

AWARDS OF MERIT

(Continued from page 2)

Little League baseball in full swing, there were cars and people everywhere; and the officer was not able to locate anyone who had dialed 9-1-1," said Buzan.

With the help of Jason, the officer was able to locate the victim, who had collapsed in the grass, next to her car, which was not visible from the street.

"I was advised that, because of the actions of both Jason and the officer, this patient survived," said Buzan.

Jennifer Keith

Jennifer took a call on November 11, 2014, from a woman who had fallen from her wheelchair and was not able to get up.

Jennifer remained on the line with the caller until help arrived.

During that time, the caller was concerned that the door (to her residence) was not open and the Fire Department would not be able to get in.

However, Jennifer talked the caller through "scooting" on her stomach, approximately 35 feet to the door so that she could unlock it for the paramedics.

When the Fire Chief arrived on the scene, he explained to the patient how impressed he was that she was able to get herself all the way to the door.

The patient advised the Chief that she would not have been able to do it without the assistance of the 9-1-1 dispatcher (Jennifer), who was "so kind, sweet, and helpful."

TEAM AWARDS OF MERIT

The 9-1-1 Board also awarded three Team Awards of Merit during its April 23 meeting. All three of these award nominations were submitted by Eastcom Director Pam Buzan.

Eastcom Telecommunicators Kourtney Sanchez, Samantha Hanaman and Kelly Popek, and Will County 9-1-1 System Operations Manager Dale Murray.

Weather was the biggest factor when the "Peotone I57 Incident" occurred on February 20, 2015. On that day, heavy fog and light winds led to the first call regarding a multi-vehicle accident on I57.

While on the call obtaining additional information, call takers could hear crashes in the background.

That's because the accident resulted in nine accidents involving 42 vehicles, as well as two semi (truck) fires.

The incident required the use of MABAS, which led to 28 fire and EMS agencies responding to the scene, as well as state, local and county police.

The damage on I57 that day was catastrophic. Although most of this occurred in less than one hour's time, the entire incident took several hours to clean up.

"I had the pleasure of being with this crew on this

day," said Eastcom Director Pam Buzan.

"The teamwork demonstrated that afternoon brought great credit to Eastcom and brings me great pleasure to call them devoted members of Eastcom."

Eastcom Telecommunicators Emily Senesac, Natalie Krapf, Sharon Wall, and Tina Haemker.

This event (May 29, 2014) was caused by a tractor-trailer that struck a power line, causing an electrical pole to break and tip over.

During the incident, railroad crossings and traffic signals malfunctioned (resulting in a vehicle crash), power lines fell into the roadway, and a pregnant woman holding a young child received a severe electrical shock.

The team worked together to notify the appropriate agencies – fire departments, EMA, ComEd, mutual aid companies, etc.

South Chicago Heights Police Chief Bill Joyce states it best in his letter of recognition:

"Through the teamwork of Eastcom (and the first responders), the emergency never became a disaster."

Eastcom Telecommunicators Emily Senesac, Natalie Krapf, Amanda Rohwedder and Cindy Sepula.

This incident was a structure fire affecting multiple (48) apartment units, in the middle of the night (January 30, 2015).

All Eastcom fire agencies were dispatched and responded to the incident. Also, MABAS was utilized and the telecommunicators had to notify village officials, the building's owner, ComEd, NICOR, and the Red Cross.

In addition, the telecommunicators called a company to board up

and thereby secure the damaged apartments; and they arranged for a Pace bus that was used for warming during the incident – all while tending to their regular duties and ongoing calls.

This incident was of such magnitude that no one person could have handled it alone.

"It is obvious by the outcome, and how pleased South Chicago Heights Fire Chief Larry Nardoni was, that this group of individuals worked as a team and did a great job," said Eastcom Director Pam Buzan. ●

Below, from left: Eastcom Telecommunicators Amanda Rohwedder, Cindy Sepula, Natalie Krapf, and Emily Senesac received a Team Award of Merit for their handling of the apartment fire incident. Natalie and Emily also received another Team Award of Merit (along with Telecommunicators Sharon Wall and Tina Haemker, who are not pictured) for their exemplary teamwork during the tractor-trailer/power-line incident.



National 9-1-1 Education Month

Sponsored by NENA, APCO and The 9-1-1 Institute, National 9-1-1 Education Month was celebrated in April, when this informational display was set up in the County Office Building by Will County 9-1-1 Public Education Coordinator Caryn DeMarco.

Will County Emergency

Telephone System

2561 W. Division St., Suite 101

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2015 TRAINING SCHEDULE

For more information or to enroll in any of the following courses, contact the 9-1-1 Training Coordinator at 1-815-725-9610 or go to the Will County 9-1-1 website – www.willcounty9-1-1.com

JUNE		
1	CPR/Flipchart Review**	New Lenox
10	PowerPhone – Rewind	Berwyn
11	PowerPhone – 9-1-1 Supervision	Berwyn
JULY		
14	First Contact 9-1-1 – Dispatcher Refresher Training	Grayslake
15	First Contact 9-1-1 – Active Shooter Incidents	Grayslake
16	First Contact 9-1-1 – Dispatcher Refresher Training	Grayslake
AUGUST		
4	CPR/Flipchart Review**	Frankfort
SEPTEMBER		
14-15	Success Communications – Leadership II	Elgin
14-18	EMD – Certification Course**	Joliet
18	PowerPhone – Rewind	Matteson
OCTOBER		
21	Power Phone – 9-1-1 Supervision	Berwyn
26	CPR/Flipchart Review**	Plainfield
NOVEMBER		
13	PowerPhone – Domestic Violence	Matteson
16-17	Success Communications – Leadership III	Elgin
16-20	EMD – Certification Course**	Joliet
30-Dec 4	NENA – Center Manager Certification	Arlington Hts.
DECEMBER		
1	CPR/Flipchart Review**	New Lenox

** Counts toward EMD CE

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2015 MILESTONE AWARDS

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 presents 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 2015 Milestone Awards (below) were acknowledged during the Board's April 23 meeting.

1 Year

Jason Vasek – Eastcom
Emily Senesac – Eastcom
Elizabeth Patterson – Joliet
Eileen Allen

– Will County Sheriff
Megan Anderson

– Will County Sheriff
Katherine Nelson

– Will County Sheriff
Jayme Slucki

– Will County Sheriff
Patricia Chudy – WESCOM

5 Years

Angie Trevillian – Romeoville
Jacob Gloodt – WESCOM

Joe Trevillian – WESCOM

10 Years

Brian Wagner – Eastcom
Tanya Halford – Joliet
Kim Pasciak – Joliet
Andrea Tatroe – Joliet
Kandi Myers – Lincolnway

15 Years

Andrea DeLap – Joliet
Adela Formentini – Lincolnway
Angela Gurney – WESCOM

20 Years

Marcy Cardenas – Joliet

25 Years or more

Patti Deffenbaugh (30) – Joliet
Donna Jahn (25) – Romeoville



9-1-1 Board Members Steve Rauter (WESCOM's Executive Director) and Julie Ponce-Doyle (Joliet Comm Center Director), right, congratulate Joliet Alarm Coordinator Marcy Cardenas as she celebrates her 20-year-of-service Milestone during the Board's April 23 meeting.

DISPATCH 9-1-1 DIALOGUE

SPECIAL 2015 TELECOMMUNICATOR RECOGNITION ISSUE

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

Eastcom's Jennifer Keith Will County Telecommunicator of Year for 2015

2015 already has been a great year for Eastcom's Jennifer Keith.

A few days after giving birth to her first child (a boy), she was named Will County Telecommunicator of the Year and received an Award of Merit (see story on page 5) during the 9-1-1 Board's April 23 meeting. Also recognized at that meeting were two other telecommunicators who were nominated for TC of the Year: Alex Szalinski (Romeoville) and Kyle Parker (Joliet).

Jennifer Keith

Jennifer began her career with Eastcom in 2012.

"She trained on our busiest shift, and she graduated from trainee to full-time telecommunicator in record fashion – in half the time it would normally take," said Eastcom Director Pam Buzan, who nominated her, along with Jennifer's supervisors.

"Jennifer takes full advantage of all the training opportunities and conferences that she is able to attend; and she is currently working on becoming the Eastcom EMD coordinator," said Buzan. "She is a go-getter who volunteers every chance she gets."

The first to volunteer for everything, even during her time off, "she has not missed a public education opportunity or an Eastcom-sponsored event," added Buzan. In other words, "we can always count on her."

The recipient of several commendations for her work at Eastcom, Jennifer "excels at what she does, is always prepared, and never has a negative attitude," according to her nominating letter.

Also, Jennifer was commended for the "outstanding" way she handles all of her 9-1-1 calls.



Eastcom's Jennifer Keith, left, and Will County 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved happily listen as Eastcom Director Pam Buzan announces Jennifer's selection as Will County Telecommunicator of the Year for 2015 during the 9-1-1 Board's meeting on April 23.

"She knows when to be empathetic, how to take control, and is always professional," said Buzan, who credits her call-taking skills to her organizational ability and attention to detail.

"Jennifer is truly an asset to Eastcom," said Buzan.

For example, when P1 was installed in November, many Eastcom TCs "became frustrated and defeated," but not Jennifer. Instead (even though she had not attended 'train the trainer' and was not a CAD trainer), she helped each and every one of them.

"Jennifer assists all of her co-workers in all aspects – whether it be MABAS, LEADS, radio, CAD, etc."

She jumps right in to assist and if she doesn't know the answer, she knows where to go to find it" and does so.

"Jennifer's performance exemplifies the professionalism and dedication that Eastcom strives to achieve," said Buzan. "She is impressive; she goes above and beyond what is expected of her."

In other words, "she is a great example of the qualities that Eastcom values."

NOTE: Jennifer and her husband, Joey, are new parents. Their first child, a son, was born on April 15. Congrats.

Alex Szalinski

Alex has been an "invaluable member" of the Romeoville PSAP since 2008, according to its director, Kim Knutsen.

"Well-respected and liked by all," she said, he was nominated for Will County TC (Continued on page 2)

TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK

During National Public-Safety Telecommunications Week, Shorewood Police Chief Aaron Klima visited the WESCOM Communications Center and showed his appreciation for the dispatchers' good work by personally baking them a few dozen chocolate chip cookies – from scratch. (More TC Week photos on pages 3 and 4)



TC of Year Nominees

(Continued from page 1)



Alex Szalinski

of the Year "because of his dedication to public safety, dependability, and never-ending persistence and desire to work toward being the 'BEST of the BEST.'"

"Alex demonstrates a positive attitude toward the public, response-agency personnel and management," Knutsen said. He is "courteous, helpful and business-like ...in all radio, telephone and

personal contact." Alex "embodies the essence of professionalism and what it means," she added. His "personal and professional conduct exhibits unimpeachable moral character, emotional stability, integrity and dependability."

Further, he is "a calming influence on his peers and he provides trustworthy counsel to them when they have questions - both professional and personal," Knutsen said.

"Over the past year, Alex willingly agreed to tackle two significant projects," according to Knutsen.

"In addition to his core telecommunicator responsibilities and duties, Alex serves as a Communications Training Officer (CTO)," she said. [As such,] "he has taken an active role revising and updating the CTO program/manual and has received numerous accolades from trainees, who have noted his "compassion and willingness to share his knowledge and experiences."

"The combination of his high ethical standards and experience enable him to be an excellent mentor to new employees. He is continuously working toward making the [CTO] program more efficient and he strives to ensure [that] the trainees are provided with the best training available."

In addition, "as a result of the new CAD implementation, Alex...assumed the role of "Train the Trainer," which in itself was a significant undertaking. He spent countless hours with his peers going through the CAD manual prior to the actual training classes provided by 9-1-1

"He spent a significant amount of time diligently reviewing and verifying data accuracy. He reviewed all of the run cards and documented instances in which data needed to be corrected and revised. He maintained accurate records to open help desk tickets and track resolutions. [Then] once resolutions were defined, he disseminated [them] to his peers and provided additional training, as needed."

"He also developed a supplemental training guide, which was shared" with all of the Will County 9-1-1 System PSAPs.

"I can't speak highly enough of the work Alex does or the person he is," said Knutsen. "He is respected and held in [the] highest esteem by his peers, his supervisors, and the police and fire personnel he works with."

"I get a chance to observe him interacting with the public on a daily basis. The best way I can summarize Alex's impact is this:

"His commitment to excellence increases the

level of service provided by his peers; it increases the level of service provided by the law enforcement and fire department he works with; and his interaction with the public causes them to have an elevated regard for the field of public-safety communications."



Kyle Parker

Kyle Parker

Kyle was recognized as Joliet's Telecommunicator of the Year for 2015 during a special event on April 17.

When she congratulated Kyle that day, Joliet Communications Center Director Julie Ponce-Doyle commented that "the very best employees to have in a 9-1-1 Center are the ones who step up when the chips are down."

She added that "when it's crunch time, they stay calm, cool, and collected, but they can hit the hyper-drive level in a heartbeat."

She said that one of those "very best" employees is "18-year veteran Public-Safety Dispatcher Kyle Parker, [who] has been stepping up on a regular basis."

For example, there was that time at work when a fellow dispatcher began choking. "As soon as Kyle saw what was happening, he jumped up from his console and successfully performed the Heimlich maneuver," Ponce-Doyle said. "The employee he assisted credits him with saving her life."

NOTE: Kyle received both a Life-Saving Award and an EMS Outstanding Call Award for his actions on that day.

As the senior dispatcher on the afternoon shift, Kyle steps up into the role of supervisor whenever the supervisor is absent. For example, he has served as acting supervisor for a significant portion of the past year, due to the unavoidable, prolonged absences of the shift supervisor.

"It is difficult to continually transition back and forth between dispatcher and supervisor; but Kyle has handled the situation admirably, stepping up to the role with professionalism and dedication," said Ponce-Doyle. "He has readily handled this responsibility, and has been a positive influence on those who work with him."

"Afternoons are by far our busiest shift, with the heaviest workload of calls, some of which are downright harrowing," she added. "Just last month, Kyle was the acting supervisor during a particularly harrowing shift that involved two major incidents."

"The first was a report of a female shot in the forehead. This call involved suspect information and multiple, moving involved-parties."

While the afternoon shift (with Kyle in the supervisor role) was in the middle of handling this first incident (which became a homicide) with efficiency and team precision, the second major incident happened.

"This second incident began as a domestic battery with the suspect reportedly having numerous guns in the residence. Kyle was relieving that particular dispatcher for a break just as the officers on the scene of this domestic [inci-

dent] advised [that] they had an armed subject (he was brandishing two assault rifles)."

This second call became "an officer-involved shooting incident, wherein two officers both shot the threatening subject," according to Ponce-Doyle.

"Kyle stepped up. Not only did he handle the dispatching role, he [also] handled the supervisory role [that was] necessary during the event."

Two officers on this call personally came up to the 9-1-1 Center to thank Kyle, acknowledging that his dispatching played a significant role in keeping them safe during a perilous situation.

"But Kyle's role wasn't quite done yet," said Ponce-Doyle. "He exhibited solid leadership skills when, the next day, he wrote up a recommendation for a team award for their exceptional work on those two calls."

"Kyle continues to push himself to learn, to evolve, and to better himself, as a dispatcher and as the acting supervisor he often is," said Ponce-Doyle, when acknowledging him as Joliet Telecommunicator of the Year for 2015 and as the PSAP's nominee for Will County Telecommunicator of the Year. ●

AWARDS OF MERIT

During its April 23 meeting, the Will County 9-1-1 Board announced that Eastcom Telecommunicators Kelly Popek, Jason Vasek, and Jennifer Keith had earned Individual Awards of Merit.

Kelly Popek

On July 9, 2014, Kelly received a 9-1-1 call from an 11-year-old boy who told her that his grandma was "having a heart attack or something" and was "turning purple, vomiting, and gurgling."

The child was at times very frantic, but Kelly was able to calm him. Also, she was able to obtain the location of the incident and she provided relay EMD, as well as pre-arrival CPR instruction to the child and his mother, until paramedics arrived on the scene.

"I was advised that, because of Kelly's (and the caller's) actions, that individual (the grandma) survived," said Eastcom Communications Center Director Pam Buzan.

In the words of a member of the patient's family, "I am so thankful to the 9-1-1 dispatcher, who told my nephew what to do. They saved her life!!"

Jason Vasek

On May 19, 2014, Jason received a wireless 9-1-1 call from a distressed individual who only whispered into the phone, "Crete Elementary baseball field."

The caller stopped talking, but Jason remained on the open line while a police officer attempted to locate the caller.

"As you can imagine, with



Jason Vasek

(Continued on page 5)

WESCOM

Right: Sporting mustaches during TC Week are, from left, WESCOM Telecommunicators Lauren Pucel, Sheila Kuehni, Kelli Scholp and Pam Bass, who apparently shaved off her mustache.

Oval: From left are WESCOM Telecommunicators Jill Fasano, Krystyna Komperda, Lauren Pucel and Tina Boudreau.

Below: Will County Administrative Assistant Caryn DeMarco, fifth from right, stopped at WESCOM to thank its telecommunicators and to give them TC Week sweatshirts. She is surrounded by, from left, WESCOM Telecommunicators David Brichacek, Joe Trevillian, Brandon Johnson, Kristin Kirby, Mary Jo Lewandowski, Jessica Murillo, Dina Panos, Marie Johnson and Pam Bass.



Will County 9-1-1 & First Responders Show Appreciation to Dispatchers

National Public Safety Telecommunications Week was celebrated in many different ways in Will County.

In all cases, however, the objective was to show Will County 9-1-1 System telecommunicators how much they are appreciated.

For example, the Administrative staff visited each PSAP to say thank you and to leave a zippered pullover sweatshirt for each dispatcher.

At the Joliet Communications Center, Joliet Police Chief Brian Benton, Deputy Police Chief Brian Dupuis, Joliet Fire Chief Joe Formhals, and Joliet City Manager Jim Hock, stopped by to congratulate Joliet Telecommunicator of the Year Kyle Parker and to say thank you to all of the PSAP's dispatchers.

Also, Chief Benton presented the PSAP with artwork that depicts all the different types of 9-1-1 calls handled by dispatchers (see photo below).

At WESCOM, which dispatches for 21 Western Will County police and fire agencies, most of these first responders found various ways to express their appreciation to the telecommunicators.

In addition to Shorewood Police Chief Aaron Klima's chocolate chip cookies (see photo on page 1), Braidwood Fire Chief Ken Heberer made the TCs pulled pork with all the fixings, and Channahon Fire Chief John Petrakis brought them a homemade cake baked by Execu-

tive Fire Support Manager Jacque McLaughlin. Also, Plainfield Fire Chief David Riddle arranged for a massage therapist to give neck and shoulder massages to all the dispatchers (including the midnight shift).

Further, WESCOM telecommunicators received pizzas from the Lockport Police Department and Public Safety Director Tom Ross of the Bolingbrook Police Department; catering by Chipotle from the Lockport Fire Department; candy from the Channahon Police Department and Elwood Fire Chief Bill Offerman; and a basket of fruit and snacks from Minooka Fire Chief Al Yancey, Jr.

WESCOM TCs also received sandwiches, pasta salads, fruit and veggies from the Wilmington Fire Department; cakes from the Plainfield Police Department; money for food from the Northwest Homer Fire and Ambulance Protection District; blankets from the Shorewood Police Department; and t-shirts from Lifestar.

At the Lincolnway Public Safety Communications Center, Mokena Police Chief Steve Vaccaro stopped by to give the TCs homemade sandwiches; New Lenox Police Chief Bob Sterba sent pizza for all the shifts; and New Lenox Fire Chief Steve Engledow and Public Education Coordinator Marisa Schrieber presented the TCs with coffee mugs and coasters.

In addition, Mokena Fire

Chief Howard Stephens gave the Lincolnway TCs an Edible Arrangement of fruit; and the Lincolnway Public Safety Communications Center Executive Board and the administration provided sandwiches, chips, pop and a cake.

At Eastcom, Park Forest Fire Chief Bruce Ziegler brought the TCs a large snack basket (of both guilty and healthy pleasures); University Park Fire Chief Chuck Exner brought a large fruit basket, which included cookies, nuts, keurig cups, bread sticks, candy and more; and Crete Police Chief James Paoletti bought Italian sub sandwiches and side salads for each shift.

And at Romeoville, Police Chief Mark Turvey said thank-you by picking up the dinner tab for each shift.

"Considering the large volume of 9-1-1 calls handled professionally by our PSAPs, all of these tokens of appreciation are well-deserved," said Will County 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved.

"TC Week serves as a reminder that our telecommunicators are important members of a team that helps ensure public safety." ●

Will County Sheriff

Below: Standing, from left, are Will County Sheriff's Department Telecommunicators Eileen Allen, Megan Anderson, Jayme Slucki, and Carolyn Pate. Sitting is Telecommunicator Juan Villagrana.



Joliet

Far left: Joliet Telecommunicator of the Year Kyle Parker and his two sons are surrounded by his peers.

Left: Joliet Communications Center Director Julie Ponce-Doyle unwraps 9-1-1 artwork presented by Joliet Police Chief Brian Benton. The artwork recognizes many of the emergency situations handled by telecommunicators in response to 9-1-1 calls.

Below left: Will County 9-1-1 Training/CAD Coordinator Joanne Burian, right, and Assistant Records Manager Teri DeSonia visited Joliet and other PSAPs to pass out "thank-you" sweatshirts.

Below right: Will County 9-1-1 Training/CAD Coordinator Joanne Burian, left, gives TC Week sweatshirt to Joliet Telecommunicator Chris Grutzius.

