

# THE 9-1-1 COMMUNICATOR



Volume 1, Issue 2

May 1998

enhancing communications between public, public safety agencies and government

## OPCD BOARD

Warren McDaniels  
Supt. N.O. Fire Dept.  
Chairman of Board  
Mr. Robert Eichhorn  
Director, N.O. Emergency Preparedness  
Vice Chairman of Board

## BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. John Berault  
Acting CEO Medical Center of Louisiana.  
Brig. General Landreneau  
Louisiana National Guard  
Dr. Brobson Lutz  
Orleans Parish Medical Society  
Richard Pennington  
Supt. N.O. Police Dept.  
Mr. Mark Romig  
Mayoral Appointment  
Capt. Leonard M. Ryan  
Louisiana State Police  
Ms. June Sanchez  
Mayoral Appointment  
Ms. Sheila Webb  
Director, N.O. Dept. of Health  
General Counsel  
William A. Hawkins

## TELECOMMUNICATOR OF THE YEAR 1998 AWARDS

On April 16, 1998, four telecommunicators from the New Orleans Police and Fire Departments, and the New Orleans Health Department-EMS were selected to receive the second annual

**Mark Achary**, Senior Systems Manager, employed with the New Orleans Health Department since November 1990;  
**Claudette Adams**, Senior Dispatcher for the New Orleans Fire Department who has been with the



Stuart P. Carroll Telecommunicator of the Year Award Recipients: Mark Achary, Giselle Bertrand, Georgia Caston and Claudette Adams

Telecommunicator of The Year Award, sponsored by OPCD. This award was created to coincide with National Telecommunicator Week proclaimed by Congress. The men and women chosen were selected for their commitment to professionalism while serving the public and their agency under many challenging situations. Receiving the awards were

department for 24 years;  
**Giselle Bertrand** Complaint Operator with the New Orleans Police Department since 1991 and  
**Georgia Caston**, Senior Police Dispatcher with the New Orleans Police Department for 18 years. These individuals represent the many women and men who work as telecommunicators in our public safety agencies.

## Celia Seymour 30 Years of Service at NOPD

May 6, 1968 Celia J. Seymour walked into the bottom floor of Criminal Court building and began a journey that would span into a 30 year career. "One of four black women answering calls from the citizens of New Orleans during those times was very challenging", says Mrs. Celia J. Seymour, a 30 year veteran call taker at the New Orleans Police Department. She remembers calls were handwritten and walked over to one of three dispatchers. "Two call takers per shift handled the entire city!", she recalls, "the room was so small and narrow we could not accommodate any more than that". Mrs. Seymour was trained by a police officer, remembers how knowledge and memory of the city sectors made a call taker invaluable. cont. page 2



Mrs. Celia J. Seymour  
Police Operator #54,  
30 Year Veteran  
Complaint Operator

## THE 9-1-1 COMMUNICATOR

The 9-1-1 Communicator is a quarterly publication of the Orleans Parish Communication District .  
Direct all inquiries to Editor, Ausetua AmorAmenkum,  
301 South Broad Street, New Orleans, La. 70119 504-826-1200  
Fax: 504-826-1204 email: aamenkum@communique.net  
Staff Writers: Mike Newell, Melissa Sweetman, Orlando McDowelle  
Jeanette Williams, & William Hawkins  
Contributing Writers: Stephen Gordon, Thomas Levy

## IN THIS ISSUE.....



First Responder Update.....Page 2  
NOPD Promotions.....Page 3  
OPCD Training.....Page 3  
Wireless Report.....Page 3  
Telecommunicator News.....Page 4

# FIRST RESPONDER PROGRAM

By Thomas Levy

The First Responder Program was scheduled to be implemented on December 15, 1996. However, the collision of the Bright Field freighter into the Riverwalk wharf, hastened its' beginning by one day. This program was designed as a pilot one. Eight engine companies strategically located throughout the city were designated as first responders. The men on these units were given (and continue to be given) special medical training. Their purpose is to expedite professional medical assistance to the populace.

## HOW DOES FIRST RESPONDER WORK?

The way this program works is as follows: The call for medical help is received by the police 9-1-1 call taker. Once it is determined to be a medical call, the call is forwarded to the EMS (emergency medical service) center, where an ambulance is dispatched. At the same time, the EMS call taker routes the call through the CAD system (Computer Aided Dispatch system) to the fire communication center. The Fire Department call taker determines if an engine is

available for dispatch to the medical emergency. If so, the dispatcher sends a fire unit to that location. In many cases (due to the number of EMS units available and work load) the fire engine arrives prior to the ambulance. Their assignment is to stabilize the situation until the EMS unit arrives on the scene. Depending on the emergency, there are instances where the first responder unit handles the entire incident, freeing the EMS unit for another emergency response. This is a great plus for the citizens.

Since the implementation of this program, the fire department has responded to over 11,000 EMS incidents. There have been documented cases, where the first responder company's quick arrival and proper action saved the life of the victim. This has been a very successful program, however it has increased the work load

of both the unit in the field as well as the communication center. At present, the total number of dispatches made by Fire Alarm during the first year of this program, has just about doubled. If we go beyond the pilot program and do first responder on a complete city wide basis, it is anticipated that the number of dispatches will quadruple (yearly), what they were prior to the first responder days.

The men and women of the fire department have done a tremendous job making the First Responder Program a great success. They should be commended for their dedication and professionalism. However, the public is the real winner.

Thomas Levy is the Asst. Supervisor of Fire Communications  
New Orleans Fire Department

*“Since the implementation of the First Responder Program, the Fire Department has responded to over*

## OPCD SPONSORS EMD TRAINING



Mark Achary and Tamia Guenard were recently certified as APCO EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatcher) Instructors. Each instructor completed the 32 hour course which uses the NHTSA National Standard Curriculum for EMD as its basis. Topics covered provided the student with the knowledge and skills to answer 9-1-1 type calls for emergency medical service.

Plans are currently underway to certify all EMS telecommunicators who are presently EMTs to have the additional certification as EMDs.

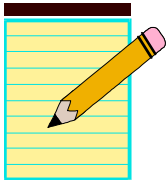
## 126 RECEIVE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE TRAINING

On May 4 - 7, 1998, Orleans Parish Communication District (OPCD) facilitated four sessions of the **PowerPhone Domestic Violence** Class taught by George Deuchar, Training Associate of PowerPhone and Sergeant of the New Jersey Police Department. 125 men and women from EMS, YWCA Battered Women Program, Tulane Medical Police, and New Orleans Police

New Orleans Police Department Communication personnel as well as field units participated in this training. Participants received an overview of the domestic violence as well as strategies for coping with stresses inherent in telecommunications. All attendees received a certificate of completion in Crisis Communications

## Seymour, cont.,

However with the invention of CAD she feels that the computer is a miracle. Police 54, as she always prefaces her calls, is an example of the dedication and perseverance that sets Celia Seymour apart from her coworkers. She has led an exemplary career, always on time and very professional. It is the knowledge that call takers like Celia Seymour are on the job that lets the citizens of New Orleans rest a little easier when calling 9-1-1



**OPCD  
TRAINING  
SCHEDULE**

**EMT  
Dispatcher  
Workshop**

June 11, 1998  
This is a pre-conference workshop that will be taught in conjunction with the Louisiana Association of National Registered Emergency Medical Technicians Educational Conference that will be held June 12-14, 1998

**APCO Basic  
Telecommunicator  
Course**

Session #98-17  
July 20 -28, 1998

Session #98-18  
Oct. 12-20, 1998  
This 7 day course is the basic telecommunicator course by which all participates receive international certification

**OPCD  
SUPERVISOR  
COURSE**

Sept. 21-23,  
1998.

This 3 day course will be open to all newly appointed supervisors as well as veteran supervisors from public safety agencies.

**COMING SOON**

**NOPD PROMOTES SIX SENIOR POLICE  
DISPATCHERS**

On April 26, 1998 the New Orleans Police Department promoted its second group of civilian supervisors for the Communications Division. Six former dispatchers now wear the new title of Senior Police Dispatcher. S.P.D.s as they are usually referred to, are responsible for the day to day operations on each of the three platoons. They are responsible for making lineups, doing payrolls, making notifications as well as monitoring calls, processing citizen complaints and administering disciplinary actions.

Congratulations go out to our newly appointed supervisors:

**Cheryl Jacobs, 18 years of service**

**Mary Polk, 17 years of service**

**Paulette Brown, 9 years of service**

**Annie Lockett, 9 years of service**

**Letitia Joseph, 8 years of service**

**Gesielle Roussel, 7 years of service.**

Mary Polk, Gesielle Roussel, Cheryl Jacobs,



Annie Lockett, Paulette Brown, Letitia Joseph and Supt. Richard Pennington

The transition from dispatcher to senior police dispatcher is one that is full of challenges and adjustments.

“Working with people who you were friends with and now have to supervise is the biggest challenge to me” says newly appointed S.P.D. Gesielle Roussel. Lt. Stephen Gordon, Asst. Commander of Communications believes that the increased number of new civilian positions will enhance the management and supervision of the Communication Center.

“These individual members represent our best and brightest and have the highest level of professionalism. We are very proud of them.”

**CLASS #98-16 RECEIVES APCO CERTIFICATION**

The first class of 1998, Session #98-16 of the APCO (Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials) Basic Telecommunicator Training Course was completed March 31, 1998. Fourteen telecommunicators from American Medical Response, Slidell Police Department and the New

Orleans Police Department received international certification in public safety dispatching. Attendees participated in 40 hours of intense study including TDD training and stress management. Students spend a full day at the Municipal Training Academy with police and fire recruits and take a

geographical tour of the city.

**CLASS # 98-16**

- Lechia Allen
- Loyce Alexander
- Katrina Alexander
- Nishe Collins
- Wendy Ervin
- Bernadine Fields
- Ebony Flowers
- Belinda Helffrich
- Dionne Johnson
- Julie Marshall
- Jeanette Preston
- Deborah Scott
- Sandra Trascher
- George Walters

**WIRELESS COMMITTEE  
MEETS IN NEW ORLEANS**

by William Hawkins, Gen. Counsel OPCD

Friday, May 15, 1998 the APCO/NENA Wireless Subcommittee met in New Orleans to discuss various issues relative to FCC requirements for providing the telephone number and location of wireless callers who dial 9-1-1.

The meeting was facilitated by William Hawkins, General Counsel to OPCD (Chairman of the committee). In attendance were 9-1-1 District directors from around the state including Bill Vincent, Lafayette; Michael Wainwright, Shreveport; Sonya Wiley, Alexandria (President of LA Chapter of NENA); Katie Zeringue, Lafourche; Mark Boudreaux, Houma, and D.J. Mumhrey, Jefferson. Also in attendance were Peter Caruso, President of the Louisiana Chapter of APCO and Thomas Levy, Asst. Supervisor of Fire Communications NOFD.

The committee is working with 9-1-1 Districts and wireless telephone companies to develop legislation that establishes the criteria for providing the service and a mechanism to collect funds to pay for the enhancements.

Several meetings have taken place with directors and telephone companies. The group is preparing a bill for consideration of the districts and hopes to have it ready for a special legislative session later this year.



Superintendent Richard J. Pennington swearing in the newly appointed Senior Police Dispatchers

**Orleans Parish Communication District  
301 South Broad Street  
New Orleans, LA 70119**

**OPCD ANNOUNCES  
9-1-1 SLOGAN CONTEST**

OPCD announces contest to develop a new 9-1-1 slogan for the public safety campaign. This slogan will be used on bumper stickers, billboards, commercials, etc. This contest is open to all telecommunicators in Orleans Parish. Entries should be mailed or faxed (826-1204) to OPCD c/o Ausetua Amor A m e n k u m , postmarked June 22, 1998. Winner will receive dinner for two at an exclusive New Orleans restaurant and featured in the next issue of The 9-1-1 Communicator!



Mailing  
Address  
Goes  
Here

**In This Issue...**

*Celia Seymour celebrates 30 years as a calltaker at New Orleans Police Department!!!!*



**Leonard Ferdinand  
Police Dispatcher  
Passes Feb. 6, 1998**

"Ferd" as he was affectionately called by his coworkers, passed on this year after starting with the department in August 1970. If you listen carefully you can still hear him yelling "potner" to a police unit or fellow dispatcher.

Eating was one of Ferd's favorite pastimes and almost everyone has brought him to lunch, picked up his lunch or shared their lunch with him. In spite of his many illnesses, Ferd continued to come to work regularly and was devoted to his job. His energy and perseverance will certainly be missed.

**TELECOMMUNICATOR NEWS!**



**NOPD SALUTES  
OPERATORS OF THE  
MONTH**

**1ST PLATOON**

JAN.-Joycelyn Carter  
FEB. -Charles Workman  
MAR.- Sylvia Baxter  
APRIL - Diana Bell

**2ND PLATOON**

JAN. - Sharon Hynes  
FEB. - Linda Martin/Kathy Robertson  
MAR. -Linda Martin  
APRIL - Rhonda Cannon

**3RD PLATOON**

JAN. -Wendy Ervin  
FEB. -Levette Joseph  
MAR. -Rashawn Watkins  
APRIL -Kathy Giovengo

**Score 97**

**APCO CLASS  
#98-16  
HONOR GRADUATE  
Dionne Johnson  
Complaint Operator  
NOPD**

**CONGRATULATIONS**  
Camille Jordan at Fire Alarms had a 7lb 8oz baby boy born Jan. 26, 1998 named Caine Jalil Jordan



**APCO CONFERENCE**

Orleans Parish Communication District sponsored four telecommunicators on March 14 - 16, 1998 to the **APCO Gulf Coast Regional Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas.** NOPD Sr. Police Dispatcher Cheryl Jacobs, Complaint Operator Celia Seymour, NOFD Sr. Dispatcher Claudette Adams and EMS Sr. Systems Manager Mark Achary represented New Orleans and their agencies at this regional conference.