

Training with Kris Paronto

By AmSJ Staff 2022 Training 0 Comments

When 'Tanto's' Battleline Tactical recently teamed up with Ammo Manufacturer Fort Scott Munitions, some serious Home Defense and Close-Quarter Battle training ensued.

Story and Photos by Paul Pawela

Why would any civilian pay their hard-earned money to go to a close-quarter battle class designed for the home? A class where you are simulating a family hostage rescue – who needs that? And what civilian really needs to be taught by a well-known former Army Ranger/CIA contractor? I can just hear the naysayers now.



Kris "Tanto" Paronto, a former Army Ranger who was a private CIA security contractor during the 2012 attack on the US diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya, teaches pistol craft during a joint Battleline Tactical-Fort Scott Munitions course on home defense and close-quarter battle drills.

Since this awesome class that I am referring to was taught in Fort Scott, Kansas, home to Fort Scott Munitions, let's start with a grim historical fact. In 1959, an infamous home invasion robbery-turned-murder took place in a farmhouse in Holcomb, Kansas.

Two ex-convicts on parole had heard through a fellow inmate that a farmer well-known in his community for being friendly and giving kept large amounts of cash lying around his house (the latter turned out not to be true). The ex-convicts entered the home of the farmer while he and his family were asleep, woke them up and then tied the family up while they looked for the cash. Upon not finding any, in a fit of blind rage, the robbers killed the entire family. This despicable act would be the inspiration for the bestselling book and movie *In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote.



Ryan

Kraft, owner of Fort Scott Munitions, hosted the training at two of his company's CQB houses.

Another example of human excrement from Kansas was Dennis Rader, aka BTK (bind, torture, kill), who tormented the Wichita and Park City, Kansas, communities from 1974 to 1991. He broke into homes and murdered a total of 10 people, including two children.

It has been said that evil events are perpetrated by humans who have no soul; that when bullets fly, bombs explode and knives flash in these most horrific of acts, society struggles to come to grips with the incarnate evil that is amongst us.

The mere definition of a home invasion is rather tough for the ordinary citizen to comprehend due to its ugliness against humanity. A home invasion is defined as a forced entry of a private home where the criminal element intends to commit a violent crime such as robbery, usually via assault. In order to force the homeowner

into compliance and subjugation, the perpetrator will use extreme force and torture, which could mean kidnapping, rape or even murder.



Instructor Pablo Martinez demonstrates close-quarter battle and room clearing.

IF THERE IS even a plan to have countermeasures in place for such a violent event, the family is relegated generally to two options. The first is to try to disengage and escape the scene, and the second is to deal with the evil element head-on. The only way to deal with these types of sub-humans who dish out extreme violence is with greater violence against them. You must perform a hostage rescue on your own family because no one is coming to help you.

You must do it yourself because the lives of your loved ones depend on it. Way too many gun owners are content with just getting their concealed carry permit and then putting their gun in a desk drawer with the notion that they will be able to use it when things go bump in the night. They could not be more wrong.

Other gun owners will spend a lot of time on a square range working on marksmanship skills that may or may not help them in real-world situations. When it comes to defensive shooting, you should have skill with a gun, as well as a good foundation of tactics. Skill with a gun is defined as the learned ability to perform the desired task with said gun with determined results, like drawing your weapon from the concealed position and hitting the target with precision (i.e., shooting the threat in the vital areas of the body).

Tactics are preplanned or prepared procedures to deal with situations such as violent encounters. If you are going to carry a handgun for defensive purposes, you should be proficient with a handgun. These defensive skills should be applied toward force-on-force training using interactive role players in shoot/don't-shoot scenarios, especially if the bad guys have weapons that can shoot back. It is a known fact that through force-on-force training, you can condition yourself to a specific tactic based on the stimulus you receive, creating a conditioned response.



Alivia Rose Kraft, the only woman in the class attended by the author, clears bad guys out first before treating gunshot wounds.

AS HINTED AT the beginning of this article, we are talking about a class run by Battleline Tactical and their famed CEO/lead instructor Kris "Tanto" Paronto. A man's man, a man of God, a family man, a loyal brother in arms, a man of proven grit, a highly skilled and trained man – Paronto is all these things and more. He is also a man who served with distinction in one of the Army's most elite combat units, the famed 2nd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.

He is a man who had many distinguished moments in battle, but one certainly cemented his name in history. Paronto's and his teammates' heroics have been forever immortalized in the bestselling book and epic movie *13 Hours*, the true account of the 2012 terrorist attack on the US Special Mission in Benghazi, Libya. Paronto has been featured in the pages of *American Shooting Journal* before, but this Battleline class was different. Battleline teamed up with ammo manufacturer Fort Scott Munitions to hold a class at their manufacturing plant and their outstanding training facility.

The two training powerhouses put together a near-perfect course on home defense and close-quarter battle drills. I was impressed that the first day of training started with a stop-the-bleed and medical class taught by Mike "Doc" Riche, a highly trained personal protection team leader with years of both stateside and overseas protection.

His protecting detail has ranged from protecting a very wealthy family to members of our government. While Riche has served in every position Paronto's acts and philosophies are detailed in two popular books. possible on a PPS detail, including team leader, he is highly regarded for the incredible skillset he has as a medic, putting on one of the best medical classes this author has ever seen. As the class went through the day doing intense scenarios, putting on seals and dressings to dress simulated wounds and tourniquets to stop the bleeding, the training did not stop until the student had perfected all tasks that were required, under the watchful eye of Riche.



Battleline instructor Jeremy Mitchell encourages a student to get full arm extension while aiming his handgun.

What is important to note is that this type of training was most valuable to Paronto's teammate Mark "Oz" Geist of 13 Hours, as he was seriously wounded by a mortar round that nearly blew off his arm. The quick medical attention he got, including a tourniquet, saved both his arm and his life.

Bullets go both ways in a gunfight and anyone could get hit, including yourself, so self-aid is very important. But to this author, what drove home the importance of medical training was a story told by a seasoned SWAT-trained officer. He was driving home from an event with his wife, going 50-plus mph in the dark. When he turned a corner, a stray cow was in the middle of the road. He hit the cow head-on. The damage to the officer's vehicle was horrendous – and the injuries sustained by his wife are too graphic to print.

At first glance, he thought his wife was dead. The officer was injured and in shock, but bravely fought through everything and started performing lifesaving first-aid techniques. By the grace of God, she survived and is on her way to recovery.

The point that really hit home was that the officer had performed medical first aid on many people, but never on his own family, let alone his wife. Think about that for a second: Are you trained to perform lifesaving skills on your family? If not, why not? At the end of the medical portion, the students were directed to Fort Scott's two CQB houses. There, the students went through different rooms where they fought and engaged an intruder. First they would deal with the threat and then perform medical first aid to the victim. Although the majority of the students were seasoned people in their fields, under the stress of the training, most put their first tourniquets

on backwards, a situation Riche would correct on the spot and everyone got better throughout the day.

THE NEXT DAY began with handgun training skills. The imparted wisdom came from none other than Paronto himself. Paronto is an expert in all small arms and, of course, has real-world experience. He talked about many different positions to go in and out of rooms, which will vary, especially if you're carrying out a wounded person or possibly a child.

No one does room-clearing better than Rangers, and Paronto, being the consummate professional, clearly explained all skillsets in thorough detail. One thing he stated that was a tough pill to swallow, but a resounding truth nonetheless, was that sometimes the best cover you will have is right behind the very weapon system you are using! This was a very powerful statement about being both technically and tactically proficient with your personal defensive weapons system. Paronto turned over the room-clearing portion of the training to Pablo Martinez, who taught one of

the best classes on the subject I have ever seen. Martinez's background fools a lot of people. You would think he had a serious background in the special operations community due to his knowledge on the subject, but that came from years of training with some of the best in the country. If anyone tries to argue with his intellect, good luck, because his real job is a contract rocket engineer working for NASA.

The firearms training was conducted with simulated firearms in Airsoft variants of the popular weapons carried today. Airsoft guns give the flexibility you can't get with real ones, and that is to simulate gunfights. As I have previously stated, this is the best training you could possibly get.



Battleline instructors (from left to right) Martinez, Riche, Paronto and Mitchell.

In closing, I would like to state that Battleline has a tremendous staff from all kinds of backgrounds and experiences who were not only knowledgeable but extremely patient to ensure everyone got the most

out of the training. Kris Paronto is a class act all the way around, driven to total professionalism in all he does because every day he honors his fallen comrades, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty. He has all the values that warriors need to have, which are loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, duty, respect, selfless service and integrity, and taught me more about personal courage than many people could ever imagine.

They are warriors through and through and I wish to honor the Kraft family by dedicating this article to their daughter Lillian, a true warrior who had a love for life and family and fought a warrior's fight to the very end. May we all have the warrior strength and love Lillian had! For more information on Battleline, visit kristantoparonto.com/battleline. For more on Fort Scott Munitions, go to fortscottmunitions.com.

Editor's note: For realistic self-defense training, see assaultcountertactics.com. Author Paul Pawela is a nationally recognized firearms and self-defense expert based in Florida.