. I'm not going to play anymore. I find myself analyzing people and situations a lot more closely. I will never, ever allow myself to be put in that situation again.”
7. “After I had some time off and then went back on duty, I felt like I was coming down with the flu one night. I asked myself, 'If I have to get into something tonight, can I defend myself?' I decided to stay home. Before, I would have brushed it off and gone in, full of bravado. Now I know I need to be on top of my game when I'm working. I can't imagine going through the kind of fight I had feeling sick.”
8. “At the station, some cops were talking about my incident, and one of the females said, 'If that had been me, I'd be dead.' Others nodded in agreement. I went off on them. 'Never give up!' I said. 'The minute you think that way, you've lost! If you're thinking you can't survive, you won't, and you'll be just another officer on a mass card.' I try to talk to other officers about what happened, because I want them to see what can be learned from it.”
9. “I've become more involved with fitness. Sometimes I work out 10 times a week now. Before the incident, I could bench press 110 on a good day. Now I've set a goal of 238, the weight of the guy who attacked me. I'm already up to 160.”

Officer Milovich-Fitzsimmons teaches a psychology workshop for recruits at the Chicago Police Academy. She knows something about motivation. She keeps a Polaroid of her assailant's

body, decorated with gang tattoos, at her gym.

“He was in my life such a short time, but he altered so much of me,” she says. “I look at that picture, and it gets me very angry. It pushes me to work harder.”

### Please Renew Your Membership

If you have recently received a notice of renewal (*check your mailing label on the newsletter for your expiration date!*), please send your dues in soon. You may renew using the envelope provided or go to our web site:

[www.rangerfop.com/join.htm](http://www.rangerfop.com/join.htm)

We now offer the option of signing up for yearly automatic renewals with your credit card.

The Grand Lodge is still having problems with their membership card printing process. Cards have been seriously delayed for some members. We apologize, but it's beyond our control.

Also, because Paige Meier, our new Business Manager and I will be in the backcountry for the next three months, deposits and correspondence will be slightly delayed. We're sorry about delays, but there's an unfortunate lack of people willing to take over Lodge duties.

A few of you have also taken the time to write us to say you've already renewed and that our records are in error. We are truly sorry for the inconvenience and appreciate your taking the time to correct it. Thank you for your patience. We're happy to report, though, that we're making fewer mistakes with membership records!

Many thanks for your continued support.

George Durkee  
Executive Director

**Lodge Website**

The Lodge website is updated with notices and links to other sites that we think are interesting and/or helpful to resource based law enforcement officers. Visit it often between issues of the Protection Ranger to keep current on things that affect you and your job. Our address is [www.rangerfop.com](http://www.rangerfop.com)

**Application for Membership**

You may also join, renew and pay your dues online: [www.rangerfop.com/join.htm](http://www.rangerfop.com/join.htm)

I, the undersigned, a full-time regularly employed law enforcement officer, do hereby make application for active membership in the U.S. Park Rangers Lodge, FOP. If my membership should be revoked or discontinued for any cause other than retirement while in good standing, I do hereby agree to return to the Lodge my membership card and other material bearing the FOP emblem.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_ E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent Rangers: \$60/year

Seasonals and Retired Active Members: \$40/year

Associate (non-Commissioned) Membership (Newsletter only): \$35/year

Renewals: You do not need to send in this form to renew. Enclose a copy of your Commission (new members only).

Agency and Work Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: FOP Lodge, POB 1481, Twain Harte, CA 95383  
Phone: 1-800-407-8295 10am-7pm Eastern Time or email  
[fopldodge@sonic.net](mailto:fopldodge@sonic.net)



**National Park Rangers Lodge  
POB 1481  
Twain Harte, CA 95383**

