



F-M AMBULANCE SERVICE

VITAL SIGNS



May - June 2007

Compassion, Excellence, Community Service

F-M Ambulance Citizen's Academy

F-M Ambulance wrapped up its third Citizens EMS Academy on Wednesday April 11th. The Citizen's EMS Academy participants enjoyed this hands-on opportunity to learn what F-M Ambulance paramedics and EMT's do every day. The Citizen's Academy helped teach skills that participants will be able to use in actual emergencies. Over an 8-week period, participants had the opportunity to ride along with paramedics and EMTs and go on actual emergency calls. The next Citizen's EMS Academy will take place in the fall of 2007. If you know anyone who is interested in being a part of the Citizen's EMS Academy, please have them check our website: www.fmambulance.com.



Learning how to use the stair chair



Ouch! Starting IV's on the dummy arm



SWAT medic gear



Cardiology lesson with pig hearts



Trying out the CPAP machine



Learning how to help people breathe



Extrication from a vehicle



SimMan practice



2007 Spring Academy participants

F-M Ambulance Wellness Committee

Approximately 70 employees from F-M Ambulance took part in the F-M Ambulance Spring Challenge. Participants were given pedometers to start keeping track of their daily steps. Weekly totals for eight different teams were kept to see which team averaged the most steps.

The winning team was "The Destroyers", which was made up of dispatchers and part-time employees. The traveling trophy in the display cabinet was awarded to The Destroyers at the March company meeting. All team members who participated in the challenge received an "F-M Ambulance Team Wellness" t-shirt.



The pedometer challenge statistics....

--- As a company, we increased over 1000 average steps from the start of the challenge to the end?

--- As a company, we walked/jogged/exercised over 172 miles in 5 weeks!

--- The Business office had the largest increase in steps.

--- Shift 1 was the most consistent highest average week to week.

National EMS Week May 20th – 26th

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) announced that the 34th annual Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week will be celebrated throughout the nation May 20-26, 2007. The event brings together local communities and medical personnel to publicize safety and honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services on the medical "front line."



National EMS Week will feature hundreds of grassroots activities coast-to-coast that will be planned around this year's theme, "Extraordinary People, Extraordinary Service," which exemplifies the excellent services provided every day, under any circumstances by the 750,000 EMS providers who serve their communities.

"As this year's theme emphasizes, EMS providers are dedicated to saving lives, even putting their own lives on hold as they respond to medical emergencies," said Dr. Brian Keaton, president of ACEP. "They do this every day without special recognition, which is why we are recognizing EMS providers this year as extraordinary."

The weeklong series of events will include national and local activities to honor EMS providers (paramedics, emergency medical technicians, first responders, fire fighters, and police) to raise public awareness about health and safety issues, including how to prevent injuries and what to do in a medical emergency.



Did you know...

- If bystander CPR is not provided, a sudden cardiac arrest victim's chances of survival fall 7 percent to 10 percent for every minute of delay until defibrillation. Few attempts at resuscitation are successful if CPR and defibrillation are not provided within minutes of collapse.
- During a typical human life span, the human heart will beat approximately 2.5 billion times.

Paging System Expanding

F-M Ambulance's Public Safety Paging System (FMAPSPS) is scheduled to expand coverage this spring. In cooperation with Cass County Emergency Management the system will provide Cass County first responders, ambulance and fire department personnel with alpha numeric paging. The paging system will broadcast digital data messages verses the analog voice pagers currently used.

In 2005, F-M Ambulance started planning to install its own paging system rather than rely on a third party provider. Administrative Manager Todd Hockert noted, "Our own system allows us to get quicker and more reliable paging services. It will also let us upgrade the system as needed like the expansion into Cass County".

Later in 2005 F-M Ambulance was asked to participate in a COPS grant application for communication systems with the City of Fargo. In August of 2006 the system was turned on and the transition made without any problems.

The expanded system will be administered by F-M Ambulance but Cass County will own the equipment that will be installed in the county. There are two sites that will add to the system. The original and main site is located on the Fargo High Rise building with a backup site located at F-M Ambulance.

Red River Regional Dispatch will continue to page the area responders while F-M Ambulance will continue to page it own units, Red River Radio Amateurs, LifeFlight and the Salvation Army.



Film Crew Shoots at F-M Ambulance

On March 28th, cast and crew from "Buick Rivera" were at F-M Ambulance filming for their upcoming movie. "Buick Rivera" is a drama that follows two Bosnian immigrants during 24 hours in a snow covered American suburb. New Yorker Kate Barry is the film's producer. The crew shot at F-M Ambulance for about three hours in the afternoon and another two hours that night. One of the film's main characters plays a paramedic and may be seen in an F-M Ambulance uniform during the movie.



One of the main characters in the movie "Buick Rivera" gets her hair done and sips some coffee in our ready room before filming starts.



The crew gets ready to film in the garage.

Did You Know...

F-M Ambulance Service switched to a tobacco-free facility on April 1st, 2007. Tobacco products are no longer allowed on company property. Congratulations to all those employees who have decided to quit!

New SWAT TEMS Medics

Congratulations to Wes Dahl and Tom Dobryzinski for being selected to be part of the Red River Valley SWAT TEMS team.

Medical support is provided by a team of paramedics assigned to Red River Valley SWAT. Six paramedics, three from MeritCare Hospital Life Flight and three from F-M Ambulance, work under the direction of an emergency physician from MeritCare and provide Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS). TEMS has been a part of the S.W.A.T. team since its inception.

TEMS responsibilities include injury management, preventive medicine, monitoring officers' health during training and incidents and health maintenance. The medics train and deploy with the SWAT team and provide on-site medical support for law enforcement, suspects, hostages and bystanders in an unpredictable, sometimes hostile, tactical environment.

The medics have special training in many areas including tactics, building clearing, firearms operations, bullet wounds, defensive tactics, handcuffing/searching, rappelling, K-9 medicine and clandestine lab awareness.

TEMS is a tool used to help the S.W.A.T. team meet its law enforcement and public safety objectives. Tom and Wes will go through training at Camp Ripley and then become active members of the TEMS team.

Get To Know...

A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees



James Kreps -- Ready Wheels

Where are you from? Moorhead, MN

Family: Wife, Carol and four children.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Spending time with family and friends

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

Former driving experience and I like helping people.

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John Wentzess Ready Wheels



Where are you from?

Moorhead, MN.

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

I have worked as a food broker and a Handy Wheels Driver. I am married – my wife Mary works at Meticare. We have four sons and one daughter.

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

I love to help people.

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Brandi Bayles Paramedic

Where are you from?

Memphis, TN

Where did you work before joining F-M Ambulance Service?

Olive Branch Fire Dept. – Olive Branch, MS

Todd County EMS – Todd County, KY

Crichton College – Memphis, TN

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

Reading, physical fitness and nutrition, participating in church activities and playing with my dog, Annie.

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

I wanted to work for a first-rate EMS department part-time while attending school. (NDSU full-time)

The Clinical Corner

By Wade Mitzel, Clinical Coordinator



How Important *is* Wellness?

In the dictionary, wellness is defined as a dimension of health beyond the absence of disease or infirmity, including social, emotional and spiritual aspects of health. How important is it to look at the wellness of our staff?

Think about the problems we face as a country – obesity, diabetes, cardiac problems, and depression are a few of the health conditions that are on the rise in the United States. I think it would be safe to say that these conditions and risks are on the rise within the EMS field as well.

Think about all the concerns our industry has with employee retention, recruitment, and employee injuries – it's becoming even more important to look at the health and wellbeing of our staff. There are studies that show a direct correlation between employee wellness and the overall success of a company.

F-M Ambulance has had a very active Wellness Committee and healthy initiatives going on. The committee tries to set up a monthly activity and one larger quarterly wellness challenge to get employees involved in staying healthy and having fun at the same time. It's very important to include things that everyone can do. Monthly activities that employees have taken part in include dodgeball, football, field hockey and volleyball.

Our last quarterly event was a pedometer challenge. Employees received a pedometer to track the daily steps they took. Each week they turned them in to their team captain and progress was tracked over the 5 weeks the contest ran. Over this 5 week span, F-M Ambulance had:

- Over 50 people participate, coming from every department.
- Increased the average daily steps over 1000 steps from the beginning of the program to the end.
- As a company, jogged/walked/exercised over 175 miles!
- A great time in the process.

At the end of the challenge the dispatchers and part-time employees had won the challenge. They were averaging over 9300 steps each day. They beat the second place team by over 400 steps each day! They received the traveling trophy and all the bragging rights associated with this great honor! Who knows... maybe a few more steps from all of us will allow us to do our jobs longer and let us help more people in our community.

Get To Know...

A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees

April Rohrer Ready Wheels

Where are you from?

I am originally from Fall Creek, Wisconsin. I moved to Fargo about two years ago and just bought a house in Horace, ND.

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

I have worked in a lot of retail stores. I am also a member of the ND National Guard. I worked at Neighbors Restaurant until they closed.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I don't have a lot of spare time since I am almost done with paramedic school! When I do have spare time I enjoy playing with my puppy, Molly. If I had more free time I would enjoy camping!

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

I have realized that the people who work here are a tight group of close friends have a lot of knowledge that work here and I wanted to be a part of that.



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Justin Dahnke Ready Wheels

Where are you from?

I was born and raised in Moorhead, MN.

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

I have worked at Target, Union Storage, and currently for Dakota Boys Ranch.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I enjoy playing in the dart league I belong to, playing softball, golf, camping, basketball, and spending time at the lake.

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

I would like to gain a little experience at the ambulance service. I am currently an EMT, and I would eventually like to be a paramedic and/or firefighter.



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A close up on our new F-M Ambulance Employees

Amanda Danielson Ready Wheels

Where are you from?

I grew up in Richfield, MN. I graduated from West Fargo High School.

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

I am a lifeguard and water safety instructor. I have some retail experience and I have also worked as a CNA.

What do you enjoy doing in your spare time?

I don't have a lot of spare time while I'm in paramedic school, but when I do have time off I like to swim and be outside.

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

I enjoy the area and I wanted to stay around this area. The people at F-M are so easy to get along with it really made me want to work here.



The Rural Roundup

By Bob Klein, NREMT-P, Liaison Coordinator ("Farmer Bob")

Since my last writing I've had a busy spring season. I visited McClusky Ambulance Service for a second time in April and provided them with a two day Basic EKG interpretation class and the nebulized medication module in order to enhance their EMT-Basic skill level.

In April, twelve Cass County Deputies completed First Responder training. They were an enthusiastic group and did an awesome job. They are going to be a valuable asset to the county for first response to an emergency. This training fulfilled a campaign promise of Sheriff Paul Laney to have every deputy in the county trained to the First Responder level.

On June 4th Meritcare LifeFlight conducted a landing zone (LZ) class hosted by the Davenport Fire Department. Nate Tiedeman, Flight Nurse for LifeFlight led the training which was capped off by the arrival of the helicopter and demonstrations of take-offs and landings using the LZ. Fifty people participated in the training which included surrounding rescue squads and fire departments including Kindred, Casselton, Leonard and Horace just to name a few. Also, that same evening, Scott Helmer, Chad Mickelson, Don Martin and Dr. Sauter were in Page, ND, conducting a MCI table top drill. The Incident Command bus and the MCI truck were on hand for training. This was also well attended even though Page Fire Department did have a fire call during the training! What are the odds of that happening! I heard all positive comments of this exercise as well as what a great job Scott, Chad, Don and Dr.Sauter did. Good Job guys!



Car Seat Safety

Today's car seats are safe and effective if used correctly. Every car seat on the market in the United States has passed the same rigorous crash tests required by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

If you're following manufacturer's instructions, you're giving your baby the safest ride possible with current technology. Make sure your infant car seat is less than six years old, has never been in a crash, is reclining at about a 45-degree angle in the car, is secured tightly in the back seat and the harness straps are adjusted correctly for your baby.

Any car seat made after 2002 can be installed either with safety belts or the LATCH system in a vehicle made in 2002 or later. Use safety belts or LATCH for an infant, whichever you prefer, but not both. If you're worried about the performance of LATCH, use the safety belt.

Read the instructions and follow them carefully. Even if you don't usually read the instructions for other products, read your car seat owner's manual cover to cover. Also read the section of your vehicle owner's manual that deals with occupant protection.

If used correctly, accordingly to manufacturer's instructions, a car seat will help save your child's life while riding in the vehicle.

Guidelines



Infant Seats

Babies should ride in rear-facing seats as long as possible according to the manufacturer's instructions. They must ride in a rear-facing car seat until they are at least 12 months old and weigh at least 20 pounds.



Toddler Seats

Children who weigh more than 20 pounds, are at least 1 year of age and can no longer ride rear-facing, should ride in a forward-facing car seat with harness until they weigh 40 pounds.



Booster Seats

Children who weigh between 40 and 80-100 pounds and are less than 4 feet, 9 inches tall, should use a booster seat to position the lap and shoulder belt.



Seat Belts

Kids who weigh more than 80-100 pounds and are more than 5 feet tall should use seat belt. If seat belt doesn't fit, refer to five-step test below.

5-Step Test

1. Is the child seated all the way back against the vehicle seat?
2. Do the child's knees bend comfortably at the end of the seat?
3. Is the lap belt low on the hip bones?
4. Is the shoulder belt centered on the shoulder and chest?
5. Can the child stay seated like this for the whole trip?

If you answered "no" to any of these questions, your child will need a booster seat to ride safely. Children 12 and younger should ride in the back seat — even if your vehicle doesn't have airbags.

Information for this article provided by **Merticare Safe Kids Coalition**



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.