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Robot Used During Bomb Drill Similar to NASA's Space Rovers



By Carol A. Gasser Moore

LANIER COUNTY, Georgia – Bomb Squad Robot used at Bomb Drill this week took every person who encountered it back to what they “thought” they knew from Science Fiction films. The Bomb location and removal practice event was “real time” and right here in Lanier County, not some new other worldly technology found in outer space! It was fascinating to watch the trained human operators use the robot and assess a possible bomb while being first outside the building and then eventually in a room off a hallway across the building where the drill occurred.

During the Bomb Drill at the old Lanier County Primary School, this Lanier County News writer learned something about the similarities and differences in a robot used for bomb removal and a “Rover” used thousands of miles out in outer space.

A Rover is often referred to as what NASA likes to call a fully autonomous vehicle. Obviously the radio distance and frequency would be different. A Rover can drive itself; it can sense what is around it and take proper actions for those sensory inputs.

A Bomb Robot used by an Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team is operated completely by trained team members and does not operate itself. Real-time trained bomb disposal tell the robot what to do at all times. The only time that this was not the case this week was when the concrete block walls which contain rebar caused a communication problem which the Moody Air Force Base (AFB) Bomb Squad had to solve. For this reason alone, the practice was an important learning tool.

The scientists that monitor a Rover’s movement are a kind of “backseat driver”. They ask the Rover to drive towards an objective to interact with it. The rover does 99% of its actions from programming done long before it lifts off for Mars. It can even be updated with new programs to make it even better at its job. It’s a real robot in every sense of the word.

One cannot control a Rover like a remote controlled car, because the signals take minutes to reach Mars and it would be impossible to control by live, remote control inputs because of the massive time lag.

In other ways, the two pieces of equipment have similar capabilities.

LCSO, LPD and LCBOE joined forces in Bomb Exercise at old LC Primary School

By Carol A. Gasser Moore

LANIER COUNTY, Georgia – Moody Air Force Base (AFB) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Airmen explosives experts joined forces with the Lanier County Sheriff’s Office (LCSO), the Lakeland Police Department (LPD), and the Lanier County Board of Education Police Department (LCBOEPD) this week in a one-day bomb exercise. It was held at the old Lanier County Primary School with the goal of practicing the protection of students and area residents. A Moody AFB EOD team specializing in explosives led the drill, with the Moody AFB Bomb Squad and partnered members from the three (3) area police and sheriff’s departments.

A spokesman for the Moody EOD Team indicated that these type of exercise is designed to provide public safety and military bomb technicians the opportunity to operate in the public sector in a large public building. The drill locations in the old Lanier County Primary School included a classroom on Hall C, and the student library area on the mail hall of the building.

The training was part of the law enforcement agencies’ response to a “suspected bomb practice”, which is routinely carried out by law enforcement agencies in various venues across the the county and the State of Georgia, as well as the Moody AFB Bomb Squad’s twice weekly actual practice in a variety of government and public sector. The drill included practice in locating 3 dummy bomb devices, developing and/or expanding the knowledge of these agencies on how to locate, identify or develop as much information about “found” practice devices as well as how to keep agency members and the public safe as they provide this type of security work.

The Moody AFB Bomb Team evaluated how law enforcement members performed their search and locating of devices, reporting of finding the practice bombs and how to convey information to a trained bomb squad team.

The first line of response to a report that a bomb may be in a building was for all area law enforcement to converge at the location and join forces to carefully look for anything that indicates the presence of a possible bomb and how to develop and convey the information to a trained Bomb Squad.



Once the possible bomb or bombs are located, identified and information conveyed to the Bomb Squad, the officers serve as support to the actual EOD Bomb Squad in the safe removal of the devices.

“This is all practice to handle something that our area law enforcement members hope will never happen,” said Chief Deputy Stryde Jones.

Mayor Exum again asserts need to ‘Jump on the Bandwagon’ instead of following the Charter to maintain her Authority

By Carol A. Gasser Moore

RAY CITY, Georgia – Despite the fact that it is Ray City council’s job to govern equally and uphold the city’s charter, Ray City Mayor Brenda Exum again asserted “nobody goes by the charter or anything else, and I’m not going to” at Tuesday’s Ray City Council meeting.

The minute that Exum recognized Councilman Wesley Bennefield, she interrupted Bennefield stating that there was going to be no ‘arguing’ because she wasn’t going to give up ‘what has always been done’ which is that she, as mayor, is the sole person who will make decisions about the responsibilities of the Ray City Councilman, instead of following the charter that spells the powers and responsibilities of the Ray City Council. To listeners, it seemed that Mayor Exum doesn’t want to follow city rules, but would rather maintain control and power which by the City’s Charter, is not hers to exercise.

Sadly, Mayor Exum’s appearance of contempt for Councilman Bennefield seemed to surface during the exchange. There were several comments by persons leaving the February Ray City Council meeting that they were offended by Exum’s attitude and comments when Exum interrupted Bennefield to say that she wasn’t going to make a change in any operation of Ray City Council and follow the Ray City Charter.

Even though Ray City citizens have elected the mayor and council with the likely expectation that they know and follow the city’s rules, virtually all councilmen (Hank Studstill, David Schools, who were present ... Jeff Sly, who was not present) as well as Mayor Exum and the City Attorney Chad Corlee appeared to admit that they have not read the Ray City Charter. Every new election requires that all Ray City Councilman and the mayor take an Oath of Allegiance. Taking the oath is a formal way of attesting that they be true to their words, yet Mayor Exum stated clearly for all to hear that she isn’t relinquishing responsibilities of whatever she wants to do even when she does not have the right to do so according to the Charter!

Yet, by law, every branch of government has an equal responsibility to uphold the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of Georgia, and their city’s City



Charter. Yet, outside of Councilman Bennefield, it seems, not one Councilman has educated himself, nor the mayor, herself, to follow the legal rules for the operation of the City of Ray City. While mildly humorous, in reality it seemed sad that these publicly elected officials acknowledge they have not taken the responsibility to read the Ray City Charter and follow it. While being contemptuous of Councilman Bennefield’s requests to follow the Ray City Charter, they adhere to and vocalize that they want to run the city any way they want to – in effect, fair or not!

Exum’s justification for the way she is operating the City of Ray City, is to institute and use the “bandwagon effect”. If readers aren’t familiar, this in effect is like saying that as sworn elected officials they would rather operate the city government to maintain

For more see “FOLLOW THE CHARTER” • PAGE 8