

Gastonia Police Department



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Quality of Life for All

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Gastonia Police Department's 4TH ANNUAL WORLD CLASS SNIPER CONFERENCE

Some of the nation's best law enforcement and military sniper teams will sharpen their skills and compete for top honors during the Gastonia Police Department (GPD) 4th Annual Sniper Conference on Sept. 8-11 at the Gastonia Police Firearms and Tactical Training Center in Gastonia. Thirty-six teams from police departments, sheriff's offices, military units and other state and federal agencies will compete in 11 events designed to simulate real-world situations that professional snipers face.

The event is attracting some of the nation's top manufacturers and dealers of elite marksmen-related equipment because of the popularity among professional snipers and the event venue, GPD's state-of-the-art range facilities. These companies offer sponsorships and prizes for the event that has captured the attention and support of leading authorities and "legends" in the field including Major John L. Plaster, U.S. Army (retired), a national authority on sniping and special operations. Major Plaster served three years with the Vietnam War's top secret covert operations unit, MACV-SOG, and has extensive combat experience. He was wounded once and decorated for heroism four times.

"There are only a few competitions in the country exclusively for professional snipers," said Gastonia Police Capt. Steve Duncan, who heads up GPD's SWAT team which includes the sniper team. "Last year's prize package included equipment and training worth well over \$50,000 and we will have an excellent prize package again this year."

Again this year, GPD's team will not compete, but will judge and score the events to ensure the integrity and fairness of the competition. The event will be open to law enforcement and military only Wednesday and Thursday. The general public is invited to watch on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 10-11 and admission is free.

In addition, this year the conference will offer opportunities for the public to test their shooting skills through controlled shooting events for the general public. The public events will be held on Saturday, Sept. 11, including the 8-Inch Plate Pistol Match for ages 21 and older, the AR 15 Rifle Event, the 22-Caliber Event, and a Youth Pellet Rifle Match.

All participants in the events for the general public must sign a release and assumption of risk form and are required to comply with the North Carolina Felony Firearms Act. No personal weapons or ammunition will be allowed inside the facility for any reason; handguns, rifles, safety equipment and ammunition will be supplied for each event. Proceeds from the public shooting events will benefit the Gastonia Police Foundation and future upgrades to the firing range facility.

Parking will be at the event location, the GPD Firearms and Tactical Training Center off Tulip Drive in Gastonia. For more information visit the event Web site at www.gastoniaswat.org.

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