

T h e T E N A T r a n s f e r

Fall, 2000

From the President.....

Tammy Conrad

Howdy! First all, a big THANKS to everyone for selecting all of us as your 2000-2001 TENA board. We appreciate your confidence in our ability to provide leadership to the state! I think we should also send out great big CONGRATULATIONS to John Melcher and Jim Goerke. Continuing the good 'ole Texas tradition, we again have national leadership with John being elected as the NENA 2nd Vice-President and Jim as the Southeastern Regional Vice-President. WAY TO GO TEXAS!!

I am just curious...has anyone been busy with things like Wireless Phase I Implementation, Strategic Planning, SCC database transition, and everyday PSAP issues??? I thought so! Well, your newly elected board is anxious to get started on activities for the year and we thought it would be fitting to get back on track with a newsletter which will try to cover those activities we have just completed as well as those challenges facing all of us in the near future.

Your new board has had numerous conference calls and one face-to-face meeting in July to discuss activities for the upcoming year. For those of you who do not know, the membership voted last Fall to concentrate on only one conference a year. Since the Spring Conference honors outstanding

telecommunicators from across the state, the membership decided to focus on that conference. We have sincerely enjoyed our liaison with APCO and the lasting friendships we built. We strongly encourage support of the Fall APCO Conference and invite those APCO members to our Spring Conference that will be held April 11-13th at the Austin Marriott at the Capitol.

Because the board is committed to providing quality, educational opportunities, we have begun researching topics for the Spring Conference. What would you think about a session covering Dispatcher Training Practices...or how about Automatic Crash Notification....or....a technical session on GIS....or....a Vendor Forum?? The ideas are coming at us from everywhere!!! Let us know if there is a topic you are interested in and we'll put it on the list.

We have an exciting year ahead of us! We stand ready to work hard for the membership. So...be sure and check out the website at www.nena9-1-1.org/texas/ for the latest information about committees, membership, conferences, etc....and....Let us hear from you...as a famous past president said in his letter to the group several years ago...."This organization's strength is in its membership!" What a great quote!

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News from across the Lone Star State

East Region - *Lisa Dodson*

Greetings from East Texas! I am excited about being the East Regional Coordinator. After being a NENA member for several years, I decided it was time to jump in and get my feet wet. I look forward to working with fellow NENA-TX members and hope to provide valuable information about the 9-1-1 community in East Texas.

The Deep East Texas Council of Governments conducted a County Level 9-1-1 Addressing and Addressing Maintenance workshop open to all the DETCOG region county judges, county commissioner, county addressing coordinators and vendors on June 22, 2000. The purpose of the workshop was to promote a better understanding of the 9-1-1 addressing and maintenance issues for all involved in the 9-1-1 addressing process. DETCOG has also recognized Jasper County Judge Joe Folk as their 2000 DETCOG Outstanding Committee Member. Judge Folk serves on numerous committees including the 9-1-1 Advisory Council.

The Houston-Galveston Area Council, Brazos Valley Council of Government, Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission and the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network have all completed their transition to SCC's database services.

As of September 1, 2000, approximately 80% of the wireless subscribers in the Fort

Bend and Harris County areas are Phase I compliant with the remaining 20% expected to be up by the end of this year.

Congratulations to John Melcher, Deputy Director of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network for being elected as Second Vice President of NENA at the Annual Conference held in Salt Lake City, Utah. All the staff at GHC 9-1-1 have been working on an aggressive schedule of converting PSAP workstations over to Plant Equipment Inc.'s VESTA ACD and MADN product. Since the beginning of the year they have converted approximately 139 positions in 25 PSAPs. Once finished, they will have converted 177 workstations in 40 PSAPs and trained approximately 1000 Telecommunicators.

Central Region - *Becky Stewart*

The CAPCO Region successfully transitioned all 34 PSAPs to the SCC Database on July 25, 2000. GTEW has deployed Phase 1 Wireless in 7 of the ten Counties in the Region effective August 1, 2000.

A big kudos to the Austin EMS PSAP for becoming the 38th PSAP in the world to be recognized by the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatch as an Accredited Center of Excellence. In addition, they are the first in Texas to obtain this prestigious honor.

South Region - *Silbia Barajas*

Hello from beautiful and sunny South Texas!

Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission sponsored a Stress Management course by Powerphone on August 14, 2000. September 31, 2000 they had a

TDD training (full certification and re-certification). Leslie and her staff have been focusing all their attention on cut-overs and finishing the addressing project. They are 98% complete with addressing conversions and anticipate having completion within the next couple of weeks.

Coastal Bend Council of Governments finished upgrading 7 sites to Positron Lifeline 100 CPE on August 31, 2000. Twenty-one (21) of 22 PSAPs are providing ALI and 10/20 for cellular phase I. Staff had a conference with SWBell, SCC, and cell providers on August 31, 2000 to properly receive Phase I ALI on all the major carriers in the region. San Patricio County is in the process of re-naming the County Roads. Signs are currently being replaced and residents notified. Trey Pattillo reports if anyone is using the Internet maps or paper maps be careful of what you are looking for and verify directions. There is nothing magic about re-addressing and people are not aware of the end result and the amount of agencies that have to update their data, i.e. Texas Department of Transportation, Rail Road Commission, Texas Natural Resources Commission, US Census, and USGS just to mention a few and an unknown amount of commercial providers such as Rand McNally. Staff is doing their best to meet the deadlines and requirements placed on them.

Cameron County Emergency Communication District has completed their last PSAP upgrades with Maars-View NT. They are implementing Wireless Phase I.

Here in Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council, we were very busy with back to back SCC

ALI Database conversion, Wireless Phase I implementation and Rural Addressing. We have completed Willacy County rural addressing and anticipate completing Hidalgo County very soon. On August 21st through 25th we converted 15 PSAPs to SCC ALI database and will finish the remaining 4 on September 7, 2000. On August 31, 2000 we did the field testing for Wireless Phase I. We sponsored Powerphone Crisis Training on May 8-9, 2000 and TDD training on August 8, 2000. We had three deadlines of August 31, 2000. What a month we have had! Until next time, be good and be safe.

West Region - Kevin Jones

Phase 1 seems to be the buzzword in the Western Region. The Concho Valley Council of Government, Middle Rio Grande Development Council, Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission, and Rio Grande Council of Governments are working diligently with CSEC in cutting over PSAPs within their jurisdictions to be Phase 1 operational by year end. By September most database issues had been resolved and are functional, with actual call routing happening soon. These agencies are using the NCAS solution.

Howard County, Midland County, and Ector County 9-1-1 Districts report that they are anticipating full cut over to Phase 1 by the end of October. These agencies will be using both NCAS and Hybrid solutions.

Midland 9-1-1 is also in the process of upgrading their mapped ALI program. Using AviTech and CML equipment, a smooth transition during the upgrade is expected. Midland is also revamping EOC operations. They are physically moving their backup center to the newly redesigned international airport. Testing was completed in August, making the new EOC a fully functional SSAP for Midland County.

Howard County's new executive director, Tommy Sullivan, is already a part of the 9-1-1 team in West Texas. Tommy brings with him a wealth of fire-fighting knowledge and skills – and has already shown a commitment to keep Howard County in step with evolving 9-1-1 technology.

Ector County is jumping the gun on Red E. Fox education this year. During September, Red E. Fox spoke to over 1,000 2nd grade students and has another 500 scheduled for October. After appearing at the Permian Basin Fair and Oil Show event, Red E. Fox will take a short mid-winter break, and will be back in the spring for more presentations.

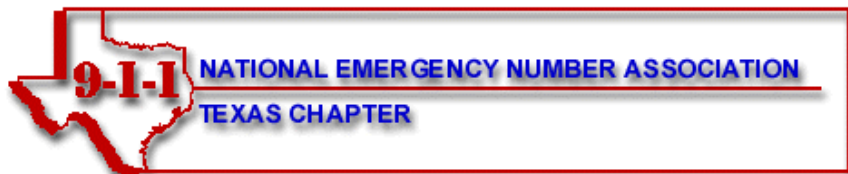
TDD/TTY training came to PBRPC in August. Many area call-takers participated in the 4

hour and 2 hour training sessions provided by CSEC on August 24. Many a thanks is extended from the Western Region to the CSEC and councils of governments for hosting these, and other training sessions, for call-takers and dispatchers.

Laura Torres, with the Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission, hosted a special event for the men and women who helped with the addressing in the region. These hard workers were treated to a dinner on August 30 and presented with gifts for their hard work and dedication during the addressing project with PBRPC.

North Region – Melissa Tutton

Please see page 4 **“Take Me Out to The Ballpark”**



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Take Me Out to The Ballpark...



On Friday, September 15th over 900 call takers and their families from 16 counties participated in the first 9-1-1 Night at The Ballpark in Arlington. As a small token of appreciation for their hard work and dedication, the 9-1-1 call takers of North Central

Texas were treated to a Rangers game against Kansas City. The baseball game rounded out this year's 9-1-1 Awareness Week. September 11th is observed as 9-1-1 Day across the nation, but in North Central Texas the entire week of September 10th-16th was used to increase awareness about 9-1-1 related issues.

Thanks to corporate sponsorships call takers from the North Central Texas Council of Governments' 9-1-1 Program, City of Dallas 9-1-1, Denco Area 9-1-1 District and the following Home Rule Cities: Ennis, Mesquite, Plano and Southwest Regional Communications attended the baseball game free of charge. Prior to the game, participants feasted on a catered picnic at the Rangers' Pavilion.

In addition to the free tickets and picnic, the call takers received baseball caps that had "TEAM 9-1-1" imprinted on them along with a gift bag containing a T-shirt, hand fan, gum, bookmark, and stress ball. The corporate sponsors who made this event a reality were ATX Technologies, CoServ, Lucent Technologies, Nortel Networks, Plant Equipment, SCC, Sprint, Southwestern Bell, Southwestern Bell Wireless, Teligent, and Tiburon.

To spread the 9-1-1 message during 9-1-1 Awareness Week billboards with pictures of Red E. Fox posing with local celebrities appeared in seven counties in and around the Dallas/Ft. Worth Metroplex. These billboards utilized the message from an award winning 9-1-1 Celebrity Campaign. This campaign was created to heighten children's awareness of 9-1-1 by utilizing local celebrities to capture children's attention and introduce and reinforce the message of knowing who to call in an emergency. In addition, 9-1-1 staff and TAG Team volunteers went to local schools, libraries, and hospitals to distribute more than 30,000 9-1-1 bookmarks and book covers.



WHAT'S GOING ON IN PUBLIC EDUCATION?

By Lamerle Lee

Hello everyone! Here is an update on what is going on around the state in public education.

School safety was the focus of a July newsletter directed to the telecommunicators throughout McLennan County 9-1-1 Emergency Assistance District. PSAPs were reminded to gather current school district phone numbers including numbers for administrators and the custodial staff. Up to date maps, floor plans and pay phone locations were other items for PSAPs to check. MCEAD hosted two training sessions in conjunction with the Heart of Texas Council of Governments: TDD and Fire Service Dispatch. The Texas Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing presented two TDD courses. The four-hour comprehensive class covered ADA compliance, deaf culture and use of the TDD, while the afternoon refresher course focused on deaf language and a quick review of the TDD unit. The Fire Service Dispatch course had good attendance and great reviews. Numerous telecommunicators could not attend this August training session, so the District will sponsor another FSD class in November. PowerPhone provided the two-day training.

The Deep East Texas COG's public education program is up and running. The DETCOG has worked with the boys and girls club, participated in various community events - such as health fairs, county fairs, block parties/family days; various churches, hospitals, chambers of commerce, and housing authorities. The DETCOG Public Education program will work in FY 2001 with public housing authorities to prepare housing/911 packets for its tenants. The packets will consist of fire safety tips, electrical wall cover plugs, key chains, 911 information cards, refrigerator magnet cards w/emergency information, and other items of importance. We look forward to working with the PHA's to ensure residents receive this valuable, life-saving information.

Things are heating up in South East Texas COG!! Two wireless carriers have turned up Phase I service in the South East Texas Regional Planning Commission area which means lots of education for the general public and call takers alike. Wireless users have been really surprised when the 9-1-1 dispatcher calls them back to let them know they have been dialing 9-1-1 over and over and over . . . The TAG Team is coming off their "summer vacation" and gearing up for the new school year. Red E. Fox has already made his way into a few schools and is in high demand for parades, Kinderventure Fun Fest and Fire Prevention Month.

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The East Texas Council of Governments will be celebrating their 2nd Annual 9-1-1 Day on September 9, 2000. This year we are having a Luau for our Telecommunicators.

City of Plano has presented 9-1-1 safety information (including Red E Fox presentations, Safety Fairs, tours, etc...) to over 8000 juveniles and over 3000 adults.

Denco has been focusing on a campaign to get citizens to display their addresses. The billboards say, "IS YOUR NUMBER UP?? Post Your 9-1-1 Address - It Could Save Your Life" They are doing a mass distribution of postcards to those who have gotten new addresses from the District office and putting information at all our rural Post Offices. Besides that they are going to enjoy their 9-1-1 Day Picnic locally and 9-1-1 Night at the Ballpark in Arlington with dispatchers from across the Metroplex.

Nortex 9-1-1 Communications District has a busy schedule with Burk Blast, Sheppard AFB Family Support, Iowa Park Whoop T Do, and KFDX Senior Focus all happening within the month of September. The district continues their Post Your Address Campaign. Residents of this area are posting their addresses in an effort to be winners in the campaign. Employees verify posting of addresses. If you are interested in further information on this project, you may contact Vereda Koch at (940) 322-5281.

Last but not least, the City of Dallas 9-1-1 System Operations just held a contest among the calltakers to create a City of Dallas 9-1-1 logo. The design will be made into a lapel pin and will be used on future educational items in the City. The winning design was submitted by Oyuki Becerra, Dallas 9-1-1/3-1-1 Communications Center. Be looking for the new label pin coming soon.

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Wireless for Telcos and Service Providers	11/29/00

You can get more information at http://www.nena9-1-1.org/NENA_Events/educationonline_courses.htm



Legislative Update



from Woody Glover

At the state level many bills are being prepared for filing in the next session, but few have surfaced at this time. The most visible, and perhaps most significant, is the outcome of the pending report from the Special Interim Committee on State Emergency Communications. This subcommittee of the Senate Committee on Economic Development, chaired by Senator Frank Madla, conducted three hearings to review several key aspects of 9-1-1 administration in Texas.

Specifically, the committee considered three issues during its hearings: 1) What is the 9-1-1 fee on the phone bill used for? 2) Is the State prepared to meet 9-1-1 future needs? and, 3) Should current State 9-1-1 participants be allowed to opt out of the State 9-1-1 System?

A draft version of the report, shared with 9-1-1 entities, indicates the committee may recommend legislative changes to clarify expenses that are deemed appropriate uses of the 9-1-1 fees. We also expect encouragement to continue to maintain the

systems technologically current and to press for implementation of wireless 9-1-1 Phase II. The committee is also considering the need for a call box program in our state, although this may not necessarily be organized through our 9-1-1 systems. Additionally, the committee sees a need for cities to not have the option of opting out of the state program, to strengthen the stability of the program.

The committee is also considering the way that Home Rule Cities operate their 9-1-1 systems, and may suggest major changes there. However, this is only a preliminary draft, and the final report from the committee could be altered significantly.

On the national scene wireless 9-1-1 implementation continues to be a priority. Deadlines for the carriers to select a method for implanting Phase II will have passed by the time you read this, although most parts of the country are still struggling to implement Phase I.

On December 8, 1999, in the Second Memorandum

Opinion and Order in Docket 94-102, the FCC eliminated cost recovery as a requirement for a carrier before being required to implement 9-1-1 service. There has been much confusion as to what this actually meant, and during a session at the APCO conference in August I proposed that question to Thomas Sugure, Bureau Chief of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau of the FCC. His response indicated that he considers it clear that the wireless carriers are to cover expenses on "their end", such as switch upgrades, and we are to cover expenses on "our end", such as PSAP upgrades, circuits from the tandem switch, etc. He indicated it was less clear at this time who should pay the expense of circuits from the wireless carriers switch to the tandem switch.

This uncertainty over the expense of these circuits was expressed in a Public Notice released by the FCC later that week. In the notice the FCC is seeking input to the question of how these expenses should be shared. Specifically, these are their questions:

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The TENA Transfer

The newsletter of the Texas Chapter of NENA is published quarterly:

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Where do you reside?

Following is a listing of the COGs served by each coordinator.

NORTH - Nortex Regional Planning Commission, North Central Council of Governments, West Central Texas Council of Governments and Texoma Council of Governments.

SOUTH - Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission, South Texas Development Council, Coastal Bend Council of Governments, Lower Rio Grande Valley Development Council and Middle Rio Grande Council of Governments.

EAST - Ark-Tex Council of Governments, East Texas Council of Governments, Deep East Texas Council of Governments, Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission, and Houston-Galveston Area Council of Governments.

WEST - Rio Grande Council of Governments, Permian Basin Regional Planning Commission and Concho Valley Council of Governments.

CENTRAL - Heart of Texas Council of Governments, Central Texas Council of Governments, Brazos Valley Council of Governments, Capital Area Planning Council and Alamo Area Council of Governments.

PANHANDLE - Panhandle Regional Planning Commission and South Plains Association of Governments.

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- Whether a clearly defined demarcation point currently exists in the 9-1-1 network that separates the responsibilities of carriers and PSAPs.
- Whether the demarcation point will vary depending on the technology chosen.
- Whether there is a rationale or precedent for a particular division of costs among carriers and PSAPs.

Comments on the above were due on September 18, with reply comments due October 11. Their decision will be released some time after that date.

***The
TENA
Transfer***

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