

Village Ambulance Service

Spring 2012 Newsletter



Thursday March 15, 2012
North Adams Transcript
Meghan Foley

WILLIAMSTOWN -- A long-time employee of Village Ambulance Service has been chosen as the agency's new general manager.

Shawn Godfrey, who previously served as operations manager, was unanimously named to the post by the ambulance service's board of directors on Tuesday.

In addition, Pamela Costine, who has been an emergency medical technician with Village since 1994, was unanimously appointed business manager by the board. Both Godfrey and Costine have been filling their respective posts on an interim basis since December 2011.

"As far as we could tell, they were the best candidates in the region for the jobs," Board Member Thomas Bleezarde said Wednesday. The board is confident in Godfrey and Costine's abilities to fill the positions, he said.

Former General Manager Albert Miller and former Office Manager Cara Miller are no longer with the company, he said. He declined to comment further on the nature of their departure.

Godfrey, who lives in Pittsfield, said Wednesday that he is excited about being named general manager of Village and about taking on the additional responsibilities that come with the post. "It's continuing the art but in a different part of emergency medical services. It's nice to have the opportunity to live out this part of my career as a manager," he said.

Before joining Village in 2001, Godfrey, 41, worked for County Ambulance. He received his EMT training at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield and Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, N.Y. He is a nationally registered paramedic, and has also served as Village's training coordinator.

Costine, a resident of Stamford, Vt., said it's probably the first time in her life she is anxious to get to work when she wakes up in the morning.

"I've worked on the trucks and with patients for the past 18 years. It can be extremely difficult at times," she said. "It's a whole different life when you work the truck on the overnight shift. You learn to go days without proper sleep."

Laughing, she said she now feels like a human being with a routine Monday to Friday schedule.

Costine, 54, who has experience working with accounts payable, patient billing and bookkeeping for Village, received her basic EMT training at the agency in 1993.

Godfrey said one thing Village hopes to do over the short-term is offer more training opportunities for current staff and individuals interested in entering the field of emergency medical services. "We're planning to establish a training department within Village, and we will be looking for a director soon," he said.

In addition, the agency would like to eventually expand its fleet from three to four ambulances and possibly pursue a new facility to accommodate the changes taking place in the emergency medical transportation business, he said.

"We continue to strive to be the premier ambulance service in the area, and maybe someday in Western Massachusetts," Godfrey said.

Spring Safety Tips

The air is warming, the snow is melting and the trees are budding. This means it's time for spring cleaning, yard work, home repairs, and new exercise regimens...all of which can present a variety of health and safety hazards.

Ready for some outdoor exercise and adventure? Here are a few pointers.

Winter's inactive muscles can take only so much strain. Don't overdo it — build up slowly so you don't have strains that can put you out of commission for some time.

It may look appealing, but don't wander on frozen rivers and lakes in the spring. The ice is beginning to thaw, and you never know just how thin the ice really is.

Spring's extra rain and thawing snow can cause normally safe rivers, streams, and creeks to turn treacherous. Even standing on banks can be risky as they can be undercut by rushing water and give in under your weight.

Springtime is also severe weather time. If the skies look threatening, check to see if a storm watch or warning has been issued before you initiate outdoor activities. If you're already outside and thunderstorms threaten, go immediately into a building or enclosed vehicle. For tornadoes, go to the nearest safe structure, or the basement or interior first-floor room of your home. If there's no time to follow these precautions, take cover in a ditch or depression in the ground.

Source:
www.KimbertonFire.org



Northern Berkshire EMS to Host Car Seat Check-up

Village Ambulance Service, along with North Adams and Adams Ambulance Service

are teaming up with Safe Kids of Western Mass to host a Car Seat Check-up on Saturday, April 15, 2012 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Adams Ambulance Service, 185 Columbia Street, Adams.

Technicians from all three ambulance services will be on-site to check car seats. Residents should have their car seat(s) installed according to the manufacturer's instructions. The technicians will verify the installation on a first come, first served basis. It takes approximately 30 minutes to check each seat. For optimum results, residents should bring along the manufacturer's instructions and, if possible, their children.

Safe Kids of Western Mass is a network that works to prevent unintentional childhood injury.

Massachusetts state law requires that all children under age 8 and less than 57 inches tall be properly fastened and secured in a federally approved car seat or booster seat, according to the manufacturer's instructions. Children who are at least 8 years old or taller than 57 inches should use a vehicle seat belt.

For more information about this event, please contact Lynn Hyland from North Adams Ambulance Service at (413) 441-5497.

Want to Get Involved in your Community?

Citizen Corps [Partner Programs](#) and [Affiliate Organizations](#) offer local opportunities for individuals to get involved in their community to support local emergency responders, disaster relief, and community safety. Below are 4 ways to get involved in the safety and preparedness of your community.

- Get [CERT](#) trained in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations and support the response efforts of local response agencies.
- Contact your local Citizen Corps Council to inquire about opportunities for you or your organization can serve on your local Council. Citizen Corps Councils build on community strengths to implement the Citizen Corps preparedness programs and carry out a local strategy to involve government, community leaders, and citizens in all-hazards preparedness and resilience.
- Teach others in your community. Be an advocate and educator for safety and emergency preparedness within your community.
- Start a neighborhood preparedness project. "What's our plan?" Help prepare your neighborhood by starting an emergency preparedness project that is designed to help your community identify local hazards and work together to solve problems.

March is National Nutrition Month!

Purpose

National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, formerly the American Dietetic Association. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits. Registered Dietitian Day, also celebrated in March, increases awareness of registered dietitians as the indispensable providers of food and nutrition services and recognizes RDs for their commitment to helping people enjoy healthy lives.

History

Initiated in March 1973 as a week-long event, "National Nutrition Week" became a month-long observance in 1980 in response to growing public interest in nutrition.

Sponsor

The Academy's mission is to promote optimal nutrition and wellbeing for all people by advocating for its members. With more than 70,000 members, the Academy is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The majority of the Academy's members are registered dietitians and dietetic technicians, registered.

Further Information

NNM inquiries should be directed to nnm@eatright.org. For media related information contact Public Relations at 312/899-4802 or 4769 or media@eatright.org.



TRAINING

Please check our website www.villageambulance.com for upcoming continuing education programs.



Village Ambulance Service joins forces with the Berkshire Mall to offer EMT training

Village Ambulance Service (VAS) Community Education and Training Programs has teamed up with the Berkshire Mall, Lanesborough, to conduct EMT-Basic training programs.

The mall has allocated nearly 3000 square feet in order to conduct both didactic and laboratory sessions in one central location. The vast indoor space also enables an on-site automobile for real-life scenarios, like patient extraction, scene safety and stabilization demonstrations.

Each year VAS provides two EMT-Basic Programs. One program starts in February, the other in September. Up to 20 students begin an intensive 3-month course of study leading to a certificate of completion and eligibility to take the Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services EMT-Basic written and practical exams. The application and admission process is extremely competitive.

For enrollment information, please visit our mall kiosk by the food court or log onto www.villageambulance.com then click on *Training*.



Employee fitness is becoming more and more important because employees, particularly in the public service arena, can experience a fair amount of "down time" when not responding to calls or performing in-house tasks.

The hit TV show, *The Biggest Loser*, has inspired many office and work groups to start their own versions of the competition to lose weight and get in shape. Village Ambulance Service decided to jump on the wagon.

The effort is being coordinated by Christine Isca, a VAS paramedic, and includes employees from North Adams Ambulance Service as well.

The twelve-week contest began on February 1, 2012 with twelve participants vying for bragging rights as the "Biggest Loser."

The contest includes optional group activities each week, individual workout assignments, nutritional counseling, team building challenges, accountability and weekly weight tracking.

To start a Biggest Loser program at your workplace, please visit www.biggestloser.com.

EMS Tricks of the Trade

Need to start an I.V. in the house? Carry a D-ring or carabiner clip.

If you need to set up a fluid line in the house and are extricating the patient using a stairchair, thread the D-ring or carabiner clip through the bag holder (hole at the top of the bag), then clip the bag to your shoulder lapel. This will keep the bag out of the way while allowing for continued fluid therapy during extrication.

Need to hang heavy turnout gear?

Weak plastic or metal hangers are often not strong enough to hold heavy EMT turnout gear. A way to solve this is by building your own double-strength hanger. Simply tape two or three hangers together; it is best if each is made of thick plastic. Join the hangers with duct or medical tape. By taping the contraption at all three pointed ends, it is now possible to hang a heavy coat (or multiple garments) without using up space on an ambulance floor.

Having trouble hearing lung sounds?

An area in which many pre-hospital providers seem to have trouble is listening to lung sounds. This is truly an "art form". Here are a couple of tricks found to help reduce external noise. First, place your stethoscope in the axilla of the armpit. Then have the patient cover it with his/her arm while lifting your feet off the floor of the moving ambulance. This will reduce most, if not all, of the external noise.



Explorer Post to Hold Bowl-A-Thon

To ensure that the VAS EMS Explorer Post 911 is doing its part to help a local EMT injured in a recent accident involving an ambulance, the members of the Post have decided to hold a Bowl-A-Thon (please see attached flyer) at Mt. Greylock Bowl in North Adams on Saturday, March 31st, at 6 p.m. The Post realizes that easing the financial burden for "one of our own" during a difficult time is vital to a suitable recovery.



Village Ambulance Explorer Post Earns Second Excellence Award

Village Ambulance EMS Explorer Post 911 was presented with their second National Exploring Excellence Award from the Western Massachusetts Boy Scouts of America Council.

The post learned of the award in March 2012 by Boy Scouts District Executive, Hunter McCormick. The honor is given to posts that have achieved at least nine of 12 objectives that represent an ideal post. This is the second year in a row the post earned the award.

The VAS EMS Explorer Post 911 has met the criteria, which includes requirements such as providing leadership opportunities, performing service and community outreach projects and maintaining a high level of participation from many of its members. The award hasn't been given to a Berkshire County Exploring Post in a few years, and the three-year old Post was the sole recipient again this year.



Congratulations to our newly appointed 2012 Officers!

John Harris, Jr., President
Janet Britton, Co-Vice President
Steven Beagle, Co-Vice President
Allison Tremblay, Secretary
Kevin Stant, Treasurer



National Emergency Medical Services Week brings together local communities and medical personnel to publicize safety and honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine's "front line." The dates for National EMS Week 2012 are May 20 thru May 26 with Wednesday, May 23 set aside as Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) Day.

History of EMS Week

The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) was instrumental in establishing EMS Week when President Gerald Ford declared November 3 – 10, 1974 as the first "National Emergency Medical Services Week." This annual observance continued for four more years and was then reinstated by ACEP in 1982. Around this time the observance of EMS Week was moved to September. In 1992 EMS Week was again moved to be the 3rd week in May. The move was made to separate EMS Week from Fire Prevention week in October. The rationale for the move was the majority of fire and EMS services felt having the two events back to back hurt the effectiveness of each program so EMS Week was moved to May.

ACEP began collecting and distributing ideas and information for EMS Week in the early 1980's. Professionally printed and prepared EMS Week Planning kits were developed starting in the late 1980's. Today 25,000 EMS Week Planning Guides are distributed free of charge to EMS services, fire departments, rescue squads, volunteer groups, and emergency departments across the country. The 48 page guide contains ideas for local EMS Week activities and highlights EMS Week programs held by EMS services during the previous year.

Upcoming Berkshire County Events

EMS EXPO

The Emergency Medical Services Corporation (EMSCO) of Berkshire County is pleased to announce the Third Annual EMS Exposition. This year's event is scheduled from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday, May 20, 2012 at the Berkshire Mall, Lanesborough. Unlike last year's Expo closing out National EMS Week, this year's event will "kick off" the week.

AWARDS BANQUET

It's that time again! The time for all Berkshire County EMS providers to come together and celebrate your hard work. This year's Awards Presentation and Dinner Ceremony will be held on Friday, May 18, at the Wahconah Country Club, Dalton. Cocktail hour begins at 6 p.m. with dinner served at 7 p.m. The cost is \$35 per person. To make reservations, please contact Luanne Weiskotten, County Ambulance Service, at 499-2527.

INDIVIDUAL AGENCY ACTIVITIES

Many EMS agencies in your area will be holding special events during EMS Week. Contact your service director to learn about these events or to suggest planning ideas.

JOIN US!
LET'S MAKE A DIFFERENCE



**TO BENEFIT THE
VILLAGE AMBULANCE SERVICE EMS EXPLORER POST 911
RELIEF FUND FOR INJURED AND FALLEN EMTS**

SATURDAY – MARCH 31

6 P.M. – 10 P.M.

MT. GREYLOCK BOWL

41 ROBERTS DRIVE – NORTH ADAMS

\$15 PER PERSON (SHOES INCLUDED)

**TO REGISTER, PLEASE CONTACT MIKE BRITTON AT
GOMERGOLFER@VERIZON.NET**