

THE 9-1-1 COMMUNICATOR



December 1998

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enhancing communications between public, public safety agencies and government

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NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AT OPCD

The Board of Commissioners of the Orleans Parish Communication District (OPCD) 9-1-1 Administration Office and OPCD staff are pleased to announce the appointment of William A. Hawkins to the position of Executive Director. Mr. Hawkins formerly served as General Counsel to the District since 1987 and Interim Director from 1994 - 1995. He replaces the first Executive Director of OPCD, Stuart P. Carroll, who passed away in December 1997. Mr. Hawkins designed and implemented the first organizational plan for the New Orleans 9-1-1 District in 1987 and actively



William A. Hawkins
OPCD Executive Director

participates in local and state public safety affairs. He drafted and helped secure passage of legislation making OPCD the *first* Communication District in Louisiana to collect a service charge on wireless telephones.

Mr. Hawkins currently is the Chairman of a Committee of 9-1-1 Directors from around the state whose objectives include the drafting of legislation that addresses issues relative to the implementation of new technologies required by the Federal Communication Commission.

Mr. Hawkins is committed to working closely with City Officials, public safety communication officials and telecommunicators by providing them with the training and technology needed to afford the citizens of New Orleans with the best quality of service when they call 9-1-1 in a police, fire or medical emergency.

Robert Eichhorn Resigns From OEP and OPCD Board



Robert Eichhorn, Director of Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP) and Vice-Chairman of the Board of Commissioners of OPCD recently announced at

the November Board meeting his resignation from OEP. The Board of Commissioners and the staff of OPCD will miss his dedication and perseverance. Mr. Eichhorn served as proxy and Commissioner since 1988 and Vice-Chairman

to the OPCD Board since 1997. Mr. Eichhorn, who is a Certified Emergency Manager by International Association of Emergency Managers (one of only 6 in the state, 700 in the world) will work in the private sector.

THE 9-1-1 COMMUNICATOR

The 9-1-1 Communicator is a quarterly publication of the Orleans Parish Communication District. Direct all inquiries to Editor, Ausetua AmorAmenkum, 301 South Broad Street, New Orleans, La. 70119 504-826-1205 Fax: 504-826-1204 Email: aamenkum@communique.net

The 9-1-1 Communicator needs contributing writers for the next issue which will be published in March 1999. If you are a public safety telecommunicator or work in public safety sector please submit your ideas or articles by February 5, 1999.

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APCO CLASS #98-17 RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL CERTIFICATION

Session #98-17 of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) Basic Telecommunicator Training Course was completed July 20, 1998.

Seventeen telecommunicators from the

New Orleans Police Department and the New Orleans Fire Department received

international certification in public safety dispatching. Attendees participated in 40 hours of intense study including TDD training and stress management.

Students spent a full day at the Municipal Training Academy with police and fire recruits and took a geographical tour of the city.

The APCO Basic Telecommunicator Course was developed to provide the telecommunicators who staff the emergency telephones and radios with a



APCO Class #98-17: L-R-Dania Houston, Chanda Devezin, Courtney Washington, Tracy Sharfner, Wanda George, Erica Lee, Bridgette Bedney, LaTanya Perrault 2nd Row L-R: Tracey Burke, Evelyn Harrison, Rashawn Watkins, Lloyd McMaster, Gesielle Roussel, Charles Workman, Tameta James, Chanel Russell, Audretta Barber

standard training curriculum that addresses basic skills and knowledge for those persons entering the field of public safety telecommunications as well as those who have prior work related experience. On completion of the course, students take a competitive, comprehensive examination.

The student who scores the highest on the examination is the recipient of the OPCD Honor Graduate Award. This class Honor Graduates recipients were **Bridgette Bedney, Police**

Dispatcher Recruit from the New Orleans Police Department and Evelyn Harrison, Police Complaint Operator.

Ms. Harrison and Ms. Bedney both scored 96 on the exam, followed closely by Wanda George, Audretta Barber, Charles Workman and Chanel Russell who

all scored 94.



Courtney Washington at MTA with Robert Fluker NOFD

OPCD BOARD TOURS PSAP



L-R: OPCD Commissioner Mark Romig, Jan Jurick from the Mayor's Office, OPCD Commissioner Robert Sundin, OPCD Education Coordinator Ausetua AmorAmenkum, NOPD Deputy Chief Duane Johnson, NOPD Superintendent Richard Pennington, OPCD Commissioner June Sanchez, NOPD Lt. Stephen Gordon, OPCD Commissioner Dr. Brobson Lutz, OPCD Engineers Michael Newell, and

The Orleans Parish Communication District Board of Commissioners participated in a 9-1-1 PSAP Tour on October 7, 1998. The primary **PSAP** or the **public safety answering point**, is located at the New Orleans Police Headquarters. The tour covered the entire communication process including call taking and dispatch stations, command desk, tandem main frame computers and digital logging recorders. The Communications Division of NOPD and OPCD has helped to developed one of the most advanced Communication centers in the country. This Center, provides our telecommunicators with the latest technology which assist them in providing the highest quality of service to the citizens of New Orleans.

OPCD CLASS SCHEDULE

1999

APCO BASIC

Telecommunicator Course

Jan 4 - 11, 1999
March 15-22, 1999
October ?

OPCD

Public Safety

Communications

Supervisor Course

Jan. 26-28, 1999

POWERPHONE

Emergency Medical Dispatch Course

April 21-23, 1999

POWERPHONE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COURSE

April 26-30, 1999

DISPATCH

INSTITUTE

Liability & Info Gathering Course

May 3-7, 1999

OPCD

SEMINARS

TDD

OPERATIONS

June 14-16, 1999

STRESS

MANAGEMENT

Sept. 13-15, 1999

All training courses are held at the Orleans Parish Communication District (OPCD) Classroom 301 South Broad Street First Floor New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information on class registration and fees contact: Ausetua AmorAmenkum, Education Coordinator 504-826-1205 Fax: 504-826-1204 Email: aamenkum@communiqué.net

All classes are limited to 25, so please register early.



NENA GULF COAST CONFERENCE

OPCD sponsored three telecommunicators from the New Orleans Police and Fire Departments to attend the Gulf Coast Conference sponsored by the Alabama Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). The conference was held October 11 through October 14 at the beautiful Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach, Alabama.

The conference offered several classes whose topics included FCC updates, CAD integration and Project Management to Wireless Law Review, Officer Survival, Suicide Calls and TDD and the ADA.

Hurricane George did not visit the New Orleans area, but took a heavy toll on the Gulf Coast where the NENA Conference was scheduled to be held. Many hotels were severely damaged and Perdido Beach did not have rooms available for the New Orleans delegation until the week of the Conference.

With the determination of a Mardi Gras parade we proceeded down the Gulf Coast to beautiful Orange



Cindy Woods, Sr. Police Dispatcher, Sharon Addison, NOPD Complaint Operator and Elaine Thomas, NOFD Call Taker/Dispatcher partying with Positron at the Conference



Elaine Thomas, Sharon Addison and Ausetua AmorAmenkum partying with Positron

Beach, Alabama. To our surprise we didn't observe much damage from the hurricane, other than piles and piles of damaged carpet out on the sidewalks.

The Conference got off to a very stimulating start with the keynote speaker, Lee Roy Jordan, former All-American at Alabama and the

Nation's Outstanding Lineman in 1962. You may ask yourself what does a former college football star have to contribute to a conference for 9-1-1 professionals? Well, the focus of his talk was to constantly strive to be the best that you can be, no matter what you do, and to strive to spend one minute everyday changing or improving on something about yourself that needs improving. Working in the public safety sector we tend to follow tradition and sometimes resist change, even when it is necessary. The talk Mr. Jordan gave set the tone for the rest of the Conference.

The NENA Gulf Coast Conference was a great place to meet 9-1-1 professionals from around the southern region, but let it be known, that the highlight of the trip was finding the most beautiful shells that Hurricane George brought ashore on one of the prettiest shores that God has created.

OPCD SUPERVISORY COURSE A SUCCESS

The Orleans Parish Communication District facilitated its first Public Safety Communications Supervisory Course I, October 26-28, 1998. Fifteen telecommunicators from the New Orleans Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Services and Levee District successfully completed "Meeting the Challenge".

Strategies for the Survival of Successful Supervisors.

The course was taught by



L-R: Ausetua AmorAmenkum, Mary Knight, Zolite Caliste, Georgia Caston, Gwendolyn Cook, Rowena Hinds, Esther Johnson, Diana Jones and Bonita Brackins; 2nd Row L-R: Samuel Latiker, Mark Achary, Tamia Guenard, Monica Addison, Lisa Ruiz, Deana Francis, Andrea Skipper, and Frank Hijuelos

Ausetua AmorAmenkum, Education Coordinator for OPCD and Frank Hijuelos, Shelter Coordinator for Office of Emergency Preparedness (OEP).

Feedback from participants revealed that the course adequately addressed issues faced by supervisors in the public safety communication and supplied them with the necessary tools to make them more effective supervisors..

TELECOMMUNICATOR NEWS

NEW ORLEANS FIRE DEPARTMENT



The New Orleans Fire Department is pleased to announce the list of the following personnel who have successfully completed the requirements for promotion to **Senior Fire Dispatcher**. There are currently four positions open. Congratulations and good luck to:

- Thomas Levy
- Bonita Brackins
- Yolanda White
- Elaine Thomas
- Ann Doyle
- Sharon Harris
- Wanda Newsome
- June Taylor
- Ella Rhone

November Birthday Greetings To Fire Alarms Personnel:
Beverly Leban Nov.3
June Taylor Nov. 4
Yolanda White Nov. 18
Claudette Adams Nov. 24
Elaine Thomas Nov. 26



NOPD CALL TAKERS HONORED

Seated L-R: Loyce Alexander, Rhonda Cannon, Evelyn Harrison, Louise Penns, Phyllis Dean, Cassandra Woods, Erica Simpson, Erica JeanPierre, Wanda George
 Standing L-R: Tricia Smith, Erica Lee, Linda Martin, Nancy Mouton, Nancy Hynes

June 27, 1998 the 2nd Platoon Supervisors of the Communications Division of New Orleans Police Department honored all fifteen of their complaint operators for outstanding services rendered for that month. Assistant Platoon Communication Supervisor Andrea Skipper states that the supervisors from the Second Platoon wanted to let all the call takers know how much they are appreciated and how important they are to the operations of the police department. "They are the first link to the public" says APCS Skipper "and without the call takers the police would not have the necessary information needed to assist the citizens of New Orleans; the entire communication process begins with the call takers".

After being led outside under the guise of having an inspection, the call takers returned to the center to discover their workstations had been decorated with balloons, certificates of appreciation and personalized clocks at each of their positions.

The 2nd Platoon currently processes 1500 calls per day—the most calls of any shift. This group of extraordinary call takers are presently being considered for a Unit Citation from Superintendent Richard Pennington for processing over **1900** calls in one shift during a rainstorm in June of this year.



NOPD PROMOTES ASSISTANT PLATOON COMMANDER SUPERVISORS



Zolite Caliste



Mary Knight



Georgia Caston



Rowena Hinds



Deana Francis



Gwendolyn Cook



Andrea

New Orleans Police Superintendent Richard J. Pennington is pleased to announce the promotion of seven Senior Police Dispatchers to the Civil Service grade of **Assistant Platoon Commander Supervisors** in the New Orleans

Police Department Communication Center.

Superintendent Pennington said "In the history of the New Orleans Police Department, this is the first time civilian employees will be promoted to

positions which were formerly occupied by Sergeants. These Senior Dispatchers have a wealth of experience and have earned this promotion with professionalism and dedication to this organization"



Robert Bickham Retires From EMS

Robert "Bob" Bickham

recently retired after working in EMS

Communications for 11 years as a

Dispatcher. "Bob was a dedicated, easy going guy"

says Tamia Guenard,

Supervisor at EMS

Communications , "He was an

excellent worker and was was

always willing to help the Center

run smoothly.".

During his career he also worked as a

police officer for NOPD and a call

taker/dispatcher for NOFD.

