Department Employees Recognized for Service Milestones

Congratulations to 15 Department of Public Safety employees and to our colleagues in other County departments who were recognized on Thursday, October 20th for reaching milestones in their careers in public service!

Ronald Diehl – 40 years
Margaret Deshon - 30 years
Steven House - 25 years
John Corcoran - 20 years
Carl Flack - 20 years
Marc Leong - 20 years (pictured, right)
Michael Orman - 15 years
Erin Taylor - 15 years
Ashley Bacon - 10 years
Nancy Bangert - 10 years
Marta Johnson - 10 years
Christopher Kendra - 10 years
Christopher Krywyj - 10 years
Amanda Rosentreter - 10 years (pictured, left)
Nicole Torres - 10 years

These employees have provided a combined 255 years of dedicated service to the citizens and first responders of Montgomery County. Thank you for everything and congratulations on this significant achievement!

Legacy Radio System Eagleville Tower Removed

In late October, the Department of Public Safety completed the final stage of the radio system transition project: removing the legacy system’s Eagleville tower. For more than 40 years, this 300’ tower rose high above the Emergency Operations Center, County Correctional Facility, and surrounding neighborhoods of Lower Providence Township. It served as a communications hub for the thousands of first responders and other public safety personnel who protect Pennsylvania’s third-largest county. All users have now been transitioned to the new countywide 700/800 MHz radio communications system, which operates off of a separate tower on the Eagleville campus.

The Department would like to thank field users for their partnership and patience throughout the transition process, as well as the County Commissioners for their vital support and funding.
US&R Team Holds Specialized Training with New Rescue Prop

In recent years, weather events have changed the way emergency service providers train. Flooding has become more common in southeastern Pennsylvania, causing fire departments to purchase water rescue equipment, municipalities to install flood gates on roadways that commonly flood, and media outlets to promote education on what to do when flooding occurs (“Turn Around, Don’t Drown”).

A vehicle stranded in the water is one of the most common calls for emergency responders during a flooding event. Sadly, these types of incidents are usually preventable and endanger the lives of both vehicle occupants and the rescuers sent to retrieve them. Flood water is widely classified as a hazardous environment due to contaminants in the water from urban run-off and the unknowns below the water line, both of which significantly increase the level of danger to responders.

Due to the frequency of these types of incidents and the lack of an accurate and safe way to simulate them for training, the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety’s Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Team implemented a plan to purchase a vehicle-in-water training prop that will allow members to practice these advanced water rescue skills throughout the year. The Team recently took delivery of a Submerged Vehicle Trainer (SVT) from KD Fabrication, becoming only one of six agencies in the United States and the only agency on the east coast to own one.

The SVT is a two-door, scaled vehicle prop constructed of 100% stainless steel and its size allows for easy transportation to different training locations. The prop also meets all of the environmental requirements that prevent the use of real cars for this type of training due to pollution concerns.

The SVT has both front and rear "lift" air bags, giving team officers or instructors the control to manipulate the position of the car in the water. Scenarios can be designed to mimic real life situations, such as having a low hood (typical in flooding), one or two passengers seated inside or on the hood/roof, or the vehicle being carried along with the water current.

On Wednesday, October 26th, Montgomery County US&R held a “pop-up” drill on the Schuylkill River, just southeast of the Flat Rock Dam in Lower Merion Township. Since the purchase of the SVT was known only to Team leadership, members attending the drill knew only the location and that the scenario involved swiftwater rescue. Technicians arrived to find the SVT in the river and spent multiple
hours working with the new prop and brushing up on their water rescue skills.

Among numerous other considerations, rescuers needed to ask themselves and their team: Are the occupants still seat belted in? Have they been provided proper PPE, such as a life vest? If there is more than one occupant, what will happen to the dynamics of the vehicle when one is moved? Will a rescue specialist need to be added as “ballast” to ensure that the vehicle does not begin to float due to the weight change?

The Montgomery County US&R Team has highly trained water rescue specialists, 10 of which are state water instructors, as well as an extensive water rescue fleet: four swiftwater boats, two boats, two specialized crafts, and two high-water vehicles. For more information about the Team and its water program, contact Joe Dishler at jdishler@montcopa.org.

DPS Attends Keegan’s 1st Annual Touch-A-Truck

On Sunday, October 9th numerous Department of Public Safety personnel and vehicles attended Keegan’s 1st Annual Touch-A-Truck at the Limerick Fire Department. The event was organized by Bobby Langerfeld, a former MCDPS 9-1-1 Telecommunicator and current officer with the Limerick Township Police Department. On October 16, 2021, Bobby and his wife Brianna tragically lost their son, Keegan, just six days after his first birthday. Keegan’s passing was declared a SUDC (Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood).

Field Comm 1, Field Comm 3, HazMat 81, and Rescue 20 all attended, as did the Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Team’s high water evacuation vehicle and the drone response unit, for people of all ages to explore, learn about, and take pictures with. The US&R Team also provided a search and rescue demonstration for attendees, led by Canine Specialist Thomas Brown and K-9 Memphis!

Bobby and Brianna organized the Touch-A-Truck to celebrate Keegan’s second birthday and to raise money for the SUDC Foundation. For more information on SUDC and how to help, visit https://sudc.org/.

2022 Ed Momorella Eagle Award Recipient Announced

Congratulations to Alex Levy for being presented the 2022 Ed Momorella Eagle Award!

Alex recently retired after a long career in local law enforcement, serving with the Upper Moreland Township, North Wales Borough, and Abington Township Police Departments. Thanks for everything you’ve done for the residents of Montgomery County!
Freedom Valley Medical Rescue Commences Operations

On Tuesday, October 18th at noon, Montgomery County’s newest EMS agency went live as Station 376. Freedom Valley Medical Rescue was created by the merger of Harleysville Area EMS and the EMS division of Trappe Fire Company No. 1 and provides a regional approach for EMS to the communities that Trappe and Harleysville previously covered with primary 9-1-1 ambulance services. These municipalities include Lower Salford, Limerick, and Marlborough Townships; Phoenixville, Green Lane, Collegeville, and Trappe Boroughs; and portions of New Hanover, Upper Salford, Franconia, Perkiomen, and Upper Providence Townships. Freedom Valley operates out of the five stations, all of which were previously staffed by Stations 324 or 344: Harleysville (Station 376), Limerick (Station 376A), Trappe (Station 376B), Green Lane (Station 376C), and Phoenixville (Chester 85). Staff and vehicles were transitioned over with the merger and rebranding of the organization is ongoing. Freedom Valley is led by Chief Don Lynch.

In addition, the Western Montco EMS Training Institute has transitioned under the new organization and is now known as the Freedom Valley Medical Training Institute. Class availability and information is available at [www.wmemsti.org](http://www.wmemsti.org). This entity is not affiliated with the Department of Public Safety’s EMS Training Institute.

Freedom Valley is also pleased to announce the creation of a new division as part of their growth in pre-hospital care for their communities. The Community Wellness Division will support identifying and resourcing unmet and priority community needs in promoting the health and wellness of the areas they serve through their 9-1-1 division. The effort is focused on assisting with prevention, addressing supplemental public health services, and helping their residents by connecting, supporting, and empowering them with the necessary resources to live a healthier and safer life.

Freedom Valley maintains a focus on community care as a Pennsylvania licensed Advanced Life Support provider of Emergency Medical Services. The regionalization of two well established EMS agencies into this new organization represents a focus on efficiency, effective delivery of services, and a strategy for sustainability during a time where many EMS agencies across the state and nation are struggling with staffing, revenue, and the ability to maintain service.

Further information will be made available at [www.facebook.com/FVMedicalRescue](http://www.facebook.com/FVMedicalRescue) and on the organization’s future website. With questions, contact info@FVMedRescue.org.

Department of Public Safety Hosting MCI Training

On Saturday, November 12th and Sunday, November 13th, the Department of Public Safety is hosting a two-day Mass Casualty Incident Workshop for first responders at the Public Safety Training Campus. The target audience is EMS, emergency management, fire, and law enforcement personnel. The cost is $25, which includes lunch. Register at [https://forms.office.com/r/ttU7adP2Ws](https://forms.office.com/r/ttU7adP2Ws). More information is available on the flyer in the October 2022 Notices.
PEMA Announces Changes to Emergency Management Certification Program

Effective July 5, 2022, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) issued a directive making substantial changes to the emergency management certification program. PEMA’s intent with the changes was to help create a common baseline of information for all emergency management practitioners in the Commonwealth, whether they be municipal, county, state, private sector, student, or NGO. In adding a recertification aspect to the certification program, PEMA is also moving their program in line with what other states are doing in their certification programs, helping emergency management peers work towards additional certifications or recertifications (such as the International Association of Emergency Managers [IAEM]), and working towards professionalizing the field of emergency management within the Commonwealth.

PEMA released the directive itself, as well as a summary of changes and FAQs to assist stakeholders in navigating the new policies.

To view the revised checklists and the newly implemented recertification materials, visit https://www.montcopa.org/3312/Training-and-Exercises. With questions or for assistance, contact Training and Preparedness Coordinator Amanda Brady at abrady@montcopa.org.

Municipal Emergency Managers Earn PEMA Certifications

Over the past month, several municipal emergency management professionals across Montgomery County have been presented with certifications from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

Interested in pursuing emergency management certifications? Contact Training and Preparedness Coordinator Amanda Brady at abrady@montcopa.org to get started today! Congratulations to the following individuals:

- Tyler Dermer, Hatboro Borough, Local Basic Certification
- Timothy P. Dunigan, III, Montgomery County Department of Public Safety, County Professional Certification (below, left)
- Jason Wolf, Montgomery County Department of Public Safety, County Basic Certification (below, right)
Fit Testing Machine Available for First Responder Agencies

As part of the Department of Public Safety’s Health and Safety Development program, police, fire, and EMS agencies are reminded of the availability of the Department’s quantitative fit testing machine. The device is capable of quantitative fit testing soft N-95 or similar respirators, as well as half- and full-face respirators. Quantitative fit testing can provide more accurate results than qualitative fit testing.

In addition, the device is capable of connecting with an agency-supplied laptop to help maintain automated fit-testing records and track respirator pass/fail status. For more information about the device’s capabilities, please visit: https://accutec.com/accufit-9000/. To borrow the device at no-cost, please contact Madison Sehn, Health and Safety Specialist, at msehn@montcopa.org for an orientation session.

Electronic Naloxone Request Form Now Available

Utilizing grant funding from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety distributes Narcan® (naloxone) nasal spray for use in response to opioid overdoses. First responders and other pre-approved organizations can receive Narcan® through this grant.

To request a supply of Narcan®, approved organizations can click on the link below or use the QR code to the right. After the Department of Public Safety approves or rejects the request, the requestor will receive an email.

Request Narcan® Here

Organizations not previously approved can contact the Department of Public Safety at (610) 631-6500 on weekdays between 8am and 4pm to be considered for the program.

Department of Public Safety Career Opportunity

The Department of Public Safety is seeking qualified applicants for the following vacancy in the Emergency Medical Services Division. For more information about the role or to apply online, visit www.montcopa.org/jobs or click on the links below. With questions, email publicsafety@montcopa.org at any time or call (610) 631-6500 during business hours.

- The **EMS Training Assistant** is responsible for coordinating training resources; scheduling and teaching both credential-producing as well as continuing education for Paramedics, AEMT, EMTs, EMRs, and laypersons from the community. Duties include assisting in completing required paperwork and filing with the PA Department of Health, Bureau of EMS to ensure compliance with all PA DOH Educational SOP requirements; coordinating and taking an active role in Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance programs; and overseeing the Field Training Program.

To learn about the many benefits of working for Montgomery County, visit www.montcopa.org/benefits.

*Note: The Department of Public Safety has temporarily paused hiring for 9-1-1 Telecommunicators while existing recruits proceed through classroom and on-the-job training. Hiring will resume soon and will be announced in a future edition of PSN.*
Department of Public Safety Recategorizing Water Rescue Assets

In an effort to best support municipalities during flooding events, the Department of Public Safety will be re-categorizing water rescue assets. In addition to the existing boat (BT) unit, two new units, High-Water (HW) and Swiftwater (SW), will be added. All existing water rescue assets will need to be reclassified through the below online form. The criteria for these units are as follows:

- **Boat (BT)** - An inflatable or flat bottom boat with a 25HP or less motor, with all required auxiliary equipment and staffing that meet requirements defined by NFPA 1670 to conduct operations level skills in non-moving water (less than 1.15MPH).
- **Swiftwater (SW)** (e.g., swiftwater 24, or SW24) - An inflatable or rigid inflatable boat (RIB) with a 30HP or greater motor, with all required auxiliary equipment and staffing that meet requirements defined by NFPA 1670 to conduct technician level operations in swift water environments.
- **High Water (HW)** – Vehicles designed to specifically ford water and evacuate residents.
  - Minimum 18" water fording height
  - Minimum 4x4 or greater drive capabilities
  - Survivor carry capacity of at least 6 (in a seated position)
  - Must be able to transport passengers in safe manner
  - Minimum gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 16000#
  - Defined SOP for operation
- **Marine Units (MU)** - A marine unit is NOT a boat asset, but a vehicle that tows or transports boats or water rescue equipment.

To vet your existing units, or to add new units, fire departments and emergency management agencies should fill out the online Water Rescue Asset Survey using the link below. Results from the survey will be reviewed by MCDPS personnel and will be used to implement CAD changes. No additional correspondence is needed following your submission. Chiefs will be contacted once CAD changes are implemented. You are encouraged to submit information as soon as possible. Moving forward, this survey will be used for all water rescue asset changes and/or additions.

The survey requests detailed information about your boats and high-water assets, so please allot ample time to complete in full. Only one entry is needed per department/agency.

Survey: [https://veoci.com/v/p/form/tkq8cgrsumk9](https://veoci.com/v/p/form/tkq8cgrsumk9)

COVID-19 Vaccine Remains Available to Responders by Request

As the demand for COVID-19 vaccines among first responders has decreased, the Department of Public Safety paused regular vaccine clinics at the end of February 2022. If you are a Montgomery County first responder (EMS, law enforcement, firefighter, or emergency management official) who needs a COVID-19 vaccine (any dose), please fill out this form: [https://forms.office.com/r/psjSSsGfZe](https://forms.office.com/r/psjSSsGfZe)