



THE BLUE FAMILY TREE

Newsletter article April, 2020

Many criminals act on crimes of opportunity. Very few create the opportunity needed to commit their crime. A prowler who breaks into cars for loose change, waits until after dark when people have turned in for the night. A shoplifter takes advantage of the store clerk being too busy with other customers to watch them closely. Looters don't loot when it's business as usual. The ones we catch often get greedy and don't follow the rules of opportunistic crime. They try and force it when the opportunity is not there.

We have many methods of intervening with various crimes. Consider your methods "interventions of opportunity." If the opportunity is not there, do not choose to force it. We lost two officers in March to the deployment of stop-sticks. Both were struck by the suspect vehicle; a vehicle they were stop-sticking because the driver had already displayed extreme indifference for human life. Stop sticks are absolutely an intervention of opportunity and cannot be forced. If you don't have time and distance to properly deploy them, please consider other intervention methods. Be sure you have a hard barrier up stream from you so the suspect vehicle cannot hit you, and you are away from your patrol car which often draws the attention, and attack of the suspect. Lie the sticks on the opposite shoulder instead of trying to throw and pull. Throwing gives the perpetrator additional information about your whereabouts in the critical fractions of seconds before their arrival. Placing them on the opposite shoulder and running the string across the road is much safer. Vehicles can run over the string without any harm to the sticks or risk of damage to the bystander cars. After placing the sticks, as you cross the road to prepare for deployment, sprint. This both gets you across the road and out of danger faster, and allows you to count your steps in the same fashion that you are going to be taking them when you run the stop-sticks into the lanes. Leave the string loose until the pursuit arrives, maintaining control of the handle. Remember to never grab the actual string. Just before the pursuit arrives remove the slack and run counting the steps to know the sticks are in place. I promise you, they won't know what hit 'em. Much, much better than the other way around.

Sticks, tactical vehicle intervention, knee strikes, wrist locks, firearms, you name it; these are all "interventions of opportunity." If you use an intervention when the opportunity has not presented itself, the results could be catastrophic for a multitude of reasons. Slow your own mind down and look for the best solution rather than the solution you have been determined to make work.

God bless those who have gone before us in the name of justice and creating a better and more safe community. Their actions are not to blame; the actions of the suspects who take their lives is where we focus blame. We must honor and learn from the passing of our blue brothers and sisters no matter how much that hurts to do.