2009 INTEGRATED MEDICAL, PUBLIC HEALTH, PREPAREDNESS AND
RESPONSE TRAINING SUMMIT
April 4-8, 2009
Dallas, Texas

The 2009 Integrated Medical, Public Health, Preparedness and Response Training Summit is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and brings together several national-level entities that have, in the past, held separate organizational meetings, training summits and leadership conferences. These organizations include the U.S. Public Health Service (PHS), National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and the Emergency System for Advance Registration of Volunteer Health Professionals (ESAR-VHP). The combination into an integrated Training Summit permits coordination, collaboration and interaction amongst the target audience - the leaders and members of these response partner organizations.

The Training Summit will enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of participants, which in turn will improve their competency to deliver public health and medical care services during disasters of any origin. Expert faculty will present on key topics such as clinical care, leadership skills, volunteer management practices, and response team issues. Networking with these expert faculty members and fellow participants, many of whom are the nation’s leaders in the area of public health emergencies, will give access to the latest in emergency response and coordination capabilities.
2009 NDMS TRAINING SUMMIT AWARDS CEREMONY
Dallas, Texas

“On behalf of the partners of the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS), the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the Department of Homeland Security, I wish to extend our sincere appreciation to all of you for your outstanding dedication and hard work. I look forward to our continued partnership as we face whatever challenges lie ahead.”

Kevin Yeskey, M.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
National Disaster Medical System

CONGRATULATIONS

The 2009 NDMS Conference Awards Ceremony was held in Dallas on April 5, 2009. The following DMORT members were honored with the 2008 NDMS Response Team Distinguished Member of the Year Award:

DMORT I
Adam Freeman, DDS

DMORT II
Vincent Iocovozzi

DMORT III
Patrick Murray, DDS

DMORT IV
Abigail Works

DMORT V
Terry Swanson, DDS

DMORT VI
John Catlett

DMORT VII
To be announced

DMORT VIII
Rich Lipich

DMORT IX
Steven Combre

DMORT X
John Courtney

DPMU
Robert J. Stevens

FACT
Susan Eastman

WMD
Leonard Parker
Adam J. Freeman, DDS was selected by DMORT Region I to receive the 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year Award. Adam joined DMORT in 2003 and is currently a team member and dental section chief of DMORT Region I. He has served DMORT in the dental section of the morgue in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (2005) and Hurricane Ike (2008).

Dr. Freeman is an Assistant Professor at Columbia University College of Dental Medicine and the director of the Forensic Odontology area of study. He also serves on Columbia’s admission committee.

Adam is a Diplomate of the American Board of Forensic Odontology, Fellow of the American College of Dentists, Fellow of the International College of Dentists, Fellow of the Academy of General Dentistry, Fellow of the Pierre Fauchard Academy and a Fellow of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences. He currently serves as President of the American Society of Forensic Odontology.

Region I is proud to have Adam as a member of their team and expresses their congratulations.

DMORT Region II is pleased to select Vincent “Vinny” Iocovozzi as their 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year. Vinny is well known to many in the DMORT family from his previous deployments. He is characterized as one who consistently responds to any request and faithfully handles all assignments delegated to him. Vinny was the only DMORT II member deployed to Hurricane Gustav (2008) as a direct result of his previous work in the area of casket recovery during Hurricane Katrina (2005).

Vinny is a New York funeral director and owns two funeral homes in Herkimer County. He resides in New York with his two sons – Vincent and Matthew.

The Region II team sincerely expresses their Congratulations to Vinny!
DMORT Region IV chose Abigail “Gail” Works (also known as “Baby Girl”) as their 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year. Gail is the Training Officer for the team. She assumes her duties very seriously, taking a “no nonsense” approach in ensuring that the team is current in licensures and certifications. Concomitantly, Gail’s quick wit and charm exudes the feeling that she is everyone’s long-time friend.

Since joining DMORT, Gail has participated in numerous deployments. She was also instrumental in closing out operations in Mississippi, following Hurricane Katrina (2005). Gail sets the standard for compassion, professionalism, dedication, kindness, and initiative – all of which characterizes DMORT.

Gail is a Mortuary Officer and resides in Bonifay, Florida.

DMORT Region IV is proud and honored to have Gail as an officer and valued member of the team!

Terry Swanson has been awarded the 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year Award for Region V. She joined DMORT Region V in 1996, and since then has been deployed to NYC, NY following the World Trade Center attacks (2001); Port Charlotte, FL following Hurricane Charlie (2004); and both Mississippi and Louisiana in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (2005).

Terry is a general dentist and has been practicing in northern Illinois for the past 20 years. She has been a member of the Dental Identification Team for the Cook County Medical Examiner’s Office in Chicago, IL since 1995. Terry is a co-editor not only of the DMORT National Newsletter, but also the newsletter for Region V. She lives in Vernon Hills, IL with her husband, Bob and her 3 children.

We are very proud to have Terry on our team!!

John Catlett was been honored as the 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year for Region VI. He joined Region VI as an MLI in October, 2004, and since then, he has been deployed to Hurricanes Katrina / Rita (2005), and Hurricane Ike (2008).
John works for the Office of Medical Investigation in New Mexico as a Deputy Field Investigator/ABMDI-D. He is also employed at Memorial Medical as an Anesthesia Tech and has been a Hazmat team member for 20 years. John served with the Volunteer Fire/Rescue for 18 years, and Volunteer Search and Rescue for 5 years. John, with his wife, Susan (also a member of Region VI) lives in Las Cruces, NM, where they have been married for 23 years.

Rich Lipich received the honor of being chosen as the 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year for DMORT Region VIII. Rich is a retired Police Sergeant from Pueblo, Colorado with 29 years of service. He now works as Deputy Coroner for the Pueblo, Colorado Coroner's Office.

Rich has been a DMORT Region VIII team member since 1999. He assumed the position of Primary Administrative Officer in 2006 and currently serves in that role. He has been deployed to the World Trade Center (2002), Hurricanes in Florida (2004), Katrina/Rita in Louisiana (2005), and has worked in the Op's Center at the NDMS Headquarters in Washington, D.C. during Hurricanes Gustav and Ike (2008).

Region VIII is proud to have Rich as one of the leaders of their team.

It is with great pleasure that the Region IX 2008 Outstanding Team Member of the Year Award goes to Steven Combre, Security Specialist.

A member of DMORT-IX since August 2003, Steve initially held the position of Medical Investigator. Several years later, he was upgraded to the position of our team’s first Security Specialist. At the NDMS Summit in 2008, Steven was certified to do the fingerprinting for all new applicants, and also for any members who needed to go through the process.

Steve’s selfless efforts for the benefit of our team and all of the Southern California DMAT teams demonstrate a degree of professionalism and a work ethic that he has consistently displayed since his appointment. He has made extensive sacrifices in order to process fingerprints of both DMORT and DMAT team members, as well as new applicants on his own time and at his own expense, in many cases. On every deployment, training, meeting and event, Steven has been among the first to arrive and the last to leave. His level of support and level of effort have always been above and beyond what is expected. This award is very deserving, and it highlights his willingness to serve and his efforts to put others before himself for the good of our team.
Steve lives in Corona, California with his lovely wife Collette, son Steven, 13 and daughter Nicollette, 7. He says he truly enjoys serving on the DMORT-IX team, and we are sincerely glad he’s part of our family!

Training Officer John Courtney was selected Distinguished Member of 2008 by his colleagues at DMORT Region X. John joined DMORT as a Fingerprint Specialist in 1999. Since that time, he has served on several deployments, including the World Trade Center (2001) and Hurricanes Katrina/Rita (2005). John was promoted to the position of Training Officer in 2007 and also handles the quartermaster duties for the team.

John recently retired from the Portland, Oregon Police Bureau, where his most recent assignment was as a Criminalist. John is an accomplished bagpiper and currently serves on the Executive Board of the Portland Police Highland Guard. He frequently appears at public safety functions as a piper. John is the President of the Portland Police Historical Society.

Region X congratulates and thanks John for all he has done for the team.

The DMORT DPMU team selected Robert “Bubba” Stevens as their 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year. Bubba has been a licensed Funeral Director for 25 years and Captain of Loves Park Volunteer Fire Department for 21 years. He is also an instructor for the Illinois Emergency Management Agency. He resides in Machesney Park, Illinois with his wife of 25 years, Sue, and their son Bob.

Since joining DMORT in 1996, Bubba has been an invaluable asset to both DMORT Region V and the DPMU team. He has been deployed on numerous occasions: Amtrak Train Derailment in Bourbonnais, IL (1999), World Trade Center (2002), Hurricanes in Florida (2004), Hurricane Dennis - Washington, D.C. (2005), Hurricanes Katrina/Rita in Louisiana (2005), Supply missions in LC Fort Worth and LC Frederick (2006), Hurricanes Gustav and Ike in Lake Charles (2008), Hurricanes Gustav and Ike serving as Property Management Officer at IRCT (2008), and most recently, the Buffalo, New York Air Crash Flight 3407 (2009).

The DMORT DPMU team recognizes Bubba’s devotion to DMORT and expresses their sincere congratulations.
Susan Eastman was chosen by the Family Assistance Center Team (FACT) to receive the 2008 Distinguished Member of the Year Award. Susan joined DMORT Region IX in 2002. During the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina (2005), Susan worked a total of 6 weeks in several different deployments. She covered the holidays so that others could be home with their families. For Susan, Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years were spent in Louisiana. Susan is a good example of a DMORT member putting others before herself.

In 2006, Susan became a member of the FACT. Since that time, she has been deployed to the Comair Flight 5191 crash in Lexington, Kentucky (2006) and Continental Express Flight 3407 in Buffalo, New York (2009). Susan has done everything from Administrative duties to clean up work in the FAC - whatever it takes to make the families comfortable and enable her fellow team member to do their job. She consistently demonstrates the saying there is no “I” in team!

Susan currently works at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, Department of Cell Biology & Anatomy in Tucson, Arizona. She is the Program Coordinator for the Willed Body Program. Susan is looking forward to retirement this summer.

The FACT is proud to call Susan our distinguished team member this year.

Leonard Parker was chosen to receive the 2008 Distinguished Member Award by DMORT-WMD. He is the team’s Deputy Commander of Operations. Leonard is one of the most tireless people on the team and is always available to assist anyone with questions concerning the understanding of their jobs. Leonard makes the four to five hour drive from his home to the Fred O. Berry Training Center several times a year to help paint, maintain the building and equipment, or do whatever tasks may need to be done at any given time. He always represents the team in a positive light, whether traveling across the country, talking about our capabilities or on a conference call with the rest of the command group discussing issues. This year, Leonard traveled to many different areas to facilitate fingerprinting - for not only the WMD team members, but for others as well, all on his own time and at his own expense. Leonard Parker is the epitome of what it means to be a team player and we are proud he is with us on our team.
THE THOMAS J. SHEPARDSON OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP AWARD

OZRO HENDERSON
Past Team Commander (TX-4 Disaster Medical Assistance Team)

Submitted by Misty Clark

NDMS, TX-4 DMAT and North Central Texas College suffered a great loss when Ozro Henderson passed away November 19, 2008 from a stroke. His absence has left a void within NDMS, and in the Emergency Medical Services community. Ozro spent the last
15 years of his “retirement” training paramedic students. Ozro Henderson’s name was well known in EMS circles and to his students as the master of Cardiology. It was a fact that no one could explain the anatomy and mechanics of the heart like Ozro.

Ozro was a dedicated fire fighter and paramedic for the City of Irving, TX for over 20 years, retiring in 1993. During that time, he also worked as a flight nurse for Careflite for 13 years. Ozro never was one to remain idle, having earned Associate of Applied Science degrees in Firefighter Technology, Nursing and Paramedicine, as well as earning a Bachelor’s degree in Emergency Administration and Disaster Planning.

Ozro had a passion for helping people, which lead to his involvement with the TX-4 Disaster Medical Assistance Team. Serving as Team Commander since 1997, he assisted in many rescue efforts such as the 9-11 World Trade Center attacks (2001), Hurricane Katrina (2005) and most recently, Hurricane Ike (2008). Ozro helped save many people, earning him recognition as a Distinguished Member of the Year in 1999 and 2008.

Ozro always had a good story to tell from all of his adventures. He had anecdotes that not only delighted his listeners, but also gave them a hefty dose of laughter, which made the story even more enjoyable. He was told many times by others to write a book because stories like his were too funny and endearing to keep to a select few.

When Ozro decided to become a fire fighter, his mother thought it was very noble of him to lay down his life for another, but the young man told her, “I didn’t sign up for that. If I have to do it, I will, but I signed up to fight fire and win.” With all the accomplishments Ozro achieved in his life, he pursued them with a “fight to win” attitude. Ozro was a husband, a father, a grandfather, a teacher, a hero and a friend. He is dearly missed by those who knew him.

**CONFERENCE COURSES**

Although there were no specific classes or tracks for DMORTs this year, there were 3 presentations regarding DMORT that were designed to educate the non-DMORT audience. They are as follows:

**The Family Assistance Center**  
*Speakers: Don Bloom (DMORT FACT Deputy Commander)  
Arbie Goings (DMORT FACT Administrative Officer)  
Greg Klimetz (DMORT FACT Team Member)  
Jennie Thommen (DMORT FACT Commander)*

The Family Assistance Center Team (FACT) is an extremely important aspect to any DMORT mission. Working in conjunction with multiple agencies, the FACT is a group of specially trained individuals who interview family members of the deceased.
Interviewers obtain ante-mortem data that will be used by forensic specialists in the morgue to make positive identifications of the remains.

The speakers gave the history of the FACT, with all the various changes to its name. The responsibilities of the team members were also discussed, along with the structure of the team and the many different organizations with which the FACT interacts.

A description of the type of personnel that must make up the team was given, along with discussion of the Call Center, the interviewing process, and the importance of strict accuracy of the files.

Location of the FAC is extremely important. An explanation of how the location is determined was given, along with the different types of facilities needed.

Participants were given practical experience by using laptop computers and the VIP program (Victim Identification Profile) to learn hands-on how ante-mortem and post-mortem information is eventually paired up to make a positive identification of the deceased.

The FACT is a very important part of DMORT, and many people now have a better understanding of how they work.

**A Basic Training for Mass Fatality Response**

*Speaker: David McBath, CEM*

David McBath gave a presentation on basic DMORT information tailored to non-DMORT people. He explained how all NDMS response teams have the potential to become involved with the handling of human remains following a disaster. Things to be considered are the understanding of the decomposition process, the risk for bio-hazard exposure, the do’s and don’ts of evidence preservation, as well as the relationship that must be maintained with the Coroner/Medical Examiner. Also discussed was the method in which the deceased are identified and processed by the DMORT team.

With the over-abundance of attendees at this session and the meeting room being at full capacity, the DMORT members in the room were asked to give up their seats, in order for non-DMORT members to listen to Dave speak. Without hesitation, the DMORTs rose and exited the room. Attendees in the meeting applauded and thanked all of us for allowing others to gain some insight as to what DMORTs do while deployed.

**Building a State Portable Morgue Unit: What You Need to Know**

*Speaker: Janette Simons (Region V Training Officer)*

Jan Simons gave a presentation on the benefits, start-up process, costs and resources needed in having a state-run Disaster Portable Morgue Unit (DPMU). She explained that
many states now own and maintain a DPMU. Its presence creates a bridge between a maximum local response and one not quite large enough for a federal response. Jan explained how to start the process at the local level and discussed what it takes to make this endeavor a positive process for the community and the state.

Jan Simons (Region V Training Officer), Mary Fischer (Region V), John Frasco (Region VII Administrative Officer), Sue Atwood (Region V Administrative Officer) and Terry Swanson (Region V)

Bill Young (Region VII Commander) and Dr. John Frasco (Region VII Administrative Officer)
Chuck Smith (Region VI Deputy Commander) and Cindy Matthews (Region VI Administrative Officer)

Barb Salazar (Region IX Administrative Officer) and Sue Atwood (Region V Administrative Officer)
I was recently deployed to the recovery of Flight 3407 from Newark to Buffalo. The accident occurred just short of the Buffalo Airport on Thursday, February 12, 2009. My heart goes out to the friends and family of those forty-nine passengers aboard the short, but ill-fated flight. The plane was a Dash 8, a seasoned turbo-prop with an excellent travel history. There was also one unfortunate casualty on the ground.

Although Buffalo has its reputation for rough weather, the snow, wind and cold fazed no-one. We found the recovery workers and ME staff quite friendly and welcomed our help.

Our work area was the Erie County Medical Complex and was headed by the Erie County Medical Examiner, Dr. James Woytash, DDS, MD. He and his staff were most grateful for our efforts and provided us with a superior work space.

The deployment lasted about eight days of 7AM to 7PM service under the expert guidance of Kevin Costigan (Region II Commander). This was the most well-planned and well-executed operation that this writer has experienced in his seven years with DMORT. We blended well with the Medical Examiner’s staff and were aided by a local volunteer group known as S.M.A.R.T. The volunteers were amazed at how well we functioned and communicated. Nearly every non-DMORT worker I encountered was interested in becoming one of us! My hat goes off to the DPMU (red shirts). This
operation would not have been possible without them. Although it took nearly a day to ramp-up to full speed, once all our software applications were configured, things went very predictably.

This deployment again successfully demonstrated that DMORT is one team! In addition to Region 2, specialized DMORT personnel from Regions 1, 3, 5 and 7 (I guess we like odd people) assisted in the operation. Ante-mortem information was compiled by the DMORT Family Assistance Center Team through their family interviews.

I would like to thank all the section leaders, particularly Dr. Ray Miller, for demonstrating strong leadership, while skillfully integrating local resources into our operation. My thanks to the hospital staff who fed us, and the local law enforcement personnel who protected us during this deployment.

While it is impossible to overstate the sadness and grief felt by all, it gives me a personal feeling of satisfaction to be able to, in some small measure, mitigate the suffering of others affected by this tragedy. I feel that DMORT has been expert in helping to bring rapid closure to grieving families and gives comfort to the nation in the knowledge that we stand at the ready.
DMORT DPMU DEPLOYMENT
Mike Gedert (DPMU Deputy Commander)

The DMORT DPMU team was privileged to be able to assist in carrying out a successful mission in Buffalo, New York in the wake of the Continental Express Flight 3407 accident. The team, with the helpful logistical assistance of the Medical Examiner’s Administrative Coordinator, was able to support the Medical Examiner’s office with significant additional equipment so morgue operations could be carried out at that facility. Included in our cache was the newly acquired digital equipment. This digital technology (full body x-ray, dental x-ray and photography) was all routed to the primary server at the M.E.’s office, making this data available immediately to those who needed to view it. This was the first mission where this technology has been fully used, and although it had a few anxious moments, everyone worked together to make a successful transfer of data to the local officials.

As usual, many lessons were learned during this mission, especially with the digital technology. These lessons have been discussed and necessary changes are already being made to make the next mission even more efficient. The DMORT training in Nashville will offer the opportunity for those attending to once again have some practical training with the digital equipment and will offer many insights that were learned during the mission in Buffalo. We look forward to supporting a successful training in Nashville.

DPMU members deployed to Buffalo plane crash: Mark (Mudflap) Maupin, Bob (Bubba) Stevens, Mike Gedert, Shannon Dotson, Josh Gore, Dean Stacy and Mark Soucie
One quiet Sunday morning (February 15, 2009), Ronda and I returned from church and took my Mom and two oldest granddaughters to lunch. I received an e-mail from headquarters asking my availability to deploy that day to Buffalo, New York. When I called in, I spoke with Kim Newcomer. She informed me that the deployment needed another Mortuary Officer and asked me to fulfill that role. I told her that I could be at the airport anytime after 4:00 PM. By the time I arrived home, I already had e-mails regarding my flight, car rental and hotel location.

Once again, I called headquarters and asked what my duties would be in order to pack properly, since FACT or morgue duties require different attire. I was assigned to the morgue, so I packed some additional cold weather clothes. It’s hard to believe that I wanted additional cold weather clothing, but from what I have heard about Buffalo weather, I thought it a good idea to be prepared.

I arrived at the St. Louis Lambert International Airport with time to spare, but the plane was late. My concern was that I only had 30 minutes between the connecting flights in Chicago, since this was the last flight to Buffalo from Chicago that night. Fortunately, the flight to Buffalo was also late, so my original arrival time of 11:30 PM in Buffalo became 1:00 AM. I had been in contact with Mary Fischer to let her know I was also deployed.
and she asked me to call her when I arrived - no matter how late. Since she was already working in the morgue setting up the radiology section, we agreed to meet at the hotel when I arrived. Once in my room, I called and told her my room number. She asked me to stick my head out the door. Yep, we were neighbors and had adjoining rooms.

We started work that morning at 7:00 AM and worked 12 hour shifts. There were members working in the morgue from Regions II, III, V and VII. Our temporary morgue was set up within the Erie County Medical Examiner’s Office. Dr. James Woytash (Erie County Medical Examiner) and his personnel were FANTASTIC. Our job was made so much easier by the interaction with him and his staff. Kevin Costigan (DMORT Region II Commander), Robert Golden (DMORT Region II Deputy Commander), Scott Schmidt (DMORT Region II Training Officer), and Kathleen Costigan (DMORT Region II Administrative Officer) ran the incident very well. They held morning and evening briefings which provided us with information regarding safety (always first) and procedural development within the morgue. Shannon Dotson (DPMU Commander) and/or Mike Gedert (DPMU Deputy Commander) informed us of proper protocol regarding the DPMU inventory, such as requisition forms and handwritten receipts. Bob “Bubba” Stevens (DPMU Logistics Officer) was stationed at the warehouse with the DMORT cache, which was located just down the street from the Medical Examiner’s office. He provided us with any equipment that we requested. I was assigned to Admitting or “Intake” as they named it, which was a great area to be in, as far as I am concerned.

On Saturday, Dr. Woytash walked by our station when there were 3 items left to process. He asked if he could be a tracker and take the last item through the stations. There was a cheer when he stepped in and announced he had the last item. When he completed all stations, everyone lined the hallway and he walked between the double lines, taking the last item to trailer management. It was a very moving experience. He thanked us all as he walked past, shook hands and remarked how he could not have done this without us.

A new procedure was used regarding the tracking and use of the DPMU equipment that was located at each station in the morgue. All equipment was inventoried and the section leader signed for all equipment within their station. The section leader then became ultimately responsible for the equipment. As the equipment was returned to the DPMU, a release was signed and the equipment was returned to the DPMU cache. Tracking of equipment is essential for replacement and re-supply. In previous missions, equipment mysteriously disappeared and there was no way to track who had it. This new process eliminates the potential for lost equipment and the replacement cost which would be associated with it. My hat goes off to the wonderful DPMU Team as they always provided us with whatever we needed.

Another notable change was the placement of computers at all stations. After the VIP questionnaire had been filled out, the data was entered into the computer, saved and sent to the main server. This step eliminated the frustration in trying to read others’ handwriting or questioning what was actually on the form. Also, full body x-ray images were stored on the main server and were accessible to all the other stations within the
morgue. This was a **HUGE** improvement for all of us. All of the data stored in the servers were ultimately given to the Medical Examiner’s Office.

It was a relatively short mission for me; I left on Sunday, February 22nd arriving home at 6:30 PM. The members who remained in Buffalo were working on the VIP program, ensuring that all collected data was correct.

On my last night, Mary and I went out with the DPMU Team and the AFDIL DNA Team. **Bill Ambler** and his girlfriend, Wendy, drove down to visit, since they live fairly close. For those of you that may not know who Bill is, he was the DPMU Commander before Shannon Dotson. Bill retired from DMORT during the Hurricane Katrina deployment. It was great to see him again. We all miss seeing members from other regions and Bill is a wonderful friend.

As always, when we respond, we represent not only Region V, but all of DMORT. At the last briefing I attended before leaving, I stood up and thanked everyone for their assistance and let them know Region V is thinking about them as they work to complete this mission.

*Pictures submitted by Mary Fischer*

*Mary Fischer (Region V team member) and Brad Targhetta (Region V Deputy Commander)*
On March 15, 1999, the Amtrak “City of New Orleans” train was traveling from Chicago, IL to New Orleans, LA. At 9:48 PM, it crashed into a semi, which was loaded with 22 tons of steel, in the village of Bourbonnais, Illinois. The train derailed and the sleeper car caught on fire, killing 11 people and injuring more than 100.
For a small town, this was a huge tragedy, one that Bourbonnais will never forget. The crash occurred very close to a steel factory, and several men who were working that fateful night came to the rescue of many of the passengers, ultimately saving many lives with no thought of their own safety. These men were the first responders, with police and several fire departments from the area, close behind. We also had fire departments from as far as 100 miles away come to assist.

There were countless stories of lives being saved, from a cook passing a child out a window to a woman saving her niece and sacrificing her own life.

For the past 10 years, we have mourned those who perished in this tragedy and remember those who convalesced for a time in our community before returning to their homes.

I was not a member of DMORT at the time. Actually, until then, I had never even heard of this wonderful group of people. I worked at one of the two local hospitals, and a couple days after the incident, the Deputy Coroner called my hospital, asking if an x-ray tech could come down to where they had the temporary morgue set up, to take x-rays of the deceased, which I was happy to do. Up until that time, there were no x-ray techs in DMORT. Since this was the first time the Federal DPMU was deployed, and the x-ray equipment was new, there was no need for an x-ray tech until that point.

I worked in the morgue with them for 2 days, after which I was asked to put in an application, and I have been a member of DMORT Region V since that time.

On March 15, 2009, in honor of those who lost their lives, along with the survivors, the village of Bourbonnais held a memorial service at a small park, where a memorial was erected in honor of the deceased, 3 of which were children.

It was a very moving experience, where many firefighters, police and hospital employees, along with Amtrak officials and some of the steel workers, gathered to pay their respects. One man who had lost both his parents and a sister in the crash, traveled with his family from Nebraska for the memorial service. He shared his thoughts and was able to talk to some of the steel workers who had saved so many lives.

I have been on many deployments since 1999, but this one is close to my heart, since it happened so close to my home. Seeing the man who lost three members of his family reminded me of the reason I joined DMORT: to use the training I have acquired to help serve families who have undergone tragic losses.
While our nation endured some of the worst winter weather of the season, DMORT Region IV held their annual training in sunny Orlando, Florida on January 23-25, 2009. Fifty-seven team members and three guests from DMORT Region V spent the weekend gaining knowledge and developing skills to enhance future deployments.

The weekend began on Friday afternoon with a “Meet and Greet” in the lobby of the Florida Hotel and Convention Center. The hotel lobby conveniently accessed the Florida Mall, one of the largest shopping centers in Central Florida. The mall’s food court seemed to be the ideal gathering spot, where one could always find a fellow DMORT team member.

Early Saturday morning, the training commenced with an overview of the DMORT Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), presented by several members of the Region IV Command Staff and Section Leaders. Diana Parker (Nurse/Medical Section Leader), Ronnie Freels (Deputy Commander), Danny Baldwin (Deputy Commander), Paul Taylor (Deputy Commander), Roger Baldwin (Mortuary Officer and Mortuary Section Chief), Jason Byrd (Administrative Officer), and Gail Works (Training Officer) reviewed sections of the SOP, demonstrating how they apply in the field.

The training also included an explanation of the NDMS hierarchy and DMORT’s relationship within this system and other federal agencies. Several DMORT IV members, who are also on the Incident Response Coordination Team (IRCT), were able to assist members in understanding the IRCT (previously known as the MST) and its role. This was especially helpful to those members who have not been deployed since DMORT reverted back to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Deputy Commander Ronnie Freels provided the team with an interesting presentation on an unusual science – Ballistics Comparisons in Forensics. He described how the architecture of various firearms determined the “fingerprint” of the resulting projectile. Ronnie presented several case histories, where poor ballistics analyses resulted in the imprisonment of individuals, who were later found innocent, following expert ballistics re-examination.

Ronnie ended his portion of the program with an in depth breakdown of the IRCT operation in Tallassee during the past hurricane season. He displayed slides, diagrams, and charts, describing how the IRCT functions and how it truly does support ESF-8 operations.

On Saturday evening, DMORT IV members and families were guests of the Florida Emergency Mortuary Operations Team (FEMORS) and the Central Florida Independent Funeral Service Association. Attendees boarded a chartered bus to the
Osceola Memorial Gardens, where tables were arranged under the portico with a banner reading, “FEMORS WELCOMES OUR BROTHERS FROM DMORT IV”. A feast of homemade tacos and fajitas, with all the culinary accompaniments, contributed to an enjoyable and memorable social event.

**Larry Bedore** (FEMORS Commander) began the Sunday session with an overview of the state team: its development, team structure, funding, and how the state team works with DMORT.

Much of the morning was devoted to DMORT procedures: how the team is activated, mobilized, and deployed. In addition, the processes involved in developing rosters, vetting members, and issuing travel authorizations were thoroughly explained. This was followed by a discussion, focusing on member expectations on deployment. Most team members have not been deployed since Hurricane Katrina, which generated numerous questions, comparing previous methods of deployment with its current management.

Following a team business meeting, members began their farewells and started their journeys home. Everyone experienced safe travel to and from the training, which is always an added bonus. In summary, the personal relationships and team-building, combined with the informative and comprehensive aspects of this meeting, will be essential to the overall success of our next mission.

Special gratitude is owed to Deputy Commander **Paul Taylor, Pat Brewer** (Mortuary Officer, Florida), **Larry Bedore** and the **FEMORS Team** for contributing to the success of this training session!

**REGION V TRAINING**
Grissom ANG
Kokomo, Indiana
June 5-7, 2009

Region V will once again combine classroom sessions and a morgue operation into this training and continue to build on the information from previous hands-on trainings. Members and participants should look forward to a weekend of twists and turns. Notable speakers will include: DMORT V Leadership, **Dale Downey** (WMD Commander), **Mike Gedert** (DPMU Deputy Commander), **H. Gill King, PhD**, **Elias Kontanis, PhD**, **Dennis Dirkmaat, PhD** and **Don Bloom** (FACT Deputy Commander). Any DMORT members are welcome to attend this training. Please contact Jan Simons at janette.simons@hhs.gov or Sue Atwood at susan.atwood@hhs.gov for further information.
REGION V NEWS

Congratulations

In February 2009, Dr. Denise Murmann was elected President-Elect of the American Society of Forensic Odontology (ASFO) in Denver, Colorado. From February 2007 until the present, Denise has served as Secretary of the ASFO. Region V congratulates and wishes her well in her new position.

Congratulations to Tim Schmidt on his recent appointment to the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) Disaster Preparedness and Response Action Plan Committee. His appointment is an honor to all of us.

Congratulations to Bob Nicola, Jr. and his wife, Melissa, on the birth of their daughter, Sophia Rose. She was born on July 30, 2008, weighing 6 pounds 4 ounces. Congratulations to the proud parents!

Region V team members congratulate Dave Hunt on his new position as Montgomery County Coroner in Indiana. He assumed his new responsibilities January 1, 2009. He has served for two terms previously as Coroner and one as Chief Deputy Coroner. Dave will also serve on the board of the Indiana State Coroners Association and become President of the Association in 2011. We are proud to have him as Region V’s Deputy Commander. Congratulations Dave!

DMORT ANNUAL TRAINING

Submitted by
Cindy Matthews
Region VI Administrative Officer

Excitement is in the air as Region VI prepares for and approaches the Second Annual National DMORT Training to be held once again in Nashville, Tennessee May 28-31, 2009. Years ago, a nationalized training was only a dream in the hearts and minds of our founding leadership. Baby steps were beginning to be taken several years ago, when Dale Downey (previous Region IV Team Commander) attended Region VI’s annual training in Dallas, Texas. Jack King, (previous Region VI Commander) Todd Ellis, (Region VI Commander) and Dale Downey brainstormed regarding how a nationalized DMORT training could ever happen. These three men decided to request that Regions IV and VI have a combined training in order to be more cost effective. With more folks attending, better rates could be obtained. As most of you know, we took turns hosting each year. The only glitch was that every time we went to New Orleans, a major disaster occurred within a few weeks! At least we amused ourselves by explaining it that way!
Several years went by with our combined trainings, and voila…. 2008 finally arrived with a big training event. We are especially thankful to those at our NDMS headquarters for working so hard for this to come to fruition. Anyone who has ever had to pull a training together knows it is a labor and not always of love. It will be a great opportunity with the portable morgue, FACT, WMD and all the regions coming together. What more could we ask for?

We would like to give a special thank you to Chuck Smith (Region VI Deputy Commander) for stepping up and filling in temporarily for our commander, Todd Ellis. And to Todd, you know that’s what your command staff is about…helping out when needed.

As hurricane season nears, we want to thank all of you fellow DMORT’s for always coming to help out in Region VI, and we sincerely hope you will come back if needed. Who knows, maybe we will get lucky this year and the poor folks in our coastal areas will get a break.

**2009 NATIONAL DMORT TRAINING**

*Nashville, Tennessee*  
*May 26-31, 2009*

The 2009 National DMORT training will be held at the Gaylord Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tennessee. This training will include classroom sessions based on the DMORT SOP’s adopted in 2008, as well as practical breakout sessions that will introduce new morgue technology.

This event will include first time team trainings for the DPMU and FACT. There will also be a session for new members and a fingerprint specialist training.

The timeline is as follows:

May 26 – 29 DPMU training  
May 29 – 31 Regional Teams, DMORT/WMD, FACT training

**Responder e-Learn**

This Online Training Program uses the “Blackboard” Learning Management System (LMS) for the delivery of educational modules on a wide variety of subjects. This new program completely replaces the old CentreLearn system that was previously used. This distance learning program will provide up-to-date lessons on a wide variety of subject areas. The first part (Course Part 1) of a multi course program is now available.
Currently, there are six (6) training modules available for all NDMS employees to complete. These modules are not mandatory, but we highly recommend all current and future NDMS employees complete these modules. Certificates will be provided upon the successful completion of each module; however, the certificates will not be available until late summer, when the certificate process is finalized. At that time, any individual who has completed a training module will be able to then get a module completion certificate.

Additionally, some training modules will be accredited and all individuals will be apprised as to which modules are accredited as they are made available online.

Most NDMS employees that are deployable have been given access to the Responder e-Learn program and the following procedures are provided for your use:

Log In:  www.Responder-e-learn.com

Click on: NDMS Instructions or User Login Instructions NDMS
NDMS team personnel: User Name: 1st initial of first name & 1st two (2) initials of last name (ALL CAPS).

NDMS USER Password: Same as your USER Name (you can change your password while in Blackboard).

Please contact the NDMS Program Development Branch (PDB) for any comments regarding this new online training program at NDMSTraining@hhs.gov.

Thanks for all your interest in this newly developed distance learning program and look forward to more announcements and information regarding this program in future newsletters.

Special thank you to the Online Training Group: Tim Tackett, Gina Smith, Marsha Myers and Steve Allen, the lead on the project.