

More on the Lighter Side of Law Enforcement

I.P.E.D.

By Det. Sgt. James T. Quaglino (Ret)

Humor on the job, a necessity to survive until retirement. Sometimes sad and serious situations evoke humorous responses. Case in point: My son Jim is an 18 year veteran of law enforcement in a suburban New Jersey Department of 28 Officers 10 miles from New York City. He related an incident that although humorous, eased a situation for a women evidently experiencing psychological problems.

It seems, and we have all experienced this call, that a resident of his community would periodically "go off" and call the Police Department with her problem. She would call and request that Officers respond to her home to assist her in getting rid of "them", persons she felt had invaded her residence. Officers would respond and search her home finding no one there and would leave. Sometimes that would satisfy her and other times it would not, so she would call again. The officers would return and attempt to assure her that there were no persons unknown in her home.

One particular 3-11 tour Jim was breaking in a rookie Officer showing him various areas of problems in town and educating him in the methods of residential patrol. Then the call came in, respond to Mrs. X residence for a suspicious persons call. Having been at the residence many times in the past, Jim related to the new Officer what was occurring at Mrs. X home. He advised the recruit to follow his lead and that they would perform a search of her residence to be sure that there were no persons present there.

As they approached the residents area, they performed routine checks for

any vehicles or persons in or leaving that area. Finding none they circled the block and returned to the address. The home was in a fairly well to do neighborhood with nicely manicured lawns and gardens. The homes in that area were well kept and upscale. They called out at the location and exited their patrol vehicle. As they approached the front of the home, the door opened and Mrs. X appeared in an obvious distressed state. She recognized Jim and advised him that "they" were back again and she wanted them removed. Jim advised her to stay at the front door of the residence while he and the other Officer checked her yard and the rear of her home. They did just that and found all to be in order and returned to the front door to speak to Mrs. X. She invited them in and requested they check her home further for those persons.

These types of calls take time and tie up personnel, but they must be answered. They advised her that the outer areas of the home were secure. She advised them that "invisible people" were in her home and the Officers should be very careful. She also told them that her daughter had stopped by to comfort her and introduced the daughter to Jim and his partner. Her daughter acknowledged them and rolled her eyes indicating she knows her mothers problem. She advised in a whispered tone that her mom goes off every so often and a little talking with her seems to calm her fears. Jim advised that Officers from his Department had appeared many times relative to this same type of call.

They advised Mrs. X and her daughter to stay in the living room while they checked her residence. They performed a search of the entire home to be certain it was secure and then returned to the living room. Jim advised his partner to

follow his lead. The recruit acknowledged he understood. Jim whispered to Mrs. X that if "they" were in her home, would she want them permanently removed?. She advised she definitely wanted to see that "they" were removed. He further advised her that if he does conduct a special procedure, the people would be removed and would never return. He guaranteed that "they" would not return to her residence but she must authorize the Officers to conduct the removal. She excitedly approved.

With his back to Mrs X, Jim inquired of the other Officer if he had his IPED unit with him pointing to his portable radio. The rookie caught on and advised he did have his IPED with him, removing it from his rear pocket and handing it to Jim. His was a unit without the attached microphone/speaker, being an older portable. Jim took the IPED and requested Mrs X follow him closely around the home.

Jim, followed by Mrs X, his partner and the daughter started a slow search of the residence pointing the IPED unit and periodically quickly activating the "squelch" button. He would stop, motioning to the others to stop while he rotated the unit left to right then up and down. At that point he would activate the "squelch" for a long period of time. At that point he would turn to Mrs X and say, "one gone". They walked through the residence, SQUELLLLLCCCHHHHH, two gone, 3 gone and so on. At 5 he stopped and advised Mrs X that it appeared that there were only 5 and that "they" were now all gone and permanently removed from her home. She could rest easy now as they would not return.

Mrs. X was visibly relieved and thanked the Officers over and over. Jim glanced at the daughter who was ►

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trying her best not to lose it and in fact, had to leave the room several times to regain control. Mrs. X was obviously feeling much more secure than he had observed in the past on calls to her home. She then asked Jim just what exactly the equipment was that he utilized to rid her home of the unwanted intruders. In a professional manner he stated, "It's an IPED maam, a very sophisticated piece of Police equipment designed for just this type of situation." At that, the rookie apparently into the investigation asked Jim what IPED stood for.

Jim looked at him and Mrs X and said, "IPED, Invisible Person Eradication Device." The daughter had to walk away once again as she was on the verge of breaking into a fit of laughter. Mrs X. thanked them and they left the residence.

When they returned to their patrol vehicle, Jims partner advised him that it was a quick thinking response. A lesson learned on another method of dealing with a sometimes impossible situation that resulted in the complainants fears being allayed. It was a case where the woman truly believed in her situation. That incident happened over a year ago and to this day Mrs. X has never called about invisible persons in her home. She was cured by IPED. Keep your sense of humor, stay safe and wear your vests. □

PEANUT BUTTER BALLS AND SCISSORS

My son Jim also advised me of the following story relating to the lighter side of law enforcement .In most suburban Police Departments, Police Officers respond to aid calls as the ems and para medics may not be readily available. One of the Officers of Jim's Department advised him that sometimes language barriers pose particular problems in communication. The Officer was working a day tour when a call came in from dispatch to respond to a certain location in town, some type of medical emergency of unknown origin. The dispatcher advised him that he was unable to ascertain or understand the complainants problem.

The Officer responded and called

out at the location, popping the automatic trunk release as he exited the patrol vehicle. He grabbed his first aid and defib unit and headed for the front door of the home. An anxious woman was waiting for him and yelled "in here Occifa, in here Occifa" The Officer was shown a male lying on the floor of the dining room of the home and appeared to be convulsing. The mans wife was screaming ":help him Occifa, help him he is doin a scissor, he does scissors all the time" The Officer asked, "what is a scissor maam?" She responded, "a scissor, a scissor, he's havin a scissor right now." It now became clear, the man was having a seizure. The officer immediately administered precautionary measures to keep the man from hurting himself. The wife was now yelling, "I told him, I told him, he didn't take his peanut butter balls today, I told him." The Officer asked, "what did you say?" She responded, " I told him to take his peanut butter balls and he didn't take them." Hmmm" the Officer thought, trying to act and think as fast as he could, "scissors, seizure. peanut butter balls, what the heck, wait, seizure, phenobarbital, yes thats it phenobarbital, maam is he supposed to take phenobarbital?" The woman screamed at him, "whats the matter with you Occifa, dont you understand english, I kepted telling you, he didnt take his peanut butter balls." Again the Officer asked, "do you mean phenobarbital?" She shook her head and said. "whats wrong with you, thats what I just said, peanut butter balls"

The paramedics responded and after examining the man and contacting the medical facility, they administered the medication he required and the patient responded. This call ended happily but had the Officer not been able to figure out the words the woman screamed, the results could have been much different. So scissors, seizures, peanut butter balls, phenobarbital. hey, the possibilities are endless. You can imagine how many peanut butter cups were left on the Officers locker after that incident. So keep your sense of humor and stay safe and wear your vests. □