

# Village Ambulance Service Winter 2010 Newsletter



Photo by  
Art Sachs



## Welcome back!

Welcome to the Winter 2010 edition of the Village Ambulance Service EMS & Community Awareness Newsletter. This publication is aimed at keeping you updated on the progress of Emergency Medical Services in Berkshire County.

## Employee Spotlight



### Jeffrey Quimby EMT-Paramedic



Jeff began employment with Village Ambulance Service as a full-time EMT-Basic in 1985 before eventually becoming certified as a paramedic in 1995. It's no secret Jeff has been an integral part of the service's growth during this tenure.

Jeff possesses the knowledge and skills that take years to acquire. He has a very calming demeanor in, what many of us know, is a very demanding profession. He is dedicated to the quality of his work because his number one priority is his patients.

He consistently focuses on helping his coworkers and resolving all issues as efficiently as possible. He has a strong and positive work ethic and truly loves working with people.

He plans to continue to do his job to the best of his ability and to make a difference in the lives of the people that he currently knows and those that he has yet to know.

In Jeff's spare time he loves participating in outdoor activities, tending to the family farm and spending time with his wife, Missy, and their three children.

Thank you, Jeff, for being a part of the Village Ambulance Service team!

## Winter Storm Preparations [www.lovetoknow.com](http://www.lovetoknow.com)

If you live in an area prone to winter storms, it's important to plan for their occurrence early in the season. Don't wait until the last minute to prepare your home for winter storms and to stock up on the supplies you might need during a serious snow or ice storm.

### Supplies include:

- Battery powered radio
- NOAA weather radio
- Flashlights and lanterns, with spare batteries
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable food that doesn't require cooking
- Baby food and formula (if needed)
- Pet food
- Prescription medications
- First aid kit
- Rock salt (to melt snow on sidewalks and driveways)

In addition to making sure that your home is prepared and stocked to deal with the winter weather situations that you can expect as the days get shorter and the temperatures drop, it's also important to consider winter safety tips for the activities that you and the other members of your family are likely to participate in this time of year. Read more in our Community section below.



## **Giving thanks, giving gifts and giving BACK!**

Those of us in emergency medical services have many blessings to be thankful for. A recently retired Fire Chief had the perfect banner in his office that read: "If you love what you do, you'll never work a day in your life."

If you are like many of us, you've never worked a day in your life. We do what we do not for the money, or the glory, but for the intrinsic reward that comes from knowing you truly make a difference in people's lives every day.

The fact that our communities allow us to serve them is indeed an honor, one that we should routinely be thankful for. The holiday season offers a perfect opportunity for us to give back to the community in a number of ways.

One way Village Ambulance Service is giving back is through the Berkshire Community Action Council's "Holiday Elf" program. Village Ambulance Service has agreed to sponsor and provide gifts to four children of a single family. Donations from over 25 employees, as well as outside funding, will be used to purchase suitable toys, clothing and wrapping materials for the family. The gifts are then anonymously delivered to the family just before Christmas day.

For more information on the Holiday Elf program or other BCAC sponsored programs, please call 663-3014 or visit them in person at 10 Ashland St, North Adams.

## **Winter Safety Tips**

### **Dress Appropriately**

When heading outdoors to participate in wintertime activities, whether you'll be hiking, skiing, shoveling snow from your driveway, or any other outdoor activity, make sure that you dress warmly. It's wise to dress in layers when you'll be exerting yourself in frigid temperatures so that you can start out properly insulated and then shed layers as your body temperature starts to rise as a result of your level of activity.

### **Use Properly Maintained Equipment**

Many winter sports require specific equipment. Make sure that your equipment is in good condition and properly maintained. For example, snow skis need to be properly waxed, ice skate blades need to be sharpened, and snowmobiles should be serviced at the beginning of each season. It's also important to make sure that sized items, such as snow ski boots and ice skates, are properly fitted. Because children grow so rapidly, there's a good chance they'll need a larger size each season.

### **Winterize Your Vehicle**

Make sure you're prepared to travel back and forth to your winter activities, as well as to work and to school, by preparing your car for the coldest months of the year. Prior to the first freezing nights of winter sure that all fluids are changed and full, especially antifreeze and oil. Keep a scraper on hand to remove ice from your windows and windshield. If you live in an area where chains and snow tires are needed, get prepared in time for the first snowfall.

### **Emergency Communication Plan**

Develop a family emergency communication plan in case family members are separated during a winter storm - a possibility when adults are at work and children are at school - and have a plan for getting back together.

Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the family contact. After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance than across town. Also, calling outside the area will probably be easier than calling into a disaster area. Make sure everyone knows the name, address and telephone number of the contact person.

# TRAINING

## Remaining 2010 Continuing Education Programs

All classes will be held at The Spruces Recreational Center, Route 2, Williamstown, MA 01267 unless otherwise specified

### Pediatric Emergencies

Wednesday, December 8, 2010

6 PM to 9 PM

3 Credits Pending for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic

Speaker: Village Ambulance Service Faculty

### Communication & Documentation

Wednesday, December 29, 2009

6 PM to 9 PM

3 Credits Pending for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic

Speaker: Village Ambulance Service Faculty

## 2010 CPR Guidelines

### How the American Heart Association's CPR Guidelines Have Changed for 2010

By Rod Brouhard, About.com Guide

After a review of the available research published over a 5 year period, the American Heart Association released its 2010 CPR Guidelines. As expected, the focus for CPR is on good quality chest compressions. Here are the differences between the 2005 and the 2010 CPR Guidelines:



### **A-B-C is for babies; now it's C-A-B!**

It used to be, follow your ABC's: airway, breathing and chest compressions. Now, **C**ompressions come first, only then do you focus on **A**irway and **B**reathing. The only exception to the rule will be newborn babies, but everyone else -- whether it's infant CPR, child CPR or adult CPR -- will get chest compressions before you worry about the airway.

### **No more looking, listening and feeling.**

The key to saving a cardiac arrest victim is action, not assessment. Call 911 the moment you realize the victim won't wake up and doesn't seem to be breathing right.

Trust your gut. If you have to hold your cheek over the victim's mouth and carefully try to detect a puff of air, it's a pretty good bet she's not breathing very well, if at all.

**Push a little harder.** How deep you should push on the chest has changed for adult CPR. It was 1 1/2 to 2 inches, but now the Heart Association wants you to push at least 2 inches deep on the chest.

**Push a little faster.** AHA changed the wording here, too. Instead of pushing on the chest at *about* 100 compressions per minute, AHA wants you to push *at least* 100 compressions per minute. At that rate, 30 compressions should take you 18 seconds.

## Explorers' Horrors Haunted House a Huge Success!

The Village Ambulance Service EMS Explorer Post 911 held its first "Explorers' Horrors" haunted house attraction the last two weekends in October at the Berkshire Mall.

The haunted house was the brainchild of the Berkshire Mall's Operations Manager, William Mahoney, and Explorer Post Chairman, Shawn Godfrey, but the entire Post became involved in trying to make it the scariest experience in the area. In fact, according to Godfrey "this project would never have been a success without the hard work of each and every member of the Post." He added, "The acting was amazing and the commitment to the endeavor was unbelievable."

More than 630 guests went through the converted former Carlton Cards space, which was outfitted to include four rooms. A scary Operating Room, Haunted Saloon, Execution Chamber and Horror Movie theme were used to successfully frighten the mall-goers. A Post Advisor parent was in charge of each room while the students did most of the decorating.

The cost was \$3 dollars for adults and \$2 for children, and The Explorer Post raised approximately \$1,500 after paying for the materials used in the haunted house.

"It's the cheapest haunted house in the area," Mahoney said. "And it's inside the mall so you don't have to wait in line outside if it rains."



## Explorer Post Launches New "Exploring Hearts" Program

The VAS EMS Explorer Post 911 has collaborated with the Spruces of Williamstown for an elder-youth match project beginning on Sunday, November 21, at 1 p.m. for the park's Thanksgiving celebration.

The "Exploring Hearts" program facilitates the matching of Explorers with residents living within the Spruces who have little or no visitation, or who are unable to easily leave their home. When visiting residents, the Explorers have the unique opportunity to show compassion to their community

and are rewarded by the one-on-one relationships that are cultivated by learning through the lives of those who have "paved the way." The loneliness of the residents is then replaced with the caring presence and continued support of the Explorers.

The coordination and supervision of the activities is performed between a group of dedicated Post Advisors and the Spruces' Administrative Staff. Each Explorer receives orientation, training, materials and on-going support to ensure program success.

Are you or someone you know interested in joining the VAS EMS Explorer Post 911? If so, please contact our office at 413-884-5729.