



# F-M AMBULANCE SERVICE

# VITAL SIGNS

Summer 2005



## West Fargo National Night Out

Jason Smith and Stef Jordheim worked at West Fargo's National Night Out on Tuesday August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Beautiful weather let approximately 3,000 people enjoy the festivities in Elmwood Park that evening. Many kids enjoyed looking through the ambulance and getting "Junior Paramedic" stickers.



## Safety Safari at the Red River Valley Zoo

On Thursday July 28<sup>th</sup>, the Red River Valley Zoo held a Safety Safari to kick off the new North Dakota booster seat law. There were over 360 kids that visited the zoo to learn about safety. The Safe Kids Coalition held a car seat check and handed out free booster seats to the first 10 people at the event. Along with tours of the ambulance, the Nebraska State Patrol had a rollover simulator, and the West Fargo Police Department had one of their squad cars there for kids to tour. The event helped parents and kids realize how important seat belts and booster seats are!

## Did you know...

- The human brain stops growing at the age of 18.
- In 1977, a 13-year-old child found a tooth growing out of his left foot.
- During his or her lifetime, the average human will grow 590 miles of hair.
- The average human bladder can hold 13 oz. of liquid.
- Your thumb is the same length as your nose.

## Paramedic Refresher

The first of many paramedic refresher classes for 2005 was held on August 8<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in attending any of the upcoming refreshers, please talk to Merlee.

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|--------------------------|---------------|
| • Trauma I               | 9/6 & 9/7     |
| • Trauma II              | 9/26 & 9/27   |
| • Airway and Respiratory | 10/12 & 10/13 |
| • Cardiology             | 10/25 & 10/31 |
| • OB & Peds I            | 11/9 & 11/10  |
| • OB & Peds II           | 12/7 & 12/8   |

# The Clinical Corner

By Wade Mitzel, Clinical Coordinator



## Are You Short of Breath?

In our efforts to continue providing our patients with the highest level of care, F-M Ambulance has been seeking out the latest medical research and new technologies. As a result, we have incorporated two new pieces of equipment – CPAP and the Autovent 3000 – to aid in the treatment of patients experiencing shortness of breath.

CPAP or Continuous Positive Airway Pressure has been in the hospital setting for many years. It hasn't been available to EMS due to the size of the machine and the amount of oxygen it uses. CPAP is designed for any patient that is suffering from severe shortness of breath. It works by forcing air in the lungs at a high pressure when the patient breathes. CPAP makes the work of breathing easier and gives better oxygenation for the patient who can't breathe well themselves due to CHF, pneumonia, or even asthma. The new technology has made the equipment smaller and is now able to be implemented in the pre-hospital setting. The State of North Dakota has approved CPAP for the EMT-Basic level standard of care. F-M Ambulance hopes to train other squads on how to use CPAP and have it more available in the rural setting.

The Autovent 3000 is a small compact ventilator that was purchased through grants for the use in a mass casualty. These ventilators would help us in the situation of moving patients from a hospital to another location. The ventilator would also help in a chemical attack with a substance that would affect the respiratory function of a patient. They can also be used for hospital transfers and cardiac arrests in the field. The ventilator will take the place of a person ventilating with a bag-valve-mask. This will give us another set of hands to help with other skills. The ventilators are easy to use and will enable us to give better patient care.

F-M Ambulance is committed to continually improve quality within our system. These two new devices will help us provide better service and improve the outcome of the people and community we serve.

## Did you know...

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During a typical human life span, the human heart will beat approximately 2.5 billion times.

# F.A.Q...

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## Calling an Ambulance

**Q:** *How do you decide which hospital to take a patient to?*

**A:** Generally, if the patient is stable they will be taken to the hospital of their choice in Fargo (MeritCare or Innovis). If the patient is unstable or needs specialized care, they will be taken to the closest hospital to where the patient is.

**Q:** *Will the ambulance use the lights and sirens on the way to the hospital?*

**A:** Lights and sirens will only be used if the patient's condition is life-threatening or the patient is rapidly deteriorating. If the patient is stable, it is much safer for the patient and the ambulance personnel to drive without lights and sirens.

**Q:** *Will the hospital be ready for me when I get there in the ambulance?*

**A:** Ambulance EMT's and paramedics generally call ahead to the hospital to tell them the patient's condition before they arrive so the hospital is expecting the patient when they get there.

## Did you know...

The **EMEC** team went on their 1<sup>st</sup> annual golf outing? Chad Mickelson and Rick Cameron won the event, with the other 3 teams finishing close behind them (OK, the team of Jodi and Kristi may have not have been sooo close behind...).



# F-M Ambulance Welcomes...

*A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees*

## Marcel Sim NREMT-P



### *Where are you from?*

New York City and Long Island, NY

### *What brings you to F-M Ambulance?*

My wife is from Moorhead – we were married on Sept. 11, 2004, and we are planning on starting a family. I retired early from NYPD, and I wanted to maintain my skills as a paramedic, meet new people, and serve the community.

### *Where have you worked?*

In NYC I worked as a EMT-B and a paramedic. I have also worked at Eagle Rescue Helicopter as a flight paramedic, in Phoenix, Arizona/Sun City as a firefighter/paramedic, and finally in NYC as a police officer/paramedic.

### *What kids of things are different in NYC compared to Fargo, North Dakota?*

In NYC we had a very busy 911 system – over a million calls every year. We often dealt with large crowds, a high suicide rate, and a lot of violence. There is heavy drug trafficking and substance abuse problems there.

We had a very high call volume and often saw shootings, assaults, drug overdoses, gang activity, robberies, murders, and rapes.

Since September 11, 2001, the threat level has been increased, and we often dealt with suspicious packages, bomb threats, hazardous materials, and anti-war protestors and violence associated with that.

### *Are there any differences in protocols or the EMS system?*

It's a fast paced, load-and-go system in NYC. The protocols are very similar. In NYC there is EMS academy training.

### *What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?*

I own a 1964 Pontiac GTO Convertible – my wife and I enjoy car shows. We also enjoy 4-wheeling with our Polaris 600 Sportsmen, biking, and going to the lakes.

# Did you know...

**Wade Mitzel** just got done taking part in a triathlon? Wade swam ½ mile, then biked 17 miles, and finally ran 4 miles. He finished with a time of 2 hours and 11 minutes – WAY TO GO WADE!!

## F-M Ambulance Explorers

### *What are F-M Ambulance Explorers?*

Explorers are high-school aged students who are interested in a shadow career program in which they can valuable medical experience through observation and participation with professional and successful paramedics and EMTs, that strive for excellence in patient care, community service, and compassion.

### *As an Explorer, what do I get to do?*

Participants in the Explorer program get to attend monthly meetings at F-M Ambulance where they learn about the medical field and the types of injuries and illnesses that they may see “in the field”.

As well as ambulance ride alongs, Explorers get to experience many other aspects of EMS, including seeing the SWAT team in action, talking with law enforcement personnel, and touring a fire department, Lifeflight, and a funeral home.

### *If I want to be an Explorer or know someone who would, how can they get involved?*

If you or someone you know is interested in the Explorer program, please have them visit our Explorer web page, found on [www.fmambulance.com](http://www.fmambulance.com), under “education”. They can also call Kristi for more information (701) 364-1759. The first meeting of the 2005 – 2006 Explorer program is on Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup> – we hope to see you there!



Last year Explorers got to tour the **Red River Valley SWAT Team** Vehicle and learn how to do a “raid” in a room at F-M Ambulance – they found Sondra hiding under a counter and Kristi in a closet!

# The Disaster Department

By Chad Mickelson, Liaison Coordinator

## Disaster Preparedness

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As a sign of the times, F-M Ambulance, in direct coordination with the North Dakota EMS Association (NDEMSEA), has been gearing up our disaster preparedness plan. This cooperative effort is quickly paying off. A regional response plan that outlines steps to work together effectively so we are able to manage incidents regardless of the cause, size, or complexity, is nearly complete. These types of events range from large scale; such as acts of terrorism, hazardous material incidents or natural disasters; to those of a smaller scale; such as motor vehicle crashes. The NDEMSEA Regional Response Plan is also designed to interlace with North Dakota's Hospitals' Regional Surge Capacity Plans.

An event requiring the use of this plan could be any incident that involves situations or circumstances above the normal response capabilities of local EMS providers. It can be assumed that there are EMS responders, rescue squads and ambulance services in North Dakota that are not trained or equipped to adequately manage a large scale event or natural disaster. Predictably, rural communities won't have the manpower or resources needed in the time directly following the onset of a large scale incident. Equipment and supplies to augment local response capabilities will be cached at four sponsoring ambulance services and could be quickly dispatched out from Bismarck, Minot, Fargo and Grand Forks. Also under this plan, EMS agencies will be trained on awareness, triage, National Incident Management System, and the initial, early-stage management of a disaster.

Now, I know what you might be thinking, the last thing volunteers want to do is find themselves stuck in another "disaster class" – I can sympathize, I am also on a volunteer rescue squad – but it is very important that everyone be on the same page when it comes to disaster response. The first installment is the *All Hazards Awareness for EMS* course which is available to any recognized EMS service that operates in the state of North Dakota. This is a free course and is funded by the Health Resources and Service Administration's (HRSA) grant program for hospital bioterrorism preparedness. This three-hour course focuses on a "common sense" approach when responding to a chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive event as well as natural disasters.

F-M Ambulance is currently working with West Central EMS on the Minnesota side of the river to develop a similar plan for disaster response.

If your squad is interested in the *All Hazards Awareness for EMS* course or if you have any questions regarding other domestic preparedness courses, feel free to contact me at (701) 364-1737 or [chad.mickelson@fmambulance.com](mailto:chad.mickelson@fmambulance.com) and check out our website [www.fmambulance.com](http://www.fmambulance.com). Stay tuned for further updates in future issues of *Vital Signs*.

## Get To Know...

*A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees*

### David Partlow Maintenance Engineer

#### *Where are you from?*

I'm from south Fargo. I did live in Kansas City, MO for 3 ½ years, and then moved back to Fargo. I'm married to Sue (the luckiest girl in Fargo), and have a 15-year-old son named David. I worked at Nativity Church and Nativity School for 17 years before coming to F-M Ambulance.

#### *What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?*

I enjoy hunting, fishing, camping and woodwork. I also like to work on cars and snowmobile – anything that's fun!

#### *What do you like so far about F-M Ambulance?*

Everyone has been very friendly and respectful. I think this is the best move I could have ever made!



## Cass County EVOC Training

On Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, more than 40 members from various Cass County ambulance and rescue squads took part in EVOC training. Sherm Syverson, Chad Mickelson, Bob Jostad, and Scott Helmer all had a great time driving with everyone!



## Paramedic Class of 2006

Paramedic school started on Monday, August 22, 2005. This year there are 20 students, coming from as far as Washington!

## Did you know...

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## The Rural Roundup

By Chad Mickelson, Liaison Coordinator

Hello All! This is where you can find updated information on what's happening with the liaison program at F-M Ambulance and the training that's going on in Cass and Clay Counties.

As some of you may know F-M Ambulance provides liaisons to each ambulance service and rescue squad in Cass and Clay County, as well as fire and police departments in Fargo and Moorhead. The largest role of these liaisons is to provide an open door of communication between the responders that provide patient care in and around our communities and F-M Ambulance. The liaison may also provide monthly training and run review as well. The liaison program is very important to F-M Ambulance. Keeping those doors of communication open is the best way to optimize patient care. It is crucial that we all work together for the benefit of the patients that we treat. On the average, our liaisons travel an approximate total of 8,400 miles and spend an approximate total of 500 hours per year delivering this service. That goes to show how serious F-M Ambulance is about providing this service. With that being said, I'd like to introduce myself. My name is Chad Mickelson and I am now the Liaison Coordinator at F-M Ambulance. My primary roles include being a resource for the liaisons, being a resource for the rural rescuers, addressing any questions or concerns that arise from the responders in Cass and Clay Counties and to aid in recertification procedures.

We've been doing some exciting training in Cass County. Just recently, Cass County EMTs that are affiliated with a recognized ambulance service or rescue squad and have attended the mandatory training have obtained variances to use Combitube® and administer Nebulizer treatments. This training was performed in cooperation with the ND Division of Emergency Medical Services (DEMS) and Rural Cass County Ambulance and Rescue Association (RCCARA). A lot of Cass County emergency responders also had the opportunity to attend an Emergency Vehicle Operators Course this August. This was made possible with funding from the RCCARA.

Quarterly training sessions with rescue squads and businesses are projects that we are continuing to develop. Cass County First Responders have been using quarterly training sessions for ongoing education for a few years now, but we are continuing to set up new sessions throughout the area. Unfortunately, this is not free, however there is a possibility that these sessions could take the place of first responder refreshers for those organizations that choose to do so.

If you have any questions, concerns or would like more information on quarterly training, please contact me at (701) 364-1737 or [chad.mickelson@fmambulance.com](mailto:chad.mickelson@fmambulance.com).

# I.C.E. – In Case of Emergency



F-M Ambulance is encouraging people to start using I.C.E. in their cell phones. I.C.E. stands for In Case of Emergency. Putting I.C.E. along with a name and telephone number will enable emergency responders to quickly contact family members in the event of an emergency.

Paramedics, police officers and firefighters often waste valuable time trying to figure out which name in a cell phone to call when disaster strikes. If someone is unconscious or otherwise unable to respond to questions, I.C.E. gives emergency personnel a faster way to get more medical information about that person.

Follow these hints to get the best use of out I.C.E.:

- Make sure the person whose name and number you are giving has agreed to be your I.C.E. partner.
- Make sure your I.C.E. partner has a list of people they should contact on your behalf.
- Make sure your I.C.E. person's number is one that's easy to contact.
- Make sure your I.C.E. partner knows about any medical conditions that could affect your emergency treatment (allergies or current medications).

"Many people carry cell phones, and this is something that is very easy for them to do," states Sherm Syverson, a paramedic from F-M Ambulance. "Having I.C.E. in their cell phones will help us know who to contact during an emergency".

**If you have any ideas, questions, or comments about "Vital Signs", please contact Kristi at (701) 364-1759, or email [kristi.rasmussen@fmambulance.com](mailto:kristi.rasmussen@fmambulance.com).**



# Get To Know...

*A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees*

## Janine Weidner Administrative Assistant

### *Where are you from?*

I grew up in Aberdeen, South Dakota. I worked for 4 ½ years at Bed, Bath & Beyond before coming to F-M Ambulance. I'm married to Jeremy, and I have a 3 ½ year old son named Ethan.

### *What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?*

I enjoy spending time with my family, shopping, and cleaning up after my puppy!



## Did you know...

Once a human reaches the age of 35, he/she will start losing approximately 7,000 brain cells a day. The cells will never be replaced.