

DISPATCH 9-1-1 DIALOGUE

MAY 2012 SPECIAL ISSUE • NATIONAL PUBLIC-SAFETY TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK

NEWS ABOUT THE WILL COUNTY EMERGENCY TELEPHONE SYSTEM • 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved, ENP

Family Fun Day Caps TC Week of Appreciating Telecommunicators

When National Public-Safety Telecommunications Week came to a close on Saturday, April 14, Will County 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved decided to take another opportunity to say "Thank You" to each PSAP's directors, managers, supervisors, support staff and, most of all, the telecommunicators - via an email, this article and this special issue of *Dispatch Dialogue*.

"The success of emergency public safety in Will County is accomplished by the vital link you provide to our emergency responders and residents - each and every day of the year.

"We were extremely pleased that on April 14 we were able to offer the opportunity for a "Family Fun Day" (see photos on pages 4 - 5) to more than 150 of our PSAP's telecommunicators and their family members," said Figved.

"The involvement of the different PSAPs - with their activities and games - was tremendous - thanks to all the talent and spirit that exists in our 9-1-1 family! We look forward to being able to sponsor more activities to show our gratitude in the future.

"A very special acknowledgement also is deserved by some very special individuals who have demonstrated the "Best of the Best" in technical expertise, professionalism, career advocacy and outreach. I am referring to the Will County ETSB's Telecommunicator of the Year for 2012

Ashley Klco from Bolingbrook - and to those who were presented Awards of Merit at the Board's April 26 meeting, including Theresa Saracco from Joliet, Alex Szalinski of Romeoville, Jennette Turner of Lincolnway, and Cindy Sepula of Eastcom.

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Chuckles the Clown has applied some colorful paint to the face and arms of this young Family Fun Day attendee, who appears to be very pleased with the end result. There are many more Fun Day photos on pages 4 and 5.



Will County 9-1-1 Board Vice Chairman Steve Rauter, left, Board Chair Julie Ponce-Doyle, and 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved congratulate Bolingbrook's Ashley Klco, second from left, who was selected as Will County Telecommunicator of the Year for 2012 and presented with a commemorative certificate and flowers during the Board's April 26 meeting.

Bolingbrook's Ashley Klco Selected Will County TC of Year

On the heels of achieving one of her personal career goals by becoming a Certified Training Officer (CTO), Bolingbrook's Ashley Klco has been named Will County Telecommunicator of the Year for 2012.

Ashley's selection was announced by the Will County 9-1-1 Board during its April 26 meeting. In addition, the Board presented Awards of Merit to Telecommunicators Theresa Saracco (Joliet) and Alex Szalinski (Romeoville), both of whom had been nominated for Telecommunicator of the Year by their PSAPs.

Also receiving Awards of Merit were Lincolnway Telecommunicator Jennette Turner and Eastcom Telecommunicator Cindy Sepula.

Ashley Klco

A Bolingbrook telecommunicator since 2008, Ashley is considered to be someone who is "always willing to challenge the status quo and challenge herself." For example, she had an "integral" role in helping her teammates to learn and perfect their use of four completely new emergency telecommunication systems that were installed in her Bolingbrook PSAP in 2010.

Last year, after the Blizzard of 2011, she was "instrumental in putting together disaster preparedness kits," which will be used in future emergency situations, when the telecommunicators may need to stay on site overnight for several days.

In addition, as one of Bolingbrook's CTOs, Ashley has helped maintain and improve the PSAP's training standards. And she is considered by her peers to be a "go-to person" who is "always willing to lend a helping hand."

Further, Ashley has become an important part of the Village of Bolingbrook's Public Education Team," as well as the Will County 9-1-1 System's Public Education Committee, for whom she visits local schools to teach 1st graders how and when to call 9-1-1.

In conjunction with being honored as Will County Telecommunicator of the

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Telecommunicators Honored

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Year for 2012, Ashley will be able to attend the annual APCO/NENA conference in Springfield in October, all expenses paid.

Theresa Saracco



Besides receiving an Award of Merit from the 9-1-1 Board, Theresa was chosen to be Joliet Telecommunicator of the Year for 2012.

A 10-year veteran at the Joliet 9-1-1 Center, Theresa was nominated for this honor by her peers, who describe her as "knowledgeable and caring," "officer-safety oriented," and as someone who "identifies and solves problems without qualm."

Considered a role model by her peers, one of them said that "her list of qualities is only surpassed by her motivation."

According to 9-1-1 Board Chair and Joliet 9-1-1 Communications Center Director Julie

Ponce-Doyle, Theresa is "a highly intelligent and dedicated dispatcher whose nimble mind, quick fingers and rapid-fire speech are always going a mile a minute."

In addition to serving as a remote dispatcher for Joliet NASCAR events, Theresa has volunteered hundreds of hours for the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics. And she has been a Joliet TERT team member since 2004 and an Illinois-TERT member since 2010.

Alex Szalinski



Award of Merit recipient Alex Szalinski was hired by the Romeoville Police Department in 2008. Cross-trained in police/fire/EMS dispatch, he also is a CTO and, therefore, actively participates in the

PSAP's training program.

"The combination of his high ethical standards and experience enable him to be an excellent mentor to other employees," said Romeoville Communications Center Director Kim Knutsen.

Also, Alex was commended for demonstrating a strong personal commitment to public safety during the past year, for working "countless hours above and beyond what is expected of a part-time employee," for being dedicated to familiarizing himself with current 9-1-1 practices and standards, and for increasing his knowledge through training and attending seminars.

Alex is highly respected by

Romeoville's supervisory and administrative staff, as well as by his peers, "because of the courteous, patient, compassionate and professional manner in which he treats others," according to Knutsen.

In fact, "several members of the patrol staff have commented on his abilities and often inquire as to when he will be on duty again - which, in itself, shows their extreme level of confidence" in those abilities, she added.

Jennette Turner



A telecommunicator with 12 years of experience, Jennette Turner, started working at the Lincolnway PSAP in 2007.

She was nominated for the Will County 9-1-1 System's Award of Merit in order to recognize her handling of a call on March 3 from the father of an infant who "was not breathing and was turning blue," according to 9-1-1 Board Member Brad Veerman, who also is the director of the Lincolnway Public Safety Communications Center.

"In the background of that (father's) call, the hysterical mother of the infant could be heard," said Veerman, adding that, as a mother of two young boys, "it had to be a challenge for Jennette to stay focused on assisting the family."

While Frankfort EMS was enroute to the family's home, Jennette immediately started instructing the father on how to perform infant CPR and counted down with him for the compressions. As the father continued with the CPR, he indicated that the baby had started to make noise and was breathing again.

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PSAP Director's Poem 'Says It All'

The following poem was written by Hugo Costa Jr. ENP, who is director of the Mesilla Valley Regional Dispatch Authority, which is located in Las Cruces, N. M., and serves the residents of Dona Ana County.

"We think that this poem pretty much says it all," said Will County 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved. In essence, its title is:

'Not All Heroes Wear Capes!

Our Heroes Wear Headsets, They Answer the Call'

Not all Heroes wear capes!

**Those patrolling our streets by night and day,
Wear vests of Kevlar to stay safe we pray.
Protecting the public, an oath they swear,
We sleep safe at night; criminals beware.**

**Those responding to HAZMAT, explosions and fire,
Wear Scott Packs and helmets and protective attire.**

**They bravely will go where others won't dare,
The service they render, beyond any compare.**

**Those who tend to the injured, the dying, ill felt,
Wear stethoscopes, gloves and utility belts.
They bring the E.R. to the victim's bedside,
Treating and caring before the hospital ride.**

**None of these Heroes wear capes, that's a fact,
Heroes are Heroes because of the way that they act.
Some everyday Heroes are as close as your phone,
When you dial 9-1-1, you get a Hero of your own.**

**Twenty-four seven, each day of the year,
9-1-1 call-takers, dispatchers, you have their ear.
Whenever there's trouble, an immediate need,
These Heroes send Heroes your way with great speed.**

**They triage the call, keep you calm, acting quick,
9-1-1 life line to safety when in danger or sick.
They work in the background; you won't see them at all,
Our Heroes wear headsets, they answer the call!**

— (Hugo Costa Jr., 2012)

City of Joliet Proclamation Commends Telecommunicators, Communications Center

Recognizing the critical services provided by 9-1-1 dispatchers, Joliet Mayor Thomas C. Giarrante - on behalf of the Joliet City Council - proclaimed the week of April 8-14 as National Telecommunicator's Week in the City of Joliet.

The proclamation acknowledged that the Joliet Communications Center "provides continuous emergency response to [the City's] citizens and plays a vital role in the protection of human life and property in the City of Joliet."

Also, the proclamation recognized that the Joliet 9-1-1 Center's dispatchers:

- endure long shifts and frequently handle life-and-death emergencies
- set "high standards in performing their duties in a dedicated, diligent and compassionate manner"
- provide "a critical communications link between the residents and police, fire and emergency medical service providers," and
- "ensure the health and safety of our first-responders, residents, visitors and travelers in our City, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

In addition, the City of Joliet proclamation indicated that these Joliet dispatchers "are rarely visible to the public, but perform "an exceptional service that deserves praise and recognition."

On hand to thank the Joliet City Council for this proclamation (during its April 3 meeting) were 9-1-1 Board Chair and Joliet Communications Center Director Julie Ponce-Doyle, Technical Support Supervisor Patti Deffenbaugh, Shift Supervisor Zeldia Scott and LEADS Coordinator Denita Draper. ●



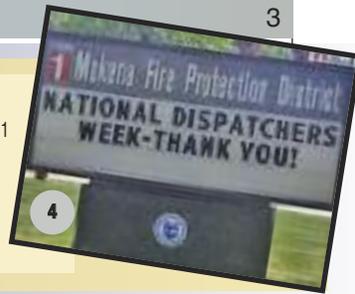
JOLIET: (1) Among those wearing the jerseys of their favorite teams on Sports Day were, from left, Joliet telecommunicators Marcy, Stephanie and Lisa, Com Center Director Julie Ponce-Doyle, and telecommunicators Darrell, Cindy, Mary, Zeldia and her grandson, Jennifer, Millie, and Denita, as well as, leaning in front, Technical Supervisor Patti Deffenbaugh. **(2)** Gathered around



Joliet's Family Fun Day duck pond game were, from left, Com Center Director Julie Ponce-Doyle, Technical Supervisor Patti Deffenbaugh, Shift Supervisor Zeldia Scott, and Telecommunicators Jamie VanByssum and Darrell Hudgens. **(3)** Nursing their fake injuries on Fake Injury Day were Joliet Telecommunicators, sitting, Andrea DeLap, and, standing, from left, Nicole Otto, Kris Wilkerson, Traci Harrison and Kacey Lauer.



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LINCOLNWAY: (4) Mokena Fire Protection District's Station 1 used their community message sign to thank 9-1-1 dispatchers, especially those at the Lincolnway PSAP.

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WESCOM: (5) Dressed for WESCOM's Hawaiian Day are, from left, Supervisor Erich Sommer, Administrative Assistant Cindy Tooley, and Executive Director Steve Rauter.

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(6) Braidwood Fire Chief Ken Heberer and Administrative Assistant Kristin Wexell delivered some pulled pork that was made for the WESCOM 9-1-1 staff.

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(7) Telecommunicators Sherrie Klima (and her daughter), left, and Briana Cavill (red shirt) check out their "thank you" soup bowls, as well as the soup that was made by Shorewood Police Chief Aaron Klima. Joining them was Administrative Assistant Donna Prince, right, also from Shorewood PD. **(8)** Telecommunicators Lauren Pucel, left, Billy Jo Noll-Brink, center, and Sarah Rauter are joined by



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Troy Fire Chief Steve Engledow, second from left, and Deputy Chief Andrew Doyle, who dropped by with some goodies, to show their appreciation for WESCOM dispatchers.



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Telecommunicators Enjoy *Thank You's*

National Public-Safety Telecommunications Week (April 8-14) was celebrated in many different ways throughout the Will County 9-1-1 System.

There were special events at all the PSAPs from Monday through Friday – some of which are pictured here.

The purpose of these special events, of course, was to say "thank you" to our telecommunicators and to let them know how much they are appreciated – in a variety of ways.

For example, the City of Joliet issued a proclamation (see story on page 2). Mokena Fire Protection District's Station 1 used a community- message sign. The Romeoville Police Department provided lunch. The Joliet Communications Center had its usual array of special days. And WESCOM had several celebrations, too.

Then the first-ever Family Fun Day provided a very successful and very appropriate way to end the week – which likely will become a tradition in future years.

So, we hope that you will enjoy the photos – and the news stories – in this special issue of *Dispatch Dialogue*, which also is our special way of saying "thank you." ●

ROMEOVILLE: (9) Communications Center Director Kim Knutsen, right, offers cookies to Telecommunicator Peggy Karkula. **(10)** Assistant Police Chief Larry Vinson gets a sandwich during visit to thank Romeoville's telecommunicators, including **(11)** Todd Baran, left, and Stacey Budz, **(12)** Romeoville Police Chief Mark Turvey and 9-1-1 Training Coordinator Joanne Burian join Kim for a lunch provided by the Romeoville Police Department. **(13)** Kim shows one of the t-shirts donated by the Romeoville Fire Department to, from left, Telecommunicators Peggy Karkula, Cindy Valencik, and Sharon Whitaker.



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WILL COUNTY 9-1-1 FAMILY FUN DAY



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(1, 2 & 4) Tossing bean bags was the Family Fun Day game of choice provided by the Lincolnway Public-Safety Communications Center. (3) Supervising the game and giving prizes to the winners were Com Center Director Brad Veerman, his wife, April, right, and Deputy Director Janet Altobella.



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(5 & 6) Many of the kids attending Fun Day enjoyed jumping around in this inflatable castle. (7) Also enjoying themselves were 9-1-1 Board Member and WESCOM Executive Director Candi Thuringer, right, 9-1-1 Board Member Steve Rauter, and her husband, Crest Hill Police Officer Joel Thuringer.

(7) However, at least one "participant" was bored or sleepy, and yawning - while being held by her proud parents: Bolingbrook Telecommunicator Jackie Holte and her husband, Troy.



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(9) More than 150 Will County 9-1-1 System family members were greeted and signed in by GIS Manager Barb Steffen, right, and Address Coordinator Mary Jo Szymanski.



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(10) Bolingbrook Telecommunicator Ashley Kico watches as Fun Day attendee tries to knock down a stack of cans with a bean bag, while (11) Steger Telecommunicators Ashlee Wathen and Andrew Egan, supervise their PSAP's Plinko game.



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(16) Helping to serve the free hot dogs during Family Fun Day were 9-1-1 Network Engineer Jim Ariagno Jr. and GIS Technician Ashley Burghardt and (18) Joliet Telecommunicator/ Shift Supervisor Zelda Scott, left, and Telecommunica-



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tor/Public Education Coordinator Denita Draper. (17) Enjoying the food were WESCOM Telecommunicator Kristen Kirby, her husband, Jason and their two kids. (19) Charlie the Clown made a lot of kids happy with his balloon creations.

WESCOM telecommunicators hosted a game of ring toss, with one participant (13) tossing from a closer distance than others. Supervising were (12) Tiffany Kruienza, and (14) Janice Savage. (15) From left are Telecommunicators Erich Sommer (and his daughter), Sherrie Klima (and her daughter), Tiffany, Janice, and Kristin Kirby.



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(1) Cell Phone Sally welcomes 9-1-1 Board Member and Bolingbrook Deputy Chief of Police, Tom Ross.

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(3 & 5) Romeoville Communications Center Director Kim Knutsen and her telecommunicators – including (2) Diane Cotter (and her daughter) – had fun helping lots of kids (3-6) haul in some loot in their “money” grab machine.

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(7 & 8) Also having fun were the many kids and (10) 9-1-1 Training Coordinator Joanne Burian, who played Eastcom’s toss-the-ball-into-the-buckets game. (7) On hand to help all of the “tossers” were, from left, Eastcom Telecommunicators Brian Wagner, Natalie Krapf, also in (8), Megan Enright, also in (9) with the balloon phone, and (10) Natalie’s daughter, Brenna Krapf.



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(11 & 12) Another popular Fun Day attraction was the duck pond game, which was operated by the Joliet Communications Center and its telecommunicators, including, from left, Jamie VanByssum, Sandy Ponce and Nicole Otto.

Having the best time of all during Family Fun Day were the kids, some of whom are pictured in (13) thru (18).



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Family Fun Day

Continued from page 1

Congratulations to each of them for jobs well done!"

Also, "as I reviewed our 9-1-1 system's first-quarter statistics for 2012, it is more than apparent that our skilled team of dedicated and professional life-savers is going to be asked to provide care and protection to those most in need, during difficult moments, more than ever before," said Figved.

"With 80,000 9-1-1 calls and 200,000 CAD incidents already logged in, we are well on a course to exceed more than 1.2 million emergency responses this year!

"On behalf of all who benefit from the quick and competent professionalism of our remarkable team of men and women, I express my gratitude and praise for all that our PSAPs and their telecommunicators/support staff do every day!

"And thanks so very much to everyone who made April 8-14 such a memorable and GREAT week!" ●

Telecommunicators Honored

Continued from page 2

Jennette stayed on the phone with the father to monitor the baby's condition and she continued giving pre-arrival instructions until the paramedics arrived.

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DISPATCH 9-1-1

Upon arriving at the home, the paramedics indicated the infant was an ashen color, but after receiving oxygen, the infant started to return to a pink color.

"Had it not been for Jennette's quick response and precise instructions, the outcome of this call may have been very different," said Veerman. "The baby may not have survived."

Veerman added that this was not the first time Jennette has been recognized for a job well done.

"She has consistently proven that she is dedicated to her work as a public-safety dispatcher and we are proud to have her here at Lincolnway," he said.

Cindy Sepula



Also receiving an Award of Merit was Telecommunicator Cindy Sepula, who was honored by Eastcom as its Telecommunicator of the Year for 2012.

Cindy was recognized for her "dedicated efforts" and her "willingness to work as a team player to do whatever it takes to get the job done."

After beginning her public-safety career at Eastcom as a part-time employee in October 2008, she "quickly jumped in with both feet" by becoming a full-time telecommunicator in March 2009, according to 9-1-1 Board Member and Eastcom Director Pam Buzan.

Cindy also was commended for having "a positive attitude" toward all aspects of her job, for "taking pride in the quality of her work," for "having a high standard of work ethic," and for her "passion to learn more (about her profession) by attending classes and continually re-

viewing policies and procedures."

In addition, Cindy was recognized for her personal integrity and honesty and for serving as a role model who is admired by her colleagues. ●

2012 Milestone Award

In an effort to recognize the professionalism and day-to-day accomplishments of the Will County Emergency Telephone System's telecommunicators, administrators and other staff members, the 9-1-1 Board decided to present Milestone Awards to those who have achieved 1, 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25+ years of service as of April 1 of each year.

The recipients of the 2012 Milestone Awards (below) were acknowledged during the Board's April 26 meeting.

1 Year

Annie Gerdzunas – Lincolnway	Joseph Alsbury – WCSO
Kristin Sterba – Lincolnway	Amanda Gruca - WCSO
Todd Baran – Romeoville	Tom Clifton – WESCOM
	April Kerkstra – WESCOM
	Jenny Music – WESCOM

5 Years

Amy Albright – Bolingbrook	Jim Cullen – Lincolnway
Krystyna Kulach – Bolingbrook	Bill Blaskey – WESCOM
Megan Enright – Eastcom	Briana Cavill – WESCOM
Sally – Lucito - Eastcom	Steve Rauter – WESCOM
Jennifer Marques – Joliet	Erich Sommer – WESCOM
	Cindy Tooley – WESCOM

10 Years

Dawn Barfield – Joliet	Peggy Karkula – Romeoville
Fran Hernandez – Joliet	Cindy Valencik Romeoville
Kacey Lauer – Joliet	Sherrie Klima – WESCOM

15 Years

Nancy Sylvestre – WESCOM

20 Years

Pam Buzan - Eastcom Dora Finley – WESCOM

25 Years +

Natalie Krapf - Eastcom	Carol Adair – WCSO
Zelda Scott – Joliet	Jeff Paris – WCSO



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