

ATV club

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Doug Vickers, vice-president of the Ontario federation, was one of the instructors during the educational session for members of the Essex County club.

Vickers' group currently works in partnership with police services in Hamilton, Peel, and the Halton Region.

When a person goes missing in those areas, police contact the federation to join the search. Vickers said it's a goal of the two-year-old federation to develop a number of

similar groups across the province.

"It's a valuable tool," Vickers said. "The police are using ATVs and their clubs more and more now."

During the session, Vickers taught club members about search methods and how to preserve a crime scene. They applied the training in a series of scenarios in the forest.

In the first scenario, they were told a family had gone missing and were thought to be somewhere in the forest. It was up to the search and rescue team to find them, flag off the crime scene and

revive the victims if necessary.

The Essex County club constructed a trail through the forest for the event, where two groups of ATVers worked as a team in the search and rescue missions. During a search, Vickers said it's not uncommon for groups of three ATV members to work together.

Amherstburg Police Const. Melissa Taylor was asked by the service's staff sergeant to participate in the training.

"The more trained professionals you have looking for a missing person, the better," Taylor said after the scenarios

were completed. "Evidence preservation is very important."

Taylor said there is a possibility that more officers will be trained with the ATV club.

Vickers, who's been

involved in nearly 75 searches, including evidence searches with the RCMP, said ATV rescue missions are not just confined to rural areas and can be used in urban areas as well.

ATV models by Polaris, Honda, Yamaha and Suzuki were used during the training. Honda Canada and Rick's Performance in Harrow each donated two machines for the training day.



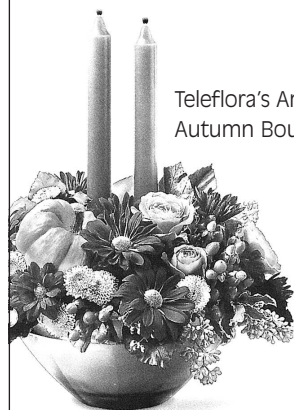
Sarah Fisher / Free Press

Safe Driving - Ted Wheeler, left, a member of the Ontario Trucking Association Road Knights team, talks with parents outside Essex Public Library Sept. 28. Wheeler drives an 18-wheeler for a living and gave a presentation about safety for truck drivers and other motorists. Part of the presentation included an opportunity for local children to sit inside the truck's cab.

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