

2007 Four Corners Emergency Management Conference Speaker Bios

Steve Besemer

Earthquake Program Manager
MO State Emergency Management Agency
Jefferson City, MO.



Steve Besemer has been with SEMA for more than five years and has served as the agency's Earthquake Program Manager since November 2005. His current duties include directing earthquake awareness and outreach efforts across the state, as well as being the SEMA staff liaison to the Missouri Seismic Safety Commission and the Missouri Structural Assessment and Visual Evaluation (SAVE) Coalition Board of Directors.

Mr. Besemer was also involved in the planning and development of an earthquake annex to the state's Emergency Operations Plan as well as planning for the June 2007 statewide New Madrid Earthquake exercise.

Prior to taking over SEMA's Earthquake Program, Steve was a Disaster Assistance Officer for the agency, assisting local jurisdictions in their recovery efforts following a disaster.

A 1981 graduate of the University of Missouri-Columbia's School of Journalism, he currently works in SEMA's Operations Branch and is one of the agency's Designated Contacts for the national Emergency Management Assistance Compact. He is an assistant to SEMA's Public Information Officer.

Mike Cameron

Risk Communications Specialist
KDHE Office of Communications
Topeka, Kansas



Mike Cameron is the Risk Communication Specialist for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Office of Communications, handling bioterrorism and public health threat issues.

Cameron has a bachelor's degree in Mass Media-Print Journalism from Washburn University and has attended many seminars on Risk Communications and Media Relations, as well as seminars on Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction, Critical Incident Stress Management, Terrorism and Criminal Extremism, Incident Command Systems, including National Incident Management System (NIMS) and Emergency Preparedness. He was part of the team that conducted the Risk Com U training sessions for local officials at 15 locations in Kansas during the fall of 2004 with more than 400 attendees from over 90 Kansas Counties.

Cameron has also participated in several tabletop exercises, including Oktoberfest, a regional bioterrorism exercise in the fall of 2003, the Coliseum Chaos exercise in Wichita in Feb. 2005, used to train local officials and the media and Terrorism and the Media held in KCMO.

Prior to his appointment to the KDHE Center for Public Health Preparedness in 2003, Cameron served as the Public Information Officer for the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office for over three years. His work on smoke alarm advocacy and fire safety in the home was recognized by the Safe Kids Kansas, when he was named Outstanding Coalition Member for 2001.

Bruce Clemonds

Homeland Security Manager
Missouri State Highway Patrol

Bruce is 32-year law enforcement professional and is currently the Homeland Security Manager for the Missouri State Highway Patrol. During his 27-year career with the Highway Patrol he has been assigned to road patrol, criminal investigations/polygraph, community policing, victim advocacy, criminal interdiction, and grants management/administration.

Prior to becoming a member of the Missouri State Highway Patrol Bruce worked as a patrolman for a municipal police department and as Chief Deputy for a sheriff's department.



Bruce served 20 years in the United States Army (Missouri Army National Guard) as a Military Police Officer and served in the following positions: Platoon Leader, Company Commander, Intelligence Officer, Operations and Training Officer, Provost Marshall and Battalion Executive Officer.

Chuck Gregg

Senior Planner, Program Coordination Branch
National Preparedness Division, Federal Emergency
Management Agency (FEMA), Region 7
Kansas City, Missouri

Chuck Gregg, a Missouri native, has a Bachelor's degree in Sociology from Southwest Missouri State University and Master's degree in Social Gerontology from Central Missouri State University.



Chuck joined the National Preparedness Division at Region 7 in May 2007 after serving for over six years as the FEMA Region 6 Hurricane Program Manager and Earthquake Program Manager. He came to FEMA from Savannah, Georgia where he was stationed by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency as the state's Hurricane Program Manager. Chuck's duties also included serving as a regional planner to assist 52 counties on local operations plans and was the point of contact for the state on FEMA's Project Impact program.

Prior to Mr. Gregg's 6 years with the state of Georgia, he worked for 19 years with the American Red Cross in his hometown of Kansas City, Missouri, Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, and Atlanta, Georgia (where he was the state disaster specialist for the National Red Cross).

Chuck's disaster experiences include numerous floods and tornadoes including the Midwest Floods of 1993. He also served on an earthquake assignment in California. He has been on several hurricane/tropical storm operations, including most recently Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. His first hurricane operation was in Texas for Hurricane Allen in 1980 and he was on two-month assignments for Hurricanes Andrew.

Chuck coordinates with federal, state and local agencies in Missouri, Kansas, Iowa and Nebraska for catastrophic and all-hazards planning. He collaborates with other FEMA staff and other non-government organizations for exercises and other preparedness, mitigation and response activities.

Richard G. Griffin

After serving in the U. S. Air Force in the field of Avionics for over 22 years, Richard took his management skill and knowledge along with his disaster management and instructional experience and went to work for the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM), then known as the Office of Emergency Services, starting in August of 1990.



Over the years, he has held several positions within the Agency, starting out as CSEPP Exercise and Training Officer and eventually moving to the position he now occupies as the Disaster Management Division Chief. His involvement on the training side of the house has provided him with a great appreciation for the many programs ADEM oversees.

Richard completed his BS Degree in Management from Park College prior to his discharge from military service and has received his FEMA Professional Development Series and Advanced Professional Series Certificates.

His field work has included duty as State Liaison with FEMA Community Relations teams, State Liaison with FEMA Public Assistance Officers and service as the State Coordinating Officer for several federally declared disasters. During Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, his agency coordinated many EMAC requests with state, county and private organizations from the state Emergency Operations Center.

Chris Harmon

Director of Emergency Services
American Red Cross, Greater Ozarks Chapter
Springfield, Missouri



At the Regional Chapter, for almost seven years Chris has coordinated/assisted the American Red Cross response to disasters within a 22 county area of Southwest Missouri and provided response guidance/support to other chapters throughout the region.

Chris has also managed service delivery for Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Services, International Services and Community Disaster Education.

Chris works with other organizations and agencies to ensure seamless service delivery to Red Cross clients. He manages nearly 500 volunteer staff and 2 paid staff in a variety of service delivery positions, and oversees the training/deployment of volunteers on national disasters and to work with the Response Call Network.

Education

1995-1998 Southwest Missouri State University - Springfield, MO

1993-1995 Social Work Courses
Ozarks Technical College – Springfield, MO
General Studies
1988-1991 Fox High School – Arnold, Missouri

Awards

2006 The Springfield Business Journal's 40 under 40 award

Danny R. Hay

Critical Infrastructure Coordinator
Adjutant General's Department, Division of Emergency Management, Homeland Security
Kansas

ACADEMIC PREPARATION:

Masters in Administration, Wichita State University, Wichita, Kansas
Concentrations: Decision making at management level and conflict resolution in the work place.

Bachelors in Criminal Justice, Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas
Concentrations: Core classes with emphasis on psychology

WORK EXPERIENCE:

State of Kansas, Adjutant General's Department, Division of Emergency Management, Homeland Security. (February 2006 to Present)

Responsibility: Operations Branch Chief for Kansas Division of Emergency Management

State of Kansas, Adjutant General's Department, Division of Emergency Management, Homeland Security. (October 2004 to February 2006)

Responsibility: Critical Infrastructure Coordinator, work with and assign teams to do vulnerability assessments of the State's Critical Infrastructure.

Topeka Police Department, over 27 years experience as a police officer with over 17 years as an investigator and supervisor.

Responsibility: The last 5 years I supervised a White Collar Crimes Unit that dealt with primarily financial crimes. (July 15, 1977 – February 1, 2004) Retired.

Kansas Army National Guard, Over 25 years of Active and Guard time as an officer.

Responsibility: Battalion Commander on active duty doing force protection missions within the United States and throughout Europe. (October 27, 1973 – December 27, 2003) Retired.

Jaci McReynolds

Public Information Administrator
Springfield-Greene County Health Department
Springfield, Missouri

Jaci works under a Homeland Security Bioterrorism Preparedness Grant through the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services to assist local public health agencies in 35 southwest and south central Missouri counties with public information and emergency risk communication needs before, during and after a



public health emergency. Jaci has been employed under this grant at the Springfield-Greene County Health Department for five years.

Jaci earned a Bachelor of Arts in Communications with honors from the Master's College in Santa Clarita, California. Her previous work career includes more than 15 years in the Communications field, including positions in film and video production, video editing, television news producing and videography, photography, website design, graphic design and writing. She also enjoys teaching SEMA courses, hosting trainings in southwest Missouri and speaking to groups about risk communication, public information and working with the media.

Jaci says she loves the Ozarks and the people she has the privilege to work with. She is passionate about public health and ensuring information is available to every person in a format they can understand. Despite her colorful and varied work experience, she says her current position is the most fascinating, challenging and rewarding job she could imagine.

Tina M. Niemi

Associate Professor, Department of Geosciences
College of Arts and Sciences, University of Missouri-Kansas City
Kansas City, Missouri

Associate Professor Tina M. Niemi, Ph.D., Stanford, is a Quaternary geologist who specializes in neotectonics, earthquake geology, and the environmental and climatic changes recorded in recent sediment along active fault zones and archaeological sites. She has published on the neotectonic behavior of the San Andreas fault and Dead Sea rift, and on various geophysical, geoarchaeological, and sedimentologic studies. Her recent research has been funded by several external grants and has focused on: 1) understanding the earthquake rupture history, slip rate, and deformation patterns of Wadi Araba fault along the Dead Sea Transform in Jordan, 2) using the archaeological record to study historical earthquakes along the Dead Sea Transform, 3) studying the recurrence and magnitude of paleoearthquakes on the San Andreas fault in the San Francisco Bay Area, California, and 4) evaluating paleoliquefaction along the eastern Kansas Humboldt fault.

Alicia Parkman

Outreach and Planning Specialist
Center for Public Health Preparedness, Kansas Department of
Health and Environment
Topeka, Kansas

Alicia Parkman has served as Outreach and Planning Specialist for the Kansas Department of Health and Environment's Center for Public Health Preparedness since February 2006. She develops guidelines, templates, and tools for Kansas hospitals as they develop all-hazard emergency response plans at the community, regional, and state levels.



Parkman is also project manager for the state's K-SERV program (Kansas System for the Early Registration of Volunteers), a volunteer registry designed to improve volunteer registration and deployment, also pre-verifying credentials of volunteer health professionals.

Parkman has a BA in Sociology from Oklahoma State University and an MA in Sociology from the University of Kansas.

Bill Sadler

Public Information Officer
Arkansas State Police
Little Rock, Arkansas



Bill Sadler, 55, of Little Rock, Arkansas, is a 10 year veteran of the Arkansas State Police. He is assigned in a civilian capacity to the Director of the Arkansas State Police and serves as the department's chief Public Information Officer. Sadler also supervises the department's Photo Lab and Video Support Units and serves in an assisting capacity to each of the department's four divisions.

Prior to joining the ranks of the Arkansas State Police, Sadler spent 25 years in the private sector a news reporter and photographer for newspapers, radio and television. The majority of his news career was under the employment of KARK-TV (NBC affiliate) in Little Rock, Arkansas where he was Southeast Arkansas Bureau Chief and later promoted as the station's news department managing editor.

Today Sadler is an initial point of contact for news media representatives and spokesman for the Arkansas State Police which statutorily provides state highway traffic enforcement and criminal investigation as well as law enforcement related regulatory functions and services across Arkansas.

On March 24th, 1998, barely 10 months into his public service career with the State Police, Sadler was thrust into the lead PIO duties for what was to be at the time, the most deadly in a string of school murders that had begun to occur with greater frequency across the country. For more than one-week Sadler was on-site in Jonesboro, Arkansas where four students and a teacher were gunned down and died while exiting a local school. Ten more students were wounded in the firestorm. For more than a year after the murders, Sadler remained closely associated with the case serving as a court appointed spokesman as the juvenile defendants faced delinquency hearings.

Bill Smith

District L Emergency Communications Coordinator
Amateur Radio Relay League (ARRL)
Arkansas



Serving as the ARRL District Emergency Communications coordinator for District L since 2003, Bill Smith earned his amateur radio license in 2000. Originating the W5YM UniversityWeather Net in 2000 to assist the Tulsa office of the National Weather Service and Washington County coordinate storm spotters, Smith directs the active storm nets and weekly training nets to promote both emergency communications awareness in the amateur radio community and severe storm awareness in the general public.

Holding an Amateur Extra license (K1ARK), Smith was the first person in the state of Arkansas to complete all three levels of emergency communications training provided by ARRL and serve as an on-line instructor and classroom examiner for the ARRL EC program.

A volunteer with the Washington County Department of Emergency Management, Smith serves as the OK-FIRST program radar officer. He has completed the state of Arkansas basic public information officer training, as well as advanced public information officer at Emmitsburg, Pa.

The associate athletic director for communications for Women's Athletics at the University of Arkansas, he earned his doctorate at the University in 1999 and is an adjunct instructor in journalism at Arkansas and in American history for Northwest Arkansas Community College.

Richard Wilson

Troop Operations Commander, Troop H
Kansas Highway Patrol
Kansas



Captain Richard "Rick" Wilson is the Troop Operations Commander for Troop H, located in southeast Kansas. Troop H consists of 16 counties located in the corner of the state, and bordering Missouri and Oklahoma.

Rick Wilson joined the Kansas Highway Patrol in 1982, and was assigned to road duties as a trooper in Johnson County, in the Kansas City metro. In 1985, he moved to Crawford County, in Southeast Kansas. In 1989, he was promoted to Master Trooper.

In 2000, he was promoted to Second Lieutenant, assuming duties as a field trooper for four counties in southeast Kansas.

In 2004, he was promoted to Captain, and assumed the field operations duties for Troop H. The area of responsibility includes Coffey County, which is the location of Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Plant. Captain Wilson's duties include manning the forward staging area during an emergency at Wolf Creek.

Captain Wilson handled the KHP operations during the 2007 flooding in southeast Kansas, which included the damage to Coffeyville during the oil release.

Larry Weatherford

Terrorism Communications Officer
Oklahoma State Department of Health
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma



Larry Weatherford is the Terrorism Communications Officer for the Oklahoma State Department of Health. In this role he serves as a conduit between public health and the general public on a number of issues, with special emphasis on catastrophic health emergencies.

Since graduating from the University of Oklahoma with degrees in journalism and political science, Weatherford has been involved in public affairs in a number of different areas including active duty service in the United States Air Force as a public affairs specialist, numerous political campaigns, and ownership of a public relations and advertising firm.

Weatherford serves on the executive committees of the Oklahoma Genetics Advisory Council and the Heartland Regional Council on Genetics. In addition, he is active in Boy Scouts and served for eight years as a volunteer in Big Brothers/Big Sisters. He is active in American Legion Post 88 and serves as publicity chair for the Cleveland County Veterans Memorial. Weatherford is a member of First Presbyterian Church in Norman where he serves as a Deacon.