Annual Telecommunicator Awards

On Thursday, April 18th, Thomas M. Sullivan, Director of Public Safety, and Michael Vest, Deputy Director for Emergency Communications, presented two 9-1-1 telecommunicators with some very well-deserved recognition. The recipient of each award was nominated and voted on by his or her peers. The honors were bestowed as the 2019 National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week drew to a close.

Andrew Gilman was presented with the Telecommunicator of the Year Award for 2018. Andrew was described by his colleagues as having a “positive demeanor and is very funny, which helps morale a lot” and it was noted that he often “goes above and beyond” with his work. Andrew is a “great dispatcher,” has “ridiculously extensive knowledge of the job,” is “always willing to help others,” and has “definitely been the morale captain” in the Communications Center. Way to go, Andrew!

Louis Collins was voted the Telecommunicator Trainee of the Year for 2018. Louis “excelled from the beginning,” has a “positive attitude,” displays a “high level of professionalism,” shows “great dedication,” and “assists his peers without hesitation.” Louis also “welcomes any challenge thrown at him and...handles it with ease,” “treats everyone with a great deal of respect and compassion,” and is “always striving to learn more.” Keep up the great work, Louis!

Congratulations to Andrew and Louis on this significant achievement!
On Tuesday, March 12th, the Abington Township Fire Department (ATFD) was re-accredited by the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI). Accredited for the first time in 2014, the ATFD remains Pennsylvania’s only all-volunteer fire department to attain this honor. In fact, only ~10% of the U.S. population is protected by a CFAI-accredited agency.

In order to achieve accreditation, ATFD staff had to prove compliance with 300+ performance indicators, core competencies, and criteria in areas such as fire suppression, fire training, strategic planning, fire prevention education programs, finances, physical and human resources, and firefighter safety and health. After submitting written documentation, a Peer Assessment Team performed a five-day on-site evaluation in Abington Township to verify and validate the printed information.

Congratulations to the members of the Abington Township Fire Department on your re-accreditation!

Picture and information provided courtesy of the Abington Township Fire Department.

In late March, seven members of the Montgomery County Major Incident Response Team (MIRT) from Abington, Cheltenham, Lower Merion, and Hatfield Township Police Departments completed a four-day hazardous materials operations class and sat for a national certification exam.

This training was conducted in conjunction with the Philadelphia Police Department’s Homeland Security Unit and involved law enforcement personnel from Philadelphia, Bucks, and Montgomery Counties. This joint training to national standards ensures that members of all MIRT teams in the region will be able to work together in the event of a Weapons of Mass Destruction incident or other hazardous materials emergency.

Fallen Firefighter Dedication Ceremony

On Saturday, March 16, 2019, the members of the Cheltenham Fire Company held a plaque dedication ceremony in honor of fallen firefighter Frank R. Evans, who was killed in the line of duty on March 16, 1936.

The plaque reads (text from the Cheltenham Hook and Ladder Company Special Meeting Minutes, Page 267, March 18, 1936):

"Firefighter Frank R. Evans, met his death in attempting to board the Mack Apparatus while in motion, in response to an alarm of fire sounded at 5:05 p.m. A Field Fire at Arbor Road & Ashbourne Road, Rowland Park, with 17 men out. He was removed to the Abington Memorial Hospital where he succumbed at 8:30 p.m. of the same day. Frank had joined the fire company with his brother, William Evans in 1918. He was survived by his wife Lovinia, son George and daughter Violet."

The ceremony was attended by Montgomery County Commissioner Joe Gale, State Representative Steve McCarter, Cheltenham Township Commissioner Irv Brockington, Philadelphia Fire Commissioner Adam Thiel, several members of the Evans family, and numerous other elected and appointed officials and local firefighters.

Pictures and plaque text provided courtesy of Cheltenham Township and the Cheltenham Fire Company.
April Happenings

On Tuesday, April 9th, the Department of Public Safety Tactical Communications Team responded with Field Comm 3 to a West Pottsgrove Township for a SWAT deployment. FC3 provides telecommunicators dedicated to the incident, a climate-controlled command post, and a cache of radios and other equipment.

On Wednesday, April 24th, the Department of Public Safety conducted a 13-hour long Open House and Hiring Marathon for 9-1-1 telecommunicators. Interested individuals were able to learn more about the job, fill out an application, and take the test. MCDPS received dozens of new applications throughout the day!

On Thursday, April 25th, Department of Public Safety staff participated in a regional public health coordination tabletop exercise (TTX) in Chester County. This TTX tested personnel and procedures in preparation for an upcoming full-scale regional exercise in October 2019.
Career Opportunities

The Department of Public Safety is now accepting applications for two positions within the Emergency Communications Division. Both positions are offered as part of the Emergency Medical Overdose Surveillance System (EMODSS) project, which is a 3-year, grant funded data-sharing initiative focused on the fusion of public safety, public health, and human services data to track drug-related incidents in the region. Ideal candidates will possess creative and dedicated personas that will fit within the Department’s collaborative culture.

The Public Safety Intelligence Project Manager will be responsible for ensuring that the EMODSS project is implemented and subsequently shows growth, increasing stakeholder buy-in, and future sustainability. The successful candidate will work directly with project stakeholders to ensure all BOJ grant deliverables fall within the applicable scope and budget. He or she will coordinate with other County departments to ensure all aspects of the project are compatible and will ensure that data planning is appropriate to fulfill stakeholder needs. The Project Manager will also provide training support for all stakeholders involved in the project. The optimal candidate will possess project management experience and, when possible, a background in intelligence, public health, or public safety.

The Public Safety Intelligence Data Technician will be responsible for ensuring that the project database development shows growth and increasing stakeholder buy-in and is sustainable in a secure environment. The successful candidate will work directly with the Project Manager and all project stakeholders to ensure all data sharing falls within the intended scope of the project and that all technical requirements are met and sustained. He or she will coordinate with other County departments to ensure all aspects of data sharing are secure and will ensure that data planning is appropriate to fulfill stakeholder needs. The optimal candidate for this position will possess database development experience, a strong background in cloud-data management and networking, and, when possible, a background in intelligence, public health or public safety data management.

Both positions may be required to work non-traditional schedules, including evenings and/or weekends as needed. Both jobs require availability 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year and are considered Essential Employee positions. Essential employees are obligated to report to work as scheduled or remain at work during emergencies. The following is the Duty Statement for Essential Employees:

"Carries out essential job functions or assigned emergency duties which may involve assignments within the Emergency Operations Center, deployment to a field location to participate in emergency management activities, or other duties as required during periods of emergency. If received, emergency assignments may be performed under adverse conditions and continue for periods ranging from a few hours to several weeks."

Both positions are offered under a term-limited grant and upon expiration of the grant cycle, one or both positions may be eliminated. Apply now at www.montcopa.org/jobs.
First Responder Peer Support Hotline

FiRST (First Responder Support Team) is a Pennsylvania-based peer support hotline for all first responders and their families. The hotline is staffed by current and former police officers, firefighters, EMS providers, and 9-1-1 telecommunicators, offering peer support for:

- Job Stress
- Family Issues
- Financial Concerns
- Drug/Alcohol Issues

The call is 100% confidential and the hotline is available 24/7/365. No issue is too big or too small. If you have a concern about yourself, a coworker, a friend, or a family member please CALL, don't hesitate! Calls will be routed through the Lenape Valley Foundation Crisis center. Once you identify yourself as a first responder, you will be transferred to a volunteer Peer First Responder who will speak with you.

Incident Support Team Leadership Transition

On Tuesday, March 26th, members of the Montgomery County Incident Support Team (IST) gathered at the Emergency Operations Center for their regular meeting. The IST is a group of experienced police, fire, and EMS command officers who respond to assist Incident Commanders throughout the County with the management of complex emergencies. Recent deployments include a missing person search in Upper Providence Township on April 14th and a commercial building fire in Lower Providence Township on January 26th.

Chairperson Dave Camarda's third 2-year term recently expired and he chose not to run for re-election. Jim Staufenberg was then unanimously elected as the new Chairperson. Dave will assist Jim during the transition and then will continue to respond as a regular team member. Thank you to Dave for your service and congratulations to Jim on your new role!

PA Entry Level Firefighter Summer Daytime Program

The Montgomery County Fire Academy is offering Pennsylvania Entry Level Firefighter training in a daytime program this summer. All classes will be held from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM. Firefighter I State written and practical testing is included at the end of the class. The course will meet on the following dates:

Week 1: May 15, 16, 17
Week 2: May 20, 21, 22, 23, 24
Week 3: May 28, 29, 30
Week 4: June 3, 4, 5, 6
Week 5: June 10, 11, 12, 13
Week 6: June 17, 18, 19, 20
Week 7: June 24, 25, 26

Please see the flyer in the April 2019 Notices for additional information.
Radio Warranty Extension

The Department of Public Safety has worked with Motorola Solutions to extend the warranty period for two (2) additional years for all APX radios that were purchased under the 2015 promotion. This extended warranty will begin on June 30, 2019 and will expire on June 30, 2021. The warranty for radios purchased by municipalities and volunteer companies in the fall of 2018 will also begin June 30, 2019.

Motorola Solutions will also cover the radio system infrastructure warranty and maintenance for the Department of Public Safety until a cutover is made to the new system. A copy of Motorola’s Change Order is included in the April 2019 Notices.

Any questions can be directed to Rick Lohwasser (rlohwass@montcopa.org or 610-631-6542).

Traffic Incident Management Training

Free online training in Traffic Incident Management (TIM) is now available for all fire and EMS agencies in Montgomery County. Departments that frequently respond to limited access highways are strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity.

It is the goal of the Department of Public Safety to train all Montgomery County first responders in TIM, either via an online offering or a face-to-face session at a fire or ambulance station. In-person classes are available through the Fire Academy and can be held at your organization’s location.

In order to register for the online training, visit the TRAIN PA website at https://www.train.org/pa/welcome. If you have an existing user account, log in and search for “TIM.” If you don’t have an account, please create one to access the course.

Four (4) hours of Continuing Education Units (CEU) through the PA DOH Bureau of EMS are available for this class. If you have any questions, please contact David Brown at dbrown2@montcopa.org or 610-631-6518.

In addition, the Montgomery County Fire Academy is offering an on-campus TIM class on Wednesday May 22, 2019 from 6:45 PM until 10:45 PM.

For more information and to register, visit the Fire Academy website: https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Fire-Academy-Training-Schedule
EMS Institute Training Announcements

The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety, EMS Training Institute is offering several courses starting this spring and summer:

- EMS Preceptor Training (Basic): Wednesday, May 15th, 7 PM – 10 PM
- Paramedic Course: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Saturdays between May 20, 2019 and December 14, 2020 (Mon/Wed 7 PM – 10 PM, Sat 8 AM – 4 PM)
- Medical Management of Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Events: Tuesday June 4th and Wednesday June 5th, 8 AM – 5 PM
- Emergency Medical Technician: Monday – Thursday, 8 AM – 4 PM, from June 10th until August 8th
- Instructor Methodology Course: Thursday June 20th, Saturday June 22nd, Sunday June 23rd, Tuesday June 25th, Thursday June 27th (Tues/Thurs 6 PM – 10 PM, Sat/Sun 8 AM – 5 PM)
- Emergency Medical Technician – Arcadia University: Monday – Friday, plus 3 Saturdays (dates TBD) 8 AM – 4 PM, from July 22nd to August 23rd

All courses will be held at the Public Safety Training Campus, with the exception of Emergency Medical Technician – Arcadia University. Please see the April 2019 Notices for detailed course descriptions and registration information.

Bleeding Control Kit Distribution

The Department of Public Safety recently deployed bleeding control kits to critical access points at the County Courthouse complex and One Montgomery Plaza. The kits are strategically placed in enable quick access for responders to stop bleeding.

Pictured here are Corporal Carl Robinson (left) and Corporal Harry Burke, who were trained on how to use the kits by Department of Public Safety staff.