

# COMMUNICATIONS CORNER

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## CHANGES IN FACES & SPACES

June 2009

There have been many changes in our department since the last newsletter was published, but one thing that has remained constant is the good work done by PSC staff 24 hours a day, every day of the year!

The first change you are likely to notice if you visit the communications center is that the front, main doors are now locked, 24/7.

In our ongoing efforts to enhance the physical security of the department, while increasing the operational effectiveness, we have moved the "business office" for the department to Room 325 in the City/County Building.

Those possessing electronic access cards will continue to have access through the card reader. The process for picking up data and reports by our client agencies has not changed.

If you have an operational issue or other official business in the Public Safety Communications Center (Room 109) a bell is located to the left of the doors that will allow for screened access. Security cameras remain in place.

Individuals dropping off or picking up an open records request, inquiring about our training or quality assurance programs or needing direct contact with the department, should go to Room 325.

Other significant changes are in the area of personnel, below is a summary of those changes.

Gary Bell has been promoted to Operations Manager and is now the primary point of contact for all operations related questions within the department. Gary's office is in room 109 and his phone number is 608-267-3912.

Rich McVicar also holds the title of Operations Manager - Projects but has moved to room 345 in the CCB and now has primary responsibility for the planning and management of capital and other projects. Rich's phone number is 608-283-2911.

Paul Logan has been promoted to Support Services Manager. In this position he is responsible for the department's training and quality assurance programs as well as public records, MSAG, and supporting the department's current technology. Paul's phone number is 608-283-2914 and his office is located in room 325 of the CCB.

Communications Supervisor Chad Fleck has been assigned to the Support services division and is responsible for the coordination of the department's infrastructure upgrade and remodeling project. Chad's phone number is 608-283-2912 and his office is located in room 325 of the CCB.

Chris Schultz has been assigned to the position of Training Communicator and Tom Vaughan joins Support Services as the Policy & Procedure Analyst / Communicator.

Tammy Johnson is re-joining the PSC family as a Clerk IV.

## THE JOURNEY BEGINS

On March 1 we had ten "recruits" begin the journey to becoming Communicators.

The fact that we hired so many new employees is significant in several ways. First it is the largest single hiring we have ever done. Second, it marked the opening of our new training center.

Previously we were restricted to hiring no more than 6 at a time due to the limited space and limited availability of computers and other tools we need for training. The new space has 10 computer workstations outfitted identical to

the 'live' workstations in the communications center. This



allows the new employees to train on the actual CAD, Maps and other systems they will use when they become certified.

Joining our team as of March 1st are Scott Allain, Camille

Jimenez, Chad Godfroy, Pete Mueller, and Kipp Smith.

The group completed the classroom portion of their academy on April 10. That training, a total of 240 hours, was mainly conducted in our own training facility included a combination of lectures, hands-on, observation and scenario based training that will provide these employees a strong foundation on which they will build the additional knowledge, skills and abilities required of a skilled Communicator.

This hard working group completed the following nationally recognized certification courses; Emergency Telecommunicator Course , Emergency Medical Dispatch and Emergency Fire Dispatch.

These courses were all taught by our own in-house instructors credentialed by the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED).

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They have also completed nationally recognized training in American Heart Associa-

## OUTREACH & PUBLIC EDUCATION

Is your agency or department hosting an open house, a job fair or other public event?

Our department is interested in opportunities to provide outreach and public education throughout the community. We want to work with you to educate the commu-

nity on the mission and capabilities (and limitations) of the 911 Center.

If your agency has requests from community or neighborhood associations, civic groups or other organizations and you feel they might benefit from having a representa-

tive from our department come and speak with them, please direct them to Chad Fleck. Chad is our primary point of contact for all department outreach activities and can be reached at fleck@co.dane.wi.us or 608-283-2912

We participated in Safety Saturday on June 13th. This

event was a great success and allowed us to reach out to the many people that visited our booth on the Square!

Most recently, we staffed a booth on "Safety Day" at the Dane County Fair 7/18 and will be participating in a few community's National Night Out on August 4th.

## NPSTW 2009

Each year, the second week of April is dedicated to the men and women who serve as Telecommunications Officers. In October 1991 Congress made a Formal Proclamation to recognize this week as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week (NPSTW).

This year for NPSTW the 911 center management team cooked meals, breakfast,

lunch and dinner, once on Monday and again on Friday.

Staff were treated to pancakes with all the fixin's for breakfast, and chicken quesadillas, again with all the fixin's for lunch and dinner.

An open house was held on Wednesday for department heads, elected officials, chiefs, directors and other visitors.

Some of our user agencies also stopped in and spent some time chatting with the dispatchers, others brought up or sent goodies and treats to share with each shift.

The staff would like to thank the user agencies that took time off to wish us well this year! We look forward to seeing you again next April.

## GOODBYE & CONGRATULATIONS!

We know it has been mentioned before in this issue, but many changes have taken place in our department since the last issue and we wanted to make sure we don't leave anyone out.

January of this year marked the end of service for 4 long time employee's.

Marcia Jensen retired after more than 30 years with Dane County and nearly 20 years with PSC as a clerk/typist. Marcia was our payroll clerk, MSAG coordinator, bill payer, map keeper upper and source of all matter of information to the entire department.

Paul Kamps also retired in January. Paul was with PSC since our formation and probably told most of you 'where to go' on a regular basis.

Also retiring in January was Support services Manager Tom Hanrahan. Tom joined PSC in 1991 after spending many years on "the other side of the mic" with various EMS agencies in Dane County.

Dr. James Steadman has also retired effective 6/6/09. James began his career in 1981 for the Madison Police Department and made the successful transition when agencies consolidated in 1988. He has achieved many hallmarks in his time he spent with the department ; listing only a few would diminish the importance of his service provided during his 28 year career.

All of these folks made special contributions to the department and will be missed greatly.

One thing that remains con-

stant in any organization is change, and change in personnel is no different.

Due to retirements, promotions and some restructuring in the department, two additional supervisor spots opened this spring.

After a long and difficult selection process Luis Bixler and Pete Johnson have been promoted to Communications Supervisor, effective May 9 and 24, respectively.

Luis has been with the department since 2005 and has served as a Communications Training Officer (CTO) and chair of the Communicator Committee. Luis will be working the night (2245-0645) shift. (see related story on page 4)

Pete started his career with PSC in 1992 and has been waking you all up for years!

Pete has served the department as an Acting Supervisor and CTO. Pete has a wealth of knowledge and will be working the 2nd (1445-2245) shift.

## JOURNEY...CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

tion professional rescuer CPR, U.S. Department of Homeland Security - National Incident Management System course levels 100 & 700, and the Wisconsin Department of Justice T.I.M.E. system basic operator course.

Students received nearly ten hours of specialized training in mental health awareness and suicide risk assessment presented by Nancy Pierce, MA, LCSW, Mental Health Crisis Consultants. Specialized training in communicating with special needs populations was presented by the Hamilton/WI Relay. In my

experience this training far exceeds what most PSAP's in the state and nation provide.

Of special note is that our training program, developed in-house and provided by PSC Communications Training Officers, our Medical Director, Dr. Paul Steigler, user agency personnel and other local professionals, exceeds national standards as outlined in APCO's Project 33.

If you are interested in visiting the training center, stop in room 325 in the CCB.

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*"The mission of the Dane County Public Safety Communications Department is to provide a fast, effective communications link between the citizens of Dane County requesting public safety services and the public safety agencies charged with providing emergency and non-emergency services to those citizens."*

## BIXLER NAMED 2009 APCO/NENA TELECOMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR

What does it mean to win an award? It means you are a leader in your industry and usually perform at peak efficiency. That's exactly what it means in the case of PSC Communicator Luis Bixler.

In April, Luis was named the "2009 Wisconsin Telecommunicator of the Year" by the Wisconsin chapters of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA).

Luis was not selected because of one significant event or one 'good' or 'bad' call, but for his

his continued good work, leadership and ability to carry out his assigned tasks with a high degree of professionalism.



Outside his normal day-to-day duties as a Communicator, Luis also fulfills the role of Communications Training Officer, and is the elected Chair of the department's Communi-

cator Committee. In both of these additional responsibilities, Luis has proven his capability of passing on his knowledge, skills and abilities, empowering staff to affect change, while improving morale.

A mentally healthy and well-trained staff is important to meet the department's mission, the user agencies' expectations, and the expectations of citizens reporting

emergencies. Luis has met these challenges and makes the daily difference as one of our unsung heroes: the FIRST First responder.

## Compliment / Complaint Process

The employees of Dane County Public Safety Communications strive to respond to the needs of the public by providing professional, effective, efficient, telecommunication response to calls by citizens and public safety responders.

As a means of maintaining Dane County Public Safety Communications Center performance and community relations, our center:

- Encourages citizens to recommend improvements in our service delivery.
- Encourages complaints and/or questions about the Communications Center's performance or actions of its members and employees.

If you feel that an employee has acted improperly or in an outstandingly positive way, you may register your remarks by completing an Incident Inquiry Form from our website [www.dane911.com](http://www.dane911.com).

# 9-1-1 Center Construction Update

## 1st Quarter 2009 Call Stats

All Incoming: 105,363

All Outgoing: 31,032

Wireless 9-1-1: 25,377

Landline 9-1-1: 11,425

VOIP 9-1-1: 138

Other 9-1-1: 587

Non 9-1-1: 67,823

Average answer time: 6.7 sec  
Average for 911 calls: 6.05 sec

The excitement is beginning to build on the upcoming Center remodel project! Many have asked when is construction/demolition going to take place? And most importantly, when will it all be done? These are very good questions that unfortunately I can only answer in general at this time. Construction should begin sometime in September or October. There have been a few delays in getting this project underway due to some logistical issues involving some cost-savings measures the county wants to use. There is also the possibility of some last-minute changes to the design of the Center as we have recently been offered some additional space in what is currently the City Engineering Annex (right next door to our Center in room 107a. Here's what is currently planned:

Lots of changes are coming up this year. We all know we are getting new consoles, but a lot of work will also be done 'behind the scenes' as well and some other exciting construction/remodel items.

Please remember that any issues that arise will be temporary and well worth the small amount of time you may feel inconvenienced.

Prior to the operations floor remodeling begins, there will be a sound-deadening wall constructed that will run the entire length of the Center, effectively cutting the Center in half roughly where the pillars are located. This wall will go from the real floor (not the raised floor) all the way to the "real" ceiling (above the drop-down ceiling).

This wall will contain a sound-deadening baffle system to significantly reduce any construction-related noise. Once that wall is in place, temporary workstations will be deployed in Marcia's old office and the "fishbowl" area to allow us to maintain the needed amount of consoles for use.

Reconstruction will take place on one half of the floor at a time. Once one side is complete, Center operations will shift to the newly-remodeled side while reconstruction takes place on the opposite side of the floor. I have diagrams of the latest console layout available and can post them if anyone is interested. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please let Chad Fleck know!



**John Dejung**

## PSC Matters

A warm welcome to our new 9-1-1 Center director, John Dejung! John became the director on 6/1/09, replacing Interim director Kathy Krusic. His article, *PSC Matters*, is printed below:

To start with a play on words; yes, PSC and your contribution to what we do here for the residents and visitors (not to mention the responders we do shepherd work for) does "matter"...greatly.

You do a noble work here; thank you for dedicating yourself to public safety and public service. And, another yes; I'll try to provide you with my perspective herein and from time to time on the "matters" we're working on to allow you and the corporate PSC to do your important job better and better as time goes on. I think I'll stick with "PSC Matters" for the title of my column (or maybe suggest the newsletter be called that). Your votes on the matter will count.

## PSC *Matters* (continued)

Let me be very quick to qualify what I just said...you already do a great job and you might be tempted to think that a focus on getting better and better isn't necessary. I'm impressed with lots of things I've seen (certainly impressed with all the people that comprise our Center). But, I think you'll agree that things can and should get better and better as time and experience (not to mention funding) allow. I believe my job, and the jobs of the 10 managers, is to help grease the skids for that continuous improvement, to remove obstacles to your success, to be responsive to your needs/questions/suggestions, and to actively seek your help to understand what can and should be done better and better (and involve you in developing those solutions). I have asked the management team to seek your feedback and to be more responsive (as timely as they can) to that feedback. And, so that you know I don't ask others to do what I'm not willing to do, please know that I also will accept your feedback, ideas, concerns, questions, etc. That is one of the reasons I visit the Ops floor each day and many evenings...nights once in awhile...to say "hello" and to see how you're doing, but also to allow you to "bend my ear" a bit. Now; just a few "rules of engagement". First, venting is OK if done kindly without "lightning bolts" to whoever the "lightning rod" is that is

coming around or that you are tracking down. If venting and not expecting action, it is always helpful to say so (then or later when you have your composure back). Please...give us all a chance "in the family" to solve things. Second, if you have a beef or an idea for improvement, it helps (a lot) to come with some background and ideas for helping (or solving) the situation. Third, don't be surprised if me or others want to assign it out to someone and/or need to delay action due to other priorities (give us a break here, please). One of the reasons for assigning things out is that, in a perfect world, we'd identify and solve problems at the most immediate point/person in the chain of command. Each of the 6 supervisors/managers have a span of control of (and a sense of responsibility to) about 10 people and are closest and most accessible to you. Gary and Paul have more, especially Gary. If Gary gets all the "suggestions" you can bet that he'll be less able to get to everyone (60 or so people, all with ideas and needs) as expeditiously as those with fewer people to attend to. I think you get the picture; follow the chain of command if you can...jump it only if you have to. Let me know if we aren't being responsive or open. Maybe we can complete and "frame" some more "rules of engagement" that we can try to focus on? And, speaking of things to put on the walls, how 'bout a photo and/or art contest (the Center will pay for the winners to have their work matted/framed and displayed on our soon-to-be-repainted

walls). Would the Communicator committee like to take that on?

To help grease the skids for some of the involvement by you and your co-workers, the managers and I have concocted a "fun" little set of advisory teams that we'll hope you plug into (notice they all rhyme with "plug"). There'll be the CUG (CAD user group) and the PUG (policy user group), the TUG (training user group), and, finally, the MUG that we'll offer to have you volunteer for. Oh, and by the way, if you come up with a RUG, BUG, SUG or a LUG, etc., let us know for future reference and for future team opportunities. We're going to try something a little different from what's been done in the past with employee teams. That is, we want you to actively use on-duty time (operations-permitting of course) to do team work with your peers around you at your work positions (rather than try to get a group together from various shifts outside of your work hours...you work enough OT as it is already). We'd like the CUG to be the day shift's team (to work with the consultants, Gary, and Rich as they will be "day-workers" too). The TUG, the training user group, is already constituted (the CTOs), but will be augmented with a couple volunteers who may have a different perspective than the CTOs who are so very involved. The PUG, or policy user group, will be the night shift's puppy (pun intended) and will work with and advise

Tom (who has been tasked with revamping the vast and Ugly array of policies into a more coherent, readable, and true-to-life set of guidelines). The PUG will help us "play like we train"...so what we actually do is consistent with what the documents for training (et cetera) say we do. And, finally, the MUG will be the mid-shift's cup to drink from. The MUG is the "morale user group" and we're hoping that they'll be active in devising even more fun things to do on and off-duty and will also "sit still for" some time to take a picture of the state of the recognition program and come up with various ways to "catch you doing something right" (and rewarding you in ways you'll value). Each group will be facilitated/coordinated by a manager (perhaps also known as a BUG) to help you progress. So, the CUGBUGs will be Chad and Rich. The TUGBUG will also be Chad and Paul because they are the management team folks who I hold responsible for providing you the best training possible. The PUGBUG will be Chas, and finally, the MUGBUG will be Pete. Oh boy, this is getting long, but I hope you're having as much fun reading this as I am writing it and thinking it through. Think about where you are on your shift and see if you can get "jazzed up" to let your ideas and creativity flow to/for these teams.

Now, for some of those "matters" we're working on for continuous improvement:

## PSC Matters (continued)

- Center remodeling...delayed till Sept/Oct (maybe even a bit later)... the good news is that the commotion caused by the remodeling isn't being done during the busiest part of the year.
  - Radio project...will begin negotiating with Motorola this week (they have an impressive plan). The project will take about 2 years to complete.
  - CAD replacement...also rolling along swiftly now. The consultant who will help advise us on what all to replace (just CAD or CAD and mobile and records management systems) will be selected in the next few weeks and will start work in September. From that work (with the CUG's input) we'll write an RFP (request for proposal) for the system itself, early in 2010. This is another one of those huge, labor-intensive projects that takes a long time to do right; it'll be about 2 years to complete this project too.
  - We're re-declaring that operations is our reason for being (raison d'etre, I think, is how the French say it...somebody who knows French better check my spelling on that). Thus, as you've hopefully seen, the Support Services folks have been called into action to help the floor Communicators keep a lid on the overtime by taking a shift or a part of a shift or an overtime slot when needed. They'll get back to their primary jobs of supporting the continuous improvement of the operations when staffing and the volume of activity on the floor allows.
  - Which reminds me to say that we are funded to hire 10 more in September (and we're on schedule for that) and will be funded completely in 2010 (1 of only 2 departments not to get a budget cut) so that we can hire 10 more in March.
- out. And, treat 'em all like family (callers like your Mother and responders like brothers and sisters...the brothers and sisters that you like). ☺
- Take care, JED 7/23/09
- Thank you for welcoming me so graciously. It's been fun to get to know you a bit. I'm sticking around...nothing has scared me away yet. And, so far, my family has also been gracious about my absence from Minneapolis.
- So, when in doubt; send 'em