

★ The TENA Transfer ★

Volume 3, Issue 2

Spring, 1997

Like most cliches, those about Spring are grounded in science. Physiologically, our bodies respond to the increase in daylight that follows the Spring equinox, March 20. With more daylight comes more of the chemicals used by our brains to moderate or heighten moods. We are hopefully prone to eating lighter meals since we don't need to store calories to make body heat. We may even fall in love!

Just like animals coming out of hibernation, it's a time to slough off the residues of winter sleep and wake yourself up. It's time to muster your energy and "spring into action."

With all of Mother Nature pulling for us, how about a few tips to get your kite soaring? The following have been gathered from an assortment of time management and organization references, with a few added from the "wisdom of age."

Around the Office:

Make and use a master list. Add phone numbers for return calls at the time you make the list.

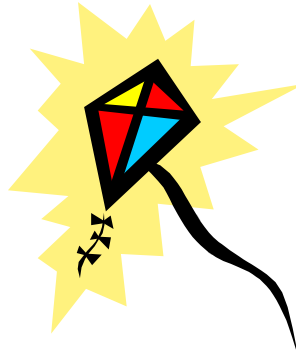
Checkmarks aren't gratifying enough - cross out items you've completed.

Limit the number of messages your voice mail can hold. Callers must call back, send a letter, or e-mail you.

Keep a reading file - tear up magazines and newspapers to save only articles of interest.

Trash more! Nearly 80% of what goes into a file folder is never used again. Clean your briefcase or purse!

SPRING...



EASTER BONNETS AND TEXAS BLUEBONNETS

BUNNIES & CHICKS

SPRING CLEANING

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

SPRING INTO ACTION

TULIPS

SPRING FORWARD, FALL BACK

WEED AND FEED

FALLING IN LOVE

SPRING FLINGS & KITE STRINGS

Delete unused files from your hard drive.

Around home:

When you load a multiple CD player, stack the CD covers in the same order to avoid searching for a match later on.

During television commercials, prepare 50-100 envelopes in advance for bill paying by stamping with your return address and postage.

Keep the roll or box of trash can liners in the bottom of the waste container for a quick change.

Have an "in-box" for each family member. Drop messages, mail, items to be put away, etc. into the container.

Use Post-Its on your forehead! Actually, the bathroom mirror, the car's dashboard, or the door to the garage, may be less obvious and more convenient.

Clean your closet! Sort clothes into Keep, Throw, and Maybes. If you haven't worn it in 2 years, it's an obvious "Throw." Bag up "Maybes" and keep for 1 month. If you weren't tempted to pull them out in that time, they can be relegated to the "Throws."

And lastly, if you're really tempted to go all the way with Spring cleaning and DO THE WINDOWS, use wadded up newspaper, not paper or cloth towels for the job. It works!

A look inside...

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From the President...

Toni Dunne

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Our Spring Conference was a smashing success and I trust that those in attendance received valuable information both from our session presenters and vendors who support our organization by showing the latest and greatest technology/products and sponsorships. Planning and coordination of such an event requires an immense amount of time and dedication on the part of a lot of people, and I would like to thank our Conference Chair, Sherry Sevey, and all the volunteers who contributed to make this a wonderful event.

Your Board continues to look for ways to serve the membership, and we are pleased to announce a partnership with the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications with the annual Telecommunicator Recognition and Celebration (formerly 9-1-1 Day). As we transition from September 11th, allowing this day for local activities, we move to August 4th, 1997 and then to finally accompany our Spring Conference in 1998. We will also hold our first election under our new By-Laws in 1998!

Our membership continues to grow and I encourage each of you to participate in the Membership Drive that was announced at the Spring Conference. Legislative activity abounds.

From the national scene, the FCC issued a press release on February 19, stating that it "has made available a new code, 311, as a quick access to non-emergency police and other government services." The Commission also made available 711 for access to Telecommunications Relay Services. However, it is not mandated.

The wireless issue continues to be a hot topic as entities move to implement the FCC mandates specified in Docket 94-102. Excellent information has been made available on this subject in your

March '97 issues of NENA News, and on the NENA homepage. Another issue of major importance in 94-102 has not dominated the headlines. It's a proposal to regulate the quality of information passed to enhanced 9-1-1 systems by PBX telephone systems. This is hotly contested, with attorneys for interested parties currently working under an FCC request to reach a consensus agreement. These parties are NENA, APCO, the Ad Hoc Telecom Users Coalition, and the MultiMedia Telecommunications Association (MMTA) representing telephone equipment manufacturers.

It appears the group is close to agreement on the provision on ANI-ALI for residential settings, business shared tenant services and off-premises exchanges where a PBX spans multiple locations and addresses. Other business settings, such as one company occupying a large building, are still very much in disagreement, and we can expect to do some compromising in order to avoid losing the tightened requirements on the first group. We can probably expect a 2-3 year implementation period, with perhaps a grandfathering of large business settings of seven years or so.

As always, I am at your service. Feel free to contact me regarding any issue you wish to discuss.

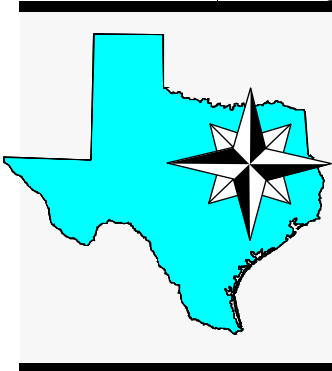
Calendar of Events

April 12-19	National Telecommunicator Week
April 21-23	APCO-TX Spring Conference, Ft. Worth Radisson Plaza
May 18-23	Interagency Emergency Communications Instructors School, Austin. Contact Toni Dunne, 512-305-6918
June 15-19	NENA National Conference, Baltimore, MD

Across Texas - News from Your Regional Coordinators

North Coordinator - Marsha Reed

Spring's just around the corner, everyone around the region is really busy. Projects are popping up everywhere around the region. Myself, I've been very busy working with a new project, Emergency Management. I have found it to be very interesting the way Emergency Management ties into 9-1-1. If you really look around, a lot of different things tie into 9-1-1. Well, enough of that.



Peggy Smith of Plano reports that in a creative purchasing opportunity, the City of Plano was able to save \$500,000 on a "gently used" 800 trunked simulcast radio system. The equipment came to Plano by way of the Atlanta Olympic Games. Smart idea, Plano!!!

Vereda Koch, Nortex 9-1-1 Communication District, Wichita Falls, reported she has found two heroes in Wilbarger County. Kert Underwood and Nicholes Lee were honored with a special 9-1-1 assembly at their respective schools on February 19, for their quick response in helping save lives in their homes and in their communities. Way to go guys!

All's well in East Texas. Shelly Cantrell of the 9-1-1 Network of East Texas reports that Red E. Fox is out and about around the county. Shelly has distributed enough kits for 8,000 kids in Smith County. Good job Shelly.

The City of Dallas is busily working on implementing the first 3-1-1 system in Texas. They are currently working with SWBell and the Texas Public Utility Commission to take advantage of the systems recently approved by the FCC. Jana Gottlieb, 9-1-1 Coordinator, says it will be for all "non-emergency city services". We will miss two of our North Region

9-1-1 Coordinators. Sue Smith of the West Texas COG and Dan Gipe of the Henderson County 9-1-1 District have both recently retired. Until next time, Take Care!!

South Coordinator - Hilda Arredondo

Many of the areas are busy upgrading their PSAPs through the process of looking at equipment, installing new equipment and training. Addressing, a never ending endeavor, is keeping many people busy which includes mapping, and postal conversions. To add to all this fun, the Council of Governments are busy working on the Strategic Plan (Five Year Plan). Everyone agrees that this is very important and very intense but realities are, they can't wait for April 15 to have this project complete.

Many of the surrounding areas have had concerns pertaining to 3-1-1 and 7-1-1. Here are some questions: Where will these numbers be answered? If these calls come to my PSAP, who will answer these calls? Will 9-1-1 pay for dispatchers to answer these calls? Will there be another charge to my phone bill for these numbers? Who will pay for the trunking of these calls to a designated place?

If you have questions, please contact your local 9-1-1 Coordinator or contact me at (915) 944-9666.

East Coordinator - Brenda Pope

Spring has Sprung! The bluebonnets are in full bloom, the Spring Conference is history, and work has begun on the Fall Conference! Time flies by so quickly that we don't seem to have enough time to enjoy all the things that come our way. I spoke with several of those in the East Region and here is "What's Happening" in their area...

(continued on page 6)

Austin County, serving Bellville S. O., Bellville and Sealy P.D.s, is in the con-

Where Are the Answers?

Food for Thought about Emergency Communications Training

In May 1996, a group of Public Safety Telecommunicators (TCs) met for the first time while attending a specialized class at the DPS Academy in Austin. This group volunteered to become "Interagency Emergency Communications Instructors" and were attending the training course. The goal was to train Public Safety TCs across the State on training concepts, the instructional process, tools to use during training sessions, communication skills, conflict resolution and the legal and legislative issues involving Public Safety in Texas. During the week, each student had to prepare two lesson plans and make presentations to the class. Many of these presentations provided insightful to the student's professionalism, intellect and pure drive in their chosen career, as well as their quest to improve training within their own agency. Successful completion of the course would net the student a certificate to train Emergency Communications in any size agency within Texas. The course was 46 hours in length and the complexity required students to work late and study hard, but they never lost track that in order to be successful you must also have fun.

I was one of the lucky students who attended this course and I can attest that this group bonded quickly. Part of any training scenario is understanding your audience and this group came from all parts of Texas and represented their home stations proudly. Everyone shared stories, tall tales flowed through the halls with ease, and everyone listened intently to each other's remedy, solutions and suggestions. Several brain-storming sessions resulted in good ideas for everyone, not just a few. The group could not quench their thirst for the answers they came for.

The course taught the entire class how to teach, create lesson plans, conduct evaluations, how to deal with training problems; however, it did not address

one very important element: What to Teach! At the conclusion the entire class concurred that we needed not only topics, but information on how to research, and a list of material, supplies, or videos dealing with Emergency Communications. Anyone who has been in the business long enough knows how limited our training has been. TCLEOSE has taken steps to improve our training by creating the "Voluntary Certification" and has completed pilot classes for this program. The learning objectives will be shared with Interagency Instructors. But this was not enough for many of us. What do we do in the meantime? The class kept asking questions and finally inquired: "Where are the Answers?"

"...we help bring life into the world and many times we are the last person a caller talks to

As it turned out we looked at each other and finally decided that *WE were the answer*. If every member of the Public Safety Telecommunications network waited for someone else to do something we would never get anything done. Sometimes it takes a few daring souls to break through and discover new paths and methods to improve their agency. The class collectively had hundreds of years worth of experience. What one student did not know another student did. This simple concept of "cross-feed" developed further. Following this course several students decided to meet regularly and try to better their agencies. The communications training coordinators for the cities of Garland, Richardson, Plano, and Mesquite started meeting to discuss training issues, common problems, collective solutions and prepare lesson plans that each can teach in their departments. They determined there was strength in numbers.

Individually members of the group did not have sufficient time to dedicate in creating new programs, classes or concepts. They found that together they can share the design and development and reap the benefits with little expended time. The group started growing and Collin Co. Sheriff's Dept. started attending. Each time the group met they would meet at a different agency, allowing more opportunity for cross-feed. Most agencies preach teamwork; however, few rarely practice its full concept and rely on the experience of the group. The problems of one can be resolved through the experience of many.

This is not a new philosophy. For years people have been finding the answers with others. Remember the old adage, "If you copy one it is plagiarism, if you copy several, it is research." In the State of Texas the following professions are required to be licensed and many more are required to have continuing education units to continue practicing in their chosen career: plumbers electricians, hair dressers, barbers, alarm company technicians, law enforcement officers, etc. What is the status of Public Safety Telecommunicator? The first responder? We are required to have 40 hours basic training with no requirement for further training or growth. As Public Safety servants we encounter life and death issues daily, we help bring life into the world and many times we are the last person a caller talks to before death. This is an awesome responsibility and challenge. This career must have continual educational opportunities to provide the answers to all those who serve.

WHERE ARE THE ANSWERS? You have them! I have them! Everyone in this profession has them — we just have not asked the right questions. We need to gather as professionals and work out the answers among us. Many times it is more difficult to recognize our own problems, but we can quickly identify others when problems exist. Try using this to your advantage. It would be a clear signal to the Legislature, TCLEOSE, or any other State agency that we require more than we are getting if we "Lead by Example." Each of us needs to reach out and meet with other agencies, establish a professional rapport that extends beyond those competitive boundaries and allows full disclosure with each other. If we did this collectively, not "one" agency would benefit —we all would! Think of the power if we utilized the corporate knowledge we have in-house and share that knowledge with each other. If I do not have the answer, believe me, someone out there does. If the "cross-feed" concept grows Statewide, our Public Safety Telecommunicators would definitely become, "Second to None."

Where are the answers? We are the answers. So, ask me a question.

Jim Conner
Garland Police Department
972-205-2164

THE LEGAL EAGLE - Woody Glover, Legislative Coordinator

As usual, the legislative issues of interest will be decided at the last moment. In fact, the key bills, from a 9-1-1 perspective, are yet to be filed. With this thought in mind, I intend to give you a few pointers on how to stay abreast of current action in the Texas Legislature. But first, an update on current filings:

“Obtaining current information on the status of legislation...is easy if you have an Internet connection.”

HB 728: Relating to the provision of Texas Poison Center Network Services to other jurisdictions and entities. Referred to Public Health Committee.

SB 388: Companion to HB 728. Placed on local & uncontested calendar on 2/26/97.

HB 1324: Relating to ability of Poison Control Centers to sell public education materials, extend liability protection to addressing

and other vendors, specify restrictions on usage of 9-1-1 fees to provision and enhance 9-1-1 service, protect access line count information from public disclosure, and charge service providers with the responsibility to bill customers correctly. Referred to Safety Public Committee.

HB 1437: Relating to the creation of an emergency telephone call box system for highway users in this state. In Transportation Committee.

HB 657 : Relating to the privilege against disclosure of certain communications by emergency stress management volunteers. In Civil Practices Committee.

SB 102: Relating to the creation and use of an emergency medical services and trauma care system fund. In Finance Committee. This bill proposed financing the trauma care systems fund with a fee imposed on some traffic offenses. Apparently anticipating difficulty in getting the bill passed, the Trauma Advisory Committees have also appeared before the Senate Finance Com-

mittee seeking a method of funding through the ACSEC. The Finance Committee has taken no action on their request.

Obtaining current information of the status of legislation filed with the Texas Legislature is easy. Direct your web browser to <http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/> From this page you may review information of any bill filed with the 73rd, 74th, or 75th sessions of the Texas Legislature. You may see its basic or full history, or complete text. If you are interested in a subject, but do not know which bills, if any, apply, you may do a search of all versions of all bills for specific keywords. You may also search for all bills by a given author, through “View Individual Bill Information.” You may also review committee schedules, memberships, and calendars. The above connections are being added to our NENA-TX web page and should be available by the time you read this.

From this Internet page you may also download complete text of Texas statutes, updated through the 74th session ('95). This is particularly useful if you use your word processor for doing keyword searches of the legislation which govern your agency.



To reach
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(continued from page 3, Across Texas)

clusion era of test period on the new VISIT ENR Nortel equipment with touch screen features at all three PSAPs. Some training has already been done. They have installed Arcview that will enable a map to be displayed for each incident. The rural addressing is done by the Appraisal District and that project is still in action.

Brazos County...Grey Petrey shared with me the updates on their equipment. They are installing ISDN intelligent workstations, by Lucent Technology. The upgrade will allow for selective routing and increase the number of PSAPs to two. It should be operational by summer. Also, the City and County in Bryan has built an Emergency Operation and County Emergency Management office next to the dispatch center.

Harris County...will soon have their very own state-of-the-art multimedia training facility. The room will include eleven touch screen VISIT ENR workstations. Training will be available to PSAPs who have new tcs in need of 9-1-1 systems training as well as a refresher course on the equipment to others. Adele Gottlieb, a former employee of the Network, is under contract to conduct the training. The facility is expected to be complete by mid-April.

Montgomery County...would like to welcome aboard Deborah Rivers. She became the Business Manager on January 10th. Susan Dziekonski is currently acting as Operations Manager. Thanks to Terry Gill, File/Addressing Clerk, for all her help on finding volunteers for the Del Lago Spring Conference. The Spring conference was held in their District.

Galveston County...the District is working to implement a regional trunked radio system which will provide service for all police, fire, and emergency medical services of the cities and county, plus public works agencies. "The result of better radio communications is better protection of life and property for residents and visitors," states Jack Wilkins, Operations Mgr. for the Dis-

trict.

I will try to talk with other areas within the East Region for our next publication. Thanks to all of those that passed on info from their area. Remember, the only way for everyone to know what's going on is for you to communicate...so let me hear from you!! My contact numbers are listed below.

(continued from page7 - Web Talk)

"The Internet" or "The World Wide Web."

One more useful piece of information for those of us in the 9-1-1 community is that the TENA home page now has a Chat room. A **Chat**--or Internet Relay Chat is a location where users can have interactive discussions allowing responses to their input almost immediately. Chris Pikulinski is the Web Master of the TENA site and has set this room up for scheduled Chats. There will be more to come on this in the future. If you have questions or comments, I would be glad to hear from you at mpayne@mail.911.lubbock.tx.us

Mark Payne

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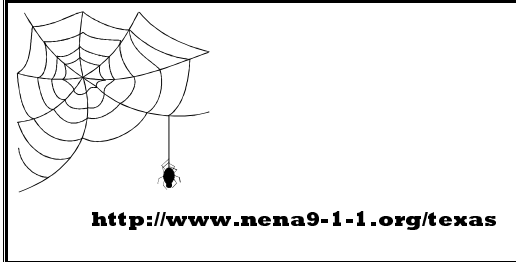
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When people talk about the Internet and the World Wide Web does it sound like Greek to you? You're not alone, while everyone may be jumping onto the Web and Surfing the Net most don't realize or care what's happening behind the scenes. For those of you who do care, let me share with you some of the "Greek" I have learned.

Let me say up front that I am not an expert, but I am happy to share what little I have learned about the Internet with those who also want to learn about this amazing creation that is beginning to shape the way we learn and communicate. Realize that this is just the tip of the iceberg, but I hope it will provide you with a little more knowledge than when you started.

The Internet began as a Department of Defense project during the late 1960's to inter-network four heterogeneous supercomputers over the public switched telephone network. This was facilitated primarily by the creation of the protocol suite **TCP/IP** or Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol. This became the common "language" that these and later computers would use to connect to the Internet. It wasn't until the Internet "got graphical" and spawned the Web around 1991 that it became the popular, household word it is today.

The Internet's most useful tools are most likely electronic mail--or **e-mail**, remote login--or **telnet**, newsgroups--or **Usenet**, and File Transfer--or **FTP**. E-mail is probably the most common reason people get on the Internet. It allows people to exchange thoughts and information anywhere in the world much quicker than regular mail. Telnet is something fewer new Internet users will ever need or use. Telnet provides login access to remote computers allowing the user to run programs, read files or perform other operations on a computer connected to the Internet. This type of service requires that the user attempting to login must have an account on that system.

Usenet and FTP are probably more useful to

the general masses. Usenet servers are a place to exchange thoughts, ideas and opinions and could be considered an electronic bulletin board. There are newsgroups based on just about any subject you can imagine. Lastly, FTP or File Transport Protocol is a service that allows a client computer to copy a file from a host computer. This is most commonly used to download freeware--software that doesn't have to be licensed or purchased--and fixes or updates to software you currently use. In all cases, to use any of the above mentioned services--or protocols--you must have a complementing piece of software loaded on your computer to communicate with that server.

The World Wide Web is probably what most people are interested in and enjoy using the most. It is becoming a multimedia medium that people are sharing not only information, but pictures, sounds and video. The Web is not a separate network or place you can visit, but merely a subset of the Internet. Web servers are computers running yet another protocol known as **HTTP**--or HyperText Transport Protocol. These servers provide the information--commonly referred to as **content**--that you **browse** or view with Netscape NavigatorTM or Internet ExplorerTM. There are other browsers available, but these two are the most popular.

The following are just a few more terms you might have heard in reference to the World Wide Web. **URL** - Uniform or Universal Resource Locator is often referred to as an *address*--for example <http://www.nena9-1-1.org/texas/index.htm>. It is the unique location on the Internet where you can find the related information or *content* of that server. The *http* part of the address is the protocol that the server will use to serve up the information that the client is requesting. The *www.nena9-1-1.org* is the domain and host name of the server. Domain names are much more involved, therefore I will save that for another time. The final part of the URL is the path and document name of the content you are looking for. The *.htm* or *.html* extension signifies to the browser that this is an HTML document so the browser will know how to format the content. **HTML**--or HyperText Markup Language--is a special way of formatting or *marking-up* the content so that your browser can interpret the information regardless of the kind of computer you are using.

The Internet is made up of thousands of servers providing many different functions or services to the clients (you and I) who access them. There is so much to know and learn about not only what's on the Internet, but also how it works. I realize I haven't covered much in this short column, but I hope that it helps you better understand a little of what all the noise is about when people say

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In This Issue...

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**Guardian
Angels**

**Written by:
Bobbie Sellers, Public Safety Dispatcher
Abilene Police Department**

*They sit by the phones, always ready to answer,
In all situations, in any disaster.
They calm the upset and bring light to the confused,
In reality, they themselves have paid many dues.
They have cried for the lost ones, the ones they could not save.
But the lost ones always linger in their minds day to day.*

*The radio is their link to Police, Fire, and such.
They give out the calls and don't expect much.
Just let them know where you are and that you're alright,
It calms their hearts and takes away their fright.
The men and women in Blue, Firefighters and EMS,
Are their extended families, loved ones, and guests.*

*Their biggest fear is to lose one to the street,
So they practice and train day to day, week to week.
Their job is not easy, but they try hard to serve,
Though they seldom receive the recognition they deserve.
Day after day, Night after night,
They sit at their stations and continue to fight.*

*Their stress level is high and their pay is low,
But they have halos to match their hearts of gold.
The calls come in and they send help on the way,
No matter what time, 24 hours a day.
Always thinking of ways to send help faster,
The Guardian Angels, Public Safety Dispatchers.*