



**Cumberland County
Department of Public Safety**

The Communiqué

9-1-1 Communications Center Year End Report

By: Megan Moriarty

**Cumberland County
Department of
Public Safety**

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The Public Safety Emergency Telephone Act (Act 78) requires that Pennsylvania Public Safety Communications centers answer 90% of emergency phone calls in 3 rings or in 10 seconds or less. Once again Cumberland County continues to perform beyond this requirement answering 98.7% of emergency phone calls in the 10 second standard. The communications center handled 362,949 phone calls this year averaging out to 1,022 phone calls per day. Roughly 250 of these phone calls were emergency calls, with the remaining being administrative in nature. These calls generated an aver-

age of 34 fire incidents per day, 73.7 EMS incidents and 338.3 police incidents. An average of 8.4 phone calls were received per day for outside agencies which includes the District Attorney’s Office, Children and Youth Services, the Coroner’s Office, Juvenile and Adult Probation, Aging, District Justices, and Domestic Relations.

The Communication Center experienced some exciting changes this year when on July 24th, 2007 at 10:00 am, Cumberland County Commissioner Bruce Barclay effectively “threw the switch” on the 800 MHz radio system by calling headquarters from Upper

Allen Township and announcing over Fire Channel 1 that “Effective immediately all radio communications will be conducted on the Open Sky 800 MHz radio system. This system is fully operational.” Headquarters acknowledged and within seconds communications was live and dispatching several calls throughout the county on the 800 MHz system. This system will allow police, fire and EMS to communicate on the same channel (via talk groups), on the scene of incidents, which they were unable to do before.

Emergency Management Year End Report

By: Megan Moriarty

The DPS Emergency Management staff had a busy and exciting year in 2007. The Emergency Operations Center was full of activity this year with several drills and activations. Drills included the federal evaluated Three Mile Island Exercise and the two-night Dark December Exercise. The EOC was activated 8 times this year. This includes activation for the Valentines Day Snow/Ice storm that crippled the state and the ice storm in December that left thousands of Cumberland County citizens without power.

The SHOT team responded to 4 incidents this year and provided technical assistance on 15 incidents. The team also kept busy with training, logging over 90 hours. The team was also active this year partaking in many public displays and outreach

programs along with Wally Wise Guy, the Local Emergency Planning Committee’s mascot that teaches kids how to shelter in place.

Nearly 60 training courses were set up this year through DPS and the office assisted in advertising for over 450 courses. The Emergency Services Training Institute facilitated several training sessions throughout the year, which included training on ladders, roof ventilation, water flow, confined space, and water supply.

As part of a new outreach initiative that started in 2007, DPS staff hit the road to talk to Cumberland County citizens about several important topics. Nearly 1,700 third graders were spoken to on the function of the 9-1-1 center and 150 high school students learned what it takes to be a dispatcher. A new emergency prepared-

ness education program geared towards citizens and local businesses was started late in 2007 and was presented to businesses and civic groups totaling over 650 people. The ever growing annual Public Safety Summerfair/Open House was also held over the summer with nearly 1,500 people in attendance to enjoy over 50 demonstrations, informative booths and displays. The staff was also hard at work assisting with outreach for the Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT). Nearly 1,600 citizens were informed of the program and 15 citizens completed the training with much interest being generated for CERT training in 2008.

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BUCKLE UP!

By: Megan Moriarty

On April 23, 2005, Brian Hunton had been a firefighter with the Amarillo Texas Fire Department for one year when his life was tragically cut short. While responding to an alarm, Ladder Truck No. 3, in which Hunton was riding, made a right hand turn. As they made this turn, the door on the left rear side of the truck swung open and Hunton fell from the truck. Hunton died two days later as a result of the injuries he sustained during the fall. Hunton was not wearing his seat belt, had he been, he may still be alive today.

Every year firefighters are killed and/or injured simply because they do not wear their seatbelts. In 2007, 12 of the 115 reported line of duty deaths were the result of not wearing seatbelts. A new initiative has been set forth to work towards preventing these deaths and encouraging firefighters to buckle-up. This initiative goes hand-in-hand with the ongoing "Everyone Goes Home" Campaign. The initiative is being sponsored by the US Fire Administration, International Association of Fire Chiefs, National Volunteer Fire Council, National Fire Protection Association, and the Na-

tional Fallen Firefighters Foundation and was kicked off on November 8th by the members of District of Columbia Fire Department (DCFD) taking the pledge. This seat belt safety campaign asks firefighters to sign a pledge to wear their seatbelts and to encourage their fellow firefighters to wear their seatbelts as well. The pledge reads: "I pledge to wear my seat belt whenever I am riding in a Fire Department vehicle. I further pledge to insure that all my brother and sister firefighters riding with me wear their seat belts. I am making this pledge willingly; to honor Brian Hunton my brother firefighter because wearing seat belts is the right thing to do."

Cumberland County Department of Public Safety understands the importance of this initiative and is challenging every firefighter within the county to take this pledge. Each company has been sent a pledge sheet and it is the hope of DPS to reach 100% compliance with this initiative. **Buckle up, it might just save your life!** For more information on the Cumberland County initiative contact John Quirk or Megan Moriarty at DPS. For more information on the national campaign visit www.trainingdivision.com.



Firefighters escaped these major accidents with minor injuries because they were wearing their seatbelts.



Dark December Exercise

By: Megan Moriarty

It's a cold winter night and the staff at Carlisle Regional Medical Center is hard at work treating patients from a mass casualty incident that just occurred, suddenly the power goes out, what will they do? This was the problem facing nearly 1,000 participants and 13 hospitals from around the 8 county region during the two-night South Central PA Regional Counter Terrorism Task Force Dark December Drill held on December 12th and 13th.

The DPS Emergency Operations Center was fully activated

for the drill. Calls came in the first night reporting a structure collapse at the Carlisle Fair Grounds with nearly 100 injured citizens. About twenty five patients were "transported" to Carlisle Regional Medical Center, and the rest were sent to other hospitals in the region.

The next phase of the drill involved Carlisle Regional Medical Center experiencing a power outage and needing to relocate a total of 200 patients to neighboring hospitals. Every participating hospital received between 15 and 30 patients to

exercise internal procedures.

The EOC was staffed both nights with nearly 30 people hard at work providing support to the local emergency responders and hospitals.. An incident management team was on hand during the drill to offer support to the EOC. This team was comprised of 10 South Central Task Force members who offered their expertise in planning, coordinating and resource management. The exercise was a success and provided a great learning opportunity for all agencies involved.



Community of Heroes Softball Challenge

By: Claudia Garner and Megan Moriarty

Brave police officers throughout Cumberland County work selflessly to protect and serve the citizens of the county. Few citizens realize though that many of these officers go above and beyond the call of duty by doing volunteer work to continue to better the world we live in.

Several officers within Cumberland County put their time and efforts into supporting the Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital and the local Children's Miracle Network (CMN). CMN is an international non-profit organization that is affiliated with nearly 170 children's hospitals. CMN funding supports pediatric services and enhances the ability of Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital to provide top notch pediatric health care for sick children throughout Central Pennsylvania.

Inspired by how a fellow officer was touched by CMN during

a hardship with his child, Curt Heckler of the Lower Allen Township Police Department was inspired to support the Children's Miracle Network in any way he could. Little did he realize that he too would have to travel down that difficult road with his family. Curt experienced first-hand how much the CMN and its supporters can help provide comfort to the children and their families during the birth and loss of his first born son, Derek. About three years later, Curt's third son, Cole, was born



and spent ten days in the NICU at Harrisburg Hospital. Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital came to Harrisburg to evaluate him and deemed he was in good hands, but wanted all of his follow-up care to be done at Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. Cole was able to receive incomparable care thanks to the supporters of CMN in purchasing state of the art equipment for the brilliant doctors to use

in treating him. Cole was released of their care and is a normal, healthy 4 year old boy who loves playing with the family dog and his older brother, Carter.

Knowing how much the support of CMN meant to Curt and his family, in 2006 he organized a softball tournament in efforts help raise funds for CMN and try to give back. Police, fire and EMS officials from all over Cumberland County and the surrounding area participate and assist in the planning of this annual tournament.



Since it's start, he has successfully organized two tournaments and is planning for this year's to be Saturday, September 6th, 2008. At last years tournament, participants had the opportunity to win raffle items and participate in a silent auction. They could bid for items such as an autographed picture of Derek Jeter and Roger Clemens, as well as other sports memorabilia. A message and autographed picture were also available from Miss America, Lauren Nelson, who chose CMN

as her national platform for 2007. If you are interested in participating in the tournament or helping in any way, feel free to contact Curt via email at: CommunityOfHeroes@comcast.net.

The work towards supporting CMN does not stop here. Curt, along with Bill Goodhart of Middlesex Township Police Department are big supporters of the RED102.3 and I105 "I Care For Kids" radiothon that occurs every February. Bill and his family experienced the great things CMN can do after an accident injured their daughter Allison, at a young age. Bill and Allison work together to support several fundraisers for CMN. Last year their efforts helped raised over \$304,000 to help buy 12 SiPAP Delivery Systems (provides a mild and less invasive form of ventilation) and this year's goal was to buy a Cardiac Ultra Sound machine. If you are interested in making your pledge, please contact CMN today at 877-266-2647.

THE COMMUNICATIONS CORNER-BY DOUG GLASS

800 MHz Re-Banding Update

The FCC mandated realignment of the 800 MHz band is continuing nationwide. The realignment is part of an effort to mitigate radio interference to Public Safety radio systems that are FCC licensed in the 800MHz band. Realignment costs are paid for by Sprint/Nextel for affected licensed system entities. The Cumberland County radio system is affected by the realignment mandate. Sprint/

Nextel and Cumberland County entered into several agreements such as the "Frequency Reconfiguration Agreement". These agreements detail the costs associated with the FCC mandated re-banding to be paid for by Sprint/Nextel.

As for Cumberland County's 800 MHz radio system, the realignment will result in some frequency change outs; re-tuning of base stations and mobile style subscriber radios; complete swap out of the current port-

able radios and portable accessories; and training for the services for the new line of portable radios. This swap out of the entire portable radio line will result in the services receiving new portable radios and accessories on a one for one exchange basis. Cumberland County is currently waiting for the approval of software for the new portables by the Commonwealth of PA. Several specific enhancements in the portable software were requested by the County

and the Commonwealth. Once the software is approved, a schedule will be developed for the agency portable radio training, portable radio (and accessories) swap out; and mobile radio reprogramming. Updates can be found on the Cumberland County website (www.ccpa.net) under Public Safety. Look for the "800 MHz Radio Project" link.

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Lights For Life

By Claudia Garner

On Friday, December 7th, 2007 the DPS participated in the annual Lights on For Life event held at Cumberland Valley High School and sponsored by South Central PA Highway Safety. The purpose of the event is to discourage drivers from getting behind the wheel while impaired. Our staff proudly positioned the Mobile Command Unit and Public Safety 1, the newly acquired 2008 Ford Expedition among the long line of emergency apparatus in the stationary parade. Fire, EMS, and Police departments from all over Cumberland County, Cumberland County Coroner's Office, Senator Pat Vance, and over 180 students from S.A.D.D. organizations from as far as Shippensburg to Cedar Cliff High Schools joined forces to show their support.

The days' events were kicked off with an assembly for the students providing an opportunity

to listen to guest speakers including: an 11 year old victim of a DUI crash, a trooper from PSP, and the Cumberland County Coroner, Mike Norris. Then it was out to the streets for students to rally with signs to flash at passing motorists as the parade of



emergency vehicles lined the other side of Carlisle Pike. In the short hour that this parade rallied in the fight to prevent impaired driving, statistics show that 30 people would have been injured and 2 killed as a result of someone's poor decision to get behind the wheel while under the influence. DPS was proud to be among the many to help increase the public's awareness and support this cause. For more information on Lights on for Life, contact Coordinator Robb Mott at the South Central PA Highway Safety at the American Trauma Society: 1-800-822-2358.



PUBLIC SAFETY SPECIAL FEATURE



Ready Mom

By: Megan Moriarty

"How wonderful is it that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world" -Anne Frank. Cumberland County's very own 'ReadyMom' embodies this quote as she works towards making sure her fellow citizens are prepared in the event of a H5N1 virus (Avian Flu) pandemic flu outbreak. 'ReadyMom', also known as Karen, first learned of the H5N1 Avian Flu and the threat of a possible pandemic in the spring of 2006. She has since made it her personal mission to make sure her family, friends and fellow citizens are prepared for this threat. Karen says at first when she started reading about the virus and the devastation it could cause, she couldn't believe it, until she started reading articles by some rather reputable medical sources. "I found discussion forums on the subject and found even more information. I found other people who had been following this virus much

longer than I. Those discussion forums are where I found information on the history of the virus, it's progression and it's potential. I also found out ways to prepare for it's coming." 'ReadyMom' has since attended several state conferences, completed several courses, created a web forum, outreach program and serves on the Cumberland County Pandemic Preparation Committee. Most recently she collaborated with Dr. Susan Chu organizing an inter-national grassroots parent organization 'ReadyMoms Alliance' which is a legal, non-profit organization 'concerned about the potential of the next pandemic on children, families and communities'. They have recently attended the *American Public Health Association* conference in Washington DC (Nov, 2007), the *2nd National Emergency Management Summit* in Washington DC (Feb 2-5, 2008), and the *2008 Public Health Preparedness Summit* in Atlanta GA (Feb 12-22, 2008). At these conferences, they showcase the Home Preparation display that

'ReadyMom' has been taking around the Central PA area, encouraging other communities, health and government officials to utilize this display as a successful model for community awareness & preparation. Karen views her self as "a full-time Pandemic Flu Community activist whose goal is to make local communities aware of the threat of a potential pandemic and how families can prepare." The threat of a pandemic is very real and it's important to note that 'ReadyMom' is not the only resource out there actively working towards preparation. Locally, Cumberland County DPS and the American Red Cross are currently offering information and assistance in preparation process as well. The federal government is also very active in this movement. For more information visit www.ccpa.net, www.readymoms.org, www.getpandemicready.org, or www.redcross.org.