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# 9-1-1 Caller

Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications

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## US and Europe Share Emergency Services Information

By Flynn Nogueira, GTE

June 2 marked a historic day for people involved in emergency services in the United States and Europe. Using video conferencing technology, representatives from the US linked to Stockholm, Sweden, where representatives from ten European countries were meeting to discuss the problems they will encounter with the introduction of the 1-1-2, the European equivalent to 9-1-1.

For US participants, it was an opportunity to promote one international emergency number and to learn and share.

"As we become more of a world community, we must consider implementing a world-wide emergency number," says Glenn Roach, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Emergency Services Agency and US Chairman of the video conference. "The video conference opened the avenues of discussion between Europe and the US to discuss problems and assist each other in bettering emergency communications."

Although the US did not make significant strides toward convincing the Europeans to change from 1-1-2 to 9-1-1, they did share valuable information in how emergency services are currently implemented in the US and Europe.

Beth Ozanich, President of the National Emergency Number Association,

extended an invitation to attend the 1993 NENA Conference in Montreal which the Europeans accepted with enthusiasm.

"The International Emergency Number system community will be encouraged to participate in educational seminars offered in Montreal, and close contact will be developed between symposium participants/leaders and NENA national program chair for 1993," says Ozanich. Ozanich also reports that as a result of the video conference, "we have expanded the global membership special study into a Subcommittee on International Relations whose goals this year will include increasing awareness of NENA throughout the World."

Torsten Larsson, Former Deputy General Director of Swedish Telecom and the European Chairman of the video conference says, "Europe understands what possibilities there are for the future in going from three numbers to one for police, fire brigade and ambulance.

"Swedish Telecom was the first in the world to introduce a national emergency service with information on all inhabitants and all streets because everyone in Sweden has telephones," says Larsson.

Learning how 9-1-1 is financed in the US was the key to the conference for Larsson. In the US, a service fee is placed on each telephone bill. In

*Continued on page 8**In Texas, When Seconds Count . . .*

# 9-1-1 Logo

By Adele Gottlieb, Greater Harris County 9-1-1

This logo was created for our Communication District and adopted by our Board of Managers as the "official logo" of the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network in 1985. To ensure proper use of the logo, the Network applied for and received trademark registrations on both the Federal and State levels.

The Network has granted authorization for this logo to be used by other Communication Districts, the ACSEC, COGs throughout the State of Texas and other public safety agencies on a national level. The stipulation for use of this logo outside of our Harris County

area was to receive the request to use the logo in writing; nothing could be changed from the logo design; it could be used only in approved PMS color schemes.

As more and more 9-1-1 systems go on-line across the country, this logo design has gained popularity and has appeared in print company product magazines and decal order form flyers as a product offering; or it has appeared on printed materials without the "TM" by companies who do not have authorization to utilize nor sell items with this logo design on their product. As a condition of maintaining our "Registered Trademark" status, any time we know violations, we have to notify the company or individual of the misuse and request that they discontinue offering



our logo design on their product. Additionally, if a design has great similarity to our design, this is considered a logo infringement.

The Harris County Network has been happy to share the logo design with other 9-1-1 and

public safety agencies; its widespread use throughout the State is a real help in educating the public about the availability of 9-1-1 service. We need your assistance, however, in insuring its proper use. Please take care that the "TM" is always used as a part of the design in any materials you have printed or otherwise produced. If you become aware of any possible violations of the design, we would appreciate your making us aware of it so that we can take appropriate steps to eliminate the unauthorized use of the logo.

This logo design lends itself to all kinds of applications, and we are more than happy to have it displayed in a number of print media as long as it promotes access to a 9-1-1 system, and is used according to the required guidelines. Just as educating your community on the proper use of the 9-1-1 system is critical, so is ensuring the appropriate use of this logo design. Your help in doing this is greatly appreciated.

# Tariff Update

By Joe Kirk, ACSEC Staff

As mentioned in our last issue of the *9-1-1 Caller*, GTE's Docket No. 9667 went before the Public Utility Commission for final consideration. It was approved on June 4, 1992.

Most of you should not see much of a difference in your bills from GTE because they have been billing for some time under interim approval of the tariff. However, any last minute changes took effect on the Final Order date of June 4. If the new rates are higher than what you have been billed in the past (under the

interim order), then your next bill will reflect the new rates. But, you will not be back-billed for the difference. If, however, the new rates are lower, you will receive a credit for the difference.

If you have a question about your bill, discuss it with your GTE representative. If you don't understand the answer, give me a call, and we will help get it worked out.

If you need a copy of the approved 9-1-1 section of the tariff for a telco that operates in your area, let me know.



Joe Kirk accepts congratulations for his efforts toward the approval of Docket 9667.

**September 2-3** – ACSEC Committee Meetings, ACSEC Offices, Austin.

**September 9-12** – Texas Association of Regional Councils 27th Annual Conference, Corpus Christi, TX. Contact: TARC (512)478-4715.

**September 11** – ACSEC 9-1-1 Day in Texas held in Corpus Christi during the TARC Conference.

**September 11** – ACSEC Commission Meeting, Corpus Christi.

**October 13 -15** – County Judges and Commissioners Court Assn. Annual Conference. Headquarters: El Paso Westin Hotel, 101 S. El Paso, El Paso, Texas 79901

# TDD Update

By Toni Dunne, ACSEC Staff

In the March/April 1992 issue of the 9-1-1 Caller, we reported on a lawsuit that was pending in New York City. Legal action was initiated due to a concern that the 9-1-1 system had not installed TDD equipment and was not providing accessibility to speech- and hearing-impaired citizens. The case was heard in District Court. New York City was directed to install TDD communications in the 9-1-1 center by September 1st or pay punitive damages for each day thereafter that 9-1-1 was not accessible.

Recently, the Department of Justice (DOJ) received their first complaint for discrimination within a 9-1-1 system. The complaint was filed against the City of Chicago. Chicago's 9-1-1 system has TDD accessibility; however, the complaint raises concern for the effectiveness of how the center handles those types of calls.

ACSEC has been assisting PSAPs with both equipment and training. Although Texas is ahead of most of the nation in this area, it would be advantageous to be knowledgeable about the type of information the DOJ may look for should they be called in to investigate a complaint against your agency.

To begin with, be prepared to provide information on your *System Configuration*. You may be asked to submit your organizational structure, number of employees, their job titles, job descriptions, and how you determine qualifications of personnel assigned to handle TDD calls. The ADA mandates public agencies to conduct a self-evaluation of operation and services. How does your agency disseminate information about services to the public? Information may be requested on your *Standard*

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# Language Interpretation Available Statewide

By Vander Phelps, ACSEC Staff

AT&T Language Line Services provides interpretation to customers throughout the United States, Canada, and England. Whenever an interpreter is needed, a special access number is dialed, an answer point attendant answers, and the interpreter that is needed for the language being spoken is conferenced into the call.

The State of Texas has signed a contract with AT&T Language Line Services for use by all state agencies that want to participate. The Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications (ACSEC) was in the process of negotiating with the Service when the state contract became available. As a result, Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) across the state can now access the interpreter service anytime a non-English-speaking caller dials into 9-1-1.

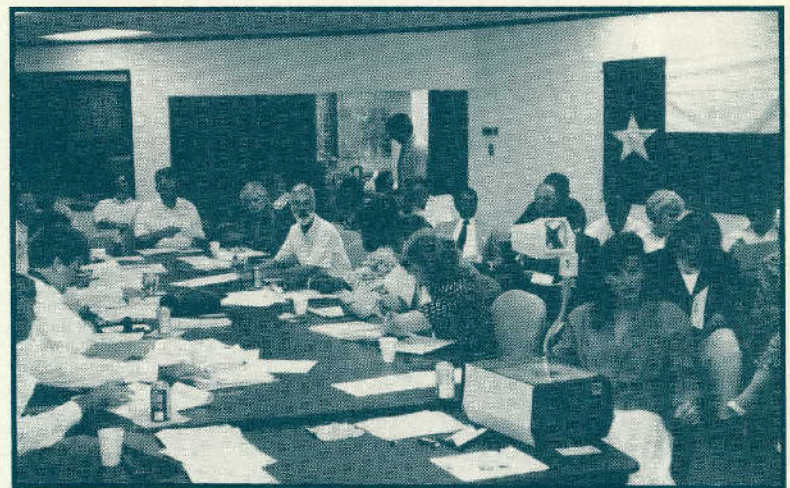
Over 40 participants representing Councils of Governments (COGs) and 9-1-1 Districts recently attended an ACSEC-sponsored workshop on AT&T Language Lines. The course introduced

the coordinators to interpretation skills, interpreter code of conduct, PSAP responsibilities, language identification, and call strategy. In addition, administrative issues such as interlocal agreements and system abuse were discussed.

While attending the workshop, coordinators were able to listen to interpretations in several languages. In a teleconference with the Language Line facility in Monterey, California, coordinators were able to role-play emergency scenarios with non-English-speaking callers.

With translators available for 140 languages, the job for PSAP telecommunicators should be made a little easier when they encounter callers for assistance but the language being spoken is one other than English.

For further information on Language Lines, you may call Helen Sommers at ACSEC or contact the 9-1-1 coordinator for your region or district.



AT&T Language Line Training held at ACSEC Offices.

# A Call to 9-1-1

Article Furnished by the Emergency Network of Ector County

May 2, 1992. Saturday. 5:17 a.m. Odessa Police Department Communications Center. Another long, quiet night. The 9-1-1 line lights up. The 9-1-1 phone rings. Dispatcher Beverly Long answers the call.

"What's your emergency?"

No answer.

Another kid playing on the phone? Too early for that. Some drunk reporting in for the night? Too late for that. No.... Wait.... Someone's talking in the background. AN ARMED ROBBERY IN PROGRESS.

Dispatchers are immediately advised. The Enhanced 9-1-1 system gives the address and location of the call. Units are sent. Beverly's ear is listening to every word, providing a play-by-play report to the other dispatchers.

"A Hispanic male."

"He wants her purse-now!"

"He wants a carton of cigarettes."

"He says he's going to kill her."

"If she doesn't lay down he's going to kill her."

"She's arguing with him--he's fixing to do something--she's not going to do what he tells her."

"He wants her rings off of her hand."

"He took her purse, rings, a carton of cigarettes, all the money out of the register."

"If one of them tries to move, he's threatened to kill her."

The convenience store. The other side of the phone. Just outside the doors. It's dark. Police respond. A perimeter is being established. The only exit--the main doors which lead East. Two officers position on the North side of the building. Two officers position to the South side of the building. The Lieutenant observes. Additional units creep into position--on foot, in cars, with canines--ready when you are. A cloak of darkness. The Lieutenant is pleased. What's that you said? "Maverick's got the ball."

Odessa Police Department Communication Center. Not your routine quiet night. 5:20 a.m. Three minutes into a 9-1-1 call. Beverly remarks,

"It's not my day."

Suddenly, the actor flees. The victim picks up the phone to talk.

She hears--

"Which way did he go?"

"Are you alright?"

"The police are there!"

She responds--

"Out the doors toward Harless Street."

"Yes,..ok."

"They've got him. I need to call my nephew! ALRIGHT!!"

The convenience store. The other side of the phone. Just outside the doors. It's dark. Police wait. The door opens. A man runs. North.

My property. My money. A job well done. I did it. I'm home free. I...

"Police! Freeze!"

Two of the largest canons ever made stare from straight ahead.

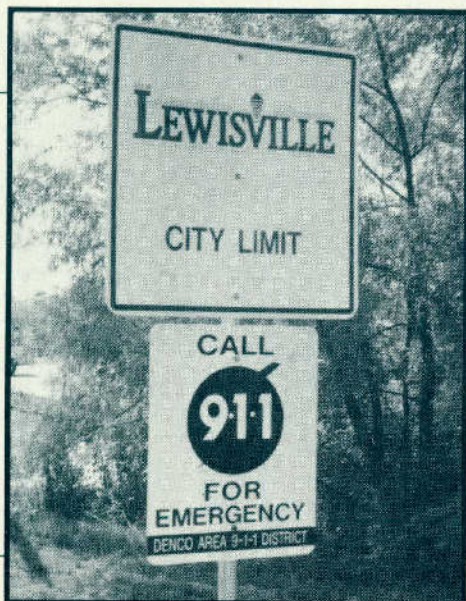
React! Quick! Escape! Turn. Run. South, I can do it. Cops are slow, I...

"Police! Freeze!"

Wait a minute. I just went through this over there. React! Quick! Escape! The only way left is East. Turn. Run. Quick! Hurry! Fast! They won't catch me! OUCH!!

A police unit pulls into the parking lot from the dark. Objective--intercept projected flight path. Robber meets car. Car meets robber. Car stops. Robber stops--HARD!

Subject in custody.



Local folks, visitors and travelers throughout the Denco Area 9-1-1 District are seeing new road signs that assure them 9-1-1 is the number to call in emergencies. The 24" x 30" signs, made of highway grade aluminum with reflective background and numbers, feature the District's new lightning bolt logo. They were installed near or on city limit signs by road crews in the District's 33 cities during the month of June in anticipation of summer vacationers and increased 9-1-1 call volume.

# Regional Councils Establish 9-1-1 Committee

In recognition of the importance of the 9-1-1 planning and implementation program to all regional councils in the State, the Texas Association of Regional Councils has established a standing 9-1-1 Committee. Bob Weaver, Executive Director of the Concho Valley Council of Governments, chairs the Committee. Members include elected officials County Judge Jim Sagebiel of Guadalupe County, Commissioner Richard Borchard of Nueces County, Commissioner Willie Smith of Morris County, and Councilman Richard Wheeler of Cuero.

Regional council executive directors Frances Pelley of Texoma, Gary Pitner of Panhandle, Jack Steele of Houston-Galveston, and Leon Willhite of Heart of Texas; as well as staffers Jill Hyde of Brazos Valley and Fred Keithley of North Central Texas also serve on the Committee.

At its organizational meeting in May, the committee reviewed the results of a survey of regional councils which recommended four roles for the Committee. In priority order those were:

1. Communicate regional council problems, needs, and questions to the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications;
2. Develop and recommend policy to the Commission related to the 9-1-1 program;

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# New Fund-raising Opportunity For Emergency Service Responders:

## Organizations to Provide Needed Community Service

A new fund-raising option with a unique community-service twist is now available to emergency-service-responder organizations in the state. The new program places a 9-1-1 card in every home in the community, and raises \$500 for the local organization's training or equipment fund.

The program is being offered by Griffin/Weirich Associates, a Fredericksburg, Texas, advertising agency with three-and-a-half years experience producing the cards in various states.

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<p><b>REAL ESTATE OFFICE</b> TERPSTRA &amp; MOSS CENTRAL TEXAS PROPERTIES 868-4235</p>	<p><b>Johnson City Bank</b> P.O. Box 428 (512) 868-7131 Lobby Hours: Mon - Thur 9:00 - 4:30 Friday 9:00 - 6:00 Sat. 9:00 - 12:00</p>	<p><b>WILDLIFE UNLIMITED</b> TAXIDERMIST ODDID HUNTS Roger Lawson 290 West Johnson City 868-7030</p>
<p><b>Pasquale's</b> Mexican Restaurant 868-7682 281 South, Johnson City</p>	<p><b>J. &amp; L. Disposal, Inc.</b> P.O. Box 1005, 1010 N. Main Blanco, TX 78605 (512) 833-5862 "THANKS" "Your Business is Appreciated"</p>	<p><b>Buster's Central Heat &amp; Air</b> Electrical Wiring Residential Commercial 868-7127 Johnson City, Texas</p>
<p><b>ADAMS INSURANCE AGENCY</b> Auto - Home Commercial 868-4017 208 East Mann</p>	<p><b>FIRE-POLICE-AMBULANCE - 9-1-1</b> My Address is _____ My Phone # is _____ <b>JOHNSON CITY NUMBERS</b> Poison Control... 1-409-766-1490 Abuse Hotline... 1-800-252-5400 Sheriff... 868-7104 City Offices... 868-7111 Library... 868-4469 Post Office... 868-7211 Chamber Offices... 868-7406 City Pool... 868-4231 L.B.J. Pool... 644-2224 Elementary... 868-7445 Middle School... 868-7061 High School... 868-4412 Supt. Office... 868-7410 Cafeteria... 868-7224 Band Hall... 868-7037 Counselor... 868-7376</p>	<p><b>Penick Farms</b> Machos - Tractors - Wagons 868-7206 Front Road 2 1/2 Miles East GRI Selection: Preserves, Jellies Pickles, Pickles Case: 868-855 Exempt Sun. 12:00 - 5</p>
<p><b>MJH VIDEO</b> 100 US HWY 281 NORTH 868-7106</p>	<p><b>JOHNSON CITY EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS PROJECT</b> <b>CATTLEMAN'S NATIONAL BANK</b> Round Mountain 512/825-3247 Blanco 512/833-4587 Marble Falls 512/693-5318 Johnson City 512/868-4051</p>	<p><b>HYDRO GAS COMPANY, INC.</b> 1600 Hwy. 811 South Johnson City, Texas 868-7412</p>
<p><b>SULTEMEIER SURVEYING</b> Boundary Title Topographic Construction Surveys (512) 868-7308</p>	<p><b>FELPS AUTOMOTIVE</b> Complete Auto &amp; Tractor Repair 512-868-4364 100 Main Street, Johnson City, Tx</p>	<p><b>SILVERLACE NURSERY</b> Come in with a little green, leave with a lot! 512-868-7088</p>
		<p><b>FINA</b> Restaurant &amp; Convenience Store Inside Dining or Take Out 512-868-7263</p>

# Texas and Arkansas Share Resources to Establish Enhanced Emergency Communications

By Janell Browning, Ark-Tex Council of Governments



The passage of H.B. 9-1-1 in 1987 was seen as a wonderful opportunity to provide emergency communications throughout the Ark-Tex Council of Governments (ATCOG) Region, at least throughout the "Texas" portion of the Region. ATCOG is somewhat unique in that it serves nine counties in Texas and one county in Arkansas. Texarkana is the largest city in the ATCOG Region, but it is actually two cities, Texarkana, Texas, and Texarkana, Arkansas. These cities each have their own police department, fire department, and Emergency Medical Service. However, they do share one thing -- emergency communications is centralized in Texarkana! So when H.B. 9-1-1 was written into law, the question became, "What will we do with Texarkana, Arkansas?" This question was particularly significant because the two cities already shared basic 9-1-1.

Research into the situation revealed that Arkansas has its own emergency communications legislation, passed in 1981. The Arkansas legislation is quite different than H.B. 9-1-1, requiring a vote by the Citizens indicating their desire to establish and pay a fee for 9-1-1. ATCOG staff met on several occasions with Texarkana, Arkansas, city officials, encouraging them to consider enhanced 9-1-1. The question then became, "Will the people vote yes to enhanced 9-1-1?" The answer was yes. A referendum was

held in May 1990, and the citizens of Texarkana, Arkansas, passed a measure to allow a fee to be assessed on their telephone bills to pay for enhanced 9-1-1. The passage of the referendum allowed Texarkana, Arkansas, to participate in the ATCOG Regional Emergency Communications Plan.

In June 1992, fully enhanced 9-1-1 emergency communications became a reality in Texarkana, serving citizens in two cities, two counties and two states. The Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) is located in the Bi-State Criminal Justice facility, which is

on the state line. Since the system cut last year, approximately 120,000 calls have been received for emergency services. The PSAP has three call takers and three answering positions. The PSAP answers 9-1-1 calls for five cities, as well as a portion of Bowie County, in addition to the two Texarkanas. Dispatchers are assigned specific areas of responsibility -- police, fire or county calls. The communications center is totally staffed by civilian personnel. The overall department, which includes

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Bi-State 9-1-1 call takers Annette Clay and Shannon Pearson respond to requests for emergency assistance.

## *TDD, Continued from Page 3*

**Operating Procedures.** How are specific types of calls handled? What is your policy for handling TDD and "silent calls?" You may be required to provide details on answer or response time.

Have telecommunicators been provided *Training and Instructions*? Specifics may be requested on who received

training, number of training sessions attended, credentials on the instructor, and content of instructions from training sessions. Do you maintain *Entries and Statistics*? Do the entries state the status of calls? You may be required to provide information concerning TDD calls made for a specific period of time. Do you have a formal *Complaint or Grievance Procedure*? How did you

determine what equipment is installed in your location. You may be required to provide information on any *Studies Conducted* by your agency. How do you determine staffing? This might include your agency's Self-Evaluation report. The DOJ may request information on your *System Capabilities*.

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## In Remembrance

ACSEC Commissioner Lee Walker

"She gave of herself willfully. She always put the public interest ahead of her own with honesty and integrity."

Those words were spoken by ACSEC Chairman and Collin County Judge Ron Harris about a colleague and friend, Lee



Walker, upon hearing of her death. Ms. Walker, a member of the Advisory Commission since 1987, died Thursday, July 23 in Lewisville.

In addition to her duties as a member of the Advisory Commission, Lee served three terms as Denton County Commissioner, Precinct 3. As a member of the Texas Association of Counties, she was instrumental in heightening the awareness of the statewide 9-1-1 program among county judges and other county officials.

A tireless advocate of the public good, Lee Walker will be remembered by friends, colleagues, and certainly the 9-1-1 community that knew her well. The Advisory Commission and its staff send condolences to her family.

## ACSEC Assistant Director Position Filled

By Mary A. Boyd, ACSEC Staff

After a very comprehensive search, an Assistant Director for ACSEC has been selected. Mr. James (Jim) Goerke has accepted the position with the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications. He served as Executive Director of the Ark-Tex Council of Governments where he worked for the past 18 years.

Mr. Goerke brings to ACSEC leadership and a strong background in administering state and federal programs. His experience in the fields of planning and public administration is extensive,

ranging from his military service in Germany to managing the Ark-Tex Council of Governments.

Mr. Goerke graduated with honors from the California Polytechnic University with a Bachelor of Science degree in Environmental Design. His majors were Urban Planning and Landscape Architecture. Under a fellowship from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, he received a Masters in Public Administration with emphasis in urban and regional affairs from the University of Oklahoma.



## Rabago Appointed to PUC

Governor Richards has appointed an attorney and law professor to fill the vacancy at the Texas Public Utility Commission. Karl Rabago, who has represented environmental and consumer groups before the Commission, became the newest member of the PUC on May 19. Rabago has been an associate professor of law at the University of Houston Law Center since 1990.

## Texarkana, Continued from Page 6

records, is governed by the Intergovernmental Advisory Committee comprised of elected officials from both Texas and Arkansas.

Cooperation between all the agencies is the key to the success of the Bi-State 9-1-1 System. Sharing communications and 9-1-1 service provides both increased efficiency as well as cost effectiveness for all citizens served by the system.

## Commissioner Resignations and Appointments

By Velia S. Williams

Notice of resignation was received from John Schneider, Jr., a local real estate businessman whose length of service was short, but memorable. John served on the Planning and Implementation Committee. He was committed to his duty as Commissioner, and took a real interest in the 9-1-1 regional plan processes. His fairness and boyish charm, made him a likable figure. Thank you, John.

Chairman Ron Harris has been appointed to fill the unexpired term of Lee Walker of Denton. Judge Harris,

whose present term expired, was moved to another position on the Commission. With the 9-1-1 Program maturing and making strides in the future of telecommunications and emergency management, the 9-1-1 community should continue to benefit from his leadership and enthusiasm.

Ms. Arlene Rash Aldridge, city councilwoman with the City of Laredo, has been appointed to replace Ron Harris, whose term expired. Her term will expire September 1, 1997. Ms. Aldridge was welcomed at the July Commission meetings, where she was quickly initiated into the world of regional plan amendments, addressing, and various funding requests. She will serve on the Planning and Implementation Committee.

## U.S. Postal Service

By Ralph Barnard, San Antonio Division

Your United States Postal Service (USPS), Address Programs Support (APS) and Address Information Systems (AIS) offices are an excellent source of information for counties involved in addressing, and what's more, they want to help you.

For starters, the APS and AIS offices may be able to furnish maps and CLASS edit sheets. The CLASS edit sheet is a listing of every delivery address on the carrier route in the sequence that they deliver along with a map. This should give you an approximate idea of how many housing units you will need to address in that vicinity.

The Postal Service would like to be involved early in the street naming process. As you know, the USPS ZIP Codes may cross county boundaries; and by involving them will help your county's residents continue to receive efficient mail service.

In addition to providing maps and edit sheets, the Postal Service will also assist in the notification to residents.

Previous experience has shown that converting one route at a time eases the burden on the addressing agency and the Postal Service.

### *US/Europe, Continued from page 1*

Sweden, the emergency service is handled through SOS Alarming, an organization owned by Swedish Telecom on behalf of the Swedish Government and the regional and local communities. Funds are generated from the budgets of the local and regional communities in addition to numerous commercial services. "The commercial services make it possible to provide a better service with more operators. And it's good for business, too."

In addition to discussing the technical and political problems associated with the introduction of a national emergency number, the participants

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## Contributions Made to Addressing Funds Pool

In recent weeks, there have been two more contributions to the State Addressing Funds Pool. Contributions from GTE and Southwestern Bell Telephone Company will add over \$56,000 to this addressing pool.

On June 25, GTE mutually agreed with the Public Utility Commission to donate \$36,628 in residual funds to the State Rural Addressing Program.

On July 8, Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (SWBT) presented a check for \$20,000 to support the State Rural Addressing Program. SWBT anticipates continued support for this program as it progresses.

The allocation of these funds to counties will be made at a later date.

### *Committee, Continued from page 5*

3. Report regularly to regional councils on issues and developments in the program; and

4. Develop and recommend uniform program standards and policies for all regions.

At the Commission's request, Committee members joined Commission members in a June workshop to review the state's five-year forecast for the program and is developing a recommendation on the budgeting process for regional council administrative budgets for consideration at the Commission's July meeting.



# A GIS! It's Not Just For Big Counties Anymore

By Jimmy Ellis, Capital Area Planning Council

There has been no better time for counties in the State of Texas to consider a GIS.

The availability of seed money for the startup of GISs through 9-1-1 addressing funds opens an opportunity for county governments. With the current rush towards rural addressing in the State of Texas, the use of GIS technology has become a consideration for many counties; however, planning and implementing a Geographic Information System (GIS) in the current economic climate is a challenging proposition.

Starting with small, highly visible projects, such as a 9-1-1 addressing venture, can lend credence to a GIS and gain the interest of even the most pessimistic official. The small project approach applies directly to counties with limited resources using 9-1-1 monies. Addressing may take as little as one year, while tax appraisal or utility mapping projects may take years to accomplish and cost proportionately more than rural addressing. With a project like rural addressing, both citizens and officials see quick tangible benefits.

At first glance, the GIS cost can be intimidating. However, technological advances and increased competition over the past few years has led to dramatic decreases in hardware and software costs. Today, a fully functional PC-based GIS, including subsystems for data input and output, may cost as little as \$10,000 - \$20,000. More complex workstation based system expenses will increase dependent upon the platform and the size of the network. The hardware and software of a GIS are not the only considerations when making decisions. Personnel, as well as database development must be considered.

What data do you put into a GIS? Database development is the major cost

in starting and maintaining a GIS. According to the Technology Exchange Working Group, Technical Report I (FICCDC 1988, p.21), estimates for the cost of developing databases for a GIS range from 10 to 1000 times of the cost of the entire GIS. Regardless, counties should not be discouraged with these costs since each county's project will vary. In fact, a small county pursuing a rural addressing project may find the database development costs less than the systems cost.

Determining the cost of a GIS database requires selecting such items as essential features, the spatial accuracy of those features, and whether the data is readily available.

Reducing the cost of database development calls for efficiency and innovation. Who develops the data?: qualified interns and volunteers can be crucial in helping to reduce the costs of database development. Where do you get the data?: various resources such as the Census' TIGER files and USGS digital line files can instantly reduce database costs.

Now that a database development cost is targeted, where are funds to implement a GIS? Check for available 9-1-1 service fees, WATS/Pool funds, cost sharing among county agencies, and grant funds on the state and federal level.

The first GIS question for a county is, "Can we afford it?" Myron Glaser states in his article GIS for Public Safety (9-1-1 Magazine, May/June 1991, p.26), "About 80 percent of governmental activities involve information that is geographical in nature: addresses, streets and highways, property and administrative boundaries, and police and fire records, to name just a few."

If the time spent accessing, maintaining, and graphically portraying this data were added up with the personnel costs, a county can realize that a GIS reduces all of these expenditures. Two full-time draftspersons and a librarian may now be replaced by one GIS operator, and projects that meant weeks of manual drafting can now be done in hours and altered instantly. Perhaps even more important to a cash-strapped county is the ability to locate untaxed parcels. The real question for a county may be, "Can we afford not to automate our spatially related databases into a GIS?"

When it comes to making the decision on a GIS, numerous sources are available help. Trade magazines such as GIS World, Geo Info Systems, Spatial Systems Journal are just a few of the publications devoted to the technology of GIS. Contacts with agencies using a GIS, such as Alamo Area Council of Governments and North Central Texas Council of Governments, are perhaps the most important means of gathering information on the startup of GIS. Jefferson County's Tax Appraisal District RFP for a GIS (1989) details an extremely, well-thought-out GIS. Many other agencies, such as the Department of Information Resources, have vast experience in assessing GIS systems.

As the cost of hardware and software has been greatly reduced and a county is innovative in cost-sharing and utilizing database resources, a GIS may not only be affordable but also, profitable.

Jimmy Ellis is a 9-1-1 Planning Assistant at the Capital Area Planning Council. He is currently working on a Masters in Applied Geography at Southwest Texas State University.

# Questions Counties Ask of Vendors About GIS

By Maxey Sheppard, Sheppard Surveying

## Act I Scene I

Time: Early Spring

Location: Texas, Commissioners Court Meeting

Judge: Commissioners, since 9-1-1 is just around the corner, it's time for us to get a map.

## Act II Scene I

Time: Seven months later

9-1-1 Coordinator: All these MSAG's from a phone company--how do we answer all of this?

## Act III Scene I

Time: Two months later

9-1-1 Coordinator: Sir, the phone company is asking to verify these addresses, and they need us to assign a new address before they will give these folks service. The Post Office needs address ranges, and Mrs. Jones out on County Road 123 forgot her address.

The above scenario highlights a number of important points affecting both counties and vendors in Rural Addressing Projects.

First of all, maps and mapping are terms often used interchangeably by counties. Mapping is a process of gathering, correlating, and reporting data including rural addresses, roads, land marks, names, and telephone numbers. A map is only one product of the data.

The physical address establishes both the geographical location and the framework within which all other information becomes useful. This framework must be logical and accurate to withstand the test of time, thereby providing the basis for future GIS applications. A GIS is a computer software system designed to capture, store, process and manipulate data linked to a physical location. Rural addressing defines this location while gathering data-pertinent information, i.e., name, phone number, old address.

However, a map that is produced by a computer using digital information has never-ending flexibility.

Census Tiger Line File Maps provide the most logical, easily accessible, affordable base maps for Rural Addressing Projects. These maps can be translated into a standard Data Exchange Format (DXF) and then read into almost any CAD (Computer Aided Drafting) or GIS software package. Compatibility and exchange of data will be the key to the ultimate usefulness of the GIS.

The main concern of counties is that their maps show the road network and enough information for the public to understand and use the map content. To produce a map that will fit particular county needs, some basic questions need to be answered, such as:

1. Who...will be end users?  
...will maintain the data?
2. What...base map will be useful for extended future uses?  
...information is going to be required by various end users?  
...detail is required?  
...will the final product be?
3. When...is certain information going to be required by users?
4. Where...will the final product be kept?
5. How...will the data be maintained upon completion?

At no other time has there been such an opportunity for a county to do something so long lasting. Thus, the previous scenes will hopefully be followed by a happier one:

## Act IV Scene I

Time: One year later

Yes, 9-1-1 has been fully implemented, the Post Office is using physical addresses to deliver the mail, the Appraisal District Office and utility companies called and wanted some information on maps...

The Happy Ending

## TDD, Continued from Page 6

The DOJ is required to investigate all allegations of discrimination and attempt informal resolution. If informal resolution is not successful, they will issue a letter describing findings and actions necessary to remedy each violation. ACSEC will continue to be available to assist you with your proactive efforts. You are encouraged to regularly conduct TDD test calls for everything your PSAP has done, from A-Z, in an effort to comply with the ADA. The mandate requires more than the installation of a TDD. It requires us to be cognizant of all aspects of service provision. Let's continue to make Texas No. 1 in the nation!



## US/Europe, Continued from page 8

from Belgium, Finland, France, Great Britain, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Switzerland came to learn from the experience of Sweden's emergency number, 90 - 000, and Sweden's handling of alarm procedures. Bjorn Fleetwood with SOS Alarming and video conference coordinator in Stockholm, says that, "During the symposium, the European representatives held lectures about the present situation and the planning for the future. Their lectures verified that only three countries in the world have nationwide emergency numbers: USA, Sweden and Great Britain."

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# Integrating Data with a GIS

By Sharon Nichol-Jost, Bexar Metro 9-1-1 Network District

It was years ago when all our data and research existed in a file cabinet. The mass quantities of paper consisted of master street address guides, post office streets and zip codes, utility company service addresses, county roads and subdivisions, telephone number databases and county maps. Each, a one-dimensional representation of a network of streets and street characteristics.

Unfortunately, there were no linkages from maps to the data. For any database discrepancy, each resource had to be researched individually and compared. The conglomeration of paper had to be assembled into one unique system where one physical change to the database was applied to the numerous resources. The task of data integration began with a decision to develop a Geographic Information System (GIS). We discovered a GIS could provide an integrated solution for efficient data collection, management, analysis and manipulation, yet could also provide for future growth and expansion.

The implementation of a GIS comprises five phases of development. The users of the GIS for input and analysis

will not only need the hardware and software components, but will also need the expertise to configure the system, input data, develop customized programs and manage the information. The first phase of development should be a study to determine the extent and possibilities of implementing a GIS.

The second phase should be a plan to identify specific GIS tasks and products.

The third phase involves the design of the system. Vendors will assist the client in determining the types and relationships of graphic and attribute data required to develop the expected capabilities of the system. This includes evaluating current systems in use by agencies that would participate in the data sharing and investigating the coordinate system and projection to be used.

The next phase should consist of evaluation and acquisition of the software and hardware components. Investigate all data resources available. Realize that data conversions from computer platform to platform may be costly and the final graphic data product may need extensive alterations after conversion. Do not limit your system with a PC

platform for your GIS any longer than financial conditions dictate. A move to a graphics workstation will increase your central processing unit productivity pace from megahertz speed to Million Instructions per Second (MIPS).

The final phase will include installation and training on the software and hardware components. Once the system is installed, the updates to the graphic and non-graphical data are continuous. Incorporate a file security system that is strict and absolute on file write protections. Maintain a good geodetic and database control. Do it right the first time, or you will have to do it again.

Finally, some helpful hints: start with a simple, affordable system to train your staff and enlighten your management. In time, your GIS will serve as a recognized need in your organization. Be cautious explaining your system to local decision makers for fear of frightening or confusing non-technocrats with the weight of technology. Display your products frequently and solicit comments for improvements from end-users. Be bold in "addressing" new ideas.

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## 9-1-1 Card, Continued from Page 5

The 8.5 X 11 inch cards, which hang by the side of the phone, contain 9-1-1 information and other critical emergency and community phone numbers. They carry 15-20 ads, and are mailed to every home.

Up until July 1, the firm's salespeople were working directly with community businesses to arrange sponsors for the cards. "With the rapidly accelerating rate of 9-1-1 implementations across the state, our salespeople have been unable to keep up," said Rick Weirich, president of Griffin/

Weirich. "We were looking for a way to get the cards produced in a timely manner that didn't depend on the physical presence of a salesperson, when a couple of EMS departments asked us about the possibility of using the cards as a fundraiser."

Under the new approach, the local emergency organization recruits local businesses as sponsors, receiving \$500 for its efforts. The cards are renewed every 12 months, generating an additional \$500 yearly.

"The ads are popular with business people because it's the only type of advertising where they can have a "cap-

tive" audience by the side of someone's phone for 12 months," noted Weirich. The firm's research shows that 78 percent of the homes hang the card up, making it a very attractive vehicle.

The high "hang" rate creates an unequalled opportunity to get 9-1-1 information and other critical phone numbers into homes, making it an important part of a successful public education effort.

Those interested may contact Griffin/Weirich Associates by phone at (512) 997-5365, or write to: 501 W. Main, Suite #102, Fredericksburg, Texas 78624.

# Faces from NENA '92



9-1-1 Caller is a publication of the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications.

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