



# Florida NENA Quarterly Newsletter

Newsletter Issue:  
December 2019

**Florida Chapter of the National Emergency Number Association, Inc.**

## Letter from the Immediate Past President

By Laurie Anderson, Florida NENA Past President

It's been an outstanding year and a half as your Florida NENA President. Many accomplishments have been made by the Executive Board to improve the services of the Florida NENA membership and to enhance 9-1-1 overall in the State of Florida. I had the pleasure of reviewing these accomplishments at the Florida NENA Conference in November held in West Palm Beach. While we had a great turnout at the conference, based on our membership numbers, unfortunately, there were still many that could not attend and therefore I would like to take this opportunity to present a re-cap of these items here.

- ◆ Gained incorporation status
- ◆ Created Standard Operating Procedures.
- ◆ Set a policy for and began completing internal financial audits
- ◆ Created quarterly financial reports
- ◆ The FL NENA newsletter received a new look and set up a quarterly distribution plan
- ◆ Developed the Pat Welte ENP scholarship. (To be offered two times per year)
- ◆ Established the Excellence in 911 Award (To be offered one time per year for any 1 member of the 9-1-1 Community that performs outstanding service in their jobs)
- ◆ Obtained 501c3 status

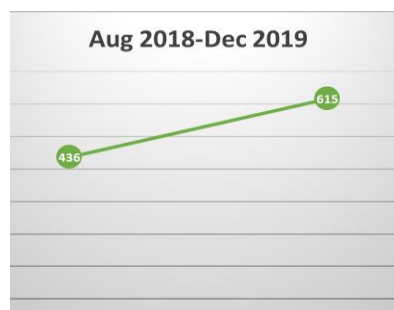
◆ Submitted the organizations first tax return

◆ Obtained insurance to protect the Executive Board

◆ Contracted with a membership management company that will be providing us with a fresh new website and communication tools for our membership. (Debuted at the FL NENA Membership meeting and will go live in the next couple of weeks)

◆ Contracted with 2 companies to provide GIS statewide training and will be coordinating this training over this next year

One very important item that I failed to mention at the conference, yet is extremely exciting and worth mentioning, is that Florida NENA has had a 41% increase in membership since Aug 2018. Those are some astonishing numbers!



While we have gained a great deal of momentum throughout this past year and half, we need to keep up the momentum and driving forward. While there have been

many positive changes within the organization, there is still much work to be done. Florida NENA needs input from you on what your expectations from this organization are to ensure that we are meeting your needs. You can expect to see surveys soon that will allow the FL NENA Executive Board to identify and assess the needs of and provide the most benefit to its members. But this is not the only way for us to learn about what you need. We ask that you become as involved as possible by participating in semi-annual membership meetings that coincide with the Spring Meetings and Fall Conference, attend quarterly region meetings (WEFA, NOFA, SOFA, CEFA), become involved in FL NENA Committee work or even communicate with a phone call or email to your FL NENA Executive Board Members. This organization is about you and improving all things 9-1-1 here in the State of Florida.

With that, as your Immediate Past President, I am here to support Greg Holcomb in his role as the Florida NENA President and aid the rest of the Florida NENA Executive Board in any way that I can. I am looking forward to another great year with Florida NENA. Happy Holidays to all!!!

*Laurie Anderson*

FL NENA Past President

**“Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does!”**

**William James**

# Missing Kids Readiness Project

By: Cristie Taylor, St Johns County Communications Support Unit Manager

## Most Public Safety

Telecommunicators have a list of calls that they hope they will never have to handle and every PSAP Manager has a list of call types they hope never come in to their Emergency Communications Center. Though some of the types of calls vary on everyone's list, it's almost guaranteed that there isn't any center or PST that wants to take the call and dispatch a report of an abducted child.

Unfortunately, we don't get to pick and choose the calls we are given and must do the best we can to be prepared.

In an attempt to find training and guidelines to handle a call about an abducted child we looked to industry leaders for guidance. The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC), National Emergency Number Association (NENA), Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO), National Academies of Emergency Dispatch (NAED) and National AMBER Alert created an ANSI standard known as the "Standard for Calltakers when Handling Calls Pertaining to Missing and Sexually Exploited Children." In addition, NCMEC created a program nationwide that PSAPs can be a part of to help train and prepare their PSTs for reports of missing children. This program is known as the "Missing Kids Readiness Project." As of this writing there are only 10 PSAPs in Florida that have gone through the requirements to be a part of this program. The St Johns County Sheriff's Office's Communications Center completed all the necessary requirements and joined in 2016.

NCMEC gives some insight on the program in the press releases that they provide to PSAPs: "From the moment the report of a missing child comes in to the resolution of the case, every action taken has

the potential to make the difference between a successful recovery and a tragic outcome". The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) developed the Missing Kids Readiness Project to promote best practices for responding to calls of missing, abducted and sexually exploited children. 911 call centers and law enforcement agencies are recognized for meeting essential training and policy elements demonstrating preparedness for responding to a missing child incident."

Becoming part of the Missing Kids Readiness Project requires ensuring that your SOPs and policies align with defined national standards. It also means additional training for the PSAP manager and everyone in the PSAP on how to handle calls of missing children. The training is free and can be done on-line. The cost for preparing our PSTs was the time it took to revise existing policies, the time to train and ensuring that quality assurance reviews are done on these types of calls. By going through the process to become a part of the Missing Kids Readiness Project our PSTs improved their knowledge and their ability to effectively respond to reports of missing children.

Many PSAPs already are training their PSTs on how to take missing children reports and many already have SOPs that reflect the best practices to do so. By taking the extra step of joining NCMEC in the Missing Kids Readiness Project you can ensure that what you

already are doing is the best, or, if not, make needed changes. The process itself helped us align our practices better and the ongoing participation incentivizes us to make sure all new hires receive the much needed training. For more information from NCMEC:

<http://www.missingkids.com/ourwork/training>

*Cristie Taylor*

2016 Picture of SJSO PSTs with the certificate awarded to them by NCMEC:



**"From the moment the report of a missing child comes in until the resolution of the case, every action taken has the potential to make the difference between a successful recovery and a tragic outcome".**

# National NENA News

By Linda Draugh-Woloski, ENP

2019 has been a busy year for National NENA. We have seen several new programs introduced, an increase in our membership, and Florida hosted a very successful Annual Conference.

Two of the new programs that have been introduced is NENA's Wellness Program and Women in 9-1-1. NENA wants to promote good health and wellness for all of our 9-1-1 Professionals. So, if you are a telecommunicator, a supervisor, a manager, a director or you work with the Private sector providing equipment, software, or services, this program is for you! Get involved and have an impact.

The other program that was introduced this year is Women in 9-1-1. This is a program that encourages women to mentor and support others in the growth of their careers in 9-1-1.

Some upcoming events in the first quarter of 2020 are the Standards and Best Practice Conference (SBP) which will be in Austin, TX, January 20<sup>th</sup>–23<sup>rd</sup>. This is a working conference where YOU have a voice and input into how to improve our profession. Be that at an Operational or Technical level. In addition to SBP, we will also be hosting a Critical Issues Forum on Wellness, January 23<sup>rd</sup>

and 24<sup>th</sup>. If you can, I encourage you to attend both. We will be in Washington DC, February 12<sup>th</sup>–15<sup>h</sup>, for "NENA's 9-1-1 Goes to Washington". This is a time for us to share with our elected officials our needs and concerns.

On a personal note, I want to take a minute to wish you and your families a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas, and a Healthy New Year.

I want to thank all of you for your willingness to get involved. It is because of all of you that NENA is recognized as "The 9-1-1 Association".

*Linda Draugh Woloski*

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## Your 911 Environment: More Than Just A Place To Sit

Co-written by Megan Lewis, Public Safety Manager for Evans and Tanya Lee, Manager for EvansCare

"Ergonomics" is defined as "the study of people's efficiency in their working environment". When exploring improvements to your 911 center, we often times only focus on the workstations as being ergonomic, evaluating sit-to-stand features, monitor adjustments, etc. What is often forgotten is that ergonomics goes beyond just the human mechanics needed, but proper lighting, acoustics, layout and proper maintenance.

The two biggest fatigue factors in a dispatch center are lighting and acoustics; I know what you're thinking, "my center is always dark and it's great!" Did you know that your eyes work and strain harder against the constant glare of your screens with darkness around you, rather than if you kept those "bright" lights on? You may think the light on the computer or TV stays the same but it is constantly changing, forcing your eyes to adjust and change as well. Now think about that activity happening over a 10-12 hour period...don't you get exhausted just thinking about it?!

Many studies are being done and implemented into centers and control rooms around the world that mimic outdoor sunlight conditions and how our body adjusts from morning to night with natural light. The cooler light aids in productivity and decreases depression and mood swings that occur by staying in a stagnant environment all day.

Much of the same can be said for the acoustics in your 911 center; uncontrolled noise is one of the primary concerns for a communications center. Background noise can be incredibly distracting and leads to several negative results, commonly reported in 911 centers. We must think beyond the acoustics around the workstations themselves, and consider the room as a whole. Wall paneling, carpet (sorry, but it's the best for sound absorption!), foam, etc. all need to be factored in to design of your control center. Wall paneling is more than just putting some panels on the walls; there is a strategic design and formula to how these

are placed around the room and can be done with a proper acoustic study.

Once you've placed value on the 911 center as a whole, you'll want to protect your investment! With vendors constantly in and out, IT adjustments, new hardware, etc., proper operation of your equipment can become compromised. Your center and equipment cost a lot of money; maintaining your equipment affects not only your investment, it lets your people know they matter. It is an investment in staff as much as it is the equipment, etc.

Finally, attention to all of these details affects the performance for each and every call and/or task. Creating an optimum work environment decreases the likelihood of a mistake being made and creating a happier, healthier place to work!

# Public Education Corner

By Amber Siena FL NENA Committee Chair for Public Education

A couple agenda items are:

How do you determine what your public education campaign should be? Once you have a topic, how do you create a program?

There are some tips and tricks you can use to get you started. Someone else in the group may already have a presentation.

Check out the PUBLIC EDUCATION page of the FL NENA EDUCATION group on TEAM 911. There are sample coloring books, pamphlets and campaign outlines that you can use and customize for your program. If you have any items you can share, please request to be a part of the group page and I will work with you to get the items uploaded.

How can we create a PSA competition with the schools to promote 911 safety? This would be a great way to celebrate the month of April for both 911 Public Education Month and National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week. Get your thinking cap on and start making some notes of what we can do together to start this campaign for April 2020.

Join the National Public Safety Educator Forum and receive ideas and contacts to help you grow your program.

If you are able to travel, start planning to attend the National Public Educators Forum Conference in Austin Texas.

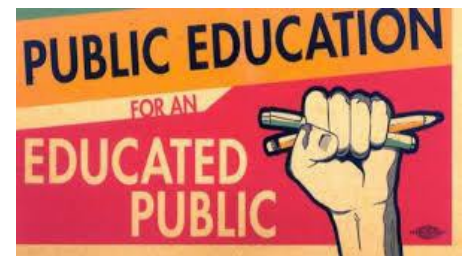
Dates: **July 12th-15th 2020.**  
<https://www.911npef.org/>

We want to grow our membership so if you participate in Public Education events or know someone that does, we want you to be part of the group and share your knowledge!

For more information please contact me!

Amber Siena, FL NENA Committee Chair for Public Education.

Email or call - [asie@osceola.org](mailto:asie@osceola.org) - office phone number 407-344-5269



## Florida NENA Education Updates

**ENP 9-1-1**

Since 1992 The Emergency Number Professional (ENP) certification has served as a benchmark of professional achievement in the 9-1-1 industry. ENP designation indicates a high level of comprehensive knowledge and a commitment to the profession, and serves as a way to raise industry standards and accrue a body of knowledge.

To become an ENP you must first meet eligibility requirements and submit an application (go to [NENA.org](http://NENA.org) for details). The next step is to take and pass the ENP exam. The ENP exam is given four times per year for a two-week period, and is administered at testing centers. The Spring 2020 Exam dates are April 4-18, with a March 6 application deadline.

Got test anxiety? Florida NENA is here for you. In 2004 the Chapter implemented the ENP Study Group, which has now been copied by other state chapters. The study group meets via weekly conference calls to review the ENP Study Guide and practice test questions. The next study group will get you ready for the Spring 2020 test dates.

FL NENA does have the next ENP Study Group planned.

It will be February 4-March 17, 2020 on Tuesdays 2:00-3:00pm EST. Please contact Judith Weshinsky-Price if you wish to register.

Judith Weshinsky-Price, ENP, RPL  
 Director, Regional 911 Division  
 (727) 464-4226 Office  
 (303) 944-0225 Cell  
[jweshinsky-price@pinellascounty.org](mailto:jweshinsky-price@pinellascounty.org)



### NENA Updates:

- CEFA - March 13, 2020 - Location TBD
- WEFA – December 10, 2019 – Gulf County EM/911  
 1000 Cecil G. Costin Sr. Blvd, Port St Joe, Florida  
 \*\*\*Note: Turkey provided by Gulf County EOC  
 RSVP @ [kevin@santarosa.fl.gov](mailto:kevin@santarosa.fl.gov) with your favorite side dish
- NOFA – March 5, 2020 – Gilchrist County EOC, 3250 N US Hwy  
 129, Bell, Florida
- SOFA – March 12, 2020 – Location TBD

\*\*\*Charlotte County is hosting the **NENA Enhanced Caller Management Course** on January 23, 2020. Register at [nena.org](http://nena.org)

# Florida NENA Executive Board

By Susan Nelson, FL NENA Committee Media Chair

The Florida Chapter of NENA held the Fall membership meeting during the Annual Conference and Training Expo in West Palm Beach on November 21, 2019. At that meeting final voting for new executive Board positions was held and tabulated. The following members were sworn in to office for 2019-20:

President - Greg Holcomb, ENP

1<sup>st</sup> Vice President – Dan Koenig, ENP

2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President – Jacob Saur, RPL, ENP Immediate

Past President – Laurie Anderson, ENP

Treasurer – Sandi Chernoff, ENP

Secretary – Katja Jalonen

Central Florida Regional Vice President – Ira Pyles, ENP

West Florida Regional Vice President – Kevin Sowell, ENP, CMCP

South Florida Regional Vice President – Michael Fernandez, ENP North

Florida Regional Vice President – Keith Godwin, ENP




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## Alachua County Text-to-911 Success Story

By Keith Godwin, CPM, ENP – Alachua County 911 Coordinator / FL Chapter of NENA NOFA Vice President

Alachua County 911 Operator Cherie Muse received a Text-to-911 call from a 15 year old girl who reported her father's friend raped her. She was able to give a vehicle description and some landmarks of what she saw around her, which Cherie was able to cross-reference with the lat/long on the Text-to-911 ping and determined the girl was most likely in Alachua near the interstate. Cherie quickly entered a call for service and contacted Alachua Police Department relaying information/questions back and forth between Alachua Police Department and the caller. For 45 minutes, Cherie continued to update the call with the young woman's ping location and stayed on the line with Alachua Police Department's dispatch until their sergeant was able to arrive on scene.

The truck the girl was in left the hotel and entered the interstate. Thanks to Cherie's efforts, Alachua Police Department PD, FHP and Columbia County Sheriff's Office were able to identify and stop the truck just over the county line, apprehending the driver for the confirmed rape of the 15 year old victim, rescued the victim, and may have ultimately even saved her life. Cherie was able to utilize her call taking skill sets with vague information and piece it all together.

This is that call that we hope we never get, but where we really **\*must\* get it right**, because there is zero room for error and no second chances.

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**NENA**  
THE 9-1-1 ASSOCIATION

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