



# the *NHEDA Broadcaster*

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## Why Such a Passion for Training?

By Jennifer Cloutier, Communications Manager, Berlin Police Dept.



A couple weeks ago on my way to a meeting with the NHEDA Board of Directors and NH Public Safety Chief Level Personnel to discuss NHEDA's efforts for Dispatcher Training Standards and Certification – I got to thinking about why I am so passionate about adequate standards and training. Below is my story which gives some insight to my reasons.....

I'll start by saying that I NEVER EVER thought I would be in Public Safety (even though nowadays I can't imagine a life outside of it!) I grew up loving art and actually being pretty decent at it. After graduating from College with a Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design, I immediately went to work for a newspaper in my hometown designing ads for the daily edition. After a year at that job, I was miserable! The people I worked for and with, weren't progressive! I spent most of my days being told by my boss that she has been in the newspaper business for years and that I was doing everything wrong. After my grandfather passed away and they didn't want to give me the time off to attend his services, I quit! I went in one morning to collect my belongings and tell them I wasn't coming back. I was 21 years old, just moved into my own apartment, had school loans to pay and no job to go to the next day!

I took a couple days to collect my thoughts and then started searching the help wanted ads and ended up applying for a full-time position as a dispatcher with Berlin PD. At that point I was just hopeful that I would be able to get a steady job - and one with benefits and health insurance would certainly be a plus! After a

quick 10 minute interview and a week for my background check to be done, I was hired! My supervisor only had a few weeks left with Berlin PD before a move out of state to be with her family. She was obviously in a rush to get someone hired and trained before she left.

My short-timer supervisor was my trainer for the two week training period (Yes—you read that right, only two weeks!). The first day I observed her, the second day I used the radio, and the third day I hopped on the phones. For the remaining 1 ½ weeks, she observed me work and voila – I was considered trained in the eyes of my department! On my fourth day of training, my supervisor left the building for an hour for a lunch break. Before leaving she told the two officers on duty, and one detective whose office was next to dispatch – to keep an eye on me while she was out. During that time, I received a call for a missing juvenile. I didn't even know what questions to ask the hysterical mother! By the grace of God I muddled my way through it, resulting in a successful outcome.

Two and a half months after being hired (if that would have been today, I would have still been in the training period!) I handled one of the biggest and most serious calls to date, of my career – a fatal helicopter crash where the father of one of my friends from high school was the victim. Again I muddled my way through it even after having to make the death notification over the phone to my friend's mother!

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# Why Such a Passion For Training?

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Some may wonder why I'm not upset with the training (or lack thereof) that I received, and how ill-prepared I was to handle these sort of emergencies. The reason for that is because for every incident that I had to muddle my way through, every mistake I made, and every time I realized that I didn't receive adequate training – I was determined to strive to better myself and learn from these incidents. I worked a lot of night shifts at the beginning of my career (as I'm sure many of you did too) and during the down time, I took the opportunity to better myself, my dispatching skills and improve my knowledge. I organized binders and files – and always read over each page as I was putting it away. If I had a question, I asked. If I didn't understand something, I found the answer.

Two-years in, and after training a couple of new dispatchers, I saw a CTO (communications training officer) course being advertised and asked to attend. After attending the class, I truly realized how insufficient our training of new dispatchers, actually was! I spent the next couple of months developing the draft version of Berlin PD's first ever official CTO program. I presented it to my supervisor and was told to run with it! At this time, our training program increased from two to six weeks long.

In 2005, my current supervisor left her position and I was promoted to Communications Manager. My first goal was to improve the CTO program even further. I made modifications and additions to the program and finally received approval to increase it to 8-10 weeks. We currently do a 12 week intensive CTO Program. Our high standards and commitment to continued training, has contributed to our low turnover rate and product of very capable dispatchers!

I've never been a 'sit back and let things happen' type of person – and I always tell people that I'm just barely brave enough to make that leap to try new things, and learn by my own mistakes. I also

owe much of my success to my Chief, Pete Morency who believes and encourages me, and trusts my instincts. He has always given me enough freedom along the way to take the bull by the horns and make changes where they are needed. Change is very hard for most people, but Chief Morency has always welcomed it. He truly realizes the value of networking, being involved in associations, heavy training and being well-prepared.

I have learned over the years that to be a successful dispatcher, you must take charge of your own knowledge and even though *"we don't know – what we don't know"* (Chief Billy Goldfeder) – you shouldn't just be satisfied with the training you are given, if you feel it isn't adequate enough. Always ask for more, and strive for more - to better yourself. If your agency doesn't believe in heavy training as much as mine does, there are ways to take charge of your own destiny. There are many training resources out there - various online trainings, many periodicals, your dispatching peers, and most importantly being connected with NHEDA!



# Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Promotes Two Members



Laconia, NH – Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid dispatches provides professional Fire, EMS, and All Hazards emergency dispatching to 35 communities in and around the Lakes Region of NH. Chief Coordinator Jon Goldman, is pleased to announce the promotion of two members.

**Lt. Rob Frame Jr.** a twelve-year veteran has been promoted to Scheduling Lieutenant. As the Scheduling Lieutenant, Lt. Frame will coordinate all aspects of employee scheduling, assuring qualified Dispatchers are on duty 24 hours per day, and seven days per week.

**Dispatcher Erin Hannafin**, a seven-year veteran has been promoted to the position of Communications Center Train-

ing Coordinator. Dispatcher Hannafin will work to coordinate all of the internal/external, and continuing education for our newly hired employees, as well as our current employees. This position will be integral to the operations of the organization as we strive to increase available training to our members, and work towards standards based accreditation, and services.

Both candidates were selected for their position out of a pool of internal applicants who had expressed interest in the positions. After a resume review, all applicants were interviewed in an “oral board” style of interview. Chief Coordinator Jon Goldman said “The decision was a difficult one, each candidate brought their own unique style, and qualifications to the process, but I’m confident we have selected the right people for the right positions.”

As part of a formal recognition of duties the following personnel were also assigned to the following tasks:

Lt. David Parker – CAD Program/Implementation Manager

Lt. Kevin Nugent – PIO/Community Liaison, Strike Team/Task Force Manager

Lt. Paul Steele – Radio System Manager, IT Team

Dispatcher Chris Reynolds – Emergency Plans, Data Analyst

Dispatcher Benson Goodwin – Safety Officer, Facilities Manager



**News!**

## 2016 EMD of the Year Announced

Rebecca Desrochers joined the Bureau as a Telecommunications Specialist in June 2006. Over the course of her career, she has been a hardworking, dedicated employee who is the definition of a model employee. She is upbeat, and always willing to assist her newer coworkers who are acclimating to the job. As a Training Officer, she brings her 'A' game every day and is always looking for new, innovative ways to help her trainees succeed. Like those before her, she is well chosen as our 2016 Telecommunicator of the Year. Congratulations and thank you to all 9-1-1 Telecommunicators and local dispatchers!

(Pictured in the photo are Rebecca's family members as well as 9-1-1 Assistant Director Peter DeNutte, 9-1-1 Assistant Director Bob Lussier and Department of Safety Assistant Commissioner Richard Bailey)



## New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications Earns Re-Accreditation as An Emergency Medical Dispatch Center of Excellence from The International Academies of Emergency Dispatch

**New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications** was approved as an Emergency Medical Dispatch Center of Excellence on March 7, 2017 by the Board of Accreditation of the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch (IAED). Therefore, **New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications** retains the distinguished honor of being the 30th Emergency Medical Dispatch Accredited Center in the world.

The IAED is a non-profit standard-setting organization promoting safe and effective emergency dispatch services worldwide. Comprised of four allied Academies for medical, fire, police, and emergency communication nurse system dispatching, the IAED supports first-responder related research, unified protocol application, legislation for emergency call center regulation, and strengthening the emergency dispatch community through education, certification, and accreditation. An Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) is the highest distinction in 9-1-1 emergency communication services.

**New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications** achieved re-accreditation for their continued compliance to the Medical Priority Dispatch System (MPDS) and the associated "20 Points of Excellence". The "20 Points of Excellence" encompass international practice standards of excellence for Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). This sustained culture of operational effectiveness addresses system oversight, quality improvement programs, and individual certification of all emergency call-takers. Re-accreditation is a voluntary accomplishment that demonstrates an unprecedented dedication to public safety from not only each individual within the communications center, but also the administration team.

In addition to being featured in the next issue of *The Journal of Emergency Dispatch*, **New Hampshire Bureau of Emergency Communications** will be recognized on The International Academies of Emergency Dispatch's website (<http://www.emergencydispatch.org/AccredCurrentAces>).

Permission was granted by IAED to NHEDA to reprint this article.

# Upcoming Meetings & Trainings

**July 19, 2017 at 10:00am** Monthly meeting and training. To be held at Franklin Police Department. Training will be the Crisis Negotiations Module.

**August 16, 2017 at 10:00am** – Monthly meeting and training at Conway Police Dept. Training will be the Fish and Game module.

**September** – Possibility of an all-day module training. Stay posted for details.

**October 18, 2017 at 10:00am** – Monthly meeting and training at at the IPOC in Concord – WebEOC training module.

**November 15, 2017 at 10:00am** – Monthly meeting and training at Southwest Fire in Keene - EMS Overview module.

## Welcome to NHEDA's Newest Member!

*Adam Frederick—Hudson Fire Department*



## The NHEDA Broadcaster

The NHEDA Newsletter is produced monthly and available free of charge electronically. Go to [www.nheda.org](http://www.nheda.org) today for details on free membership and other benefits of belonging to NHEDA.

Any NHEDA member can contribute to the newsletter. Submit articles, photos, training announcements and your ideas for articles. Send material to [newsletter@nheda.org](mailto:newsletter@nheda.org)

**Jennifer Cloutier**  
Berlin PD

**Cassie Leavitt**  
Hampton Fire

**Keith Veale**  
Hillsborough County  
Sheriff's Office

**Laura Bartlett**  
NH HSEM

**Austin Brown**  
New London PD

# Director's Message



Hello NHEDA!

While it's certainly warmer, this *summer* has seemed pretty wet and it seems like there's another weather watch or warning every couple days!

I'm happy to see that some of you have been doing a great job with your 2017 homework—at the last meeting the membership committee reported we are 547 members strong! That's good progress, and please keep up the recruiting efforts—there have to be at least twice that many folks working in our profession around our little state (and I know some of you have more Facebook friends than that!). It should be an easy sell to get them to join—just the cost of their email address.

Your Governing Body has resumed regular meetings/conference calls with our new officers—please contact any of us with any questions or concerns (contact info is on the website). As your elected representatives, we try to do what's best for you, so please make sure we know what you're thinking, what you want to see, “what's up”!

In May, Board members and the Certifications & Standards Committee met with representations of several of the Chiefs Associations and began a productive dialogue on dispatcher training, certification, standards and how to continue recognizing and promoting the professionals in our line of work. We'll be continuing this work with these organizations, the Department of Safety, and other stakeholders as we build on the programs we've already started and look to our futures. Please stay engaged and aware of the activity and training opportunities so you're ready to answer the questions from your Chiefs. We need to continue to be our own best advocates to ensure our profession is recognized.

The Training Committee has continued to produce a good schedule of monthly training events, most of them part of the NHEDA certification module program. The schedule is always posted on the website and the weekly e-mail blasts. Please come join us!

I hope you each have a fantastic summer, both at work and play.

Thank You, for all you do, every day

***Thomas Andross***