



# F-M AMBULANCE SERVICE

# VITAL SIGNS



February 2006



Winter is here! Crews have been busy this winter season with many rollovers and vehicle accidents.

## EMS Rendezvous

The North Dakota EMS Association is putting on the EMS Rendezvous in Bismarck on April 21<sup>st</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>. This conference is designed for the EMT-B, EMT-I, EMT-P, Nurses, First Responders, Physicians, EMS Instructor/Coordinators, Law Enforcement Officers, Military Emergency Personnel, Fire/Rescue Personnel, EMS Dispatchers, and other emergency personnel. There will be personnel from F-M Ambulance Service presenting on Hurricane Katrina response on April 21<sup>st</sup> at 5:00.

## Did You Know...

- No piece of paper can be folded in half more than seven (7) times.
- Donkeys kill more people annually than plane crashes.
- Apples, not caffeine, are more efficient at waking you up in the morning.

## New Building for F-M Ambulance

F-M Ambulance Service has experienced growth in all areas of services that we provide. To facilitate this growth, F-M Ambulance recently began renovation of our new satellite facility at 3148 Fietchner Drive in south Fargo. The building was the former site of Radiology Limited.

The new satellite center will house an expanded storefront for our retail operations, four additional classrooms for EMS and public classes, a base for ReadyWheels, and collaboratively provide space for some of Meritcare's programs. During the building renovations, the radiology students that were previously in the Fietchner building will be housed at the F-M Ambulance main station. Dave Partlow will be doing much of the renovations on the building, which is scheduled to be completed by this summer. While no ambulances will be based at this location, the growth of our Ambulance Service has increased space needs at our main facility.



The new F-M Ambulance satellite facility at 3148 Fietchner Drive in Fargo should be ready by this summer.

## SimBaby

The Emergency Medical Education Center at F-M Ambulance has recently received an exciting new piece of equipment called SimBaby. SimBaby is an extremely advanced manikin that will let students practice all kinds of advanced skills on a life-like infant.

SimBaby has an anatomically realistic airway that allows accurate simulation of all infant airway management and patient care scenarios. The anatomy can be changed to represent conditions like tongue edema, pharyngeal swelling, and laryngospasms. SimBaby can simulate a wide range of breathing patterns including changing the rate and depth, and adding complications such as retractions and see-saw breathing. During hypoxic conditions, the SimBaby will present cyanosis in the mouth region. SimBaby has a wide range of cardiac rhythms and heart sounds. The blood pressure can be adjusted and measured manually by palpation or by auscultation. SimBaby also allows for defibrillation, pacing, and synchronized cardioversion. SimBaby has IV arm and bilateral IV/IO legs for peripheral access. It also has a distendable fontanel and abdomen, and can be hooked up to cry, cough and hiccup.



SimBaby will be used in all pediatric classes, from First Responder to Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS). Paramedic students will use SimBaby to challenge and test their critical thinking and clinical decision-making skills in pediatric scenarios. If you would like to see a demonstration of SimBaby, please stop by the EMEC department anytime.

## RN-to-EMT

The first RN-to-EMT class was held December 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup>. There were 11 RN's who participated in the course, and we are happy to announce that all of the nurses have passed their National Registry tests! The next RN-to-EMT course will be held May 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>. For more information about the course, please contact Merlee at (701) 364-1750.

## ABC's of Babysitting

The ABC's of Babysitting course is an initial course for teens and pre-teens about responsible babysitting and child care. The first course was held in July 2005 and was an instant success.

Using scenario-based learning, the babysitting class addresses staying safe and dealing with emergency situations. The classes are held every other month.

Participants learn CPR, first aid, diaper changing techniques, fun activities for the children to do and many other things. They also learn about when to call 911 and what will happen if they do need emergency assistance. At the end of the course, participants get a tour of an ambulance, they receive a certificate of completion and a first aid kit to bring with them when they babysit.

This course is designed for young babysitters ages 10 – 15, but other ages are allowed in the class if parents think it is appropriate for them. For more information or to sign someone up for the next course, please call Merlee at (701) 364-1750.



ABC's of Babysitting instructor Carol Tepley gives a tour of the ambulance to the February ABC's of Babysitting course participants.

## Did You Know...

- A duck's quack doesn't echo, and no one knows why.
- The king of hearts is the only king without a moustache.

# The Clinical Corner

By Wade Mitzel, Clinical Coordinator



Bird flu. It's a term you've probably heard frequently on the news, but you may not realize how seriously it could impact your life. While the disease is currently thousands of miles away, it could move quickly into our backyard if conditions are right.

## **Bird flu vs. "regular" flu**

The seasonal flu we face every year usually arrives in November and affects our area for 3-5 months. Symptoms include fever, cough, runny nose and muscle pain. While many cases of the flu are relatively mild, the seasonal flu can lead to serious illness and even death in children, older people and those with certain medical conditions.

A flu shot is your best method of defense against this flu. The illness spreads from person to person through droplets released when people cough and sneeze.

Bird flu, also called avian flu, is a disease that occurs among domesticated birds like chickens, ducks and turkeys, as well as migratory birds. Infected birds "shed" the virus in their saliva, nasal secretions and feces. Other birds that come into contact with contaminated surfaces or feces can become infected with avian flu.

The disease has been reported in birds in 13 Asian nations, as well as Russia, Turkey, and Romania. A human case of avian flu has also been confirmed in Iraq, although researchers have not confirmed an outbreak of the flu in poultry there. Scientists have confirmed bird flu infection in 160 people worldwide since 2003.

While bird flu mainly affects birds, it can be transmitted from birds to humans. People become infected when they have direct contact with infected birds or contaminated surfaces. This often happens when people raise poultry, then kill and butcher it.

The symptoms of avian flu in humans are similar to that of seasonal flu, but they can be more severe. Healthy adults may be more susceptible to bird flu than they are to seasonal flu. In the outbreak taking place now in Asia and other countries, more than half of those confirmed infected have died.

## **Pandemic influenza**

An influenza pandemic is a widespread outbreak of the disease. A pandemic could begin if the bird flu develops the ability to spread easily from person to person. Right now, the virus seems to pass only from birds to people, but the structure of flu viruses changes often. Scientists worry that the avian flu virus could change into a form that is highly contagious among humans. If this happened, the virus could spread quickly between countries and arrive in the U.S. in a relatively short amount of time.

If the avian flu does begin to transmit easily between people, scientists will try to isolate its exact structure and develop a vaccine to protect humans from the disease. Due to the complicated vaccine manufacturing process, it would take more than a year to produce enough vaccine to protect all Americans from avian flu. There is currently no medication to cure or prevent the avian flu.

## Get To Know...

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

### Noah Schulz Dispatch

#### *Where are you from?*

I am from Montana. I was an EMT, firefighter and 911 dispatcher there before moving to the Fargo - Moorhead area. I have a fiancée, Kathrina, and three dogs.



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

I enjoy playing paintball, hockey and video games in my spare time.

#### *What made you want to work at F-M Ambulance?*

I wanted to work at F-M Ambulance because of the teamwork and camaraderie.

## Santa Visits F-M Ambulance Service

On December 20<sup>th</sup>, F-M Ambulance had a special visitor – Santa Claus! Santa and his reindeer landed at approximately 5:00. Since the weather was a bit cold and blustery, the reindeer were parked in the garage to keep them warm.

Santa visited with many employees and families at F-M. Everyone who came to see Santa got to enjoy Christmas cookies and other snacks while the children received books and other gifts. We hope that Santa can continue to visit F-M Ambulance Service... Thanks Santa!



Ethan Gerhardson (Janine's son) enjoyed his visit with Santa while Evan Erickson (Sondra's nephew) liked watching Andy the Ambulance travel around the room.

## Citizen's EMS Academy

The first annual Citizen's EMS Academy met for the first night of their program on Wednesday February 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Citizen's Academy will meet for 8 weeks, having their completion celebration on Wednesday April 12<sup>th</sup>.

The Citizen's EMS Academy is a program that offers a hands-on opportunity for community members to learn what F-M Ambulance paramedics and EMT's do every day. It will also educate participants about F-M Ambulance Service and emergency medical services, along with teaching skills that they will be able to use in actual emergencies.



Participants will have the opportunity to ride along with Paramedics and EMTs and go on actual emergency calls.

The academy focuses on hands-on training, showing and teaching the skills that an ambulance crew may use. Participants get to practice starting IV's, intubations, defibrillation, reading heart rhythms, and doing a full "code" on our SIMMAN manikin. Participants will also have the chance to drive an ambulance with our Road Safety system in place.

For more information or if you know anyone who is interested in the next Citizen's EMS Academy, please contact Kristi at (701) 364-1759.



John Brieland, Kristi Rasmussen, Todd Hockert, and Ken Krupich help the participants of the Citizen's Academy run a code using SimMan on the first night of the Academy.

# AHA Releases New CPR Guidelines

On February 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>, the American Heart Association held a BLS Rollout at F-M Ambulance Service for the regional AHA faculty. In November, the AHA released the *2005 American Heart Association Guidelines for Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation and Emergency Cardiovascular Care*. New emergency care guidelines include dramatic changes to cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and emphasis on chest compressions.

The 2005 guidelines emphasize that high-quality CPR, particularly effective chest compressions, contributes significantly to the successful resuscitation of cardiac arrest patients. Studies show that effective chest compressions create more blood flow through the heart to the rest of the body, buying a few minutes until defibrillation can be attempted or the heart can pump blood on its own. The guidelines recommend that rescuers minimize interruptions to chest compressions and suggest that rescuers “push hard and push fast” when giving chest compressions.



F-M Ambulance was full of CPR instructors during the BLS rollout in February.



Kelly Kenner and Sherm Syverson practice the new guidelines for rescue breathing at the AHA BLS rollout.

The most significant change to CPR is to the ratio of chest compressions to rescue breaths – from 15 compressions for every 2 rescue breaths in the 2000 guidelines to 30 compressions for every 2 rescue breaths in the 2005 guidelines. The 30-to-2 ratio is the same for CPR that a single lay rescuer provides to adults, children and infants (excluding newborns). The change resulted from studies showing that blood circulation increases with each chest compression in a series and must be built back up after interruptions. The only exception to the new ratio is when two healthcare providers give CPR to a child or infant (except newborns), in which case they should provide 15 compressions for every 2 rescue breaths.

Another guideline change emphasizing the importance of CPR is the sequence of rhythm analysis and CPR when using AEDs. Previously, when AED pads were applied to the chest, the device analyzed the heart rhythm, delivered a shock if necessary, and analyzed the heart rhythm again to determine whether the shock successfully stopped the abnormal rhythm. The cycle of analysis, shock and re-analysis could be repeated three times before CPR was recommended, resulting in delays of 37 seconds or more. Now, after one shock, the new guidelines recommend that rescuers provide about two minutes of CPR, beginning with chest compressions, before activating the AED to re-analyze the heart rhythm and attempt another shock. Studies have shown that the first AED shock stops the abnormal cardiac arrest rhythm more than 85 percent of the time and that a brief period of chest compressions between shocks can deliver oxygen to the heart, increasing the likelihood of successful defibrillation. The guidelines also recommend that healthcare providers minimize interruptions to chest compressions by doing heart rhythm checks, inserting airway devices, and administering of drugs without delaying CPR.

What does this mean for F-M Ambulance and people in the Fargo-Moorhead area? There are changes to all CPR courses, along with ACLS and PALS courses; F-M Ambulance Service CTC members may start teaching with these changes as soon as they attend one of the roll-out sessions. The dates for the BLS roll-outs for F-M Ambulance CTC members are March 3<sup>rd</sup> and March 11<sup>th</sup>. To sign up for one of the roll-out sessions, please contact Merlee at (701) 364-1750. F-M Ambulance Service team members will learn about the new ACLS, PALS and BLS guidelines at a company meeting on either March 22<sup>nd</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup>.

## F-M Ambulance Service Nominated for Chamber Choice Award

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F-M Ambulance Service has been nominated for the Fargo-Moorhead Chamber of Commerce Not-for-Profit *ChamberChoice* Award. The *ChamberChoice* Awards program is designed to recognize the vigorous entrepreneurial spirit and important contributions made by businesses in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area.

Sherm has been busy working on an extensive application form that was turned in on February 10<sup>th</sup>. At a luncheon on March 16<sup>th</sup>, the top three finalists will be announced. On April 6<sup>th</sup>, the finalists will be honored at the Chamber Spotlight Breakfast, where they will have the opportunity to showcase their business.

On May 24<sup>th</sup> at the Chamber's *Annual Awards Luncheon*, all nine companies will receive their *ChamberChoice Awards*. Highlighting the event will be announcement of the top-rated company in each of the three categories.



## Marcel Receives Award

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On January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2006 Marcel Sim was awarded the "Finest of the Finest" award by the city of New York and the union of the NYPD. Marcel was called to a mall for a male who was about to jump off of a four-story ledge. Upon arrival he found the patient sitting on the railing, with hundreds of shoppers below. After building verbal rapport with the patient and gaining his trust, Marcel leapt over the railing and grabbed the back of his shirt, pulling him down onto the floor. After about a 10 minute struggle, the patient was cuffed and detained.

At a formal dinner and awards banquet in January, twenty officers received the "Finest of the Finest" award in 2005 for going beyond the call of duty.

## Evening Paramedic Course

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On Tuesday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, the new evening paramedic course started. The students have lectures on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 6-10 PM with the second Saturday of each month reserved for practical lab. There are 15 students in the eighteen month long course. They will complete the paramedic course in July of 2007.

And yes, you do see two people on the television screen in the picture – those are our 'satellite' students from Devils Lake. These students thought "telecommuting" would be a lot easier than the 3 hour drive each way. They watch the lectures on an interactive video network and do some of their clinical experiences in their hometown.



## Health Leaders Meet With Secretary Leavitt

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Recently when Health and Human Services Secretary Leavitt was in Fargo he invited several Health Leaders in the community aboard his bus to discuss federal preparation to the Avian Flu with Senator Conrad and Governor Hoeven. Mike Hall was among the small group of eight invited to take part.

Secretary Leavitt explained that the Federal Government will be working with states to prepare for potential pandemics. He went on to say that his agency is preparing a plan that will be released soon for local agencies to utilize.

## CAAS Reaccreditation

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During 2005 F-M Ambulance team members starting working at collecting information and complete the application for re-accreditation with the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services (CAAS) for the 3-year accreditation. The process includes collecting documentation that shows compliance with various requirements. The documentation submitted was over 1,000 pages in length. The next step is an onsite review that will occur in April or May 2006. The Board of CAAS then votes on the application and onsite review for another 3-year accreditation.

Contributed by Todd Hockett

## Get To Know...

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

### Ryan Theis First Line Medical – Sales Assoc.

#### *Where are you from?*

I'm from Cold Spring, Minnesota. I was in charge of a marketing team of about thirty people for Fortune High Tech Marketing in Fargo before coming to F-M Ambulance.



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

I am the oldest of four children and I enjoy spending time with my family and friends in my spare time.

#### *What made you want to work at F-M Ambulance?*

I was very impressed with First Line Medical and how quickly they are growing. I want to be a part of a strong growing team and that is why I chose F-M Ambulance Service.

## Mike Hall Receives AAA President's Award

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F-M Ambulance Service is pleased to announce that at the annual meeting of the American Ambulance Association Michael Hall, Executive Director of F-M Ambulance Service, was awarded the President's Award.

Association President Robert Garner presented the award to Michael for his leadership as the chair of the Association's Recruitment and Retention Task Force, Board Member, and for his capacity in several committees of the Association.

The AAA is a national organization that represents 700 services from all 50 states. The Association's goal is to provide leadership, representation and resources for ambulance services across America.

F-M Ambulance Press Release

## Did You Know...

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Our next MCI full-scale exercise is tentatively scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup> at 5:00 PM? This will be a chance to see all of the new MCI equipment and training in use!



Dave Partlow works on the new storage area in the garage. The area will be a temperature regulated storage room used for housing various pieces of equipment. It is expected to be completed in about two months.

**If you are an employee and you are interested in running in the Fargo Marathon (the full marathon, half-marathon, or 5K) please talk to Kristi – we are getting "F-M Ambulance Marathon Team 2006" t-shirts to wear!**



Kristi Rasmussen won the “**Explorer Leader of the Year 2005**” award during a banquet at the Holiday Inn on Sunday, February 12<sup>th</sup>. The F-M Ambulance Explorer Post 2243 has expanded from about 10 participants every year to over 30 active members this year. The Explorers meet on the first Monday of every month to learn about medical emergencies and also get to do ride alongs in the ambulance and standbys at special events. Joining Kristi at the awards banquet were 3 of her Explorers (from left) Katie Noennig, Brittany Regan, and Brittany Schulz.

## Major Incident Response Unit

Did someone ask for a LITE? Well, not exactly – but at first glance it may look like it. F-M Ambulance Service purchased a used beverage truck for use in Mass Casualty Incident response. Affectionately nicknamed “Bud One” due to its similar appearance to a beer truck, it was actually hauling Snapple products in California before it came to Fargo.



The “new” truck will be utilized to haul disaster response equipment to the scene of a potential mass casualty incident. The truck will haul the “first in” equipment that may be needed in the first hour of an incident. It will be equipped with approximately 100 transport devices (backboards, litters), generators, scene lighting, treatment shelters, medical supplies, communications equipment, and enough gear to supply 100 patients with oxygen.

F-M Ambulance is considered an anchor community in North Dakota’s newly formed statewide response plan for EMS. The plan requires F-M Ambulance to expand its capabilities of MCI response to a larger response area.

In the past, the MCI equipment was put in trailers, which worked out well until the need to increase stocked equipment changed. Each time equipment was added, more trailers were needed also. The problem with adding trailers was that we needed more people and vehicles to get the trailers to the scene. Since ambulance services are typically not in the business of trailer hauling, it was not easy to accommodate a rapid equipment response. In addition, the current trailers were becoming overweight and difficult to safely haul a long distance.

The used Snapple truck was actually found on the internet in California. After working out many details, Dave Partlow, F-M ambulance maintenance engineer, flew to California and drove the truck back to Fargo. The 1998 International truck came to us with 140,000 miles on it, which should mean it has about another 150,000 to go before it’s worn out.

The vehicle has been a group project for members of the F-M Ambulance MCI team. All of the design, up fitting, including the emergency lighting, has been done by F-M Ambulance team members.

The project is expected to be completed by late April.

Contributed by Ken Krupich



Mike Schulz works on the Major Incidence Response Unit



We hope that you have enjoyed this edition of “Vital Signs”, a quarterly on-line newsletter distributed by F-M Ambulance.

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).