

The Conway Daily Sun

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Police ramp up patrols to try to put the brakes on speeders

By NATE GIARNESE
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

CONWAY — Lead-footed drivers, here are two good reasons to ease off the pedal — and both could squeeze your wallet. Police sent special speed patrols onto the

streets this week hoping to curb crashes during the mobbed summer season. "Intensive" patrols, targeting unidentified stretches of roadway police say are plagued by speed, will run in Conway through Sept. 15.

Speeding while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is the leading cause of

state highway deaths, and a local danger, said Lt. Christopher Perley.

A \$4,000 state grant will pay for 18 five-hour overtime shifts for units dedicated to speed traps, he said.

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Ed Minyard, of Response Force 1, uses the phone in his SUV equipped for emergency dispatch, command and communication through satellite connection. The equipment is designed to help first responders, including National Guard units and local fire and police, communicate during major emergencies. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

Portable unit can help keep the lines of communication open in disasters

Local firm makes emergency response equipment available to town for free

By CASEY CONLEY
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

CONWAY — A Conway resident whose emergency response firm provided a communications link in the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Katrina has made the service available to the town free of charge.

"I viewed this as a demonstration of being a good corporate citizen," said Ed Minyard, 57, chief executive of North Conway-based

Response Force 1. "I live here, Response Force 1 is registered as a New Hampshire corporation, and I think one obligation of citizenship to be participative."

The emergency unit itself, known as EMCOMMS, relies on a roof- or ground-mounted satellite to sustain voice, data, video and television links in situations where communication to the outside world has been

see **COMMUNICATION UNIT** page 11

Chandler, Bucu and Butler to run again for House

Filing period opens today and runs through June 13

By LLOYD JONES
THE CONWAY DAILY SUN

CONCORD — While Carolyn Brown has decided not to file for a fourth term in the New Hampshire House of Representatives, her three fellow incumbents from District I — Democrats Tom Bucu and Ed Butler and Republican Gene Chandler — intend to file for another two years.

The filing period begins this Wednesday and runs through June 13.

District I covers Bartlett, Chatham, Conway, Hart's Location, Hale's Location and Jackson.

Chandler will seek a 14th term while Bucu is running for a third term and Butler for a second.

Chandler said by phone from Concord Tuesday afternoon he will file in Bartlett later this week.

Though he still enjoys serving in the House "at times," this session has been difficult in his eyes with the Democrats in control of

see **CANDIDATES** page 12

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COMMUNICATION UNIT from page one

compromised. All of the electronics can run off a car battery or other localized power source and fits in a roughly 3-by-3-foot box weighing around 80 pounds.

"It's designed to be field deployable in an area where infrastructure is either nonexistent or compromised through some event — disaster, terrorism, whatever," Minyard, 57, said, adding that the unit can be operated by a single person and does not require technical expertise.

In response to the communications difficulties during the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, Minyard helped design EMCOMMS for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey while working for consulting giant Unisys Corp..

Minyard and his team first deployed the EMCOMMS in 2005 just two days after Hurricane Katrina made landfall in New Orleans. With infrastructure in the city damaged and inoperable, EMCOMMS coordinated efforts between first responders and became a central link to the outside world.

"We were charged with putting up communications for the mayor and were the first communications that city had after Katrina," Minyard said. "It was a pretty significant demonstration of how this system would work."

When Unisys moved away from the emergency consulting business in 2007, Minyard acquired the assets and technology from Unisys and formed Response Force 1.

To date, the City of New Orleans and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey have several units apiece. And on top of sales and service to major cities, Response Force 1 has a contract with the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, to provide emergency communications throughout much of the western United States.

A former resident of New York City, Minyard moved to the North Conway in 2006 after marrying local Realtor Joy Tarbell.

In recent weeks, he has led a series of training sessions with town officials and emergency contacts on how to use the EMCOMMS device, and more are in the works. So far, local officials like what they see.

"Should a mega-disaster hit greater New England, there's a good chance Conway will be one of



Ed Minyard, of Response Force 1, poses in front of a SUV equipped for emergency dispatch, command and communication through satellite connection. The satellite dish can be mounted on the truck or placed on the ground and is powered by the truck. (JAMIE GEMMITI PHOTO)

the first towns with a working line to the outside world," said Ed Duffy, Conway's emergency management director.

Conway Fire Chief Steve Solomon said the device is "pretty easy to use" and fills a gap in technology available to first responders in the valley.

"What it does for us is it allows us to communicate with people where we currently couldn't," he said.

Through capabilities only available in a few devices worldwide, EMCOMMS allows disparate frequencies to communicate on the same line through what Minyard calls "interoperability"

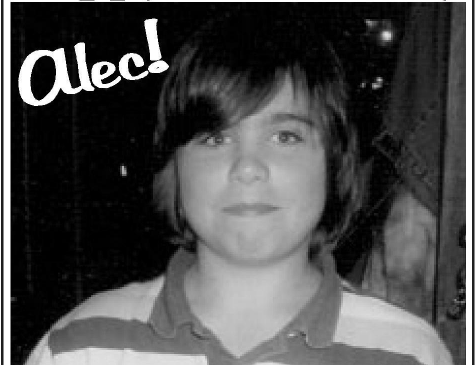
"In the case of a large event that requires multi-agency coordination, the National Guard, the fire departments, EMS officials from other locales show up with their own radios," Minyard said. "[This] bridges them together."

Given the response his company has gotten nationwide, he's not surprised at the local response to his offer to provide the extensive — and expensive — service for free.

"All the guys at the bloody tip of spear are very excited at having this type of toolset. And frankly who wouldn't be?" he said, adding, "It's here for the use of the community."

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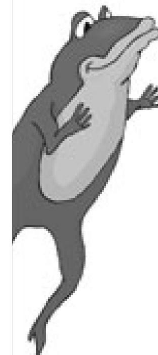
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