



The TENA Transfer



Volume 4, Issue 1

Winter, 1998

On December 17, Dallas became the third city nationally to implement a 3-1-1 system. After nearly three years of preparation, Southwestern Bell turned on the system with a ceremonial 3-1-1 call by Dallas mayor Ron Kirk. Dallas' system is the first in the nation to provide three-digit access to all city services, not just public safety. In Baltimore, MD and San Jose, CA, 3-1-1 is set up to handle "nonurgent" public safety concerns.

The Dallas noon cutover, which rated front page coverage and top story status on most news stations, went off without incident. By day's end city officials reported 1,045 calls on the new number. The city spent \$450,000 to purchase equipment for the nonemergency phone service. Southwestern Bell will charge the city \$74,000 per year for the next three years plus a fee of 5 cents per call, with an estimated 1,000,000 calls anticipated.

The city, which received in excess of 1.5 million calls to 9-1-1 in each of the last five years, estimates that 7 out of 10 calls were not emergencies. City officials saw the implementation of a 3-1-1 system as a way of dealing with misuse of the emergency lines.

Cellular phone users' ability to use the new 3-1-1 system will depend on their service provider. Dallas telecommunications have been trained to answer both 3-1-1 and 9-1-1 calls using sophisticated integrated software. 9-1-1 calls automatically get priority over 3-1-1 calls. During storms and other peak calling times for emergency reports 3-1-1 calls will be sent to an automated answering service.

As far as the 9-1-1 community is concerned, there is still much controversy about whether or not 3-1-1 systems

should be promoted as a solution for misuse of 9-1-1. Comments from Bill Stanton, executive director of NENA, as well as Bill Munn, executive director of Tarrant County 9-1-1 District and current president of NENA were included in the press coverage.

Officials at NENA are worried about potential confusion between 9-1-1 and 3-1-1. A traditional seven digit number for city services would be cheaper than a three digit number and would cause less confusion, said Bill Stanton. Baltimore officials admit they initially underestimated the amount of training that their 3-1-1 officers require. They found that about 45% of 3-1-1 calls are actually emergencies requiring a police dispatch.

For most small cities, a separate 3-1-1 system is impractical and would probably be cost prohibitive. Despite comments by President Bill Clinton, which opened the door for the development of 3-1-1, most city and county 9-1-1 systems are not overwhelmed with calls. Public safety officials from those cities that surround Dallas, San Jose, and Baltimore, are concerned that citizens in their communities will be confused and perhaps irate about not having the service.

"It seems like a very expensive solution where there may not actually be a problem," said NENA President Bill Munn in a recent interview printed in December's *Dispatch Monthly*.

3-1-1

To be
or
not
to be...

Is
that
the
question?

A look inside...

<i>Calendar of Events</i>	2
<i>News from "The Legal Eagle"</i>	5
<i>Conference News</i>	8

From the President...

Toni Dunne

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Happy New Year! With another year behind us, it seems the future is now here. The Federal government has been actively involved with improvements for 9-1-1 services in several arenas. U.S. Attorney, Janet Reno, directed Dept. of Justice (DOJ) attorney's to visit PSAPs in an effort to assure accessibility for TTY users. Are you ready for a visit? With FCC 94-102, we are seeing changes in technology that our ancestors could not even dream of. Is your PSAP ready to receive more calls and/or new data? Although our business can at times feel overwhelming, I think you will agree that it is truly exciting to be in the middle of cutting edge advancements.

Where can you learn more about DOJ requirements and wireless communications as it pertains to communication centers? At our Spring Conference, of course! Mark your calendar for April 20-22nd. We will be celebrating the 10th anniversary of the McClennan County Emergency Communications District (Waco, Texas). I encourage each of you to join us. Several more exciting things are happening at this conference. History will be made when new officers are elected for the first time in the spring. Also, in conjunction with National Telecommunicator Week, TENA and ACSEC join forces to hold our 10th Annual Telecommunicator Appreciation Day celebrations. Look for more information on the conference and how to nominate those very deserving individuals!

Texas is NUMBER ONE in mem-

bership and we are about to be the first chapter to reach 500! A couple of other states are fast approaching, so won't you please help make history and put Texas over the top by signing up a new member today? Each new member is a vital link to public safety and our growing family. Special congratulations to Carol Ortega for becoming NENA's 6,000th member.

By now you should be aware that for the first time in 9 years, National has had to increase dues. While this may be surprising, it is important to understand that our dues cover many things at the national and state level. More importantly, YOU receive numerous benefits and can be proud to be a part of a national effort towards the protection of life and property of our citizens. As a member, you have a voice in issues that impact the profession.

Your Board continues to work for you and your interests. We look forward to a great 1998 with your support. Please feel free to contact us with your ideas or concerns. Communication is the key to our business?....right?

Toni Dunne

Toni Dunne

Calendar of Events

Jan. 12	TTVN Interactive Video TDD/TTY Training at sites across Texas. Call Toni Dunne - 512-305-6918
March 1-4	NENA Technical Development Conference, Orlando
Apr 5-11	National Telecommunicator Week
Apr 15-17	APCO Spring Conference, Austin
Apr 17-22	Interagency Emergency Communications Instructors School, DPS, Austin. Call Toni Dunne - 512-305-6918
Apr 20-23	NENA-Texas Spring Conference, Waco, TX

Across Texas - News from Your Regional Coordinators

North Coordinator - Marsha Reed

Hello from the North Region where today it's cold and rainy! I don't have much to report except that everyone's really busy. At Denco Area 9-1-1 District I hear there is a contract for CML workstations to be installed at their PSAPs by the end of the year. CML is working to develop a "9-1-1B" form for ALI screen corrections that can be filled in automatically from the ALI screen, quickly corrected by the dispatcher, and then "dumped" to a fax at the Denco offices. An easier method for this infrequent process will encourage telecommunicators to complete these forms.



There's so much going on with your Texas chapter before the first of the year. Planning for the Spring conference has begun. Everyone needs to mark their calendars - it should prove to be one of the best ever.

Please remember that elections for new board members are upon us. Everyone's nominations and votes do count. Well, until next time. Hope to see everyone in WACO!

East Coordinator - Brenda Pope

As we wrap up 1997, I'd like to thank each of you for letting me be a part of the NENA-TX Chapter Board. It has been a great experience and lots of fun. I have met lots of new faces and treasure the time spent at each of our meetings and conferences. Our Board is created with lots of wonderful people with great ideas, and I encourage each of you to keep up the great work!

I had the opportunity to "sneak preview" CAPCO's Public Service Announcement. It is fantastic!! Be looking for it after the

first of the year in any of the metropolitan areas. If you do not get to see it, call Joanna Oliver for more information on it. By the way, "Congratulations" to you Joanna, I wish you much happiness!! (I'll let her share the news with you.)

Harris County 9-1-1 Network had an open house recently with a dedication to their newest additions. The "Hall of Dreams" is superb!! You have to go to Houston to see this, it's unbelievable. It consists of the original proclamation, the signing of the legislation on adopting 9-1-1 as the official emergency number in Texas. Red E. Fox and his friends are hand painted on the hall, along with many other items from the past up to the most recent wireless additions in today's real world of 9-1-1. Also, their training center is up and running with Adele Gottlieb as their contracted trainer. The room is equipped with 10 wheelchair accessible positions that can be used as an actual PSAP if needed.

Remember to start making plans now for our Spring conference, April 20-23 in Waco. This is a combined conference with the State 9-1-1 agency to honor our Telecommunicators of the Year. Get your PSAPs informed early so they can start nominating and planning to attend this event. Our host District, McClennan County, is helping the Board plan for a conference you won't want to miss. See you there! Happy holidays and may each of you be blessed with good health and happiness.

South Coordinator - Hilda Arredondo-Gariby

Greetings from South Texas! Hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and are ready for another great year!

In our areas, our folks are busy, busy, busy. With some areas upgrading their equipment due to the fact that it is time to change out equipment and other areas up-

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Why not answer uninitiated calls? I have been listening to this discussion for some time and am still not clear as to what the objection is to answering calls that are not registered with a carrier.

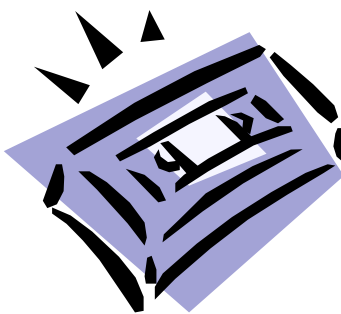
It seems to me that with this type of call the phone number for call back is not delivered to the PSAP and this is a problem, but the problem is a lot worse than the problem of not being notified of an emergency as soon as possible. As long as we are not disconnected from the call we do not need the call back number. In fact, in our PSAP one of the first things we train everyone to do is verify the address and phone number on wired and wireless calls. Once...done, you don't need the call back number anyway.

...I picture it being late at night and a car is passing my house at about 4 a.m. and sees flames coming from the attic of my house. The driver picks up the cell phone that came with the car he just bought and tries to call 9-1-1. The call does not go through and he has to stop the car, bang on my door, and try to wake my family up. We're not at home...and he then goes to the neighbor's house and tries to wake them up. Anyway you get the idea.

I think the critical thing for emergency communications is to get the message to the emergency provider as soon as possible. Sacrificing the receipt of a call because we cannot get ANI seems to me like throwing the baby out with the bath water.

Am I being simple minded about this or is there something I am missing?

Mike Newell
PSM Consulting, New Orleans
www.communicue.net/psm



NENA- Texas Lending Library

The NENA - Texas Chapter Lending Library is now located at the Capital Area Planning Council in Austin. Titles include:

- ◇ How to Deal with Difficult People
- ◇ Implementing Total Quality Mgmt
- ◇ Dealing with Conflict & Confrontation
- ◇ Becoming Red E. Fox
- ◇ Stress Management for Professionals (6 audio tapes)
- ◇ TCCJC '97 Conference Sessions

To check out materials, contact Joanna Oliver, CAPCO Public Education/Training Manager, 512-916-6090 or jloliver@capco.state.tx.us



Texas is **Boot-Scootin'** close to a total of 500 NENA members!

Wouldn't it be a **KICK** to be the first state to set that record?

Recruit a new member to-

THE LEGAL EAGLE -

Woody Glover, Legislative Coordinator

On December 1, the FCC issued an order to reinforce its position of improving wireless 9-1-1. It now requires wireless carriers to transmit all 9-1-1 calls to a PSAP without regard to validation procedures intended to identify and intercept calls from non-subscribers. This effectively removed the option of PSAP choice originally offered in Docket 94-102. In the original order, each PSAP had the option of receiving or rejecting non-validated calls.

FCC Reinforces Its Support of Wireless 9-1-1

Additionally, it ordered immediate compliance by all wireless carriers on processing TTY calls from analog wireless telephones, while suspending compliance by digital telephones until October 1, 1998. This is to allow time for wireless carriers to overcome technical barriers and compatibility problems on digital equipment. Currently, most cellular telephones are analog, while PCS telephones are digital. The industry is rapidly moving toward digital signaling.

The FCC also upheld its decision to require that, as of April 1, 1998, covered wireless carriers be able to provide ANI and cell site information for 9-1-1 calls to the PSAP. It also reaffirmed its schedule of Phase II of 9-1-1, which becomes effective on October 1, 2001.

The FCC had delayed its October 1, 1997 deadline for the passing of all 9-1-1 calls and TTY compliance while it reexamined compatibility problems. This order effectively reinstated these requirements, and made clear that the other deadlines were not delayed.

In separate statements issued at the same time as the official order, FCC Chairman

William E. Kennard and Commissioner Gloria Tristani expressed their support for wireless 9-1-1 and encouraged the industry to rapidly solve the TTY compatibility issue.

The requirement to pass all 9-1-1 calls, including those from non-validated telephones, means that people will be able to use cellular phones to call 9-1-1 even though they do not subscribe to wireless telephone service. This does not appear to be widely known to the general public, although this may change as it was featured on *Primetime Live* in November. Also featured in the article were the concern about "holes" in cell area coverage, and the fact that other carriers may be able to cover these "holes" if the telephone is programmed to scan all carriers.

This subject, and others, is being addressed by representatives of public safety organizations, consumer advocate groups, and the wireless industry. This group, known collectively as Wireless E9-1-1 Implementation Ad Hoc (WEIAD), met in September and

(Continued on page 6)



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(Continued from page 3, Across Texas)
grading to ALI. The counties in this region continue to work on their addressing projects. With addressing as an on-going project, many counties are at different levels in their addressing maintenance.

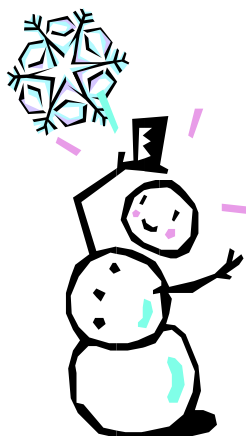
Public education has been an on-going project as well for the majority of these counties. Even Santa Claus got into the swing of 9-1-1 and did his part in educating the children.

Crockett County has been working on getting 9-1-1 service. They hope to officially cut-over on January 14, 1998. Now the whole state of Texas is covered with 9-1-1 service!

All of the COG's 9-1-1 Departments are getting ready for or have been audited by the State Auditor's Office. There will be a written report pertaining to the audits issued by the end of May, 1998.

On a personal note, thanks for all the good wishes on both my wedding and Tony's surgery. He continues to improve and we are hoping that no more surgeries will be required. Keep your prayers coming our way!

No "snow job" here - The national office of NENA has sent out notice of its first dues increase after 9 years of holding the line!



(Continued from page 5, Legal Eagle)
November, with an additional meeting planned for January '98. There appears to be general consensus among the group that "the call must go through," but disagreement about how this is to be achieved. The consumer advocates want the phone to automatically select the strongest signal and use that, while the wireless industry says there are problems with that method. Public Safety, in general (although not unanimously), says "the call must go through," but we are flexible on how the determination is to be made.

The January meetings are to be three days of engineering discussions on the problems, and two days of policy determination by the parties. The recommendations of the WEIAD will then be provided to the FCC for consideration. The FCC encourages the parties to work together for solutions, and is expected to give strong consideration to the recommendations.

Your 1996-97 NENA - TX Board

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The TENA Transfer

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In the past I have written about several key concepts to understanding a little bit about how the Internet and World Wide Web work. Of course, you don't have to understand it to use it or enjoy it. This time I thought I might just provide a little insight, as I see it, as to the state of the Information Super Highway.

Much of what makes the Internet such an amazing creation is also what makes it so hard to understand and explain. There are so many different technologies present in the Internet today that I find it difficult to keep up. Gone are the days of writing simple HyperText Markup Language (HTML) home pages, which would provide information to the reader. Now web sites make use of Java, Java Script, Active X, multi-media plug-ins, streaming audio and video and I think even the kitchen sink. Don't get me wrong, all of these enhancements make our browsing a much more interesting and fun experience. As web sites become more interactive it often comes at a price. Generally, these sites become slower as your modem and the sometimes-congested Internet strain to move all the graphics and multi-media data.

Don't worry though, the brightest minds are diligently working on higher speed connections for John and Joan Smith, average users. Companies are promising Digital Subscriber Lines (xDSL), cable modems and satellite services in an effort to increase the speed at which we cruise the Information Superhighway. As more people, companies, institutions and countries join the ever-shrinking WWW you may have noticed that at times it seems more like the Information Super Parking Lot. You know what I'm talking about, the "Waiting for reply" message when

you enter a URL or click on a link.

The way we use the Internet will change dramatically over the next several years. With more and more use of "push" technologies, which deliver information to clients (us) on a regular basis, our browsing time may actually decrease. That may sound bad, but what most of us seek from the Internet is easy access to information in a timely fashion. However, much time is and always will be spent in a purely recreational fashion.

See if this sounds familiar . . . *Channels*. That's right, subscribe to your favorite channels such as sports, news, entertainment, business, whatever interests you and the latest information will be "pushed" to your desktop. This allows you to spend less time hunting information down and more time using it. Someday soon, you may roll out of bed, shuffle into the kitchen, pour a hot cup of coffee – which will probably be connected to the Internet – and pick up your digital, LCD News-Tablet, which just downloaded the latest global news, a live stock ticker and video footage from your local news.

The next decade is going to be an exciting one for the world of computers and networks. Someday you may sit back and say; "I remember when the Internet was..."

If you are interested in push technology, PointCast is a starting point. Visit www.pointcast.com to download their free software. If this is a little much for you initially, you might be interested in list-servers. These servers can be found throughout the Internet providing information via email on various topics. Visit www.tipworld.com to subscribe to computer-related list-servers.

Until next time, I wish everyone happy holidays and a prosperous new year.

Mark Payne
Information Systems Manager
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District

The TENA Transfer

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In This Issue...

3-1-1 - To Be or Not To Be?

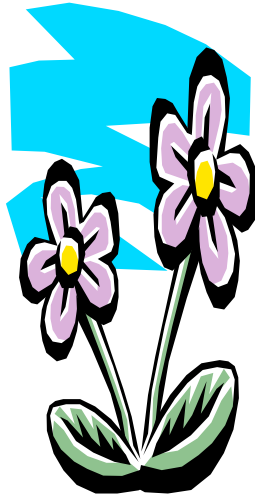
See Page 1.

Make plans to head to the heart of Texas for the Spring TENA conference, April 20-23. The Waco Convention Center on the banks of the Brazos River will be the host site for this annual meeting.

Added this spring will be the State of Texas Telecommunicator Awards. TCs of the Year and Silent Heroes honored at the Wednesday luncheon. In the past, these awards were held in August. The 1998 Spring TENA Conference will consolidate these two events.

Hotel sites are the Waco Hilton and the Waco Marriott Courtyard, both within easy walking distance of the convention center, boutiques, restaurants, and the historic Suspension Bridge.

Here's a peak at the tentative agenda.....



Monday, April 20

- 7:30 am Golf Tournament -
Lake Waco Country Club
- 9am-3pm NENA Sponsored Course
- 2pm-5pm Registration
Exhibitor set up
TENA Board meeting
- 7-10pm Earlybird Party

Tuesday, April 21

- 9 - 6:30pm Registration
- 9am Opening Session
- 10am-6:30 Exhibit Hall Open
- 10:30-Noon Concurrent Sessions
- Noon-1:30 Box Lunch, Exhibit Hall
- 3-4:30pm Afternoon Sessions
- 4:30-6:30 Exhibit Hall Reception
- 6:30pm Buses Load for Party
- 7-9pm 9-1-1 Appreciation Party
Texas Ranger Hall of Fame
Dance
- 9-11pm

Wednesday, April 23

- 8am Red E. Fox Bun Run
- 8-9am Continental Breakfast
- 9-10am General Session
- 10:15-11am TENA Business Meeting
- Noon-2pm Awards Luncheon