



## 2012 VEMSACC MEETING SCHEDULE

- June 13 – Linesville
- July 11 – Summit
- August 15 – Fairgrounds (STAT)
- September 12 – Townville
- October 10 – Fellows Club
- November 14 – Jamestown
- December 12 – MAAS

## Crawford County Firemen's Association Meeting Schedule

- May 21 - Scuba
- June 18 - Linesville
- July 16 - Cambridge Springs
- August - No Meeting
- September 17 - Springboro
- October 15 - Hayfield
- November 19 - Townville
- December - No Meeting

## NEW FACES AT 911

*By Dianne Fuller, 911 Supervisor*

Over the course of the last year we have hired a new dispatcher and rehired two previous dispatchers. A former Shift Leader that has returned is Mike Betts. Mike was employed with us from the early 1990's thru 2002. He initially was a dispatcher and was promoted to Shift Leader. He left to pursue another career choice in 2002. Mike decided he missed us and came back on a per diem basis last summer. He went thru training and completed his testing late last summer. We are pleased to have his experience back in the 911 Center.



**Mike Betts**

The next new trainee per diem is Jordan Turner. Jordan is involved with the Diversified Occupations Cooperative Education Program also known as D. O. Co-Op at the Crawford County Career and Technical Center. He is a senior at Maplewood Junior/Senior High. He goes to school in the morning and then comes to the 911 Center in the afternoons and every other weekend. Jordan is getting very close to completing his training and will be testing in the near future.



**Jordan Turner**

The last per diem trainee is Todd Pfeifer. Todd started training with the 911 Center in the late 1990's. At that time the Chief of Police for the Conneaut Lake Regional Police position was vacant and Todd was selected to become the new Chief. Understandably he was unable to stay with 911 to complete his training and take over as Chief. Since then Todd has decided that he now has time to dedicate to complete his training with us. We are pleased to have him back and look forward to him completing his training.



*Todd Pfeifer*

## **TOWER AND MICROWAVE REPLACEMENTS AMONG MANY PROJECTS FOR OES IN 2012**

*By Kevin Nicholson, 911 Director*

Construction on a new communications tower at the Crawford County Fairgrounds began recently. The project began several years ago when County Commissioners authorized a computer analysis of the existing guyed tower which was built in 1981. The study revealed the tower had been twisted and damaged over the years caused mainly by winds and loading on the structure. It was determined that it was more cost effective to replace the tower rather than attempt to repair it. 16 months of planning, permitting and regulatory processes then began. The contract for the new self-supporting tower was awarded to Keegan Wireless of

Pittsburgh late last year but due to weather conditions at the fairgrounds it was determined that construction should be held off until spring.

Work began on the new tower April 16<sup>th</sup> and different aspects of the project continue. All antennas and cables need to be re-located to the new tower and then the old one will be taken down.

OES uses the tower for several frequencies and for a microwave system that connects the eastern side of the County with the 911 center.

The County has entered into agreements with both Verizon and T-Mobile who will rent space on the tower for their operations. Both companies indicated that this will improve cell phone service in the area for users.

Another project which ties into the tower is the replacement of the Microwave. The old system which dates back to 1994 is obsolete. The replacement is expected to be in-service in the near future. MOBILCOM of Meadville is the contractor for this project. The 900 MHz system connects Police East, Government East, Med 10

East and Med 8 with the 911 Communications Center.





After a few years of work, the Crawford County GIS committee has enabled this data to be viewed and searched via a web application. There is no special software required; just an internet browser and an internet connect. Crawford County 911 has a presence on this GIS committee via Phil Baranyai (co-chairperson). This website can allow anyone to access information usually only available from a visit to the courthouse. All information displayed is available through the freedom of information act; searches can be conducted via name, 911 address, parcel #, or road name. Also available are well-known landmarks and cemetery locations, as well as campsite # locations at Colonel Crawford Park and the Pymatuning State Park as well as a few other camping areas in the county. Are you located in a flood zone? How close am I to the nearest Fire / EMS / Police department?

**Crawford County releases new interactive mapping website**  
*By: Phil Baranyai*

Crawford County's GIS mapping is now online. GIS stands for Geospatial Information System, it is simply visualizing data on a map, geographically. Instead of just a list of 911 addresses, roads, streams, schools, etc. GIS enables you to still have that table of information, but in addition it adds a visual aspect on a map. Also, all of the geographic features are placed on a scale model of the county, so their position is accurately displayed. This allows for analysis of this data as well as visualization.

These questions and more can be found by visiting this exciting new website. The GIS landing page can be found at <http://www.crawfordcountypa.net/gis> and will have links to the web service(s) and also expected dates and times of service disruptions. There is a HELP feature located at the top of any/all mapping applications that assist you in searches and frequently asked questions. The data will be updated every two weeks and there is also a link for submitting corrections.

**New K9 Unit at MCPD**

Meadville City Police has a new K9 team on the streets. Patrol officer Greg Beveridge was selected to replace Rich Skalko last year. Officer Skalko and his K9 partner IZON left for warmer climates in May of 2011. IZON was nearing the end of his career, so the search was on for a dog and handler.

After Beveridge was selected, finding the funding to pay for the new dog and training began. Funding was secured from two main sources. The Crawford County District Attorney's office and the Crawford County EMA office were able to fulfill the financial needs to keep the city K9 program alive.

With funding secured, MCPD entered into a contract with Shallowcreek Kennels to provide a dog and the training at a cost of about \$13,000.00. Shallowcreek, located in Sharpsville, PA is a leading provider of Police dogs to agencies in over thirty states, Canada, and has provided dogs to many of the Federal Law Enforcement agencies in the U.S. [www.shallowcreekk9.com](http://www.shallowcreekk9.com)

Lilo, whom turned two years old on March 18<sup>th</sup>, was imported to the United States from Holland when he was about fifteen months old. Lilo had six weeks of training at Shallowcreek before the actual class started. On August 29<sup>th</sup>, Beveridge and Lilo began an additional six weeks of training together with seven other dog teams from throughout the Eastern half of the United States.

At the end of K9 School, Lilo and Beveridge graduated with certification from the North American Police Word Dog Association (NAPWDA). Lilo is certified as a dual purpose Patrol and Narcotics dog. Lilo is certified in the areas of Narcotics, Tracking, Apprehension, Obedience, Area Searches, Building Searches, and Article searches. Certification has to be renewed annually. School ended on October 07<sup>th</sup>, and work started on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

Since October 10<sup>th</sup>, the pair has been working together in the City. Lilo resides at home with Beveridge and his family including two other dogs. Lilo and Beveridge continue to train on a weekly basis as required by National standards. The K9 unit participates at times in group training with other county K9 units along with returning to Shallowcreek on occasion. Lilo and his partner will be traveling to Lancaster in June to participate in the NAPWDA national workshop.

Since October, the MCPD K9 unit has been deployed numerous times to assist patrol officers in the City with a Robbery, building searches, narcotic searches, and a track to find two prowlers. The K9 unit has also assisted other County Police departments and troopers from PSP in Meadville with narcotics searches. On a regular basis, the K9 unit participates in pre-scheduled narcotics searches at the Meadville Middle and Senior High-Schools.

Lilo is receiving high-quality dog food free of charge from Ainsworth pet products. Lilo is enjoying the Rachel Ray "Nutrish" line of food. Along with donated food, Lilo has his healthcare donated by the Crawford County Humane Society Veterinary Hospital that recently opened on Park Avenue in the City of Meadville. Lilo had his annual exam on March 19<sup>th</sup>, checking in at 80 pounds and a clean bill of health. Lilo will be capable of providing about nine to ten years of service to the Meadville City Police Department.



***K9 Lilo***



***K-9 Lilo & K-9 Handler Officer Greg Beveridge***

## **Rail Car Incident Response**

***Don R. Bovard***

***Operations & Training Officer***

Train accidents/derailments are rare in Crawford County. Only two such incidents occurred in 2011, and they were relatively minor in nature. However, the potential for severe railroad incidents is certainly present. A train derailment and fire occurred in Cochranon Borough in 1983.

In an effort to prepare first responders for these low frequency, high impact incidents, the Crawford County Office of Emergency Services and the Northwestern Pennsylvania Emergency Response Group sponsored two sessions of the *Rail Car Incident Response* course during March 2012. The course was developed and delivered by the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium (RDPC). Tyler Pendleton from the University of Findlay (one of the RDPC's academic partners) was the instructor.

The first session was hosted by the Meadville Fire Department on Friday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thirty-nine students and three railroad company representatives attended. The second session was conducted on Saturday, March 24<sup>th</sup> in the Conneaut Lake Volunteer Fire Department's Station #3 Banquet Facility. Twenty-nine students attended. The students represented the disciplines of disaster relief, emergency management, fire and rescue, hazardous materials response, law enforcement, and the military.

*Rail Car Incident Response*, an eight-hour awareness level training program, was developed to educate rural responders on freight rail car incidents involving hazardous materials. Topics covered during the class included an overview of the rail/freight industry, basic rail car design, characteristics of chemicals and toxicology, hazardous materials recognition and identification, and rail tank car damage assessment and mitigation techniques.

A "consist" shipping paper practical exercise was conducted to familiarize the students with pertinent data contained in a typical consist. The document provided critical information about each railcar and its contents.

Students then discussed appropriate rail car incident response procedures, hazard recognition, and appropriate control measures during the review of two

case studies. The first incident reviewed was the train derailment in Livingston, Louisiana on September 28, 1982. Forty-three cars derailed, but there were no fatalities. The second incident reviewed was the derailment in Graniteville, South Carolina on January 5, 2005. Only fourteen cars derailed, but there were nine fatalities.

*Rail Car Incident Response* provided each student with a fundamental knowledge of safely assessing, controlling, containing, and handling leaking or damaged rail cars. Hopefully the students never have to utilize the information provided during the course, but they will be more prepared should an incident occur.



## **Annual Severe Weather Exercise**

***Danella Schroeder, Regional Planner***

On March 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012, Crawford County participated in an annual Severe Weather Exercise sponsored by PEMA.

Each year local, county, and state agencies participate in a Severe Weather Exercise. The exercise scenario is designed to allow all local agencies and the county to experience significant weather problems from severe thunderstorms, flooding and tornado.



**RACES**



**Darlene Bracken of PEMA**

Every year we practice responding to emergencies and disasters so this year we wanted to exercise recovering from those disasters. Darlene Bracken from PEMA Western Regional Office presented information on DRC's during the exercise and reflected on her experiences in working in DRC's across Pennsylvania.

**Rep. Stephen E. Barrar leads committee consideration of legislation to increase public safety on flooded roadways.**

Text of April 4 press release. HARRISBURG - Rep. Stephen E. Barrar (R-Chester/Delaware) today led the House Veterans Affairs and Emergency Preparedness Committee in its consideration of several bills, including a proposal that would prohibit drivers from disobeying traffic-control devices on closed roadways and would institute a fine for driving around barriers if doing so would result in the need for emergency response services.

"The floods of 2011 really highlighted the need for citizens to respect road barriers, as we sadly saw several individuals swept away and killed by flood waters" said Barrar, majority chairman of the committee. "A motorist who drives around a barrier is not only endangering his or her own life, but is also imperiling the lives of first responders. People should remember that it is always safer to turn around rather than drive through a barricaded or flooded roadway."

House Bill 2199, which was authored by Rep. Todd Stephens (R- Montgomery), would prohibit motorists from driving around traffic barriers used to close roadways due to potential hazards. The committee approved an amendment to the bill offered by Rep. Joe Hackett (R-Delaware) to increase the fine to between \$250 and \$500 for disobeying traffic barriers which result in the individual requiring the services of emergency personnel, including towing services.



**Commissioner Francis Weiderspahn signing disaster declaration**

This year, Crawford County wanted to test capabilities in not only response, but disaster recovery efforts. On March 28, 2012, the county was part of a regional exercise that activated the Multi-Agency Coordination Center (MACC) in Erie County, Emergency Operations Center's (EOC's) in Crawford and Venango Counties utilizing Emergency Support Functions (ESF) Staff from their offices throughout the region in Knowledge Center as well as other communication methods available. The participants simulated a disaster spreading across Crawford and Venango Counties including a thunderstorm, flooding and tornado. Simulated resource requests made through each county tested resources throughout the region, testing the Regional Response Plan along with the Communication Plan in place for the Northwest Pennsylvania Emergency Response Group.

**Members of Amature Radio Group RACES**

On March 29, 2012 at 9:00am, as part of the state wide drill, participating agencies were able to test emergency plans in accordance with PEMA guidance. In conjunction with the state exercise and broadcast warning, Crawford County also set up and simulated a disaster recovery center, DRC, in the assembly room from 9:00am to 1:00pm.

This measure voted on by the committee will now go before the full House for consideration. More information about Barrar and his legislative priorities is available at [SteveBarrar.com](http://SteveBarrar.com) or [Facebook.com/Rep Barrar](https://www.facebook.com/RepBarrar). Contact: Nicole Wamsley, 717-783-8063

## **CART**

### ***Michael Birdman Anthony***

Department 45 Fallowfield received call last night approximately 23:00 for a horse stuck in the mud in Adamsville with an assist from the CART team. The horse, a 28 year old retired racing mare called Bullet Proof may have become stuck in mud just outside the barn door, went down and was unable to recover her footing. On CART's arrival she had pretty much given up her fight at survival. She had no... capillary refill and was shivering badly. It was clear she had no strength left as she gave no fight when we manipulated her legs and struggled at wrapping a strap around her haunches to allow us to pull her into the barn. After much pulling and ingenuity we were finally able to get her into the barn so she could be warmed up and kept comfortable until a vet could make it to the scene to euthanize her. As soon as she made it into the barn however and onto a harder surface she decided to give another try at getting up and after an uneasy start she was successful and stood a little shaky at first but she was up. The CART team would like to thank all of those from Dept. 45 for all the hard work they put into this effort and we all owe a huge amount of gratitude to the Crawford County Office Of Emergency Services for had they not been quick in dispatching the CART team the outcome could have been a whole lot different. I have to say seeing the look on everyone's faces and the tears of joy in the owners eyes when this beautiful animal was standing made the trip at this hour well worth it .



***Dept 45 & Bullet Proof***

## **Super Sack Sandbags**

### ***Don Bovard Operations & Training Officer***

Flooding is one of the most common hazards experienced by municipalities throughout Crawford County. It frequently occurs in the late winter and early spring when melting snow is accompanied by heavy rain. Obviously it can also occur during other times of the year. Heavy downpours resulting from the remnants of hurricanes or tropical storms often lead to flash flooding. Severe thunderstorms and ice jams can also result in flooding.

Fortunately the majority of flooding in the county usually results in only minor inconveniences such as closed/restricted roadways and flooded fields. However, flooding occasionally causes damage to property, injuries, and even deaths.

Crawford County has a new tool in its resource arsenal to combat the effects of flooding. It's called the Super Sack. Super Sacks are large sandbags capable of holding up to 4,000 pounds of sand each. They are loaded and positioned with heavy equipment such as backhoes or front-end loaders. Full Super Sacks can be lined up to create a barrier against flood waters.

Approximately forty Super Sack sandbags were acquired from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) on April 16<sup>th</sup>. PEMA gave them to any county that was able to pick them up at its warehouse in Selinsgrove, PA. They are being stored at the City of Meadville's Public Works Department garage on South Cottage Street.

The Super Sacks are available to assist any Crawford County municipality with a flood fight. The Office of Emergency Services should be contacted to request this resource. Hopefully these Super Sacks are never needed and they can remain in storage.



## FCC Launches It's Disaster Response Program Video

The FCC launches a short video clip on its disaster response program on its website.

<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/hurricane-information>

### Tips for Communicating During an Emergency

1. Limit non-emergency phone calls. This will minimize network congestion, free up "space" on the network for emergency communications and conserve battery power if you are using a wireless phone;
2. Keep all phone calls brief. If you need to use a phone, try to use it only to convey vital information to emergency personnel and/or family;
3. For non-emergency calls, try text messaging, also known as short messaging service (SMS) when using your wireless phone. In many cases text messages will go through when your call may not. It will also help free up more "space" for emergency communications on the telephone network;
4. If possible, try a variety of communications services if you are unsuccessful in getting through with one. For example, if you are

unsuccessful in getting through on your wireless phone, try a messaging capability like text messaging or email. Alternatively, try a landline phone if one is available. This will help spread the communications demand over multiple networks and should reduce overall congestion;

5. Wait 10 seconds before redialing a call. On many wireless handsets, to re-dial a number, you simply push "send" after you've ended a call to redial the previous number. If you do this too quickly, the data from the handset to the cell sites do not have enough time to clear before you've resent the same data. This contributes to a clogged network;
6. Have charged batteries and car-charger adapters available for backup power for your wireless phone;
7. Maintain a list of emergency phone numbers in your phone;
8. If in your vehicle, try to place calls while your vehicle is stationary;
9. Have a family communications plan in place. Designate someone out of the area as a central contact, and make certain all family members know who to contact if they become separated;
10. If you have Call Forwarding on your home number, forward your home number to your wireless number in the event of an evacuation. That way you will get incoming calls from your landline phone;
11. After the storm has passed, if you lose power in your home, try using your car to charge cell phones or listen to news alerts on the car radio. But be careful – don't try to reach your car if it is not safe to do so, and remain vigilant about carbon monoxide emissions from your car if it is a closed space, such as a garage;
12. Tune-in to broadcast and radio news for important news alerts.

Find more information at [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), <http://www.redcross.org>, or [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).