



The KEMA Perspective

April 2014

Bill Guy Retirement

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As I finish up the current chapter in my life and look forward to the next, I can reflect back on my career in Emergency Management and hold my head high. I was never the best, or had the best program, but I always tried to give it my best no matter what. As many of you know I started my emergency management journey in the Air Force. There we had basically the same responsibilities as civilian emergency managers do, but with the added attraction of a wartime mission of Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical warfare defense.

I can vividly remember starting here in Reno County with grand expectations and the “I’m going to change the world’ ideas floating around in my head. But after lunch that first day, I kind of readjusted my goals and expectations. I knew I was in this for the long haul, but was I up to the challenge. I found out quickly that the best thing to do was to depend on those around me who had been around the block a few times. There were people like Lon Buller, Mike Selves, Randy Duncan, Randy Rienecker, Chuck Magaha and many others. These were the folks who had been involved since plans where nothing more than drawings on cave walls.

I soon realized that the emergency management family in the State of Kansas was a very close knit family and if you needed something, there was someone out there that had the answer, or knew who to send you to for it. If there is one thing I would tell a new emergency manager it would be, get to know your neighbors in the KEMA organization, they will be there for you when the chips are down. But remember, you have to be there for them when they need you too.

I’ve never looked at this position as being a job. It was a way of life I had chosen, and one that demanded a lot of time, effort and dedication. I saw many folks who were taking the time to help pass on the needed knowledge through the training cadre. I felt that they had given to me freely so I needed to get involved and give back. That is just one way we have become the outstanding organization we have. We have taken the lessons of the past, passed them on, and made the changes we needed to make so things would continue to progress.



When I left the military, there was one big difference I found that was hard to deal with for the whole eighteen years. In the military, those in the leadership did not always like or agree with the things we had to do, but there were regulations that said you would do them, so they did. I have found in the civilian world, that even though there are laws that direct the need for emergency management and the things we need to do, many politicians ignore them. The reason for the difference was in the military there were consequences to failure to obey a direct order, and many looked upon regulations as just that. However, nobody holds politicians accountable for their lack of compliance and so many of plod along with too few resources, but just somehow with the help of those others, gets the job done.

I don't want to say goodbye, but would rather say, see you later. I hope to make it to several KEMA conferences in the future to see old friends and make new acquaintances. To see those now older and wiser folks, and the fresh young naïve faces with the I'm going to change the world thoughts running through their heads.

May God bless you all! May he watch over you and bring you peace. Should troubled times befall you, may he grant you wisdom, strength and courage to press on. You have all been family to me over the last 18 years, and I love each and every one of you.

Letter from the President

By Garry Berges

Once again, Kansas Emergency Management personnel stopped what they were doing and went to the town of Baxter Springs to help at the scene of a tornado strike. Personnel from the Southeast region along with Resource Accountability Tracking Team (R.A.T.T.) members from the Northeast region were sent to the town shortly after the tornado on Sunday, April 27. A short article about the R.A.T.T. can be found in this issue.

I want to wish Bill Guy good luck as he starts a new chapter in his life. I first met Bill at a KEMA Convention in Salina. Over the years Bill has been a big supporter of KEMA, serving on the Certification Committee and then working with the Kansas Association of Counties as the KEMA Representative. He was always available if you needed to talk or had a question. Bill- you will be missed, but we invite you to come and visit us at the KEMA Conventions whenever you wish.

On Thursday, May 8, the KEMA Board will be meeting in Junction City during the LEPC Conference. We will be having a presentation from an investment group as we look at how we can increase our money that we currently have in a bank. We will keep the organization's members up to date on what is going on.

Don't forget that the KEMA Conference will be held September 9-12 in Junction City. The keynote speakers have been lined up. Mike and Gary are starting to work on the rest of the activities, functions and details for the conference. I know that Jillian will be hitting everyone up for items for the Silent Auction, so start thinking now about what you will be bringing. Finally, remember that we changed how we vote for the different officers. If you are interested in putting your name in for one of the offices up for election this year, make sure you review the Bylaws. If you have questions about the election process, contact a KEMA board member.

Be safe as we protect others!

KEMA's 2014 Legislative Visit

By Vaughn Lorenson, Stanton County EM Director

Brian Stone, Cowley County EM Director

Dan Robeson, Johnson County EM Director

Earlier this month the three of us, Vaughn Lorenson, Brian Stone, and Dan Robeson, had the opportunity to represent KEMA during the association's annual visit to Capitol Hill in Washington D.C. We would like to thank Teri Smith, KEMA's Legislative Chair, for organizing the trip and preparing each of us for the visit. Teri coordinated the development of the association's talking points with KEMA leadership, Randy Duncan (IAEM Governmental Affairs Chair), and Martha Braddock (IAEM Policy Advisor). Teri also compiled the legislative packets for the visit, which we and the congressional offices found very helpful.

While the cherry blossoms were in bloom and the weather was great during the visit, our schedule really kept us on the move. We had a pedometer that showed we walked 19.1 miles (36,541 steps) during our two days of meetings. During our visit we met with congressional staff from both Senate offices, personally met with each of the Representatives from Kansas' four districts, and sat down with the leadership team of the National Weather Service (NWS).

We first met with Congressman Tim Huelskamp (Dist. 1, 69 western counties, pop. 725,222) and his Chief of Staff, Jim Pfaff. Then, we met with Mike Netherton, the Legislative Aid for Congressman Mike Pompeo (Dist. 4, 17 southern counties, pop. 716,666). After speaking with the Congressman, an aid from his office was very helpful in escorting us under the capitol and through security to get to our next meeting. We met with C.J. Grover, Senator Pat Robert's Deputy Military Legislative Assistant, who is the new contact for emergency management and later met with Sarah Ross Little, the Senator's Communications Director. We had the opportunity to meet with Congressman Kevin Yoder (Dist. 3, 3 KC metro counties, pop. 731,176) on his way to a vote, then our group sat down to meet with his Legislative Director, Patrick Carroll. Congresswoman Lynn Jenkins (Dist. 2, Eastern 26 counties, pop. 712,841) also made time to meet our delegation and we also met with her Legislative Assistant, Colin Brainard. Back on the Senate side, we enjoyed our visit with Kyle Christian, the Legislative Correspondent for Senator Jerry Moran.

During each of our congressional visits we provided information on the role of emergency managers, described KEMA, and touched on six key talking points. **1.) Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG):** Please continue to fund EMPG at the highest level possible, but no less than the FY14 level. **2.) National Preparedness Grant Program (NPGP):** Congress should carefully review the March 4 2014 legislative language proposal implementing the NPGP with key stakeholders to make sure their concerns are adequately addressed. **3.) Emergency Management Institute (EMI):** Please fund EMI at \$20,938,000. This \$1.5m increase over the FY15 budget request would allow the development of mobile training teams that would allow for increased field deliveries of new courses. **4.) Disaster Savings Accounts Act of 2014:** Please consider co-sponsoring the Disaster Savings Act of 2014 which would provide an incentive for homeowners and renters to allocated personal funding for mitigation and disaster recovery expenses. **5.) Pre-Disaster Mitigation:** Please designate specific funding of no less than the \$25 million appropriated in FY14.

KEMA's 2014 Legislative Visit, *continued from page 3*

6.) National Weather Service (NWS): Please help ensure the NWS is adequately funded to maintain their current staffing and operations. While we had an opportunity to review these points in detail with each of the Washington DC offices, it was suggested by staffers and Martha Braddock, for emergency managers to reach out to the local congressional offices to discuss these issues and, if possible, attend the many town hall meetings scheduled in Kansas in the near future.

The timing also worked out well for us to be able to visit the headquarters for the NWS in Silver Springs, Maryland. We were able to tour the NWS National Operations Center and had a great opportunity to meet with the NWS Director, Dr. Louis Uccellini and his leadership team. We discussed the focus on impact-based decision support services, the value of integrated warning teams, and the staffing of and support for regional offices. The NWS leadership team was clearly passionate about the strong ongoing partnership between the NWS and emergency managers.

Throughout our entire trip the people we met with were very accommodating and gracious. Everyone seemed interested in what we had to share and open to many of our suggestions. We enjoyed being able to represent KEMA and hope the visit leads to positive outcomes.

***"Planning is not hard.
It just takes focus and
a little effort."***

Doug Hoell

Resource Accountability Team – Baxter Springs

By Dave Sterbenz

On Sunday, April 27 a tornado struck the town of Baxter Springs located in the Southeast corner of Kansas. The Southeast area needed an Accountability Team as they did not have one in their region. The Northeast region has put together a Resource Accountability and Tracking Team (R.A.T.T.) which is made up of Emergency Managers and staff along with volunteers from the region who have done extensive training with Midwest Card on the different accountability systems and equipment. They are ready to respond following an incident.

Shawnee County Cert members Susan Sims and Carolyn Brock traveled to Baxter Springs along with Shawnee County EM staff Scott Steele and Director Dave Sterbenz to handle Accountability and Rapid Tag for Command after an IRIS alert was sent out Sunday evening following the tornado.

The team left Shawnee County around 2130 on Sunday evening and arrived around midnight when operations had already ceased for the night.

On Monday morning we attended the command briefing at 0600 hrs. and were sent to the high school to set up. They divided people into four groups and colors of cards. Citizens (white), Volunteers (Orange), Responders (blue), and Contractors (green). The first day we handed out 2000 lanyards and over 500 clips to go with printed "Rapid Tags". On Tuesday they were sent to the Bergroff Building to re-setup the rapid tag and start again.

Resource Accountability Team – Baxter Springs, *continued from page 4*

Tuesday evening the team was relieved by Osage County EM Director, Bryce Romine, Coffey County EM Planner Courtney Bartley and Midwest Card rep, Natalie Glenn. They are to be there until Thursday evening.

The team wants to make sure everyone understands there are multiple reasons for Rapid Tag at incidents and events 1) So we know who is there and 2) so that if there is a federal declaration, we can show who was there working and volunteering to count towards the federal match.

EMSAK

By Gilbert Valerio

We had our annual conference on April 9th - 11th in Wichita and what a great conference it was! We started off the conference with Todd Mann from the Blue Cell speaking on Social Media-From ICP to ESF; he is a dynamic speaker and gave us information on how valuable social media is and how we can best use it for our advantage.



Thursday morning we started off with the presentation of the colors by Derby HS ROTC. We had a welcome to Wichita by Dave Unruh, Sedgwick County Commission Chair.

Bill Taldo presiding president gave a welcome to EMSAK to all members and vendors.

The vendors were introduced to the group and the vendors were in the same room of the conference so we had great interaction with them and they felt part of the conference. A great idea!

Our first speakers for the day were Keith Fink of Kiowa United Methodist Church and Linda Steward representing United Methodist's as the Disaster Response Coordinator.

They were both inspirational speakers and their topic was "Equipping Volunteers to be Partners in Disaster Response". Better ways we can utilize our volunteers when they show up to a disaster scene.

Next speaker was Lt. Matt McCluer who is the Corps Officer/Pastor of the Salvation Army of Douglas County. He brings a very heavy background in dealing with disasters all over the Midwest. We may not think of this at the time of the disaster but the emotional/spiritual care in disasters is something we need to keep in mind during the time of our particular disaster that we are dealing with.

EMSAK, *continued from page 5*

After lunch we had Dave Freeman Chief Meteorologist of the KSN Storm Tracker 3 Weather Center. Mr. Freeman has extensive back ground as a meteorologist and experience dealing with severe storms in the state of Kansas. He welcomes the partnership with emergency managers and looks forward to their input from them and the storm spotters to get the correct information to the public.

Bill Ring Emergency Manager from Ellis Co then spoke of his railroad disasters and his interaction with the railroad companies in his county when their representatives arrived on scene. Pre-planning and exercises are good ways to be prepared for something like this but with his experience in dealing with this type of disaster makes him confident that Ellis County will be prepared for the next one and he is willing to share any knowledge he has with anyone.

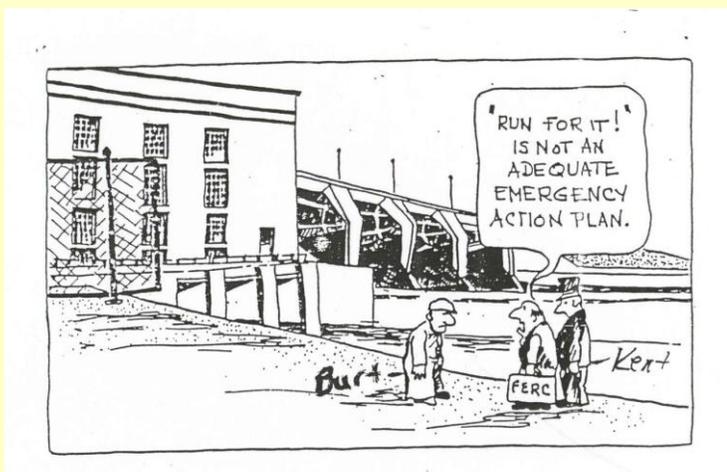
Our last speaker for the day Randy Duncan, Director of Emergency Management for Sedgwick Co, gave a very insightful social perspective for people and how they respond to disasters. What takes people to actually listen to warnings and what will make them take action.

We were pleased to honor three individuals for their hard work this past year; Deb Brown, Haskell County Emergency Management Coordinator, received the "Outstanding EMSAK Member of the Year Award." Reno County VOAD received the "Outstanding Support Agency Award." And Beth Reed of Republic County received the "Life Member Award."

Friday for our last day we had Charlie Keeton, SC Regional Coordinator speak to us in depth on ESF-8 (Public Health and Medical Services).

Our last speaker was Jono Anzalone, North Central Division Disaster Executive at the American Red Cross. Jono has a very impressive resume with all his deployments all over the world has a lot of experience with dealings in disasters.

As you can see we had very dynamic speakers all with very impressive backgrounds. Our EMSAK group is growing and I would encourage everyone to attend next year.



KEMA Board Information

President

Garry Berges, KCEM, Director
Geary County Emergency Management
236 E. 8th
Junction City, KS 66441
785-238-1290

Garry.Berges@jcks.com

President Elect

Vaughn Lorenson, KCEM, Director
Stanton County Emergency Management
Box 338
Johnson, KS 67855
620-492-6892

stcoem@pld.com

Secretary

Keri Korthals, KCEM, Assistant Director
Butler County Emergency Management
2100 N. Ohio, Ste B
Augusta, KS 67010
(316) 733-9796

kkorthals@bucoks.com

Treasurer

Beth Reed, Administrative Assistant
Republic County Emergency Management
1815 M Street - Ste 8
Belleville, KS 66935-2242
785-527-5692

rc26@nckcn.com

Past President

Brian Stone, CEM, Director
Cowley County Emergency Management
2701 E. 9th Ave
Winfield, KS 67156
620-221-0470

bstone@cowleycounty.org

NW Region VP

Keith Haberer, KCEM, Director
Russell County Emergency Management
P.O. Box 158, 850 Elm Street
Bunker Hill, Kansas 67626
785-483-5100

russellcountyem@rfd5.org

NC Region VP

Chancy Smith, KCEM, Coordinator
Dickinson County Emergency Management
109 East First Street, Suite 105
Abilene, KS 67410
785-263-3608

csmith@dkcoks.org

NE Region VP

Jillian Rodrigue, KCEM, Assistant Director
Douglas County Emergency Management
111 East 11th St., Unit 200
Lawrence, KS 66044
785-838-2459

jrodrigue@douglas-county.com

SE Region VP

Byrdee Miller-Marcic, KCEM, Director
Elk County Emergency Management
P.O. Box 623
Howard, KS 67349
620-374-3597

elkcoem@gmail.com

SC Region VP

Cody Charvat, KCEM, Training and Exercise Officer
Sedgwick County Emergency Management
714 N. Main
Wichita, KS 67203
(316) 660-5968

ccharvat@sedgwick.gov

SW Region VP

Darcy Golliher, KCEM
Meade County Emergency Management
200 N. Fowler, PO Box 604
Meade, KS 67864
620-873-9066

dgolliher@meadeco.org

“Prepare for the unknown by studying how others in the past have coped with the unforeseeable and the unpredictable.”
Gen. George S. Patton