

# DISPATCH 9-1-1 DIALOGUE

WINTER 2010-11

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

## Merry Christmas To All

With sincere appreciation for your confidence and good will during the past year, we would like to share our best wishes for a Very Merry Christmas Holiday Season and a Prosperous and Safe New Year in 2011 - filled with good health and many opportunities for success.

Steve, Caryn, Joanne, Kim, Dave, Dale, Jim, Wes, Barb, Mary Jo, the Dispatch Dialogue staff (Owen and Susan), and the members of the Will County 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone System Board

## Command Center Discussion Tabled

A special informational meeting on the proposed Communications and Command Center was held on September 23, followed by some discussion of the facility and its site on Caton Farm Road during the 9-1-1 Board's meeting on October 28. However, further consideration of the multi-functional building and its site was tabled until the Board's February 24, 2011, session.

During the special meeting on September 23, pertinent events of the previous eight months were reviewed, along with the proposed building concept, PSAP populations and current 9-1-1 Board capital projects and reserves.

Similar discussions also took place during the 9-1-1 Board's October 28 meeting, when Chief Administrator Steve Figved restated his opinion that the Command Center should be a hardened facility, since Will County has the second largest 9-1-1 system in Illinois. ●

## Steve Rauter Illinois APCO's Communications Director of Year

WESCOM Executive Director and 9-1-1 Board Member Steve Rauter has been honored as Illinois APCO's Communications Director of the Year for 2010.



Steve Rauter, right, accepts APCO Director of the Year Award.

Rauter was presented the award in October during APCO's annual conference in Springfield. In addition, his recognition was acknowledged by the Will County 9-1-1 Board at its October 28 meeting.

Rauter was nominated for the APCO award by Channahon Fire Chief Dave Riddle, who also chairs the WESCOM Chief's Operating Committee.

WESCOM provides services for 12 fire districts, seven police agencies and one emergency management agency in western Will County.

Rauter's nomination indicated that he has overseen the recent addition of five more agencies to WESCOM and "the resulting challenges that come with this expansion."

Chief Riddle added that WESCOM now serves a population of approximately 375,000 permanent residents, provides protection for approximately 400 square miles, and has a staff of more than 30 telecommunications and other personnel.

WESCOM's executive director for four years, Rauter joined the PSAP at a critical point in its evolution.

"We were in the midst of moving our then 13-agency PSAP operations from the old Plainfield Police Department into the new Plainfield Law

*Continued on page 2*



Steve Rauter and his APCO Communications Director of Year Award.

## 2010 Users Conference



For some, the highlight of the Will County 9-1-1 System's annual Users Conference (on September 14) may have been the gut-wrenching story of Denise Amber Lee - whose abduction and murder in Florida led to the adoption of statewide training and certification standards for dispatchers.

For others, the conference highlight may have been one or more of the 9-1-1 Administrative staff's presentations on the various products and services

*Continued on page 4*

Training Coordinator Joanne Burian (left) leads discussion of CAD, ATM and PMDC during the 2010 Users Conference. (See more of story and photos on pages 4 and 5.)

## Steve Rauter Director of Year

(Continued from page 1)

Enforcement Center," said Chief Riddle.

"These transitions are complex enough without the addition of a new director who needs to ramp up to full-speed in hours or days instead of weeks and months. [So, Steve's] take-charge approach, coupled with his technical background, was invaluable during our move. His deft handling of all of these critical events was professional and complete as he saw our center move, almost seamlessly, into our new facility."

In addition, Chief Riddle indicated that Rauter "contributed significantly to our labor negotiation process...and to this day has established and maintained a very good working relationship with his entire staff."

Further, Rauter has been able to keep the WESCOM Chief's Operating Committee (which meets monthly) "moving forward by being an integral part in our first strategic planning efforts and...play[ing] a vital role in the process, continually emphasizing partnerships and minimizing differences," according to Chief Riddle's nomination.

"We have had a living, working strategic-planning document in place for a few years now and continue making progress in its implementation."

Rauter also was credited with introducing and modifying new hiring practices that have been successful strategies in other PSAPs around the region and country.

"Consequently, our churn rate has been significantly reduced and our retention rate has obviously improved," said Chief Riddle. "Steve has established the foundations for our telecommunicators to consider their positions as careers now, compared to just jobs, as they may have in the past. He's promoted three of our outstanding telecommunicators to supervisory positions, providing a pathway for advancement within our organization. [And he] remains a powerful advocate for his staff.

"We believe we're all better for these improved relationships," Chief Riddle added.

Rauter "is always available," he said. "I suppose that's what we expect, but beyond his availability, he proactively keeps staff and our Board engaged in all aspects of the operations. His emails and phone calls could come at any time; and I mean anytime. He is on top of his operations like few I've experienced in my 37-year fire-service career."

Also, since 2006 Rauter has been a member of the Will County 9-1-1 ETSB and its Technical Committee, which help drive the course of emergency communications in Will County.

Rauter is "one of the best equipped PSAP directors you'll encounter," according to Chief Riddle's nomination. "The skills he brings to this position would be exceptional if taken singularly; our benefit is that he brings a total package to our operation." ●

## 9-1-1 Board Attorney David Ruttle Retires

After 14 years as the Will County Emergency Telephone System's attorney, David Ruttle has retired.

Now representing the 9-1-1 Board is attorney Nick Sakellariou, who will formally attend his first meeting on February 24.

Both Ruttle and Sakellariou are members of the law firm, McKeown, Fitzgerald, Zollner, Buck, Hutchison & Ruttle, which has offices in Joliet and Frankfort.

Born in Ontario, Canada, and raised in Joliet, Ruttle is a graduate of DePauw University in Greencastle, Ind., and received his Juris Doctorate from the University of Texas in Austin.

In 1971, he started his law career as an associate with the McKeown firm, where he stayed for the next 39 years - until retiring as a senior partner.

Ruttle was a specialist in community college law, local government law, and corporate law. However, he also advised clients with regard to governance, employment, finance, land use, annexations, zoning, commercial leases, and other transactions.

In April 2010, Ruttle was recognized by Lewis University with the De La Salle Award, which is presented each year to individuals who provide extraordinary service and leadership for the benefit of the community and region.

Ruttle resides in Joliet with his wife, Beverly. They have four children and five grandchildren.

Sakellariou has been a member of the McKeown law firm since 2003. A graduate of the University of Illinois (B.S. in electrical engineering in 1968) and the DePaul University College of Law (1974), he began his legal career in '74 as an assistant state's attorney in the Will County State's Attorney's Office.

Sakellariou then joined the City of Joliet's Legal Department in 1978 and served as the city's corporation counsel for eight years. Thereafter, he continued to practice municipal law, school law and labor and employment law for a Chicago law firm that opened a Joliet office, which he managed until 2003.

At the present time, Sakellariou represents units of local government, including municipalities, counties, park districts, community colleges and school districts.

He and his wife, Darla, live in Plainfield. ●



Top photo: New Will County 9-1-1 System Attorney Nick Sakellariou (left) and his retired predecessor, David Ruttle. Bottom: 9-1-1 Board Chairperson Julie Ponce-Doyle thanks David Ruttle for his 14 years as the Board's attorney.

## Matt Ryan Will Be Missed

Although 9-1-1 Board Member Matt Ryan may have lost his battle with cancer on September 13, he will always be remembered as a big winner by his family, friends, and co-workers.

Ryan, who was the Chief of Staff for Will County Executive Larry Walsh, died of complications from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma at the age of 53.

Born and raised in Alton, Ryan was a lifelong Democrat who was widely known as a political strategist and lobbyist. As such, he helped manage the campaigns of many candidates for federal, state and local offices in Illinois.

For example, he worked with and for former White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel, former U.S. Senator Alan Dixon, and former Illinois Senate President Philip Rock.

In addition, Ryan was known as a storyteller who delighted his friends with tales from the campaign trails.

Ryan became Walsh's Chief of Staff in 2004 and was appointed a member of the Will County 9-1-1 Board in 2005.

He is survived by his wife, Angela Welsh Ryan; his parents, Robert and Jane Ryan; and his sisters, Susan Martin and Kathleen Lang. ●



Matt Ryan

## MaryBett Marino, Kim Smyth Celebrate 20 Years at Joliet

Joliet Telecommunicators MaryBett Marino and Kim Smyth celebrated 20 years of service as public-safety professionals during a "20 Times 2" surprise party on November 5.

"Anyone staying in one job for 20 years is an endangered species – particularly so in a 9-1-1 Center environment," said Joliet Communications Director Julie Ponce-Doyle.

During the celebration, presentations were made by Ponce-Doyle, Joliet Police Commander Brian Benton, Joliet Fire Chiefs Ray Randich and Brian Lucca, and Will County 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved.

Marino and Smyth received flowers, certificates of appreciation, Chief's medallions, 20-year pins – and a slice or two of cake.

According to Marino, she remembers being with a high-school friend and listening to (police) scanner chatter on a daily basis.

"They had me at '10-4,' but it was fluky that I ended up being a dispatcher," she said.

"As a new person, I just missed being assigned to the 'relief shift' rotation, but landed on a permanent shift, where I worked with well-seasoned dispatchers – at a center with MABAS, 9-1-1 and EMD all on the horizon.

"I was fortunate to be a CTO when training grew exponentially with SOPs, the documentation of trainees, and shadow training," Marino said.

"I've found this to be a rewarding career; and, even after 20 years, it's still a challenge. In high school, I didn't imagine doing all that we do, yet I am doing what I dreamed of."

Smyth indicated that her career started unexpectedly in 1987 when Officer Zigler brought her an application for a dispatcher position in the Joliet Junior College Police Department.

"I had no idea what the job was, but I guess I fit the criteria (since) I was loud and clear throughout the school halls," Smyth said.

She was a student at JJC at the time, but in three years she put her school plans on hold and applied for a dispatching position with the Joliet Police Department.

"Twenty years later, I am still here and I still LOVE my job," said Smyth, adding that "my co-workers are my best friends."

In her off time, she enjoys spending time with her husband (who she met at the Joliet Police Department) and their five children. ●



Joliet Telecommunicators Kim Smyth, left, and MaryBett Marino enjoy flowers presented during surprise party celebrating their 20 years of service.



### 9-1-1 Board

## Chief Maher Retires; Nick Palmer Appointed

During its October 28 meeting, the 9-1-1 Board recognized Patrick Maher, Chief Deputy of the Will County Sheriff's Department's Enforcement Division, who retired November 30 after 29 years with the Sheriff's Department and more than two years on the 9-1-1 Board.

Also, Nick Palmer, currently Acting Chief of Staff for the County Executive's Office, was welcomed to the 9-1-1 Board as that office's representative. He was sworn in by County Clerk Nancy Schultz Voots.

After graduating from Western Illinois University with a B.S. degree in law enforcement administration in 1979, Chief Maher started his career with the Sheriff's Department as a patrol deputy two years later.

He was promoted to Sergeant in 1989, Lieutenant in 1999, Deputy Chief in 2002 and Chief Deputy in 2007.

During Chief Maher's retirement years, he will be keeping in shape by officiating local middle-school and high-school basketball games.

A resident of Elwood, he also is looking forward to seeing more of the U.S. (traveling) with his wife, Chris. Married 25 years, they have two adult children (a daughter, 21 and a son, 18).

Palmer was hired as Deputy Chief of Staff in the County Executive's Office in 2004. Previously, he worked a year as special assistant to the director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. And he spent more than two

years on the staff of the Illinois Senate.

Born and raised in Joliet, Palmer is a graduate of Joliet Central High School. He then received a B.A. degree in political science from Loyola University (Chicago) in 1997.

He and his wife, Laura, live in Bolingbrook with their four children. ●

Top photo: New 9-1-1 Board Member Nick Palmer is sworn in by Will County Clerk Nancy Schultz Voots.  
Bottom: Retired Chief Deputy Patrick Maher

### Three Commended

The 9-1-1 Board also recognized two Will County employees and a representative of AT&T during its October 28 meeting: Terri King of the Will County Communications Department, Patricia Killinger of the Will County Highway Department, and Kliff Ballard of AT&T's Resolution Center.

Each was commended for helping to upgrade the Sheriff's PSAP's telecommunications system by replacing underground copper wiring with a glass-fiber optics network that can transmit data at least 1,000 times faster. "Due to the excellent work and perseverance of these three people, the dispatch center's serious, long-term connectivity problems (e.g., echoing, ghosting, sound quality) were completely eliminated," according to 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved. "The Sheriff's dispatchers and end-users are very happy with this result." ●



From left, Terri King, Kliff Ballard, and Patricia Killinger

*(Continued from page 1)*

they provide to dispatchers, public-safety agencies, and other end-users.

However, regardless of which seminar or presentation may have been most memorable, it is likely that all of the conference's 80 participants learned some things they didn't know at the beginning of the day.

"We hope that everyone found the conference both informative and practical," said 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved. "Our goal was to focus on training and technology that is related to the day-to-day operations of Will County Emergency Telephone System PSAPs and user agencies."

In addition to the various topics covered in the conference seminars, many attendees took advantage of the opportunity to ask questions and exchange ideas with their peers.

There also was an opportunity to brush up on one's golf swing - during a lunch-hour competition for both pros and experienced duffers.

Vendors displaying products and services at the conference included Federal Signal/Codespear, Motorola, Zetron, NICE, Group One, US Digital Designs, and Zoll. ●



*Above: Welcoming conference participants at the check-in table were members of the 9-1-1 administrative team, from left, Barb Steffen, Mary Jo Szymanski (hidden), Dale Murray (in background), Joanne Burian, Kim Hartley, Wes Whitaker and Caryn DeMarco. Right: Nathan Lee discusses the abduction and tragic death of his wife, Denise Amber Lee, in Florida.*



*Left: 9-1-1 Chief Administrator Steve Figved, far right, joins Nathan and Mark Lee as they answer questions about the Denise Amber Lee Foundation and its objectives.*



*Right: Eastcom PSAP Director Pam Buzan gets serious about her back-swing as she competes in the video golf game.*



*Left: Liz Cline, from the Joliet Police Records Department, hopes that her follow-through is enough to get her to the "green." Left below: Winners of the golf competition were Joliet Telecommunicator Darrell Hudgens and Steger PSAP Supervisor Mary Jo Seehausen.*



**2010 Users Conference**



*Above: 9-1-1 Network Engineer Jim Ariagno, Jr., leads discussion of Codespear training. Left: Listening intently during a conference seminar are, from left, 9-1-1 Board Member Candi Thuringer (foreground), WESCOM Telecommunicator Kristin Kirby, 9-1-1 System Analyst Kim Hartley, Sgt. Patrick Rossi of the Steger Police Department, and WESCOM Telecommunicator Briana Cavill. Below: 9-1-1 Administrative Assistant Caryn DeMarco outlines public education activities and plans.*

*Right: 9-1-1 System Analyst Kim Hartley provides records overview (LRMS/FRMS/Firehouse/Tablet PCR/Hummingbird) to conference attendees.*



*Above: Conference participants break for lunch. Right and below: Joliet Telecommunicators Lisa Yanchick (left) and Virginia Bradley are focused on seminar presentation, as is the classroom of 9-1-1 users below.*



*Above: 9-1-1 Network Systems Manager Dale Murray discusses Viper 2 training.*

## 2011 TRAINING SCHEDULE

For more information or to enroll in any of the following courses, contact 9-1-1 Training Coordinator Joanne Burian at 1-815-725-9610 or go to the Will County 9-1-1 website - [www.willcounty9-1-1.com](http://www.willcounty9-1-1.com)

### JANUARY

19-20	SLEA - Effective Supervision	Glen Ellyn
20	PowerPhone - Active Shooting Response**	Romeoville
26	SLEA - Enhanced Listening Skills	Glen Ellyn
31	SLEA - Solutions to Supervision & Mgmt Issues	Glen Ellyn

### FEBRUARY

2	Kebcor - Hostage Negotiations/Suicide Intervention	Joliet
7-9	CAD New-Hire Training	Joliet
11	SLEA - Mentoring for Development	Glen Ellyn
15-16	Success Communications - Leadership II	Bolingbrook
21-25	EMD Certification Training	Frankfort

### MARCH

17	CPR Recertification and Flipchart Review**	Joliet
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### APRIL

4-6	CAD New-Hire Training	Joliet
8	Success Communications - Nix the Negativity	Joliet

### MAY

6	Success Communications - Child Callers	Bolingbrook
16-20	EMD Certification Training	Joliet

### JUNE

13	PowerPhone - Stress Identification & Management	Arlington Hts.
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### SEPTEMBER

15-16	Success Communications - Leadership III	Frankfort
19-23	EMD Certification Training	Plainfield

### OCTOBER

13	CPR Recertification and Flipchart Review**	Joliet
17	PowerPhone - Active Shooting Response**	Arlington Hts.

### NOVEMBER

28-Dec.2	EMD Certification Training	Lockport
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\*\*Eligible for EMD CE

## Kathy Driscoll Retires After Nearly 18 Years as WESCOM Dispatcher

WESCOM Dispatcher Kathi Driscoll retired October 31 after nearly 18 years of answering 9-1-1 calls. Driscoll became a WESCOM dispatcher in December 1992. In addition, she briefly served as a supervisor and was WESCOM's LEADS Agency Coordinator.

When asked what she planned to do after retiring, Driscoll said that she was going to "enjoy golfing, reading and spending more time with her grandchildren."

However, Driscoll also said that she will miss the people at WESCOM, especially the "smiling faces that made her day."

In addition, Driscoll indicated that she is thinking about getting a part-time job ("to keep her busy") in the near future. She'd like to work with people/the public. But she's not sure where or exactly when. ●



Kathy Driscoll enjoys best wishes "card" from co-workers during her retirement party.

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