



June 2007

Issue 32

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**Save the Date:  
 9-1-1 Day  
 at the Ballpark**

Saturday, Sept. 1, 2007  
 CommunityAmerica Ballpark  
 T-Bones vs. Rail Cats

**Upcoming Training  
 Opportunities**

- June 25-29: Basic Telecommunicator Training
- July 10-12: Survival Communications
- July 16-17: Negotiation Training for Telecommunicators
- July 18: Professional Development Series Workshop
- July 19: School and Workplace Violence
- July 20: 9-1-1 Customer Service
- July 23: CML Equipment and CML/GC Supervisor Training
- July 24: 9-1-1 Liability
- July 24: TICP/CASM Workshop
- July 25: NIMS for Telecommunicators

For details and registration, visit [www.marc.org/publicsafety](http://www.marc.org/publicsafety), call 816/701-8330 or e-mail to [e911@marc.org](mailto:e911@marc.org).



## Dispatching during a disaster: Greensburg, Kan.

When an EF-5 tornado struck Greensburg, Kan., on May 4, only one dispatcher was on duty at the Kiowa County Sheriff’s Office. The building’s roof was badly damaged by the storm, and rain and falling debris ruined the communications equipment. Power and phone lines, including 9-1-1 communications, were disrupted throughout the area, and most of the county’s radio system was also knocked out.

In the aftermath of the storm, 9-1-1 calls were forwarded to PSAPs in surrounding counties. Within just a few days the county’s 9-1-1 system — which handles dispatch for law enforcement, fire and EMS for the entire county — was back in service.

A makeshift dispatch center was set up in the Kiowa County Courthouse, but officials soon determined that the courthouse was too damaged to use and the dispatch center moved into a mobile command post.



Lenexa Police Dispatcher Philip Lofflin (right) in front of the mobile dispatch center with Undersheriff Jason Moses, Thomas County, Kan., communications chief for dispatch and radio interoperability.

Faced with high call volumes, Kiowa County asked for help from other Kansas law enforcement agencies. Philip Lofflin,

*Continued on page 4*

## PSAP workstation upgrade gets underway

A region-wide upgrade is underway to ensure that Public Safety Answering Points continue to operate with reliable, state-of-the-art equipment.

MARC’s maintenance personnel met with managers at each of the 45 PSAPs to discuss the upgrade, the maintenance program, and other services provided by the Systems Operation Center (SOC).

In April, workstations in MARC’s training center were successfully upgraded and tested. PSAP upgrades began in late May, and will proceed at the rate of about two PSAPs per week until the project is complete.

Each PSAP will receive a new 17-inch LCD SMART monitor and terminal. Each workstation will receive a new computer and 19-inch touch-screen monitor, as well as the latest version of PlantCML operating software.

The updated software:

- Keeps address location information on the screen after the call is released.
- Prevents the loss of previous calls if the calltaker exits the Sentinel 9-1-1 program.
- Eliminates the possibility of putting one calltaker out of automatic call distribution (ACD) when two calltakers simultaneously attempt to answer a 9-1-1 call.
- Upgrades statistical reporting software to better monitor and analyze 9-1-1 call trends.
- Upgrades GIS mapping software with additional features for locating and plotting 9-1-1 callers.

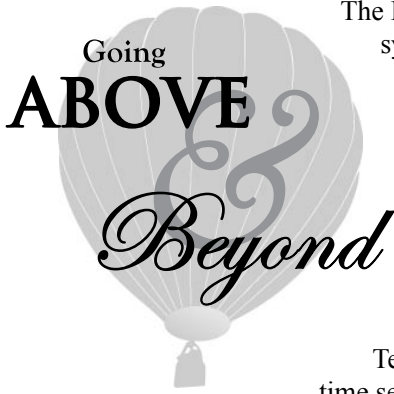
The new software operates very much like the current version, so formal training classes should not be necessary. Users will receive a quick reference guide, and can access help desk services through MARC’s new SOC by calling 816/421-2911.

Regional Public Safety Program

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# More than 325 attend 10th Annual Telecommunicators Celebration



The Kansas City Regional 9-1-1 system honored the region's public safety communications professionals at a celebration held April 13 at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown hotel.

MARC hosts the celebration each year as part of National Public Safety Telecommunicators' Week — a time set aside to honor the unsung heroes who staff the nation's 9-1-1 centers and other emergency dispatch locations.

Over 325 public safety personnel from 45 public safety answering points (PSAPS) attended the celebration. KCTV5 morning news anchor Chris Pisano served as master of ceremonies for the event. Comedian Tom Ryan and a popular local band, Funk Syndicate, provided entertainment, along with the TMT Jazz Trio, made up of students from William Jewell College and the University of Missouri–Kansas City.

Betty Knight, presiding commissioner of Platte County, Mo., made welcoming remarks, and Annabeth Surbaugh, chairman of the Johnson County, Kan., Board of County Commissioners, made a special video presentation. Knight and Surbaugh serve as co-chairs of the Public Safety Communications Board.

Event sponsors included Motorola, Commenco, Missouri Gas Energy, GeoComm, AT&T, J.E. Dunn and Sprint. Many other area businesses donated prizes and appreciation gifts to attendees.



Above: Betty Knight, Platte County presiding commissioner and Public Safety Communications Board co-chair, celebrates with Red E. Fox, mascot of the Regional 9-1-1 System. Below: Dispatchers from the Liberty Police Department were among hundreds who enjoyed the event.



## Train-the-Trainer workshops to focus on regional communications assets

Two sessions remain in MARC's "Train-the-Trainer" workshops designed to help public safety personnel improve their working knowledge of the region's Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) and the Communications Assets Survey (CAS) and Communications Assets Mapping (CAM) tools.

The TICP provides operational direction and technical data for the use of regional interoperable communications systems and resources. The training session will cover interoperability solutions, regional resources, the procedures for requesting regional resources, responsibilities and future solutions.

The CAS and CAM tools were developed by the Department of Homeland Security to help urban areas identify, manage and track existing technical communications equipment.

CAS is a web-based tool used to enter public safety/first responder radio equipment and infrastructure information into a central database. CAM provides the ability to visualize the agencies, radio systems, towers, dispatches, gateways, and radio caches in use in the urban area.

**Two dates and locations:**  
 .....  
**June 20 • Lee's Summit Police Department**  
**July 24 • Mid-America Regional Council**

The workshops will be held on June 20 at the Lee's Summit Police Department, 10 N. Tudor Road, Lee's Summit, Mo.; and July 24 at the Mid-America Regional Council, 600 Broadway, Kansas City, Mo. Each session

will begin with the CAS/CAM session from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m., followed by the TICP session from 10:00 a.m. to noon. Participants may attend one or both sessions.

There is no charge to attend, but registration is required. Register online at [www.marc.org/publicsafety](http://www.marc.org/publicsafety) or call 816/701-8330.

## Installation and testing of RAMBIS equipment begins at tower sites

Progress continues on implementation of the Regional Area Multi-Band Integrated System (RAMBIS), a project that will allow emergency responders to communicate with their agency’s personnel outside their own radio system’s coverage area, with their command centers, and with emergency personnel from other jurisdictions, regardless of the types of radio equipment used.

Installation and testing of the electronic equipment necessary for radio communications is underway at seven of the RAMBIS tower sites. The towers are located in Kansas City, Mo., at the Kansas City International Airport, near Worlds of Fun, and near 68th and Booth; and in Olathe, Kan.; Bonner Springs, Kan.; Easton, Kan.; and Independence, Mo.

Lease agreements for two remaining tower sites in Trimble, Mo., and Tonganoxie, Kan., are near completion. Site location work for Cass County, Mo., is ongoing.

The design of the high-speed microwave backbone that sends signals from tower to tower is nearly complete, and this equipment will be ordered and installed soon. Most of the RAMBIS system should be operational by the end of this year.



Members of the project team — local officials, MARC staff and representatives from Motorola — tested equipment before installation began at the RAMBIS tower sites.

Much of the funding for the multi-jurisdictional project comes from Urban Area Security Initiative grants from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

### People in the News .....

#### **Public Safety Communications Board:**

**Platte County Presiding Commissioner Betty Knight** has been appointed to the Governor’s Oversight Committee on 9-1-1 by Missouri Governor Matt Blunt. Her appointment was confirmed by the Missouri Senate in April. Commissioner Knight co-chairs the Public Safety Communications Board.

The Public Safety Communications Board would like to thank outgoing **Kansas City, Mo., Councilmember Chuck Eddy** for his years of service, both to the PSCB and the MARC Board of Directors. Eddy was honored with a Regional Leadership Award at MARC’s 11th Annual Regional Assembly on June 1 at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center in Kansas City, Mo.

The PSCB would also like to congratulate **Chief Kenneth Hobbs** on his recent retirement from the Lenexa Fire Department. Hobbs will continue to serve on the PSCB as a representative of Heart of America Fire Chiefs.

#### **Kansas City, Mo., Police Department:**

In May, **Steve Hoskins** was promoted to manager of communications. Since joining the department in 1990, Hoskins has served as a dispatcher, communications training officer, training supervisor and operations supervisor. He also worked for the Mid-America Regional Council as the first regional 9-1-1 training coordinator from 2001-2003.

Hoskins replaces **Rick Brisbin**, former communications manager, who was promoted to director of the Operations Support Division.

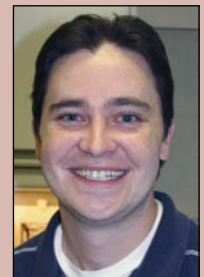
Brisbin has more than 30 years of experience in public safety. He retired from the KCMO Fire Department, then worked in the city’s Information Technology Department before joining the police department in 2006. Brisbin will report to **Major Robert Kuehl**, who is now the executive officer for the bureau commander, Deputy Chief Nick Nichols.

#### **Prairie Village, Kan., Police Department:**

**Tim Kobe** has been promoted to communications supervisor at the Prairie Village, Kan., Police Department.

#### **MARC Staff:**

On May 14th **Adam Geffert** joined the MARC staff as a Public Safety Communications Technician. He will help provide maintenance and support services to 9-1-1 PSAPs. Geffert earned an undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Kansas, where he is currently pursuing a master’s degree in public administration. A Kansas City native, Geffert resides in Overland Park, Kan.





Visit our Web site!  
[www.marc.org/publicsafety](http://www.marc.org/publicsafety)

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## Database Updates for Telecommunicators

### Database Analysis:

MARC continues to work closely with AT&T to synchronize the region's 9-1-1 address and mapping databases. A computer program is used to analyze information in the two databases and identify problem areas. Once a specific problem is identified, MARC staff can work with local city and county governments to correct the error and update the databases. This process leads to continuous improvement in data quality, and will ultimately allow accurate on-screen plotting of landline 9-1-1 calls.

### Error Reporting:

In April, a task force met to discuss ways to improve 9-1-1 error reporting. Telecommunicators are trained to use Info Manager to submit all 9-1-1 database errors (landline, wireless and VoIP) as soon as possible after the call so that these errors can be corrected. But a statistical comparison of 9-1-1 database errors to the number of error reports submitted to MARC clearly demonstrates that not all errors are reported. Comparison statistics will be distributed to each agency in June, and MARC will continue to provide PSAPs with monthly updates. By quantifying some of the discrepancies in error reporting, the task force hopes to help PSAP managers find ways to improve reporting in the future.

### TELCO change:

The merger of Cingular and AT&T wireless has resulted in many changes to cell towers and networks. In late May, the phone company ID, also known as the TELCO, was changed on CML equipment. Instead of ATT or CING, the display now shows ATTMOB for the combined services. The emergency contact information for AT&T Mobility, available online at [www.marc.org/publicsafety/wireless-service-numbers.pdf](http://www.marc.org/publicsafety/wireless-service-numbers.pdf), will not change.

## Disaster . . . (continued from page 1)

a Lenexa, Kan., police dispatcher, was one who responded, volunteering to work two 12-hour shifts in Greensburg on his normal days off.

Lofflin and others who responded to Greensburg helped with dispatch and answered public information phone lines. While some calls were "routine" 9-1-1 calls from outlying parts of the county, most calls were from people and businesses all over the United States who wanted to offer assistance. Others were from people trying to obtain information about friends and family.

"It was really wonderful to see law enforcement and rescue personnel from all across Kansas and beyond coming together to help the residents of Greensburg," Lofflin said.

"Working together with dispatchers from small communities to large metropolitan areas is something none of us will soon forget."

Four of the six dispatchers on staff at the Kiowa County Sheriff's Office lost their homes and all of their belongings to the tornado. The home of a fifth dispatcher sustained heavy damage.

The Kansas Chapter of the Association of Public Safety Communications Officials (APCO) is collecting monetary donations to go directly to these dispatchers. For more information, contact Donnette Ellegood, Kansas APCO secretary/treasurer, at 785/672-3219 or in care of the Oakley Police Department, 209 Hudson, Oakley, Kansas, 67748. Ellegood may also be reached by e-mail at [d\\_egood@yahoo.com](mailto:d_egood@yahoo.com).