

ADEM ALERT

Arkansas Department of Emergency Management Newsletter

The December Issue

- Arkansas and Oklahoma Emergency Management Teams Strategize at Mount Magazine
- 1967 Director Visits ADEM
- A Very BBQ Thanksgiving
- Build a Smart 911 Profile to Brighten Your Day
- Tips to Avoid Holiday Cooking Disasters
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Note: newsletter is written in AP Style according to newspaper guidelines. Underlined words are hyperlinked to web pages or emails. Click for redirection.

Submissions

Do you have a message to push out to ADEM staff, local coordinators, partners or the general public? Content for social media and the monthly newsletter is always welcome. Please send suggestions to Public Information Officer Whitney Green at publicaffairs@adem.arkansas.gov or call (501) 683-6700.

Follow ADEM on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and on the world wide web.



ADEM deputy director and division directors study a map of the trails while hiking around Mount Magazine State Park during the Arkansas and Oklahoma Emergency Management meeting. (From left) Admin Division Director Bobbie Ann Merkel, Preparedness Division Director Sheila Annable, ADEM Deputy Director Tina Owens.

Arkansas | Oklahoma

The Arkansas and Oklahoma Departments of Emergency Management met recently for a retreat at Mount Magazine State Park to strategize a continued partnership of emergency management through FEMA Region VI.

ADEM Director David Maxwell and ODEM Director Albert Ashwood led open discussions on the similarities and differences between the group's day-to-day operations, and stressed the





Hogs Host Sooners

Arkansas hosted Oklahoma for the emergency management collaboration this year at Mount Magazine State Park in Paris, Ark.

At 2,753 feet, Mount Magazine is the state’s tallest mountain. Sweeping vistas of broad river valleys, deep canyons, and distant mountains welcome outdoor enthusiasts to Arkansas’s highest point.



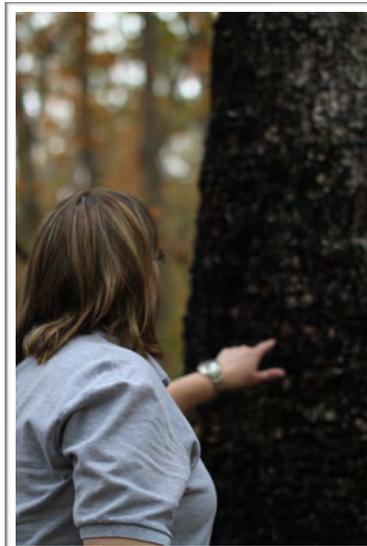
The park is a place to enjoy sightseeing and is a destination for outdoor sports. Extreme adventure enthusiasts can be entertained with rock climbing, rappelling, hang gliding, mountain biking, and more.

Consider Mount Magazine State Park for your next work conference or family adventure. The Lodge was the perfect location to host the Oklahoma team.

importance of working together. After two days of strategizing and listening, folks from both groups came away with fresh insight and some new ideas to take back to their agencies.



(Above from left) Public Information Officers Whitney Green (ADEM) and Keli Cain (ODEM) hike the Mount Magazine trails with ADEM Deputy Director Tina Owens and Admin Division Director Bobbie Ann Merkel. After circling through trails in the woods, the hike turned out to be much longer than expected.



BBQ, Pie, and Pumpkins

This year's Thanksgiving feast was put together largely by Larry Pullon with some decorating by the director's office. Folks brought pies, cakes, dips, and every other Thanksgiving treat you can imagine. Larry brought BBQ in leu of turkey in a divine twist on the traditional feast. Thank you to everyone who attended and helped out.



(From left) Sheila Annable, Keli Cain, Bobbie Ann Merkel and Tina Owens pause for a quick shot among the gorgeous Arkansas fall leaves at Mount Magazine State Park.

Special Guests:

The former director of ADEM, Eugene Talburt, visited the facility for the Thanksgiving party in November. Mr. Talburt was appointed by Governor Rockefeller in 1967, and served for the entirety of his term until 1971. Gene shared memories of his time with ADEM, and said that serving as director was one of the highlights of his career. Now retired, he enjoys relaxing at home, and spending time with family and friends.



Smart911



Dreary winter weather got you down?

Randie Jones has new bags for Smart911, and this highlighter yellow will definitely brighten up your day! Show Randie that you have downloaded Smart911 on your phone, and she might just give you a new bag. Sign up here: <https://www.smart911.com/>

Smart911 protects over 31 million people nationwide, and is used across Arkansas among other states.

The safety profile is free, private, and secure. It can include life-saving information about members of your household that would help anyone you care for in the event of an emergency.



Follow Smart911 on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for the latest news.

Gene points to the photo taken of him in 1967 while he served as ADEM’s director. Nearly 40 years later, he still considers the appointment as one of the highlights of his life and career.



First Joint Weather Announcement

ADEM and the Little Rock National Weather Service hosted the first statewide joint weather webinar/teleconference last month. The briefing was led by NWS Senior Forecaster John Lewis, and focused on a severe storm event for the week of Nov. 16. Watch the recap [here](#).

Very few technical issues, and excellent participation statewide made the teleconference a tremendous success. ADEM and NWS plan to continue weather briefings in this joint effort.

Thank you to all those who participated and gave constructive feedback on the call. The next briefing will be conducted similarly prior to hazardous weather.

Avoid Holiday Cooking Disasters



Anna



Ali



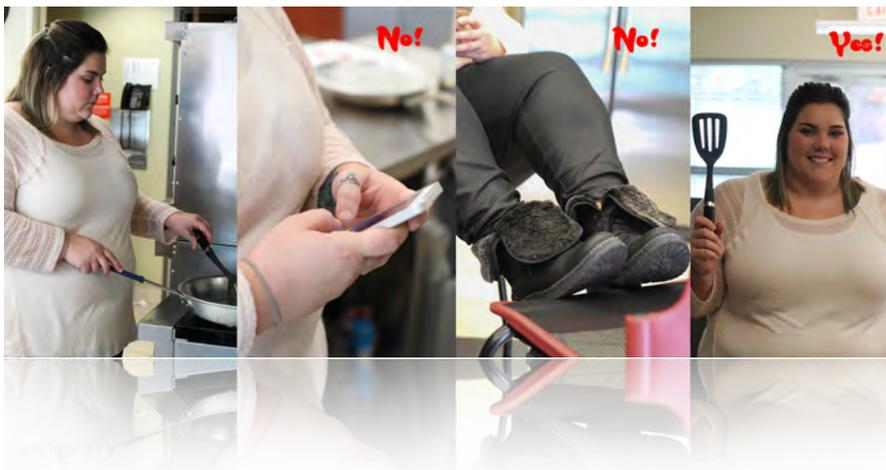
Whitney



Thanksgiving is the peak day for home cooking fires, followed by Christmas Day and Christmas Eve. Remember these tips when you're cooking (or watching others cook) this holiday season.



If you find yourself in the middle of a grease fire, don't panic! Your instincts may tell you to run away from the stove with the flaming pan, try to put it out with water or snuff it out with a rag -- these are all bad ideas!!! When cooking with grease, keep a lid or heavy plate next to the stove. If the grease gets too hot and ignites, put the lid on the pan and the flame will soon be out.



Don't get distracted and forget about your food cooking in the oven. Set a timer or keep a spatula near you as a reminder.





Want to keep your hair over the holidays? Make sure it's pulled back and away from potential flames.



Keep loose clothing away from gas stoves. Always make sure your sleeves are pushed up to avoid accidentally catching yourself on fire!

26.2 Miles

In other Mr. Snyder news...

Kendell is running the [3 Bridges Marathon](#) at 7 a.m. on Dec. 19 in Little Rock. The track runs from Two Rivers Park to the Clinton Library and back. He has been training hard for this marathon, and we wish him the best!

Good luck, Kendell!

Tips from a Fire Expert

Fire/EMS Coordinator Kendell Snyder has seen countless fires in the state, and said that most cooking fires happen around the holidays. Deep frying turkeys incorrectly is the number one cause of holiday cooking fires. Here are his tips for staying safe while frying up your bird.



"Never fry turkeys in a garage, under a carport or on a wooden or otherwise

flammable deck! Place the fryer and propane bottle on a level surface outside. Keep children and pets away during cooking until the oil has completely cooled. Before filling the pot with oil, place the turkey in a pot (I do it while it is still in the wrapper). Fill the pot with just enough water to cover the turkey. Remove the turkey from the pot. Mark the water level on the inside of pot with a pen or pencil. Empty the water and dry the pot. Now you have a "fill mark". Only use enough oil to fill the pot to that mark. This ensures oil will not overflow when placing the turkey in the pot. Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and the ice is removed from the body cavity. Be very careful when lowering the turkey into the hot oil. Lower it slowly to prevent splashing hot oil, and wear long BBQ or welding gloves. After the cooking is complete, be aware that the oil inside the pot will be very hot for a couple of hours or more."

December calendar

2nd-3rd | Arkansas Municipal League Conference, Springdale

4th | ADEQ Tour of ADEM

9th | ANO Drill, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

10th | Full ADEM staff meeting, 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

15th | ADEM Christmas luncheon, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

16th | Alternate EOC training, State Police, 8 to 11 a.m.

17th | Private Sector Working Group Mtg. 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

24th | Christmas Eve Holiday

25th | Christmas Holiday

Noteworthy

State Individual Assistance Officer Pamela Burton, has been deployed through EMAC to act as Texas's Individual Assistance Branch Director for the recently declared FEMA 4245-DR-TX. Pam reported for Duty on Dec. 1 in Austin, and will be there until Dec. 18. Pam's excellent work at ADEM has made her an extremely qualified individual for this honor. She will be quite an asset to the Texas team.

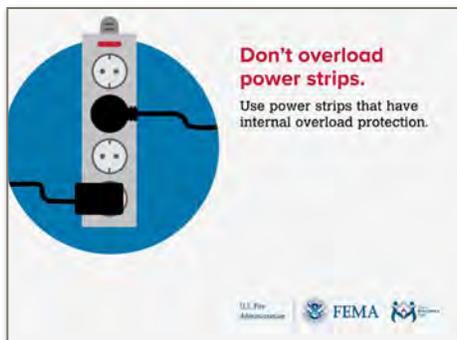
Good luck, Pam! Thank you for serving.

Holiday Safety Reminders



Traveling over the holiday's? Keep your family safe, and make sure you are prepared in case of an emergency on the road. This emergency kit will give you peace of mind so you can successfully manage the million other "Murphy's Law" issues that will inevitably happen at the most inconvenient time. Emergency kit recommendations include:

- First Aid Kit
- Cell Phone Charger
- Jumper Cables
- Tire Chains or Snow Tires
- Matches or Lighter
- Bag of Sand or Cat Litter (for ice)
- Shovel, Ice Scraper, Snow Brush
- Tow Rope
- Blanket
- Boots, Mittens, and Warm Clothes
- Flashlight
- Water and Snacks



Don't overload power strips! Keep this in mind while you're turning your home into a winter wonderland this Christmas, and always remember to unplug your Christmas lights when you leave the house.



Winter Weather Awareness week was Nov. 16-20, and Natural Hazards Planner Dustin Davis (below) was kind enough to pose for a Mary Poppins-esque photo which served as a social media announcement for the awareness week.



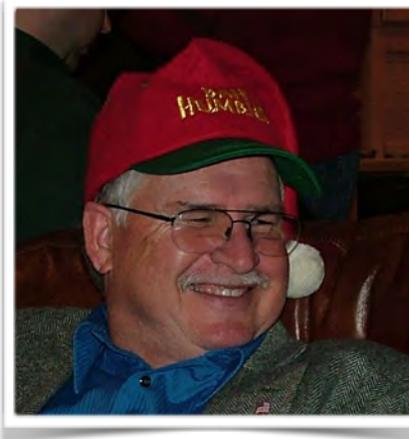
Dear Larry,

Strategic Communications Branch Manager Larry Pullon offers his highly sought-after advice to frequently asked questions over the holidays. Pondering a question you'd like Larry to answer? Email Whitney Green at whitney.green@adem.arkansas.gov and wait for Larry's response in the next newsletter.

If your wife says all she wants for Christmas is a blender and some socks – don't do it - it's a test. (Same goes for Valentine's, Anniversary, and Birthday.)

If your husband says all he wants for Christmas is a new fishing rod and reel and some socks – he is telling the truth.

Don't eat the yellow snow – really; do I even need to say this?



2016 long term weather prediction – it will be wintery until around March – then it will be springy a while – then summer a few months – then kind of fallie.

If you fall asleep at work and wake up at 6pm – you do not get to claim comp-time – even if you were at your desk.

Travel time counts as lunch-time – so it is NOT alright to go to Who-Dats in Bald Knob for lunch!

If you get a Durango air born good enough a little yellow squiggly icon pops up above the steering wheel – and it dings.

Red mud is very hard to clean off the Durango headliner.

When someone tells you to put it on your calendar – they don't mean the paper calendar on your desk.

Dogs can teach us all we need to know to live a happy life!

That's about all I have to say about that – Merry Christmas Y'all!

Pullon



Conway High School Students Complete CERT Training

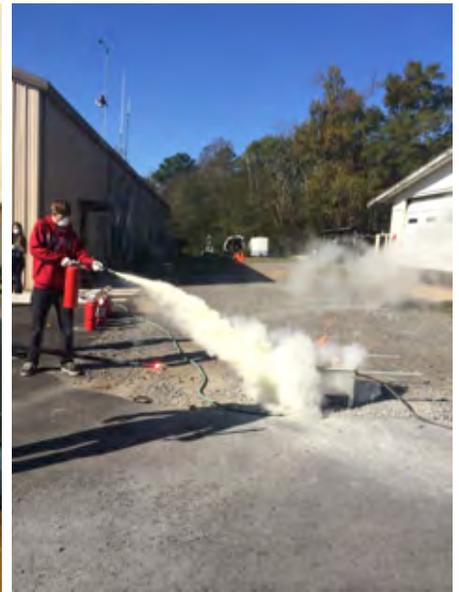
Fifty Conway High School students recently completed the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training as part of their Medical Responder course offered by the Conway High School Career Center. Their teacher, Shannon Busby, along with their CERT Instructor Dirk Sutterfield, held the end of course disaster scenario practical on Tuesday, November 10th, at the Conway OEM. Student teams were rotated through various stations to demonstrate CERT skills such as fire suppression, search and rescue, triage, and medical treatment.

CERT is a FEMA-sponsored program that trains and organizes teams of volunteers that provide assistance to their communities before, during, and after disasters. CERT volunteers help others following disasters when professional responders are not immediately available to help, and supplement and support the efforts of professional responders upon their arrival. Volunteers also support emergency response agencies by organizing and participating in local preparedness projects and initiatives. The CERT program educates participants about how to prepare for hazards that may impact their communities and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations.

For more information regarding adult or student CERT programs for your area, contact:

Gary Ragen, State Citizen Corps Coordinator for Arkansas Department of Emergency Management
Phone: 501-683-6729

Email: gary.ragen@adem.arkansas.gov



Conway High School students split into teams and work together to complete the Community Emergency Response Team training on Nov. 10 at the Conway Office of Emergency Management. Photos and article provided by Gary Ragen.

EARTHQUAKE NEWS

Blytheville Public Schools first school in Central US to have Quake Catcher installed

North Little Rock, AR – The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) in conjunction with the Central United States Earthquake Consortium and the Southern California Earthquake Center installed a ‘Quake Catcher’ in Blytheville Elementary and Intermediate Schools on Thursday, June 18, 2015. A Quake Catcher is a small sensor that detects ground movement which is consistent with earthquakes.

This catcher is part of a world-wide network that allows people, who also have sensors, to monitor earthquakes in their area and compare them worldwide. Quake Catcher has an alternate training mode which allows students to simulate an earthquake, by jumping to create ground movement, illustrating how seismology works. In comparison to United States Geological Survey seismometers, these catchers only detect localized movement; additional more in-depth research may be required after an earthquake by a geologist or earthquake expert.

The intent is to use this information to provide schools and students with real-life knowledge of how to respond to and mitigate for an earthquake in their region. Additionally, important information from these sensors is sent back to California to researchers to advance the study of seismology worldwide. Quake Catchers help monitor activity along key faults or known earthquake areas and provide a valuable educational opportunity for those involved. Currently, sensors are only being installed in select schools, museums, and libraries.

SEE THIS YEAR'S SHAKEOUT
VIDEO HERE: <http://on.fb.me/1P9S0bo>

GOVERNOR'S PSA: <http://bit.ly/1NbdiSc>



Students from Daisy Bates Elementary in Little Rock practice how to drop, cover, and hold on during the annual earthquake drill, ShakeOut.

Quake Catcher Network comes to the Central U.S.

June 2015 - In June, Robert de Groot, Ph.D, of the Southern California Earthquake Center (SCEC) came to the central U.S. to facilitate an initial deployment of the “Quake Catcher Network” or QCN. QCN is a network of low-cost seismometers installed on personal computers that transmit earthquake shaking information to servers in California. The deployment is a pilot in the central U.S., and is an extension of the EPICenter program, which provides resources and learning tools to public information centers such as museums, science centers, and other free-choice learning institutions. In all, twelve QCN seismometers were installed in Blytheville, Arkansas, Malden, Missouri, Tiptonville and Ridgely, Tennessee, and DeSoto County Mississippi. Once in place the seismometers not only record earthquake shaking, but can be used to demonstrate how earthquakes are measured and recorded through a “QCN Live” demonstration software.

Currently, QCN devices are deployed worldwide through a cooperative program at Stanford University. In the coming months QCN is transitioning to a collaborative management approach between CalTech, SCEC, and IRIS, the Incorporated Research Institutions for Seismology.

After a review of the initial deployment, CUSEC intends to reach out to other communities in states throughout the central U.S. to join the Quake Catcher Network and improve the understanding and translation of earthquakes and earth science.

For more information, visit <http://qcn.stanford.edu>

RICK KELLEY

On Retirement, Life, and Always Being Happy and Content

After 28 years of incredible service at Arkansas Department of Emergency Management, central area coordinator Rick Kelley is retiring. He began his career at ADEM in 1988 as a maintenance worker; a position previously held by his father. Always a hard worker, Rick worked his way up from maintenance to area coordinator, and later was promoted to branch manager.

He has made a lasting impression on his coworkers, and will be sorely missed. Within moments of meeting Rick, it is evident that he genuinely cares for people; not only those he works with, but everyone he comes across throughout his day. His compassion and hard work should be applauded, but in true humility, Rick would never accept praise.

“That’s just me,” he says.



An interview with Rick Kelley, by PIO Whitney Green

How did you get started with ADEM?

I came in as a maintenance man in 1988. I followed my daddy’s path. When he retired, I got his job.

Do you have any memories with your dad when he was in this position?

I remember going out with him when he was on radio duty. When he first started, he went out on incidents like lightening strikes and such. It was neat to go out there with him at night in the bunker.

Where is home for you?

Vilonia. We got totally wiped out during the tornado in 1982, and at that time my family was temporarily living in a mobile home while we finished building our house. We had just finished building the outside and were about to start working on the inside when the tornado came through. It took out everything we owned.

Can you describe that night for me, when the tornado struck?

I knew my immediate family was in the shelter, except for my daddy. We didn’t know if he was home or not. I remember going through the house looking for him, but his truck wasn’t there so I went up on the hill during the tornado to look for him. I still couldn’t find him. About an hour later we got word that he had gone down to Alexander. The tornado had hit there too. He went down to help people.

So, your father was fairly active in emergency rescue?

A little bit back then. It changed over the years, but yes at that time he did go out on some scenes.

What was your perception of him as a young boy? That was a pretty heroic act for him to be out there helping people during a tornado.

Yes, but that was just typical Daddy.



What was your father like?

He was a real people person and practical joker; hard working.

What was the biggest thing you learned from him?

Work habits. He liked to work and instilled that in me. We had cattle. I grew up in Saltillo. Nothing there but a wide piece of road. There used to be a store but it's closed now.

So, what did you do growing up in a small town like that? Get into trouble?

Some, (chuckles). I filled my time like country boys do—fishing, swimming, and when I was big enough I hauled hay to make money.

Tell me about some of the disasters you've worked. Are there any in particular that stick out to you?

The Manila tornado. It was a totally different one. It wasn't big enough to go federal, but FEMA helped us get some refurbished mobile homes and we set them up for the people whose homes had been demolished.

I probably liked that one as much as any, for some reason, I don't know why. They were just so appreciative. The ice storm in 2000 that took in about $\frac{3}{4}$ of the state was the biggest one I saw. And then in 2009 an ice storm covered the northern half of the state. We helped folks with debris clean up. It was big – mountains of debris that had to be hauled off and disposed of. Then the White River flooding in 2011 – they had to shut the interstate down. Those are the major [disasters] I remember.

What do you like about working disasters?

Every disaster is different and a lot of what we do is not with individuals, but it's with public assistance and entities. The county judges and mayors are under a big load when a disaster happens, and to help them get reimbursed for everything they're eligible for is rewarding.

If you could sum it all up what would you say?

Loved it. Going through the tornado in 82' and having everything wiped out, gave me an understanding of what people are going through, and a compassionate heart. I have always felt good about trying to help somebody recover.

So, what now?

My wife has been retired for about six weeks, and now we're just going to do whatever we want.



What's the first thing you're going to do when you leave ?

Thursday? I will pack my stuff to go to deer camp for a week in South Arkansas. I'll come back next Thursday or Friday and repack to go pheasant hunt for a week.

Any traveling plans?

Yeah, we like to travel out west to Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, that area. We just enjoy driving and looking. Always have. Not much on cruises though; it's too confining. I like seeing stuff, and not just water.

I'm going to take that cruise I got you as a going away present back then.

(Chuckles). That's fine, you can have it. Not interested.

What will you miss about ADEM?

My friends, well, my family. The area coordinators and the recovery branch are all very close. We're family, that's just all I can say. We trusted each other and liked to be around each other. That's the part I'll miss. They never questioned. When you asked them to go somewhere they were ready to go and knew what to do. They were just good. I'll miss those guys—we were close like family is supposed to be.

Hopefully you will still see them.

Yeah, I hope so.



The response and recovery team on the day of Rick's retirement. Nov. 12, 2015.

What is your advice for new people working here?

Just look at the leadership. They all started at the bottom and worked their way up.

So, you would encourage others to do the same?

I'd never fault anyone for leaving to better themselves, but a lot of times the grass ain't much greener when you get there. I'm just saying look at leadership. Look at David, Tina, Scott and Shelia – every one of them were duty officers or trade assistants or worked part time.

What do you think that means?

Just stick around and see what happens. They made it. You may make it. I wouldn't say people leave too soon, because you're a fool if you have an opportunity to better yourself and your family and don't take it. But, on the other hand, if you stick around this day [retirement] will come too. I'm thankful I was here 28 years, and now I can retire and enjoy the rest of my life. This job has allowed me to work in every county in Arkansas. I've been able to see things I wouldn't normally have the chance to see. That's something I've really enjoyed, you know seeing how beautiful Arkansas really is. I can go anywhere in the state and say I've got a friend who lives here.



What's your greatest struggle right now?

Old age (chuckles). No, but I don't really have any. I'm just happy and content.

Have you felt like that your whole life?

Pretty much. One guy said, it all pays the same and counts towards 28. It makes no difference, really. Whatever they wanted me to do I was always willing to do.

Always happy and content, hu?

Yeah, pretty much. I think so.

What do you think the secret is to always being happy and content?

I think it was my relationship with the Lord. That's just part of my life. I was raised by good people and try to raise my family the same way.

Well, it sounds like you've done a good job. You have made a lasting impression on folks around here. (Chuckles). They don't tell it all. They're good people.

With love, from your ADEM family

Congratulations and best wishes to one of the sweetest, classiest guys I know. You are a true gentleman and I'm gonna miss seeing that smile. I wish the very best to you and your family. Oh and also, I sure do miss those crappie fillets! Just saying! *-Kathy Wright*

I know you're leaving ADEM better than you found it.

-Danna Weaver

Rick – I hope the fishing is good. I still remember Rick riding by my office in Conway on the lawn mower singing gospel songs. I worked with Rick as the gofer, toter and fetcher building the warehouse shelves in Conway. Whether he was fixing the pipes or doing damage assessments, he was always the best. *-Sheila M. Annable*



Who's going to greet me when I walk in the door now? I guess you have to start planning get-together's at your house now! I will be waiting for a fish fry...– Love You Rick... *-Pamela Burton*

I'm going to miss emails with the subject line “hey”...even if it was an important email. I'm going to miss being your IT Support...remember I don't make out of office visits so if you need something fixed you have to come back to home base! But most of all I'm going to miss an amazing supportive friend that never fails to pick on me the way you do! *-Ali Rye*

Hey Rick, It was awesome getting to work with, and learn from, you. Thank you for all you have done for us and our State. Congratulations on your retirement, you will have more free time to eat at Arby's! *-Kyle Key*



Grab a fishing pole and enjoy your retirement!
We will all miss you. *-Carol Walton*

We are really going to miss you here, Rick. Catch some fish and enjoy your life. You deserve it! *-Bobbie Ann*

He always looked for the “save a door program” parking spots on the end. On days he leaves early he always says “I'm taking my smoke break” or “Going Coordinating.” *-Clayton*

Mr. Kelly, you have been a friend and a corner stone that has kept this agency firm. I will miss you, and wish you and your family happiness and prosperity! Don't be a stranger. *-Larry Pullon*

Enjoy your retirement Rick but I sure am going to miss a boss who understands a short notice “day off” request because the crappie are biting! *-Teresa Smith*

Rick, it was fun working with you these last two years. Have fun with your retirement and now that you have all this free time, let's go duck hunting sometime! *-Tim*

Watch out for hangers! *-JodiLee*