

THE VOLUNTEER VIEW

Issue # 15

APR - JUN 2014

A Quarterly Publication for the
Trophy Club Emergency Volunteer Association

Building a Safer Community Through Volunteerism

The Chief's Corner

Chief G. Scott Kniffen



"Ain't it funny, how time slips away."

Willie Nelson wrote these words in his song, "Funny How Time Slips Away." Willie wrote that song around 1960 and it was first recorded by Billy Walker. If Wikipedia is right, it's been recorded by various artists; including Elvis, The Spinners, and Homer Simpson (in a duet version with Linda Ronstadt); over 25 times since the original release.

The words seem to be prophetic, at least as far as I'm concerned. Where does the time go? As I'm writing this it's March already. Almost half the fiscal year is over and we're gearing up to start the budget cycle again.

But, more than that, I have to ask myself, not where the last few months have gone but where the last few years have gone. Is it just me or does time really seem to be *flying*? Maybe that's a symptom of getting older or maybe it is emblematic of the technological age in which we live where *everything* seems to be moving faster and *everybody* seems to be in a hurry.

In the latest grant process, we had about two weeks from notice to the submission. We got it in on time and it will be considered by the Council of Government. Hopefully we'll know before the end of the March where we stand.

If it is approved we'll have a specified time frame in which we have to submit, via a special software program, our project to the state for approval and a specified time frame in which we'll have to get our "shopping" done and data entered. Then we'll have a specified time frame in which we have to spend the money, get the invoices to the state, and receive reimbursement from the state. We were limited to \$4000 so chainsaws didn't make the cut. . . . (Sorry, I just couldn't resist).

It seems that the "Hurry, Hurry, Hurry" phenomena has wound its way into just about all facets of our lives but there is one area that should concern us all. Sometimes this phenomena is applied to our training opportunities.

On-line training, short video-based training, and brief synopsis' of classes are at our fingertips and, in spite of the convenience, sometimes don't do us any favors. In fact, these classes can lead us to be overconfident.

I recently read an article entitled "Shooting Skills and the Seductress of "Fast-Food Training," by Ron Avery, a contributor to the PoliceOne website. He said it pretty well when he called this "fast-food training."

“Without testing, certification, validation, or understanding how it fits into a training system or how it will actually

work on the street,” he said in the article, “you’re just fooling yourself.”

To paraphrase Avery, watching a few videos, working with whatever has been trained for a couple of hours and then pretending you “have it down” doesn’t make the mark. This is particularly true with firearms training but, due to the wide availability of “training” videos, blogs, etc. it can be extended to training of all types.

I just happen to agree with him but before you label me old fashioned, let me say that I enjoy many of these training opportunities and I accept *most* new technology but, in my opinion, *training* should include a definition and understanding of the objectives, teaching of those objectives (including hands-on practical exercises), testing on those objectives, and follow-up to make sure that the student retains the training.

Cramping training hours into our already harried schedules is difficult much of the time and downright impossible some of the time. But we should never overlook an opportunity to train. It might not be convenient or cheap but, as I've said before, training is the cheapest insurance you can buy.

Whether you are a volunteer, a paid employee, or someone attending a training class provided by the Town the training you receive should enhance your ability to do a certain task or perform at a certain level. Examine the training opportunities you get with an eye toward the value it provides you, your department, or your chosen area of effort. If it seems as if it is too easy, too quick, or too brief it just might not provide the training, testing, and follow-up to be meaningful. And that could make a big difference. Learning a task before an event occurs is much to be preferred over trying to learn it in the middle of an event.

From the VP

Scott Johnson
Brush Fires



Trophy Club had a rough run with a wildfire on March 11, 2014. 110+ acres were burned. Over 20 local departments responded with much of the work done with shovels, rakes, and axes. The

The Trophy Club Emergency Volunteer Association (TCEVA)

What we do—assist emergency personnel in various capacities such as providing provisions during extended emergency situations and raising funds to purchase equipment for volunteer activities. With further training, volunteers help direct traffic for special events, assist in first aid, search and rescue, as well as other important activities.

area was too remote for roads and fire hydrants and too much brush for vehicles to travel. Finally a Bulldozer was able to come in and cut fire breaks through the brush to keep the fire from spreading. The town was lucky the weather and winds did not change until late in the day.

As a force of nature, wildfires are very dangerous. Winds feed them the oxygen they need, but they also create some of their own wind. As heat rises fresh air rushes in to take its place. Embers and sparks are carried up with the heat and blown ahead with the wind. The fire can jump over roads and rivers with the embers igniting new ground.

We got to see a number of things:

- 1) The wonderful support from all the surrounding agencies and departments. With over 20 departments on the scene it demonstrates the commitment we have to help one another when needed.
- 2) Volunteer involvement. Roanoke & Flower Mound Rehab volunteers came with their perspective fire departments and Denton County Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) was on the scene. The Trophy Club Emergency Volunteers were involved too; mainly as the back-up for the early volunteers who arrived and some traffic control.
- 3) The excellent management by Chief Thomas of the Trophy Club Fire Dept. and the support from Chief Kniffen and our Police department. Please remember to thank our officers and firemen when you see them
- 4) The wonderful citizens who came by offering help. There were several who brought water and sports drinks. Please understand there is a logistical balance to reach with what is needed, what is already on hand, and what is brought to the scene. The added traffic and handling of donated items becomes another item to manage on scene. Sometimes it is best to take water and other supplies to the nearest police or fire department building rather than the scene.

Imagine having to manage 20 bosses each with their own crews and chain of command. Next imagine coordinating them all into action. It is not the time and place for egos. This is a testament to the cooperation and training of our agencies. Our emergence responders spend endless hours training and preparing for events like this.

How can you add in volunteers to something like this and not create confusion and burdens to the agencies? The volunteers need to know their role and be trained too. The Trophy Club Emergency Volunteer Association (TCEVA) meets the 4th Tuesday of each month for training and updates. We spend many hours training with our local Police and Fire Departments and CERT. The TCEVA helps for 4th of July, Christmas events, bike races and events like that, but we are also ready to help in an emergency. We encourage and welcome your participation and support. Thank you.

TCEVA Calendar 2014 - Q2

TCEVA General Meetings – 7 p.m. TCFD Training Room

April 22nd

May 27th

June 24th

TCEVA Board Meeting

April 19th – 9 a.m. TCFD Conference Room

TC Citizens Police Academy – TCFD Training Room

Begins March 27th at 6:30 p.m. for 10 Weeks

Town of Trophy Club Events

April 26th – Back To Nature Event

May 10th – Election Day & Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser, TCFD

Denton County CERT (www.dentoncountycert.org)

Monthly meetings – 1st Tuesday at 7 p.m.

CPAANT Regional Meetings – 10 a.m. (www.cpaant.org)

April 5th – Cedar Hill CPAAA

May 3rd – Duncanville CPAAA

June 7th – Dallas CPAAA

North Texas Crime Prevention Association (www.ntcpa.us)

April 17th – Lewisville PD Training Facility

May 15th – Richardson PD

June 19th – Southlake PD

Walking In the Dark Addendum By Sandra Millett

After I left last month's TCEVA meeting, serendipity struck and taught me a lesson. Perhaps you recall I had written a short article in our last newsletter warning about walking in the dark without proper illumination, whether reflective gear or flashlight, in order to be visible to drivers? Almost home, I turned the corner onto Wilson, traveled a short way and bam, there was a man walking his dog, darned near invisible in the moonless night.

Before writing my prior article, I'd made a promise to myself and there was my change to carry it out. I stopped by the walker and rolled my window down. "Pardon me, do you realize that I couldn't see you as I drove up. In dark clothes, you're completely invisible in the dark." Not until the gentleman turned and stepped over to the window did I see the small flashlight he carried. Walking on the right side of the street, his feeble light, facing away from me, had been completely useless. After a brief conversation, he decided to walk facing traffic and I suggested that he use reflective tape on his jacket. Then he asked, "Do you have night vision problems?"

Assuring him I had no trouble seeing at night, we parted company. Perhaps I learned more that moonless night. It's not only incumbent on those getting exercise after the sun sets to

carry illumination, but drivers have a responsibility to be sure their vision is top notch when venturing forth in the dark.

Safety at the Dog Park

By Conni Mayatt

Happiness is a dog park. Just ask any dog that is fortunate enough to frequent one. It's a fun place to meet and greet friends, run, play, and exercise.

We are fortunate to have one of the nicest parks in the area, in my opinion. So, now let's understand what keeps it fun with some protocol and safety tips.

- Obey rules and regulations.
 - ❑ Read all the rules to ensure you are in compliance.
 - ❑ There is usually a separate area for small and large dogs. While you may have both at home, a small dog in the large dog area could get hurt from other large dogs not accustomed to the smaller pet. Obviously, a large dog in the small dog area could be traumatizing to a small dog.
 - ❑ No puppies. This one is hard because they really need to be socialized, they want to play, and they need lots of exercise. First, check the rules of the park for age and vaccination restrictions. Second, talk with your vet to ensure they have all the vaccinations necessary before exposing them to other pets. These guidelines may be different, so go with the most stringent to protect your pet.
 - ❑ Children. For the safety of your children and your dog, it may be better to leave the children at home. It can be difficult to watch your children and your pet at the same time. Also, there may be dogs that have not been socialized with children. Both dogs and children can get excited easily, causing a dangerous situation.
 - ❑ Understand your own dog. Does it enjoy the company of other dogs? Is it used to interacting with several dogs? Does it respond to your commands? If possible, test your pet with other dogs in a controlled environment prior to going to a dog park.
 - ❑ Observe the park before entering. It's not a good idea to take your pet into the park if there is already a high level of activity. Watch the other dog's behavior. Is there any aggressive behavior? Are owner's controlling their dogs? Is there behavior that seems too rough? If there is any activity at all that makes you feel uncomfortable, leave and return at another time.
 - ❑ Initially try short visits in the dog park. About 15 minutes each visit is enough until your pet feels comfortable there.
 - ❑ Unleash your dog as soon as you enter the protected area of the park. A leashed pet is not allowed his natural instincts of "fight or flight". All dogs need to be treated the same so body language does not encourage aggressive or defensive behavior.
 - ❑ Watch your pet at all times. It's really easy to visit with other owners and get distracted. Always know where your dog is and ensure its safety. Close supervision can prevent injury to you and/or your pet. You should always be in a position where you can see behind you. Dogs typically will get into small packs to

play and run. Don't be blindsided. Be prepared to intervene before there is any trouble.

- ❑ Do not bring toys or food. Typically, there are already balls and toys at the park. If you have the park to yourself, feel free to use treats and play with toys. If the playing is fun and not causing problems, obviously let your dog play. When other dogs are added to the mixture, aggression and jealousy can occur. Just pay close attention.
- ❑ Leave early, if necessary. If you feel your pet is being bullied or threatened or is acting fearful, leave immediately. You want your pet's visit to be fun. Return when there are fewer visitors and observe behavior again before entering. Likewise, if your pet is the one that is being threatening or a bully, end the visit and return at another time.
- Dog fights! –
 - ❑ Prevention first – remember to always keep your pet in sight.
 - ❑ If a dog is pinned down by another more than a few seconds, they should be separated.
 - ❑ Watch for over excitement when dogs are playing as this can quickly turn into a fight. DO NOT physically place yourself in the middle of a fight.
 - ❑ Spray water in their faces, if possible.
 - ❑ Blow an air horn or bicycle horn to distract them.
 - ❑ Throw a bucket or any large object available close to them to startle them.
 - ❑ If injury does occur to you or your pet, exchange personal information in case medical attention is required and contact animal control.
 - ❑ If your pet is not involved in the fight, it is recommended to remove them from the park immediately. It is natural to have a pack mentality and to join in.
- Clean up! That close supervision will always enable you to be aware if a clean-up is needed. All dog parks provide bags for that use.
- When leaving, it's a good idea to clean their feet. Some parks provide hoses or you can use some type of "wipe". This will prevent pesticides, fertilizer, chemicals, and other types of garbage, etc. from later being ingested from them licking their feet and legs.

This Quarters News from the PD

Scott Voigt



There has been a lot going on at the PD this quarter, burglaries both home and vehicle have been up. So when you are out and about with your daily business, keep your spidey senses sharp and look for things out of the ordinary.

We have been able to get some training in this quarter with the initial Red Hat training from the Fire Department, we have also been able to get CID in to show you the ins and outs of going through a criminal case and all the work that is involved. We have more planned for this quarter as well.

The initial planning for the interior of the CERT trailer was done and now a plan is being worked out to get the needed shelving to store the CERT equipment. Hopefully by this quarter we will see some movement on getting that task completed.

The ID card template is complete and now we will start taking everyone's photos so that we can get everyone a new ID card. Once we get them out to everyone, those of you who have the old style card will need to turn those in to me.

I've been able to get quite a few projects done this last quarter due to all the help from the volunteers. If it wouldn't be for all of you, we wouldn't have been able to get nearly as much done, nor had as many officers on the streets due to them not being available. You are truly a force multiplier. Some of the projects that we accomplished because of your actions were; publishing and finishing Identity Theft Packets, Family Violence Packets, Vehicle maintenance for all of the patrol fleet. We have been doing some extensive fleet maintenance and this would not have been possible without using police resources for long periods of time without your help. We have some more to do, but a majority of the fleet maintenance has been accomplished with your help.

We had two TCEVA members attend CERT school in Southlake and passed their test. One of our members (Scott Johnson) also helped Southlake DPS when they came up short an instructor and was able to step in short notice to teach a class. Great team work on getting the job done, thank you for that.

We have six people in the Spring Citizens Police Academy class and we are about a third way through. It appears that a majority of the participants are interested in carrying on after the class as volunteers. Hopefully they will be joining your ranks the middle of June. After this class is finished, we will also be putting on a Citizens on Patrol Academy if there is enough interest. For those of you who have missed out on the previous classes and are interested, I will be putting out a notice probably the first week of June with information on when the class will take place. I expect that it will be sometime after the 4th of July holiday.



April 14th - 18th

National Dispatchers Week

Thank your communicator

Rules of the Road - Crosswalks

By Robin Conarty

Have you ever wondered about the "Rules of the School Crosswalk" and if you can legally proceed in your vehicle? Well, I know there are a few of you out there that don't know the rules as I have been stuck behind you with clenched fists, pounding my head on the steering wheel and shouting, "Go!" You may have heard me.

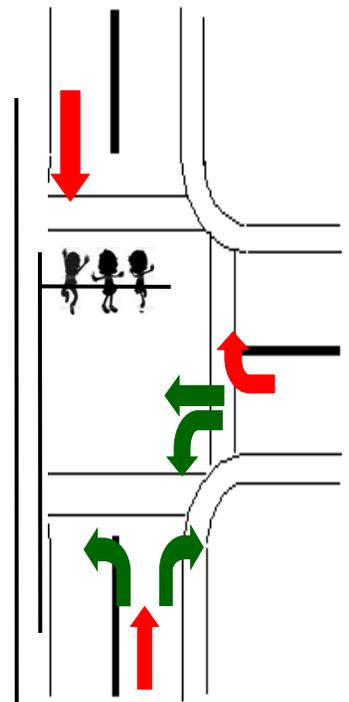
It **IS** legal to turn or go straight as long as you are **NOT** crossing the walk on which the pedestrians are using. This is **true** even if the crosswalk has or does not have a crossing guard.

If you are stopped and waiting for pedestrians to cross, remember, do not block the intersection preventing other cars from legally proceeding. The corner of Durango Dr. and Trophy Club Dr., the corner of Bobcat Blvd and Trophy Club Dr., and the corner of Bobcat Blvd and Parkview Dr. are perfect examples of three-way intersections where this situation exists.

This drawing of a typical Trophy Club three-way intersection shows **green** arrows for vehicles that are allowed to legally proceed.

The **red** arrows show which vehicles must stop.

The courteous driver who is required to stop and wait, will do so before entering the intersection to allow the other vehicles to proceed.



**The Volunteer View is published by the
Trophy Club Emergency Volunteer Association
Editor - Elaine M. Voigt**