

Village Ambulance Service Winter 2011 Newsletter



Brrrr...Winter Has Arrived!

Welcome to the Winter 2011 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

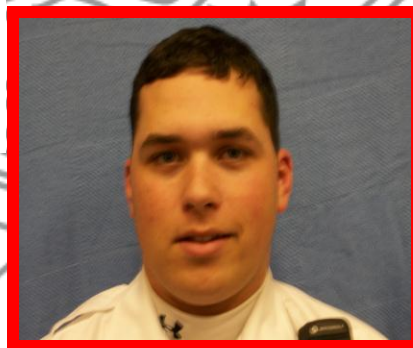


Sean Peltier EMT-Intermediate

Sean began employment with Village Ambulance Service as a part-time EMT-Basic in June 2010 before eventually attaining full-time status in September 2011. Sean went on to earn his EMT-Intermediate certification this past year and, when he's not volunteering as a firefighter for the town of Williamstown, he's working part-time for the Lenox Fire Department.

It's no secret Sean likes to keep busy, especially when it involves helping the community. In February 2011, he participated in the 6th Annual Race-Up Boston Place; a 41 floor stair climb to benefit the American Lung Association of Massachusetts. Sean completed the feat in an impressive 15 minutes and 12 seconds.

Sean is also the recent recipient of the Commonwealth's 2011



Individual Meritorious Award for bravery and helping to save a human life. The award was presented on Wednesday, November 31, 2011, by Governor Deval Patrick, Fire Marshal Stephen Coan and Secretary of Public Safety and Security Mary Elizabeth Heffernan.

In his spare time, Sean enjoys remodeling his home and spending time with his girlfriend.

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

Winter Storm Preparations 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.

COMMUNITY

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, then you've never worked a day in your life. We do what we do not for the money, or the glory, but for the inherent 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 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 three children of a single family.

Donations from over 25 employees were used to purchase suitable toys, clothing and wrapping materials for the family. The gifts will be anonymously delivered to the family just before Christmas day.

Village Ambulance Service also collected 174 useable winter coats and just under 400lbs of food during their 2011 9-1-1 Coat and Food Drive.

For more information on Village Ambulance Service sponsored programs, please call 458-4889 or visit us in person at 30 Water St, Williamstown.



ONE WARM COAT®

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 2011 Continuing Education Programs

Orthopedic Injuries

Wednesday, December 28, 2010

6 PM to 9 PM

3 Credits Approved for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic

Speaker: Village Ambulance Service Faculty

Location: Hopkins Hall – Williams College

Do you have what it takes?

Are you interested in a career that pays rewarding dividends, while offering you the opportunity to make a difference in a person's life?

Are you looking for something exciting, where every day the job is different? If so, maybe you should consider a career as an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Provider.

People's lives often depend on the quick reaction and competent care of EMS Providers.

Incidents range from automobile accidents and child birth to heart attacks and trouble breathing. EMS personnel provide the vital attention needed as they care for and transport the ill and injured to a medical facility.

Each day people are going to count on you!



What is an Emergency Medical Service (EMS) Provider?

Massachusetts recognizes three main levels of emergency medical service providers based on the amount of training you receive. The three individual levels determine how much care you are allowed to provide to patients.

- **Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT)** require approximately 145 hours of training
- **Emergency Medical Technician-Intermediates (EMT-I)** require approximately 220 hours of training
- **Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedics (EMT-P)** require 1250 hours or more. Many people who elect to make EMS a career become paramedics.

What does it take?

Training

Enroll in and successfully complete Village Ambulance Service's Massachusetts accredited EMT (or Intermediate) program for the level you are interested in.

Massachusetts Certification

Once you complete the program, and pass an approved Massachusetts written and practical examination, you will be certified to practice as an EMS provider in Massachusetts.

Making the Move

Once you are ready to practice as a certified Massachusetts EMS provider, you can work for a private or municipal ambulance company, a fire department or, in some areas, the emergency room in a hospital.

Your Community Needs You!

If somebody in your community requires immediate medical care, they want to feel they are in good hands. The sick and injured are going to rely on you to make a difference.

Once certified, you will be part of a team skilled at delivering lifesaving care. This team is also responsible for providing special guidance and support for your community. Your willingness to enlist as an EMS provider can provide you with a stable and fulfilling career, while making a difference in your community. Your help is needed!

For more information on how to become an EMS Provider, please contact our office at 413-458-4889 or go to our website www.villageambulance.com and click on TRAINING.

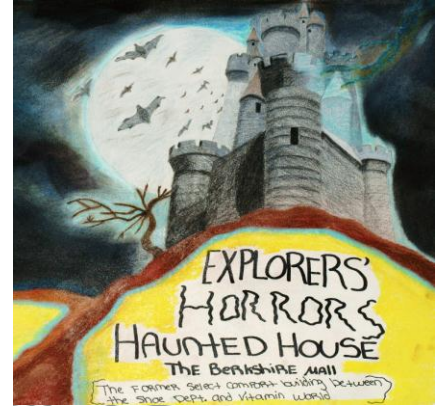
Second Annual Explorers' Horrors Haunted House a Huge Success!

The Village Ambulance Service EMS Explorer Post 911 held its second annual "Explorers' Horrors" Haunted House attraction the last two weekends in October at the Berkshire Mall.

More than 600 guests went through the converted former Select Comfort space, which was outfitted to include four rooms. The Scary Sushi Bar; The Haunted Graveyard; The Pumpkin' Patch of Death, and The Exorcism were used to successfully frighten the mall-goers, which included people of all ages. An adult Advisor was in charge of each room, while the Explorers created the themes and 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 materials and incidentals used in the haunted house.

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



Drawing by Jen Haley, VAS Explorer Post Member



Explorer Post Hosts "First Nighter" Meeting

Since 2009, Village Ambulance Service has sponsored an Explorer Post for area youths interested in pre-hospital emergency medical care. All new recruits must be between the ages of 14 and 21 and have completed the 8th grade.

The mission of the Post is to offer the co-ed youth of our community an insight into the field of Emergency Medical Services, as well as instill the importance of community enrichment. It is also our

purpose to help these same young adults become responsible, caring, and productive adults who may one day become the face of area emergency medical services.

On Thursday, December 15, 2011, the Post held its second annual "First Nighter" meeting at the Hillcrest Campus of Berkshire Medical Center from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.

The annual meeting was conducted with hopes of recruiting new members and to inform the public about our mission.

During this brief meeting, the Post covered what is expected from both the Explorer and the Post, and allowed prospective Explorers the opportunity to enroll into the program.

Congratulations! Explorers Complete EMT-Basic Program

Village Ambulance Service is proud to announce that three members of the Village Ambulance Service EMS Explorer Post 911 have successfully completed over 135 hours of Emergency Medical Technician-Basic training. Kevin Stant, Mary Tremblay and John Harris Jr. are now qualified to sit for the official Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services practical examination at Williams College on January 7, 2012.

The EMT-Basic course teaches initial evaluation, treatment and transport of patients with medical problems and/or trauma. Students learn to recognize and provide initial care for ailments including but not limited to, shock, heart problems, breathing problems, strokes, burns, diabetes, drowning and accidents.

The course was held at the Lanesborough Fire Dept. from August to December 2011.