



F-M AMBULANCE SERVICE

VITAL SIGNS



August 2006

Compassion, Excellence, Community Service

F-M Ambulance Receives CAAS Reaccreditation

F-M Ambulance Service in Fargo, North Dakota has received reaccreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services for its compliance with national standards of excellence. F-M Ambulance Service was awarded reaccreditation by completing a comprehensive application and on-site review by national experts in emergency medical services (EMS). With this achievement, F-M Ambulance Service is still the only accredited ambulance service in the state of North Dakota, one of only two in the state of Minnesota, and one of only 102 in the nation.

Mike Hall, director of F-M Ambulance, said that reaccreditation “represents our firm commitment to our patients and community. We continuously strive to do our best and we viewed reaccreditation as another step toward excellence.”



F-M Ambulance team members enjoy a steak and chicken lunch on Wednesday August 16th.

“Our staff has been key to our successful completion of the process. I think it gives the feeling of prestige and pride to work in an accredited ambulance service,” said Hall. “Everyone here played a valuable role in our ability to meet the Commission’s high standards. We have achieved reaccreditation but I believe it can only be a stimulus for continued improvement.”

To celebrate F-M Ambulance’s reaccreditation, team members were able to enjoy a steak and chicken lunch or dinner grilled and served by the leadership team. The next reaccreditation process will start in 2008.

Wellness Committee Update

We are excited about our September and October events!

September 18 th	Kickball	6:00 PM
October 4 th	Flag Football	6:00 PM

Locations will be announced soon – please sign up on the fitness board in the ready room! There will be water and Gatorade provided at both events!

Did You Know...

- Maine is the only state whose name is just one syllable.
- Dreamt is the only word in the English language that ends with “mt”.
- “Typewriter” is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.
- A crocodile cannot stick out its tongue.
- A dragonfly has a life span of 24 hours.

Citizen's EMS Academy

The second F-M Ambulance Citizen's EMS Academy will be holding their first session on Wednesday September 20th. The Citizen's Academy will meet for 8 weeks, having their completion celebration on Wednesday November 8th.

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.

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



On June 28th, Ron brought an ambulance to Rheault Farm so some kids who were in a summer day camp program could take a tour. The kids loved seeing everything that was in the ambulance, and Ron even did a backboarding demonstration with his son, Shawn (who was at the camp), as a victim!

Get To Know...

A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees

Shawna Kraft Education Assistant



Where are you from?

I am originally from Fargo, but graduated from high school in Cheyenne, WY and lived in Reno, NV for 4 ½ years

What did you do before working at F-M Ambulance Service?

I was a CNA for 5 ½ years and have done receptionist work for a couple of years.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I have two daughters who are 4 and 6 years old – they keep me very busy. I enjoy spending time outdoors with them or with friends.

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

I have always heard good things about F-M and when I interviewed I thought it seemed like a great bunch of people to work with.

Fall Challenge

The Wellness Committee invites everyone to take part in the Fall Challenge! The wellness committee is challenging each shift and department to get out and participate in the 13th Annual Roger Maris Cancer Center Home Run/Walk 2006 on September 30th. You can participate in the 2 mile fun run/walk or challenge yourself to do the 10K.

We plan to have a traveling trophy that will go to the group that wins the "challenge". More challenges will occur throughout the year. This trophy will be displayed with the winning department or shift and also be available to show the other shifts/departments what losers they are (all in fun of course).

We will have a sign-up on the Wellness Board and will start to track which department is ahead. Remember this all goes to a great cause and should be fun to participate in. Please see the Mercy Group for more information!

“There’s Been a Plane Crash!”

There were hundreds of people lying around the grass on Thursday June 1st after a mock airplane crash at the Fargo Air National Guard training center. Fire trucks and police vehicles secured the scene and put out fires while ambulances lined the parking lot as they waited to begin treatment of the patients. Over 100 people were moulaged and ready to have their “injuries” treated. The crash was used as a practice MCI (mass casualty incident) to help train and prepare different agencies who would work together in the event of a real MCI.



Over 100 people waited to be moulaged (makeup put on to create injuries)



In a different building, people were calling 9-1-1 to report the crash and ask about loved ones



A patient waits to be told where to go after a head injury was created for her



A patient is waiting for “treatment” in the field after having his arm amputated



Many “injured” people lie in the field while law enforcement secures the scene



Don prepares to be EMS Operations Commander during the MCI



Chad and Becky help some of the red patients (most badly injured)



A patient lies in the field while waiting for evacuation to the appropriate area



Two green patients (walking wounded) wait to be taken to a hospital



All trucks involved in the exercise stayed busy transporting over 100 patients



Taylor and Melanie wait for patients to be assigned to their trucks



A debriefing was held after the MCI was finished. All personnel involved in the MCI were invited to the debriefing.

New Positions at F-M Ambulance

There are some new faces in some new places around F-M Ambulance. Darin Haverland and Marcel Sim have both recently changed positions within F-M Ambulance. Darin has worked at F-M Ambulance as a paramedic for 18 years and has been working in EMS since 1986. Darin recently accepted the position of Paramedic Instructor in the education department. Everyone in the education department is looking forward to working with Darin, and future paramedic students will greatly benefit from Darin's many years of experience.



Marcel Sim has been promoted to Field Supervisor. Marcel has worked for F-M Ambulance for 1 year, but has previous experience as an EMT-B and a paramedic in New York City. He has 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. Marcel was directly involved with triaging and treatment of patients after the 9/11 attacks in NYC. Marcel brings a new perspective with different experiences (and an east coast accent) to F-M Ambulance!

West Fargo National Night Out

West Fargo's National Night Out was held on Tuesday August 1st. 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.



2005 – 2006 Paramedic Class Graduates

Graduation for the 2005 – 2006 Day Paramedic class was held on July 27th at the Doublewood in Fargo. Seventeen students graduated from the class. Riley Bertsch was named BSC Student of the Year (chosen by faculty), Justin Rosenfeldt was named F-M Ambulance Student of the Year (chosen by preceptors), and Wes Dahl was named Preceptor of the Year (chosen by students). Congratulations to everyone!



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 obtain 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, Lifelight, 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, under “education”. They can also call Kristi for more information (701) 364-1759. The first meeting of the 2006 – 2007 Explorer program is on Monday, September 11th – we hope to see you there!



There were many people at National Night Out – they enjoyed touring the ambulance and watching the West Fargo Fire Department demonstration on how a turkey fryer can start a very dangerous fire.

The Clinical Corner

By Wade Mitzel, Clinical Coordinator



Go B.I.G. or Go Home!

This last month, F-M Ambulance has started to research a new piece of equipment. It's called the B.I. G.™ Automatic Adult Intraosseous Device. It's an instrument we use that will insert an IV catheter into the bone of an adult patient for medication or fluid delivery. This sounds painful, but it will almost always be used in the unresponsive patient where starting an IV is difficult.

Finding intravenous (IV) access in small children can be very difficult and intraosseous (IO) access has been used *successfully* on pediatric patients for many years. Many other non-pediatric patients can also benefit from IO access when a traditional IV is unobtainable, very difficult, or where time is of the essence. Patients who are in shock, dehydrated or severely burned can also benefit from IO access.

Until a few years ago, there hadn't been enough research or devices on the market to deliver the same quality of intraosseous access to adults as there had been in children. Europe has been using the technology for years, but it hadn't seemed to make an impact in the United States until now.

The new AHA guidelines for CPR and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) now recommend using an IO as a device for medication delivery in adults. We think it will be a tool that will save precious time and help deliver medications that are needed to start a patient's heart or deliver extra fluid to someone who is dehydrated. If everything goes well, we hope to have this new tool in the hands of paramedics in about a month.

Did You Know...

- A snail can sleep for three years.
- An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.
- February 1865 is the only month in recorded history not to have a full moon.
- If you are an average American, in your whole life, you will spend an average of 6 months waiting at red lights.

The Rural Roundup

By Bob Klein, Liaison Coordinator

Greetings from Bob Klein a.k.a. "Farmer Bob"

On May 1st, I started a full-time position at F-M Ambulance Service as the liaison coordinator for Cass and Clay counties.

First, a little bit about myself – I grew up in the north eastern part of North Dakota near a small town of 150 people called Wales (close to Langdon if you want to find it on a map). I farmed on a family farm for 25 years before "pulling the pin" and moving to Fargo. A big change for a little country boy!

I have been involved in EMS for the past 20 years and employed at F-M Ambulance Service for the past 10 years.

I am currently working with eleven rescue squads and four ambulance services in Cass and Clay counties. Since May 1st I have been trying to meet and visit with everyone that is part of a rural squad. I feel this has been going very well for me since I come from a small service, much like the ones in Cass and Clay counties.

My further goals include having a liaison program with West Fargo, Fargo and Moorhead police as well as the local fire departments.

If you have any questions about anything, feel free to contact me at any time – my email address is bob.klein@fmambulance.com and my phone number is (701) 364-1729. Have a safe and enjoyable fall!

"Farmer Bob"



A reporter and cameraman from WDAY stopped by on August 16th to work on a media piece about Cass County and F-M Ambulance working together with the new radio and paging system.

Senior Ambulance Academy

F-M Ambulance, along with Red River Valley TRIAD, will hold a Senior Ambulance Academy on Tuesday September 19th from 9:00 AM – 12:00.

The Senior Ambulance Academy will offer a hands-on opportunity for seniors in our community 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.

The academy focuses on hands-on training, showing and teaching the skills that an ambulance crew may use. Participants get to practice CPR, starting IV's, intubations, defibrillation, backboarding, and taking care of SIMMAN, our life-like manikin.

If you know anyone who is interested in attending the Senior Ambulance Academy or if you would like more information, please contact Julie at (218) 299-5514. Space is limited, so call soon!

Good Luck Kari!

Kari's last day at work was unexpectedly very wet – crews that worked with her caught her off guard and dumped buckets of water on her and hosed her down after her last shift. We all wish Kari good luck with the wedding and in nursing school next year!



Safety Safari at the Red River Valley Zoo

On Thursday August 10th, the Red River Valley Zoo held a Safety Safari to help people learn about safety. There were over 200 kids that visited the zoo to learn about safety. Kids who attended received a passport – they went around the zoo and got the passport stamped after they completed each safety station. Along with tours of the ambulance, the West Fargo Police Department had one of their squad cars there for kids to tour and the Fargo Fire Department was also there. Kathy said the kids loved looking in the ambulance and getting a “Junior Paramedic” sticker!



The education team said goodbye to Merlee, their longtime education assistant, in June. Even though it rained, everyone had a good time golfing and then grilling at Sherm's house. We wish Merlee the best of luck at her new job!

Paramedic Class of 2006

Our 2006 day paramedic school started on Monday, August 21st. This year there are 19 students, three of them coming from as far as Washington! These students will finish their paramedic training in July of 2007.



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.