

# Village Ambulance Service Winter 2009 Newsletter



Photo by  
Art Sachs

## Profession

The American College of Emergency Physicians is calling for changes to the way medevac helicopter services operate.

Following the National Transportation Safety Board's public hearings on helicopter emergency medical services in February, the college released recommendations to improve safety. Chief among them is adding more physician control in medical decisions that call for EMS helicopters.

"We want the decision to be made by somebody who has a concern for the patient," said ACEP President Nick Jouriles, MD.

The ACEP also called on states to develop EMS protocols and require flight operators to be accredited. Other suggestions include:

- Training pilots better and giving them more accurate weather updates.
- Requiring all medical flight dispatchers to meet Federal Aviation Administration standards.
- Using helicopter terrain awareness warning systems and night-vision technology.
- Establishing state protocols for patient destination regardless of state lines or the helicopter's institution.

The safety board is reviewing data collected at its February public hearings, and may issue new recommendations to the FAA, said NTSB spokesman Keith Holloway.

Meanwhile, the FAA released an updated fact sheet Feb. 2 stating all flights with medical personnel must operate under stricter weather minimums, and that flight crews must determine safe altitude and obstacle clearance before each flight.

## Welcome back!

Welcome to the Winter 2009 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 Northern Berkshire County.

## Employee Spotlight



### Michelle Sawicky

#### EMT-Intermediate

Michelle began employment with Village Ambulance Service as a full-time EMT-Intermediate in late 2008. Since that time, she has been a tremendous asset to our patients, as well as her coworkers.

Michelle possesses the knowledge and skills that take years to acquire. She has a very calming demeanor, in what is often a very demanding position. She is dedicated to the quality of her work because her number one priority is her patients.

Michelle has a strong and positive work ethic and truly loves working with people. Any patient who speaks with Michelle will have the privilege of dealing with an



extremely knowledgeable, caring and professional individual.

Michelle earned her EMT-Basic certification from Westfield State College in 2005 before becoming certified as an EMT-Intermediate in 2007. When time permits, her future plans include becoming a paramedic.

In her spare time, she enjoys reading and hiking.

# Training Section

## Village Ambulance Service Community Education and Training Programs



Village Ambulance Service is now accepting applications for their January 2009 EMT-Basic Program.

For more information, please call our office at 413-458-4889.

## EMS and Hypothermia ([emslive.com](http://emslive.com))

### Considerations

In the field, body temperature determination is not an exact procedure. It is the patient's core body temperature that needs to be measured. Temperature taken orally, under the arm, or even tympanic can be misleading. For this reason, this patient requires transport to the local ED for further evaluations and treatment. During transport to the hospital, EMS personnel must make sure IV fluids given to the patient are not too warm or too cold since the effects can have major negative outcomes for a hypothermic patient.

### Treatment considerations

- Move patient to a warm ambulance; remove patient's wet clothing, and cover with blankets. Intravenous solutions should be given within their specified temperature range. Many times, solutions left in an ambulance may either be cold or warm depending on ambient temperatures of the ambulance.
- Oxygen is indicated in this patient, and may improve his/her mental status.
- Cardiac monitoring is indicated. (watching for Osborn J waves)
- Watch for changes in patient's condition en route to the hospital.

### Conclusion

In most cases hypothermia is a result of another illness or accident. In this case the crew must pay detective to determine the overall picture. Since hypothermia at this early stage can be treated, the EMS crew must make sure that their treatments help to improve the patient condition without causing the body core temperature to continue to drop.

## Remaining 2009 Continuing Education/M&M Programs

### **Introduction to Hazardous Materials**

Thursday, November 12, 2009  
6pm to 9pm

The Spruces Recreational Center, Rte 2, Williamstown  
3 Credits approved for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic  
Speaker: Robert Czerwinski, Pittsfield Deputy Fire Chief, EMT-B

### **EMS/Hospital M&M Meeting**

Thursday, November 19, 2009  
9am to 11am

The Clark Conference Rooms, North Adams Regional Hospital  
2 Credits approved for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic

### **Substance Abuse/Drug Recognition Program**

Wednesday, December 2, 2009  
6pm to 9pm

The Spruces Recreational Center, Rte 2, Williamstown  
3 Credits approved for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic  
Speaker: John LeClaire, Berkshire County Drug Task Force

### **EMS/Hospital M&M Meeting**

Thursday, December 17, 2009  
9am to 11am

The Clark Conference Rooms, North Adams Regional Hospital  
2 Credits approved for Basic/Intermediate/Paramedic

# Community



## Village Ambulance Service

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## Blood Drive



**American  
Red Cross**

The second and final Village Ambulance Service Blood Drive of 2009, sponsored in conjunction with the American Red Cross, generated 65 productive donors.

The drive, which ran on Wednesday, October 14<sup>th</sup> from Noon to 5pm, not only generated aid for the American Red Cross, but offered a true sense of enlightenment to all those who contributed to this important endeavor.

Village Ambulance Service and the American Red Cross would like to thank all who donated. Your continued support is greatly appreciated.

## Community Safety Tips

### Preventing the Flu: Good Health Habits Can Help Stop Germs

#### 1. **Avoid close contact.**

Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too.

#### 2. **Stay home when you are sick.**

If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.

#### 3. **Cover your mouth and nose.**

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.

#### 4. **Clean your hands.**

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.

#### 5. **Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.**

Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth.

#### 6. **Practice other good health habits.**

Get plenty of sleep, be physically active, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

*Information borrowed from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Website;  
<http://www.cdc.gov>.*

# Miscellaneous



*Christine Isca, Paramedic, demos the new Village Ambulance Service MediCart*

## **Village Ambulance Service Unveils New Vehicle**

Village Ambulance Service has a new vehicle in its transportation arsenal that fits perfectly into the service's mission to improve emergency medical response times to the community.

The Village Ambulance MediCart is the perfect solution for short trip patient transport from an incident site to a waiting ambulance. The vehicle has endless applications, making it ideal for college campuses, parks, sporting venues and big crowd events. Its compact size enables emergency responders to maneuver in smaller areas where a conventional ambulance may be unmanageable.

The MediCart has been outfitted to carry a portable gurney, patient extrication equipment, spinal immobilization equipment, Automated External Defibrillator, oxygen and a full trauma kit. It also features an 8' deck, capable of handling a full-size back board. The cart has approximately 1000 pounds of hauling capacity using a 9 horsepower gas powered motor, and can travel at a maximum speed of 12-18 mph. The gas cart tank holds 6 gallons and will go about 150 miles per tank.

Looking to rent the MediCart for an upcoming event? Please contact our office at 413-458-4889.