Written by Mark Jaeger
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## Trustee's marksmanship background brings high-tech equipment to police station

Shooting is a passion for Village of Saukville Trustee David Maglio, who is also a full-time deputy with the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department.

Maglio spent four years in the Marine Corps with the military police. During that time in the service, he became a rifle and pistol expert.

His prowess at marksmanship has brought him national accolades, but it is Maglio's desire to teach the fine points of deadly force that has earned him the respect of law enforcement agencies and private citizens around the state.

"When I got involved in competitive shooting, I found it was addictive, like crack. I shot thousand of rounds at the range and became a state and regional pistol champion," Maglio said.

He also became a fanatic about firearms safety, which spurred him — and two silent partners — to spend thousands of dollars to purchase a state-of-the-art MILO training systems.

Fronting Maglio the money for the costly simulation equipment were Ripon resident Jack Williams of Tactical Anatomy Systems and Random Lake resident Mike Kawczyski of the Institute for Firearms Proficiency.

The cutting-edge MILO technology has been used for a decade by the U.S. Secret Service, FBI, U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency and all branches of the military.

For the uninitiated, the computer-driven firearm simulator could easily be mistaken for a video game on steroids.

But for law-enforcement officers, the sophisticated equipment could mean the difference between life or death.

“The difference between this and a video game is if they miss a shot on the MILO range, I tell them — ‘You’re dead,’” Maglio said.

Maglio is the safety training officer for the Saukville Police Reserves, but on a grander stage he travels the country using the MILO system to teach firearms techniques and hone the split-second thought process that tells officers when to pull the trigger.

He said the training is becoming even more critical as citizens around the country carry registered weapons. Wisconsin and Illinois are the only states in the country that do not allow residents to carry licensed, concealed guns — but that could change soon.

Maglio was reluctant to say how much the MILO equipment costs, but it is kept under lock and key in the Saukville Police Station.

In exchange for that storage and the use of the department’s training room, local officers are given training slots when sessions are held at the police station.

Realism is the strength of the MILO system.

A laser mechanism is mounted inside the barrel of two Glock handguns and two Smith & Wesson M&P 15 semi-automatic rifles, weapons which are standard for local law enforcement.

The MILO arsenal is identical to the weapons used by officers, down to weight, balance and materials used. Only the firing pins are missing.

The handguns are color-coded, so they can be quickly distinguished from live weapons. Red guns are used on the laser range, and identical blue weapons shoot high-velocity paint pellets for deadly force “simunition” training.

The MILO rifles have CO2 cartridges loaded into the magazine, to simulate the recoil triggered when the gun is fired.

The sensitivity of the guns was inadvertently shown during a recent demonstration in the Saukville police training room.

A bump of the desk on which a “loaded” laser weapon was resting sent a spray of simulated shots in the direction of an overhead screen, with each hit leaving a simulated bullet hole.

As Maglio offers instructions on how to use the MILO system, he stresses the fundamentals of marksmanship in the most minute of details.

It is a lesson he picked up with the Marines.

“Always train the way you fight, and you will always fight the way you train,” Maglio said.

Under stressful situations, like when an officer must pull out their weapon and face down someone pointing a gun at them or a hostage, Maglio said you automatically lose fine-motor control and get an adrenaline surge than boosts muscle strength.

Proper training, he said, minimizes the risk those natural forces will work against the officer.

“The key is to bring all of the motions and thoughts to the point of being reaction,” Maglio said.

Weaponry aside, the strength of the MILO systems is its computer software. Connecting a laptop to a projector, trainees can be put through more than 600 shoot-don’t shoot scenarios. Each scenario uses the images of live actors, rather

than cartoon characters, and delayed responses or missed shots set off a cascade of follow-up consequences.

“In every case, we give the instruction that the goal is to shoot to stop the threat,” said Maglio.

That means hitting the target in the “kill zone,” typically the head or area of vital organs.

The brutality of that instruction fades when a student on the firing range faces a scenario where a robber is shown pointing a pistol at the face of a convenience store clerk or at a terrified teenager in a high-school hallway.

“The fact is, every bullet an officer fires today unleashes an army of lawyers. You have to be accountable for every shot,” Maglio said.

After a scenario plays out, students must justify each pull of the trigger. In the debriefing process, they must say whether their action was in compliance with state law and department procedures for the use of lethal force.

As a village trustee, Maglio said he is acutely aware of the financial pinch most municipalities are feeling — including police training. However, he said, not properly preparing an officer on the use of deadly force can be much more costly.

“The cost of a lawsuit would be hundreds of times the cost of the training,” he said. “And as the cost of ammunition is soaring, the cost to fire our weapons is the cost of the electricity.”

Saukville Police Chief Bill Meloy, a marksman in his own right, said he is impressed with the authenticity of the training system.

“I think it’s great. Talk about getting bang for your buck. We’ve put all of our officers through training on the MILO system, and it this something we could never afford to do on our own,” Meloy said.

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SAUKVILLE POLICE LT. JEFF GOETZ took aim with a laser-loaded handgun during a simulated robbery as part of the MILO deadly force training system. David Maglio (at left), an off-duty Ozaukee County sheriff's deputy, operated the laptop that controlled action in the training session. Photo by Mark Jaeger