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**You Gave us your feedback and we listened** – to all of you who sent in your feedback on classes – thank you! It was very helpful in our planning classes for both this year and next. The t-shirts have been ordered and will be shipped out in September when we return from our trip to Europe (for training and a little family vacation as well)! Please be patient as we have hundreds to send out! You overwhelmingly voted for one and two day classes and some ‘refresher’ classes.

**A Special Offer from us to you – \$100 off every 2- day on site class**

For the next week, starting today, we are offering a \$100 discount for those of you who sign up and pay for any 2-day non-private class offered in 2009. We have posted additional classes on our website and on the class schedule below. Because our online sign up does not accept discounts, you must call us at 310-471-2029 or fax in an application to 310-476-4158. The applications are on our website at <http://www.internationaltactical.com/faxapp.pdf>

**The ABSOLUTE DEADLINE for signing up with the discount is August 20, 2009. Don’t wait or you will miss out!**

**We will be out of the office from August 21 – September 9, when the office will re-open.** Someone will be picking up messages in our absence and returning phone calls. I will also have my Blackberry to receive email. I will do my best to respond to you as quickly as possible, but please be patient.

**Many classes will be two day instead of three** – you will notice from the schedule below that many classes that used to be three days are now two. We will be covering many of the same drills in the two days as the three since ranges split for less downtime. We are also going to be offering specialized one day classes such as the OB course, an urban hides course and many new classes for next year. If you have a class that you would like us to put on, please let me know. We are always open to suggestions and we value your input.

**New Media to Watch** – Scott and our son, Jordan, are in the new Surefire DVD on the X400. (See Scott’s article on page 3). It’s a very nicely done DVD and it is showing on youtube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSZ1dIIBreE> Check out the new ‘Watchman’ DVD the Blue Ray edition. Look for the “Real Life Heroes” section in special features. Scott and our youngest son, Spencer, are featured. (We’re starting them young in show biz!)

**We wish you all a great end of summer and look forward to seeing many of you back in the fall!**

**Courses Coming up:**

<b>Sept 12-13</b>	<b>Defensive Handgun II</b>
<b>Sept 25</b>	<b>Private Instruction</b>
<b>Oct 3-4</b>	<b>Tactical Carbine/Pistol</b>
<b>Oct 6-8</b>	<b>Boston Shotgun/Pistol LE Course</b>

# September-December 2009 Course Schedule



**Defensive Handgun I class August 2009**

**September 12-13**  
**September 25**

**Defensive Handgun II**  
**Private Instruction**

**October 3-4**  
**October 6-8**  
**October 17**  
**October 18**  
**October 24-25**  
**October 24-25**

**Tactical Carbine/Pistol**  
**Boston Shotgun/Pistol LE Course\***  
**Krav Maga Instructor's Shotgun**  
**Shotgun Refresher *New Class***  
**Defensive Handgun III**  
**Defensive Handgun I**

**November 4-5**  
**November 14-15**

**Sniper/Counter Sniper**  
**Tactical Shotgun/Pistol**

**December 5-6**  
**December 12-13**  
**December 12-13**

**OB course *New Class***  
**Defensive Handgun I**  
**Advanced Handgun**

**\* Denotes Law Enforcement only**

**2010 Schedule will be posted next month- see website next week at [www.Internationaltactical.com](http://www.Internationaltactical.com)**



**The Hostage Rack (above) - Defensive Handgun III August 2009- (below)**



**This is what happens when you get on Brett's bad side!**

## **“Light is Life”** by Scott Reitz

I coined this specific “light is life” term many, many years ago to emphasize the need for a good bright light to enable an individual to effectively deal with situations that otherwise could not be dealt with absence such light. The low level light classes which we frequently conduct simply serve to further emphasize my point and statement. With light one may readily discern a problem and then, with the appropriate techniques, deal with it effectively. I do not work for Surefire but I do endorse their products. They are ‘hardened’ systems and well-designed and they stand behind their line of equipment. There are as many models and variations and design features as you could possibly wish for. They have constantly improved upon existing designs and the improvements are readily discernable to any who use them when training with us.

The new X400 Surefire under-mount light is eye-wateringly bright. It fits onto the under-rails of pistols and the picatinny rail systems on any so provided firearms. It comes equipped with an integrated laser as well. The system is rugged and is secured onto the pistol or rail system by means of a male to female slotted system as well as a physical lock down screw to maintain the laser’s alignment once the point of aim and impact is set.

There is a video on the Surefire website and on youtube which demonstrates the x400 with yours truly working with our son Jordan, and Surefire’s Derrick McDonald, and it is worth checking out. You should have lights in the home, vehicle and with personal gear and more than one is always advised. I cannot begin to tell you how many poor tactical decisions have been made in the past and most likely will be made into the future, due to the simple fact that artificial light was never introduced into the equation. Do not become a victim of this oversight.

‘Light is life’ is not simply a quaint phrase it is a reality. In four of my officer involved shootings I utilized lights and in any one of these incidents, had I not had the light, the situations could have turned out poorly which they did not. It would take many more pages than this newsletter affords to go into greater depth concerning this subject but suffice it to say that the brightest, dependable light which you can physically manage should be obtained. It is a relatively small investment that may reap huge benefits down the road.

## **Family Safety by Scott Reitz**

Lily Burke was by all accounts a model daughter. She was 17, bright and was to have starred in a play which she would tragically never attend. Charles Samuel was 50 and a parolee who had been in and out of prison for violent crimes most of his life. Lily burke had just picked up papers at 1500 hours on July 24, 2009 from Southwestern Law school where her mother instructed as a professor. Samuel had, coincidentally, been given an early release for the day from a drug program that bordered the Southwestern Law School on Wilshire Boulevard close to downtown Los Angeles. It would prove to be a tragic collision of two separate worlds.

The last images of Lily that were ever captured were reviewed by Robbery Homicide Detectives on a video surveillance camera which clearly showed Samuel driving in Lily's car and she as a passenger in her own car from the area of the Southwestern Law School. How Samuel accomplished this will probably never be known as most criminals of this nature will always deny everything despite all clear evidence to the contrary,. She shortly thereafter attempted to withdraw money from skid row ATM's for the better part of an hour and then nothing else was heard from her. Surveillance cameras from the ATM's, showed Samuel in clear physical control of her as she attempted, unsuccessfully, to withdraw funds from the several ATM's that he had forced her to. She was discovered the next morning in the heart of skid row, in her car, beaten and slashed to death. Samuel had coincidentally, been picked up by two Metropolitan Mounted Officers - Copeland and Dominguez for drinking in public not too long after Lily had been killed but not yet located. He had in his possession, Lily's car keys and blood splatter on his person. He had scored a grand total of 35 dollars which was booked into evidence as well. Thirty-five dollars in exchange for one, promising life!!!

This is how it happens. I've seen more than my fair share of these crimes during my 30 year career on the LAPD and especially during that time when I worked the streets. The right person crosses paths with the wrong person at the wrong time. It doesn't take much for this to happen, it can come at any time of the day or night it maybe through no fault of your own and it can transpire within the blink of an eye. Those of you that attend our classes know that the discussions in our classes can literally run the gamut. You need to listen to what we tell you regarding safety and awareness and the danger signs which are there but that you may not have ever been aware of. We see these in the court cases which we work, from the feedback from students who have been involved in incidents and from our own personal experience. Our job is to teach you how to recognize danger signs and how to avoid situations and how to deal with them, should they ever arise. You need to apprise both your children and your spouse's of these signs even if they elect not to attend such classes. Avoidance of such problems can only come from knowledge. Knowledge comes from those who have experience.

**Bad guys do not view the world as you do. They do not possess the same moral and ethical traits that you grew up with and that you subsequently embody. They live for instant gratification and if you have it, and they want it, then it may just be only a matter of time before they take it through any means they see fit. It really is that brutal and that simple. I was fairly liberal when I joined the LAPD in 1976. I had a very good upbringing, a fine education and a good moral compass. Within my first week on the streets, I was exposed to the darker side of man which I never knew existed. You need to know that what violent criminals see as a natural progression of life is a galactic leap from what you view as a normal life style. The threat of a life sentence in prison holds no fear for these individuals whatsoever and any sentence less than this which is handed down is simply viewed as a perfectly normal matriculation into the world of crime. Aside from our classes here are some thoughts for you to share with your loved ones.**

**Watch a show or two with them on the channels that document gangs. Learn from your local police which areas should be avoided and when. Teach your children what gang and prison tattoos look like. Teach them about the buddy system and simple things such as asking for someone responsible to escort them to their cars or in and out of buildings if they feel at all uneasy. Most people will oblige such requests and will not be put out. Pepper spray, tasers, self defense lessons or any legal, self defensive tool which you can possess is always better than nothing. The Facebook web sites, dating sites and such venues need to be approached with a cautionary skepticism. Predators are now using these tools with an alarming frequency to target unsuspecting victims. Your family needs to learn where the local fire and police stations are and how to get there from any point in the city. They need to have their cell phones always charged and turned on when they go out and they need to be reachable. A simple thing such as a flashlight could have averted many situations that I am personally aware of. These are not complicated matters. It does not mean that they need to live in abject fear and paranoia. They simply need to be aware of the dangers that exist and understand how to avoid them. We have traded the Sabertooth Tiger and Dire Wolves of prehistoric times for modern day predators who target their prey for much less than a meal.**

**The suspect in the case mentioned above has given absolutely nothing of a constructive nature back to society. He has only taken and cost the taxpayers and his victims, untold grief over a misspent lifetime. He has extinguished a promising young life, for nothing more than the cost of a moderate meal. Nothing was accomplished but misery and emotional pain. Any of you that have been with us and trained with us, most probably would not have been targeted because of what you have learned. Lily was not so fortunate. Criminals target the weak and unsuspecting and the only way to counter this is not to be weak and not to be unsuspecting. Talk to your family members and teach them these things and maybe, just maybe, it will bring them back in one piece when both they and you least expect it.**

## **Looking Back on the LAPD- The Last 'Real Man's' Race...ever!**

As I mentioned in the last Looking Back (July 09) section, I had finally made it into Metro. I was in with the big boys but you had to prove yourself all over again as this was an entirely new ball game. In Metro it was referred to as 'making your bones.' This meant that over a period of time...you had to prove yourself in the field, with the men, both on and off duty. You had to be a stand up guy who backed his partner to the wall and would mix it up in the streets regardless of how dangerous or screwed up the details were or how tired or frustrated you were when these evolutions transpired. It was not at all unusual to work five different details in five days. Uniform one day, dirty 'C' the next, class 'A' for a V.I.P the next, utilities for a warrant and then clean 'C' for the fifth day. On some days we brought two set of clothes should things change mid-watch and the supervision saw that potential change in uniform as a possibility for the day's detail. Now...not everything that Metro did was necessarily police related which brings us to my one and only participatory encounter with the Death Valley Run. I am not much of a runner. I could run when I had to and I ran during work outs but I never liked it much even though you needed to do it just to keep up with the boys. Quite frankly...it's a pain in the butt and boring but I did it anyway. I need to set the stage first and foremost so let's begin.

Ostensibly, and according to historical lore supported by supposition and failed memory...the Death Valley run started at the LAPD Academy's bar and club at Elysian Park where, coincidentally, the Academy itself is located! This is a rather infamous location and if you didn't experience it for yourself firsthand back in the day...then you really don't need to know about it and...you either missed out on this colorful history altogether or...you managed to dodge the proverbial bullet depending upon which side of the fence you happen to sit at any given moment. All that I can say is that if you were in Metro back then, then you knew what 'Wednesday, payday night' was (and every other night for that matter.) Supposedly...some of the boys from 'D' platoon (aka - LAPD SWAT) were imbibing and salubriously self-medicating utilizing the local refreshments provided for on the premises when they came up with the brain child that, "wouldn't it be fun and motivating as a unit to run Death Valley, get some sponsors and donate the proceeds to the Boy's Club?" Well...yes it would! So off they went with nothing more than a dream and motivation and good intent and from there everything else followed. The following year, some of the boys from LASO's (Los Angeles Sheriff) SEB (Special Enforcement Bureau) decided to throw their hand into it and then things really got started. Now this invariably and almost always, makes for an interesting mix. You have two groups of Alpha males, with free time, unsupervised and somewhat shall we say...under the weather in addition to feeling rather loose and shall we also say...frisky decide to compete against one another.

[Pay close attention here because this...is how wars are started.] "We can do this." "So can we." "Yeah, but we can do it better!" "No you can't and besides...we can also do this!"

**“Really? Well...guess what we can do that you can’t that you didn’t even know about?” “Oh yeah...?” “Yeah...?” Pretty much that’s how it all started. The speech was probably slurred and watery and hugs and sloppy kisses were exchanged at one point or another after the initial verbal barbs were thrown back and forth, and individual ancestry’s were questioned and owners dog’s were insulted and then all was forgotten and forgiven entirely as the night wore on as everyone’s metabolism took a turn for the worse and yet...despite all of this...that is how...the corporate sponsored, family attended, church sanctioned, world wide endorsed, Girl Scout blessed, event of today known as the Baker to Vegas Run, was both conceived and given birth to on the very same night...under rather inauspicious and humbling and somewhat inebriated circumstances waaaay back then...and it all started at the LAPD Academy Bar! Some people will inevitably screw up a good thing when given half the chance as you are about to see. (A little know fact is that the first Apollo moon landing was first conceived of, at the LAPD Academy Lounge as well. Most probably by Metro as, I reflect further upon it.)**

**The rules were rather simple. Pick your best runners from each unit and then run a relay race from Scotty’s Castle (no relation) in the middle of the lowest place on earth, (Death Valley) at the hottest time of the year, (summer) all the way to Las Vegas so that everyone could then forget what a stupid idea it was in the first place. That was all there was to it. It was all so simple back then...there were no rules, no families, no wives or girlfriends, no fancy running team shirts, no super-duper running shoes, no nothing. It was just a group of sweaty men with something to prove although not a one of them had the foggiest clue as to just what it was...that they were proving. I like these guys! So this brings me back to how it was that I...who, dislikes running, became impressed into service in the Death Valley run very shortly after entering into Metro. This is how it works. “Hey Reitz...you’re on the running team as an alternate...okay?” What on earth are you going to say? If the rest of the lemming heard is going off the cliff then you might as well go with them otherwise, you’re just one lemming with nothing much to do afterwards anyway. I soon thereafter, found myself in a motor home with about fifteen guys for the ‘B’ platoon running team and we had already started to fortify our bodies at about 0400 hours when we departed Los Angeles for Death Valley. This was about the fourth or fifth time that the yearly race had been conducted if memory serves me so the Metro boys had the whole thing down to a fine science. Required items for an official Metro running team; one motor home, one follow vehicle for the runner, one change of clothes for Las Vegas, one gun, six bullets and plenty of beer and (1) ‘D’ cell flashlight with two spare batteries and one bag of potato chips. The usual Metro banter and joking and story telling was very heavily engaged in and it was sometime during the course of these events...that I was duly informed that in no possible way, and under no possible or even remotely conceivable conditions, would my services as a runner ever, ever be called upon so I should just sit back and relax and simply continue to fortify myself...which I did. We joined up with all the other teams in Death Valley and some official looking ‘dufus’ explained the rules and the routes and the legs of the race and the silly infractions that were not to be tolerated under any condition and not a single one of us listened much less cared. We were**

with our partners and buddies and that was all that really mattered. We left the little ad-hoc assembly and muttered how one day this glorious event would all change for the worst with more rules and officialdom sanctions than the Vatican. Boy...were we ever right.

The race started in grand fashion with someone blasting off some real shots as opposed to some silly starter pistol that couldn't hurt anything. After all, what's a real foot race without some sort of threat of great bodily harm anyway? So...right out of the gate we had already broken the rules. This was going to be a good race. The teams slowly spread out as the race progressed through the day and evening and into the night and we monitored the follow vehicle and our runner from a safe distance while continuing to fortify ourselves in the event of an emergency which might call upon our considerable skills for, who knows what. It was now somewhere around the hour of 0300 and over twenty four hours from the time that we had departed from the fair city of Los Angeles that I was roused from my slumber in the motor home. "Hey Reitz...you gotta run... 'so and so' is sicker than a frog in a washer." "What?" "You're running brother...get up." "When?" "Pretty much right now...our runner's only two hundred yards out!" Now nothing is funnier than three Metro guys trying to dress you when you're half asleep and there are about fifteen other bodies sprawled out in various configurations clogging the aisle and they are in various states of death or near death. I was very suddenly and rather forcibly, thrown out of the door onto the pavement under a totally moonless yet very star filled sky, into the middle of nowhere and the door was shut and just as suddenly, an aluminum baton was suddenly thrust into my hand. "Go...go...go." and I was off. Two minutes ago I was out to the world. Now, I had 10 kilometers to run in the dead of night...mostly uphill, and there wasn't a single light in sight in any direction which is why I suppose, they call it Death Valley. It was now to be a contest of wills - just yours truly and Death Valley. Man versus nature. My eyes watered incessantly for about the first five hundred yards and I tried to get some sort of pace going. The funny thing about Death Valley and this particular stretch of road is that there is nothing at all around you. There is no sound, no air, no light, no bushes, no animals that you can see...there really is nothing. My little feet were going pitter patter on the asphalt all by themselves in this rather tranquil and very Zen like dessert setting, when things started going south.

You see...each Metro team has a support car. These are cars that are supposed to follow the runners should anything, (God forbid on such a noble cause right?) go sideways. Well, 'B' platoon had procured a dessert dune buggy from somewhere and they had ingeniously, affixed a beer keg to the back of it with feeding lines running toward the driver and the other support personnel in the event of severe dehydration on their behalf. This just makes good, common Metro sense. Somehow they had run out of the precious fluid just prior to my leg of the race and they were somewhere behind me, hastily affixing a new keg to the dune buggy. When they caught up to me they started shouting some rather encouraging slogans infused with bits of colorful French vernacular interspersed with highly technical advice on my running style and various strategies on how to attack my stretch of the run.

The lights of the dune buggy did not work properly so they alternately faded and went in and out intermittently and this was rather confusing as they followed behind me. At one point the lights jerked suddenly to my right and then disappeared altogether in conjunction with some rather colorful language which faded in volume for a time and then suddenly stopped altogether. It seems that the driver had chosen a rather inopportune time to negotiate a most ill timed, right hand turn on an otherwise perfectly straight road for no other reason other than the simple fact that his feeding line had become fouled in some manner and the entire follow crew hanging on for dear life to the little dune buggy, had subsequently careened off into the desert sands with no lights and a full beer keg flying wildly about as the driver had unsuccessfully attempted to repair the damaged feed line while they were underway. They rejoined me some time later and continued to shout encouraging support although most of the words were slurred beyond any reasonable recognition. Now here's where it gets interesting. About a thousand yards ahead of me, there was a single, solitary yellow light shining brightly much like a beacon guiding a sailor into port. "There it is Reitz..there it is brother...go, go, go!" My support staff such as they were, had deduced that the light ahead was the hand off point for the next 'B' platoon runner. I figured that I could really push myself hard for one thousand yards so I turned it on...full throttle such as it were, and made for the light. My legs ached, my lungs burned, and I was sweating profusely as I made the last and final push for posterity. All I wanted to do was stop running and go back to sleep. Never, never, listen to Metro guys, at three thirty in the morning...in the middle of the desert...never! It is always a bad thing to do and so it proved to be in this case. It turns out that the light was from some, blithering, dumb nitwit from God knows where, that had broken down and was fixing a flat tire in the middle of the night in the middle of nowhere. There really was no reason for him to be out there other than extremely poor timing on his part. I had just spent all my energy for the last 1,000 yards for some Bozo who had no clue as to the historical significance of the events unfolding about him. My support crew immediately started issuing slurred apologies and comments on how tragic the misunderstanding was and how they were now going to motivate me for the last third leg of the race which was all uphill. It wasn't much of a party I can tell you.

I don't know where we came in on the race as I really didn't care. I was with the boys and it was all great fun. Some teams got kicked out of the race by the Forest Service for setting off flash bangs, among many other indiscretions that seemed to go hand in hand with such solemn events of great import and magnitude. The event is now run from Baker to Vegas...Death Valley wanting nothing to do with us anymore. The families and kiddies come, teams train, even the Nuns have a running team, sponsors sponsor, officials rule and keep time to the hundredths of a second and they make it all so official. They've ruined it. Charities do benefit to this day which is a very good thing and teams run in memory of individuals such as Randy Simmons which is even better but back then it was just...what it was. A group of knuckleheads out to prove nothing more than the simple fact, that they were in fact...a collective group of knuckleheads. Man will muck up every good thing that is ever placed before him each and every time.