



DMORT NATIONAL NEWS

Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team

SUMMER 2010

**EDITORS:
TERRY SWANSON
MARY FISCHER
SHEILA HALL**



KEVIN COSTIGAN WINS THE TOM SHEPARDSON AWARD



The following is the speech read during the presentation of the Thomas J. Shepardson award:

NDMS is proud to present the 2009 Thomas J. Shepardson Leadership Award as part of the prestigious awards given annually to the dedicated individuals who serve the nation as a part of the National Disaster Medical System. This award is named for the founder of the Disaster Mortuary Operational Response Team, Thomas J. Shepardson, whose legacy is the respectful treatment of the living and the dead and the timely identification of those who perish in natural and man-made disasters. This award is bestowed to an NDMS employee exhibiting leadership, vision, service and commitment to the living and dead, as exemplified by the founder of DMORT.

If Tom Shepardson were alive today, he would be humbled by the fact there is an award given in his memory and honor. He would embrace the NDMS and encourage each of us to be flexible as changes occur, for he understood that changes are made to fine tune things that work, as they can always work better. Mr. Shepardson would revel in the fact the NDMS has grown to such an active and prestigious response entity not only within the United States, but internationally as well.

The recipient of the 2009 Thomas J. Shepardson Leadership Award exhibits leadership through a calm and professional approach to problem solving which is critical to the success of any mission, exhibits confidence in both the team and individual's ability to get the job done right and that confidence can be felt by those who interact with the team.

Like Tom Shepardson, this year's recipient is the first one in and last one out every day during a mission, presents clearly defined goals on what is expected of the team with a workable game plan and provides concise feedback on how the operation is progressing.

This leader is the voice of wisdom and counsel regarding sensitive, complex issues and is always cognizant of the impact of the issue on the team as a whole, the individual team personnel and the community impacted by the disaster.

As was Tom Shepardson's intention, this individual is not satisfied with mediocre service and always seeks better ways to get the job at hand done faster and more efficiently, works behind the scenes, and never seeks thanks or the spotlight.

Our recipient's governing style is that of listening, learning, and acting on what works best, not what feels best. This style is a precious commodity in a day and age where people in charge like to let others know that very fact.

This individual's vision is to make the mission at hand the very best and is often be seen contemplating about what will happen next, what challenges might be looming ahead, what can be done now to avoid mistakes and reduce the effect of the upcoming challenge, whatever it may be. The goal is to conclude a successful mission and safely return the team personnel to their own families.

The commitment exhibited to the team personnel and the communities during a deployment are the same qualities this individual shows in day-to-day life. This individual often speaks of Tom Shepardson's dedication and vision and how it should be a guiding force we live by every day.

This year's recipient of the Thomas J. Shepardson Leadership Award is actively involved in the NDMS program, their family life and the local community, which speaks volumes to their commitment as well as giving something back for what has been given to you.

Ladies and gentleman, would you please rise and help us honor the recipient of the 2009 Thomas J. Shepardson Leadership award - **Kevin T. Costigan**

Kevin T. Costigan
Commander DMORT Region II

Kevin T. Costigan has been a New York State licensed funeral director for the past 30 years. In addition, he is a retired lieutenant, NYPD. Some of his responsibilities included: Supervisor of operations, confidential investigations and 911 equipment and operations. He has also been a member of the Region 2 Disaster Mortuary Operations Response Team (DMORT) since 1996. He served as Administrative Officer from 2002 to 2005 and as Commander from 2006 to the present.

Since becoming a member of DMORT, Kevin has participated in the following deployments: Egypt Air Flight #990 (1999); Sept. 11th World Trade Center (2001), American Airlines #547 (2001), Top Off 3 (2005), Hurricanes Katrina/Rita (2005) and Continental Flight #3407 (2009). His non-DMORT deployments include TWA Flight #800 (1996), First WTC Bombing (1993) and the NYC Subway – Union Square Derailment.

Kevin is an active 35 year member and former chief of the Oceanside Fire Department. He belongs to many other professional and fraternal organizations including the New York State Association of County Coroners and Medical Examiners, the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation, Nassau-Suffolk Funeral Directors Association, Nassau County and NYS Fire Chiefs Associations, Fireman's Association of the State of New York, Fraternal Order of Police, International Police Association, Lieutenants Benevolent Association, Knights of Columbus and the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Kevin resides with his wife Kathleen in Oceanside, New York and has four grown sons.

News from the Family Assistance Center

FACT was honored to be able to train 21 of the Regional Augmentees at the DMORT FTX in Knoxville, Tennessee. The training was in less than favorable conditions as the room was very tiny, but this led to quick bonding with the Regional folks! The trainees worked on interview skills, data entry in the VIP, learning the command structure of FACT and how the team works on a deployment.

FACT hopes to be able to train the majority of the remaining 55 over the next couple of years as funds become available. The support offered by the Regional augmentees is invaluable as was proven during the Haitian Earthquake mission.

CONGRATULATIONS

The **2010 Integrated Training Summit** was held in **Las Vegas, Nevada on June 2-6**. The following DMORT members were honored with the **2009 NDMS Response Team Distinguished Member of the Year Award:**

DMORT I
Robert Plante

DMORT II
Raymond Miller, DDS

DMORT III
David DeCapria

DMORT IV
Lynnette Fine

DMORT V
James Adams, DDS

DMORT VI
Rudolph Cunningham

DMORT VII
To be announced at a later date

DMORT VIII
James Kramer

DMORT IX
Rodney Walters

DMORT X
Richard Harruff, MD, PhD

DMORT FACT
Debora Reach

DMORT WMD
Howard Cooper, DDS

DMORT 2009 DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS

Many of the DMORT Teams submitted the following:

Region I selected **Robert Plante** as their 2009 Distinguished Member Award recipient. Robert is a Fire Lieutenant for the city of Burlington Fire Department, in Vermont. He is also a Fire Instructor for the State of Vermont Division of Fire and an Assistant Medical Examiner at the State of Vermont Department of Health - Chief Medical Examiner's Office. Aside from his public service commitments, Robert is the Owner/President of E & L Residential Sitework, in Shelburne, Vermont. He currently resides in Shelburne with his wife - Laurel, and son - Ethan.

Robert joined DMORT I in 2005, and currently serves as their Administrative Officer. He was deployed for Hurricanes Katrina and Rita (Louisiana 2005).

Region I is fortunate to have Robert as their Administrative Officer, and congratulates him on his award!



Dr. Raymond G. Miller was chosen as **Region II's** Distinguished Member for 2009. He is a private practitioner of general dentistry in Lancaster, New York. Aside from his private practice, Dr. Miller is extremely active in academia, forensics, and the military: he is a Clinical Associate Professor at the Buffalo School of Dental Medicine; Forensic Dental Consultant at the Erie County Medical Examiner's Office in Buffalo, New York; Fellow in the Odontology Section of the American Academy of Forensic Sciences (AAFS); and Lieutenant Colonel with the 107th Airlift Wing of the New York Air National Guard, which he deployed to Iraq in 2008 with *Operation Iraqi Freedom*.

In the Spring of 2001, Ray joined DMORT. He was deployed following the World Trade Center Tragedy (New York 2001), Hurricane Katrina (Gulfport, Mississippi 2005), and Continental Flight 3407 Crash (Clarence, New York 2009), where he served as Dental Section Chief.

Dr. Miller resides in Buffalo, New York with his wife – Maria. He has two children - Raechel, 25 and Christopher, 17.

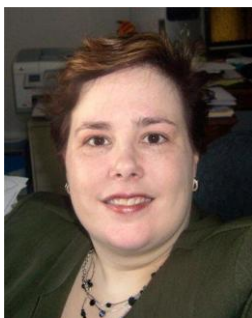
He is co-founder of the Laboratory for Forensic Odontological Research (LFOR) at the Buffalo School of Dental Medicine and has lectured at numerous national meetings on his work and research in the field of forensic dentistry.

Dr. Miller's professionalism and leadership in the Dental Section, during the Continental Flight 3407 deployment, led to the majority of positive identifications within a very short period of time. For this and for being a nice guy in general, Ray was the unanimous choice for the *Distinguished Member of the Year Award* by the DMORT Region II Command Staff.



David DeCapria received the honor of being chosen as the 2009 Distinguished Member of the Year for DMORT **Region III**. David is from State College, Pennsylvania. He is an Advanced Engineering Aide in the Chemical Engineering Department at Pennsylvania State University. His primary responsibilities include Department Safety Officer and Facilities Manager. David is also a Pro-Board Certified Hazmat Technician – he is Assistant Chief on the University’s Hazmat Response Team, overseeing the

University, as well as Centre County’s Hazmat Response. Aside from his profession, David possesses numerous civic duties: Search and Rescue for the Central Region Emergency Strike Team (CREST); Certified Field Team Leader by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR); Type 3 All-Hazard Safety Officer and Logistics Section Chief on the South Central Mountain Regional Task Force, Incident Management Team; Respiratory Fit Tester for the ASPR/NDMS Safety Team; Radiological Response Officer for the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. David joined DMORT III in 2002, and was designated Safety Officer in 2008. He has been deployed: Hurricane Katrina (September 2005), where he worked in Morgue Operations at Gulfport, Mississippi; Hurricane Rita (November 2005), as a member of the Recovery Strike Team in Lake Charles, Louisiana. The safety of team members is the most important aspect of an emergency response. David strongly believes safety is everyone’s responsibility: traveling safely, working safely, and ultimately returning home to your family is the measure of a successful deployment.



Region IV selected **Lynnette Fine** as their 2009 Distinguished Member of the Year. Lynnette is a Licensed Practical Nurse, with a specialty in Emergency Medicine and Wound Care. She works in Athens, Tennessee, caring for homebound patients who require continual medical attention. Lynnette currently resides in Cleveland, Tennessee with her daughter, Kaitlynn (age 10).

Since 2003, Lynnette has been a member of DMORT IV. She assumed the position as Administrative Officer under Kim Plunk (DMORT IV Administrative Officer) in 2008. Aside from attending annual team trainings, Lynnette has been deployed to Gulfport, Mississippi (2005), following Hurricane Katrina, working in Information Resources (IR). During the Haiti mission (2010), she participated in coordinating rosters and preparing team members to deploy.

Lynnette’s efforts, service, and dedication have earned her this honor from Region IV!



Region V is proud to announce **Dr. Jim Adams** as their 2009 Distinguished Member of the Year. Jim is a licensed General Dentist and Forensic Odontologist. He joined DMORT Region V in 1996. In 2005, Jim assumed the responsibilities of “DMART Proprietor” and has been “manning the store” since that time. He has served on several deployments: The World Trade Center Tragedy and Hurricane Katrina/Rita in Gulfport, Mississippi, St.Gabriel, Louisiana and Carville, Louisiana. Region V is proud to have Jim as a dedicated member of their team.



Rudolph "RUDY" Cunningham was selected as the Distinguished Member of the Year for **Region VI** by his peers and closest friends. Rudy has been a member of his team since 1997 and has worked every mission to which Region VI has been deployed during his tenure on the team. Rudy is the bar that is set when it comes to dedication. His hardworking ethic and compatibility with others in the field is something we all aspire to be. We appreciate him for his many years of service and may there be many more!



James Kramer has been selected as the 2009 Distinguished Team Member of the Year for **DMORT Region VIII**. Mr. Kramer is a Physician’s Assistant with a full time practice in Pueblo, Colorado, as well as the elected Coroner of Pueblo County. He served on the Advisory Council for the American Board of Medico-legal Death Investigators in 2003 and 2004. He is also an active member of DMORT Region VIII and a former member of DMORT WMD. His deployments include the World Trade Center in 2001; Florida Hurricanes Ivan and Charlie in 2004; and Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

One would think that these responsibilities would keep Jim busy enough, but in spite of his already busy schedule, he seems to find time to participate in humanitarian missions. Jim has traveled with a group known as “International Surgical Missions” to Samar, Philippines (January 2008), Sangolqui, Ecuador (September 2008) and Muisne, Ecuador (June 2009). In September of 2010, he will travel to Viet Nam with a group known as “Veterans with a Mission.” These trips are completely voluntary and at his own expense. He has provided medical care and assisted with numerous surgeries in these countries for people who cannot afford to seek medical care in their own environment. Jim has also been involved in local community groups that include: Pueblo

Area Agency on Aging, Pueblo Neighborhood Health Clinic, Pueblo Child Advocacy Center, Sangre DeCristo Hospice, and Pueblo Catholic Diocese Committee.



Rodney Lee Walters has been chosen as **Region IX**'s 2009 Distinguished Member of the Year. He has been a member of DMORT since 2003 and serves the team as a Supervisory Search and Recovery Specialist. He has been a police officer with the City of Redlands, California for 20 years, and is currently working as a school resource officer.

Rod has been a member of San Gorgonio Search and Rescue Team for 23 years. He has held the offices of President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and member of the Board of Directors. He was awarded the Medal of Valor by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department in March, 2010 for the rescue of two hikers off the top of Mt. San Gorgonio in extreme winter weather.

Rodney has earned the following awards: San Bernardino County Sheriffs Department Medal of Valor, Redland Police Department Police Cross for Bravery, Redlands Chamber of Commerce Police Officer of the Year, 40&8 Veterans Organization Police Officer of the Year for the State of California, Redlands Unified School District Honorary Service Award, 5 Grand Theft Auto awards from the California Highway Patrol and AAA for auto theft arrests and recoveries, Inland Robbery/Homicide Investigators Association commendation, Chief of Police commendation, as well as several divisional commendations from the police department.

Rodney has served DMORT on the following deployments: Hurricane Katrina (2005), American Samoa, as Acting Commander (2009), and Haiti (2010).

He and his wife, Joelle, have 2 children: Kassidy (10 years) and Mitchell (7 years). They are all extremely supportive of his DMORT activities. Unfortunately, he missed his wife's 40th birthday while on the American Samoa deployment and his daughter's 10th birthday while in Haiti. He thanks them for all their love and support.

Rod is always willing to serve, gives 100% to whatever assignment he has, and has a heartfelt desire to put others before self. His integrity is flawless, and he believes strongly in "team playing." Congratulations to Rod!



Ms. Debora L. Reach was voted Distinguished Team member for the **Family Assistance Center Team (FACT)** for 2010. She began her affiliation with DMORT in May of 2001 as a Region 9 DMORT member. In 2006, she became a member of the FACT. Her first activation was to New York as a part of the 9/11 response, followed by American Airlines #587 Crash, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Comair Flight #5191, Colgan Air Flight #3407, and the Haiti Earthquake. She

holds a MS in Forensic Science and a BS in Physiological Psychology. Her strong work ethic and effervescent personality make her an extremely valuable member of the team.

Ms. Reach has been a Medical Examiner Investigator with the County of San Diego since 2005. In addition to her job as MLI, she and her husband own KAB Laboratories, Inc. She serves as the Corporate Communications Director. In her free time she is a marathon runner and swimmer.



Dr. Howard Cooper, DDS, a member of the DMORT system since 2000, was selected for the honor as the Distinguished Team Member of the Year for the **DMORT WMD Team**.

Howard, who is a forensic odontologist, was originally a member of DMORT Region V after which he became a part of DMORT WMD in 2003. He has been deployed to New York during 9/11 and to Louisiana during Hurricane Katrina.

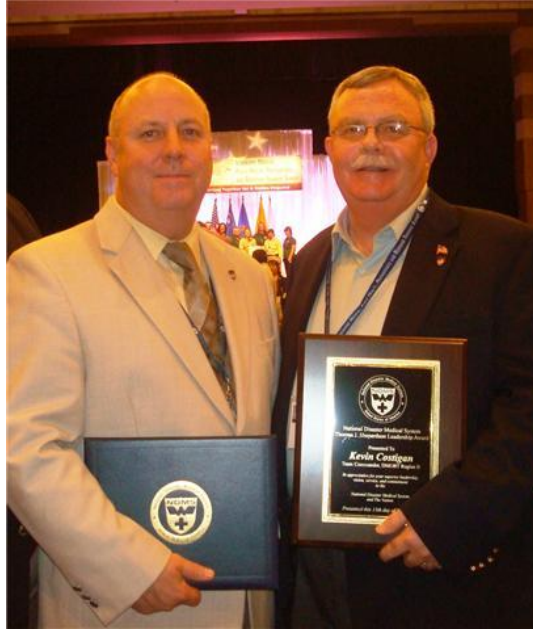
He is the force behind the DMORT WMD Store, which ensures all WMD team members are able to show their team pride by having access to a variety of DMORT WMD products. He also co-edits the DMORT WMD quarterly newsletter and serves as editor of the American Society of Forensic Odontology newsletter.

Howard maintains a positive outlook and is always ready to take on any tasks asked of him. He has donated over the years, part of his time with groups such as the American Youth Soccer Organization, donated dental services and elementary education groups.

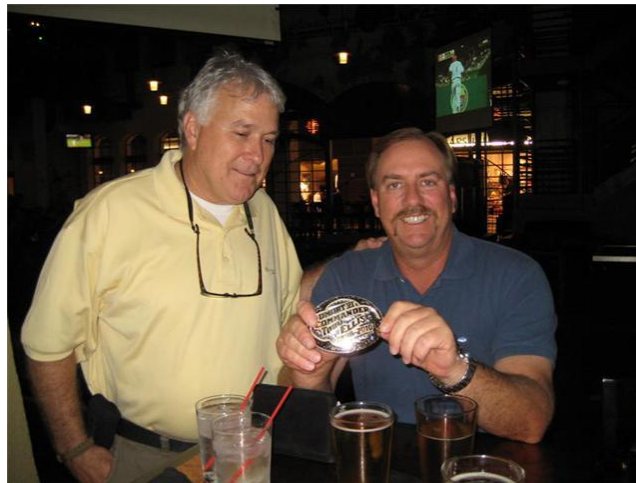
Howard, who entered the field of dentistry in 1991, has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors throughout his dental career.

When Howard is not working, being at home with his wife and five children or volunteering his time, he enjoys photography, cycling and scuba diving.

We congratulate Howard on a much deserved award and are honored to have him as part of DMORT WMD.



Dr. Ray Miller and Kevin Costigan



Todd Ellis displaying his new belt buckle, with Chuck Smith looking on

The DMORT FTX 2010 was held May 16-21 in Knoxville, hosted by the University of Tennessee, Department of Anthropology. It was an excellent training opportunity for team members. There are still a few pins left with the Body Farm logo and date of the training. They are \$5, including shipping. If interested in purchasing one, contact cj22393@earthlink.net. There are 25 remaining. First come, first serve.



A comprehensive article on the Knoxville Training will be posted in the next DMORT National Newsletter.



FACT Haiti responders with augmentee's in Miami

A TRIP TO REMEMBER

In May, 2010, **Vinny Iocovozzi** (Region II) and **Wyatt Burks** (Region VI) embarked on a motorcycle trip from Oklahoma to Louisiana. In their week long escapade, they visited numerous locations pertaining to the Katrina/Rita hurricanes of 2005.

They visited the Murrah Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, where Wyatt was a first responder during the Oklahoma City Bombing, and had full access to the building. While in Lake Charles, Louisiana they found significant improvements had been made to the area. They re-visited several cemeteries where they worked during the deployment including: Cameron Parish and Merrick Cemetery. They also spent time at Holly Beach, Baton Rouge and New Orleans.

During their adventures, they met with other DMORT members including: **John Vickers** (Region VI), **Chuck Smith** (Region VI), **Alan Anson** (Region VI), **Jordon Charlet** (Former Region VI), **Bill Stevens** (Region VI), **Zeb Johnson** and **Charlie Hunter**. Both Wyatt and Vinny reported that it was a great trip!

Shanksville, Pennsylvania 2010

Caroline Johnson
Region V

While visiting my father in Somerset, Pennsylvania, I had the chance to visit the Flight 93 Memorial in Shanksville. If you have never been there, I can tell you that it was a very moving experience. As of right now, there is a small, temporary structure that houses a sequence of placards that have photos and a script that tells the story of the incident. A very small section of the original fencing is present, with mementos attached. The site has been declared a National Park. The first phase of the permanent monument will be ready for viewing with a ribbon cutting ceremony on 9/11/2011.

Standing there, overlooking the crash site, the feeling is very ethereal. If you get a chance to go the area, you shouldn't pass up the opportunity to see it. I wanted to leave something at the site, but didn't know what to place on the fence, when I realized that I had worn that paracord-woven bracelet that Dave Walters made in Haiti. I took it off and hooked it next to an American flag, which, to me, represented DMORT Region V.

The National Park Representative told me that absolutely everything left on the fence will become part of the final memorial. At the end of the day, all articles are collected and put into a storage locker. When the permanent memorial is completed, the fence display area will be a "changing" exhibit. Every month, the entire set of mementos on display will be exchanged

with different mementos; all mementos will be stored and rotated over and over again. Nothing will be discarded. It was a very enjoyable trip and an extremely moving experience for me.

REGION III
ANNUAL TRAINING
Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
March 19-21, 2010

DMORT Region III held their annual team training in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, on March 19-21, 2010.

The training opened with a FEMA AWR 160 Terrorism Awareness Course, led by Team Safety Officer and Volunteer of the Year, **David DeCapria**. Throughout the weekend, workshops were conducted, featuring a variety of topics: proper wearing of the DMORT uniform (Deputy Commander - **Jack Ingle**); appropriate media communications (Deputy Commander - **John Carson**); how to pack a functional "go-kit" (Regional Commander - **Pat Kauffman**); the well-being of the individual responder (Team Training Officer - **Judy Shabbick** and Team Chaplain - **Greg Van Dyke**).

Deputy Commander - **John McGuire** and Training Officer - **Patrick Murray** organized several presentations, emphasizing specific roster positions and morgue station activities. This included X-Ray Technology (Team Members - **Glenda Snook** and **Dave McBride**), and Principles of Death Investigations (Team Member - **Michelle Mack**). Team Safety Officer - **Kathee Henning** - gave a rousing lecture, "Safety First!" The Pennsylvania Special Medical Response Team (SMRT) offered a hands-on practicum in Basic First Aid.

During the training weekend, all team members had their immunizations reviewed. Member information in RMS was also updated, under the guidance of Administrative Officers - **Todd Wolfe** and **Dorothy Harris**.

Past deployment experiences and lessons learned were shared with the team by Forensic Dentists - **Dennis Red** and **Doug Cross**. The 25 DMORT III responders, who deployed to Haiti, delivered a group testimonial about their impressions and memories of that unprecedented, international, multi-agency mission.

Aside from the informative and serious aspects of the training, the team was able to regroup with comrades - the highlight of the event was the traditional team Pig Pickin' and Chowderfest, along with the annual team awards ceremony.

The DMORT III Leadership Team would like to express their gratitude to the entire team for their participation and for making this their best annual training ever!



DMORT 3 Haiti responders



John McGuire (Region III Deputy Commander) addressing the team.



John McGuire honoring Donna Boyd (Forensic Anthropologist)



*John Carson (Deputy Commander), John McGuire (Deputy Commander),
Dave Quain (MedicoLegal Investigator), Glenda Snook (X-Ray Technologist),
Dave DeCapria (Safety Officer and Volunteer of the Year)*

REGION IV
ANNUAL TRAINING
Savannah, Georgia
January 7-9, 2011

DMORT Region IV will be conducting their annual team training in **Savannah, Georgia**, on **January 7-9, 2011**. Team members from ALL REGIONS are invited to attend.

To register, go to www.dmort4.com, and click on the link “DMORT IV Training in Savannah, GA” in the scrolling messages.

For more information, please contact:
Gail Works (Region IV Training Officer)
(850) 547-5603
Fax (850) 547-5604
Cell (850) 849-0047

9/11 Memorial Sweatshirts

With the 10th anniversary of the World Trade Center Attack a year away, DMART is offering the sale of black long sleeve 9/11 memorial sweatshirts. The cost is \$12.50 for the sweatshirt and \$5.00 for shipping. If interested please contact Jim Adams at jim@dmort.org to place your order.



FRONT



BACK

DMORT NATIONAL NEWSLETTER EDITORS

Terry Swanson terryswanson@msn.com

Mary Fischer mffischer53@hotmail.com

Sheila Hall halls@infantwelfare.org