

VILLAGE AMBULANCE SERVICE

SPRING 2014 NEWSLETTER



Welcome to the Spring 2014 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

Ron Barfitt EMT/Paramedic Student



Congratulations to Ron Barfitt for being in this quarter's Employee Spotlight!

Ron started working part-time at VAS in 2012. He earned his Massachusetts EMT certification in 2009 after taking Greenfield Community College's accredited EMT program, then soon attained his national certification through the National Registry of EMTs in Columbus, Ohio.

Since September 2013, Ron has been enrolled in National Medical Education & Training Center's online Paramedic program in West Bridgewater, MA.

After joining the Northfield Fire Department as a first responder in 2006, he was approached by the Northfield EMS division to join their roster. This is when Ron was truly 'bitten' by the EMS bug.



Throughout Ron's career he has worked for various agencies, including AmBCare and MedStar in Northampton, MA, Bennington Rescue Squad in Vermont and, of course, VAS.

When Ron is not tending to the ill and injured, or immersed in his Paramedic studies, he enjoys listening to heavy metal music, going to concerts, hiking and travelling.

Keep working and rockin', Ron!

National Registry News

NREMT Recertification Changes Are Important to the Nation

The National Registry of EMTs (NREMT) is currently planning and implementing changes in its recertification processes that are important to Nationally Certified EMS providers. These changes involve three components:

- Online recertification
- A reinstatement program called the Mark King Initiative
- New recertification requirements

All three components are on different tracks for implementation with a culmination date near 2016.

As with any "plan," not all of the details are available as of this writing but enough of the concepts are known to begin to alert NREMTs, EMS providers, state regulators and stakeholders.

Recertification Hours Reduced with New Process Beginning in 2016

The exciting news for many providers is that the hours required will be reduced (in most cases) from the former 72 hours every two years.

Each level of EMS provider has a different number of continuing competency requirements:

- First Responder – 16 hours every two years. 8 hours are National; 4 are Local; and 4 are Individual.
- Emergency Medical Technician – 40 hours every two years. 20 hours are National; 10 are Local; and 10 are Individual.
- Advanced Emergency Medical Technician – 50 hours every two years. 25 are National; 12.5 are Local; and 12.5 are Individual.
- Paramedic – 60 hours every two years. 30 hours are National; 15 are Local; and 15 are Individual.

[Click here for more NREMT info](#)

SAFETY TIPS

Spring Break Health Tips for College Students

Make this year's spring break memorable by having fun and helping yourself, your friends, and others stay safe and healthy.

Limit alcohol

If drinking alcohol is part of your break, remember that it can impair your judgment and actions. Alcohol-related motor vehicle crashes kill someone every 31 minutes and non-fatally injure someone every two minutes. Don't drink and drive. There are plenty of non-alcoholic alternatives.

[Quick Stats: Binge Drinking](#)

[College Drinking: Changing the Culture](#)



Be active

You've probably been sitting most of the year working at the computer, studying, or in class. During the break, take the opportunity to start a fitness program. Do a variety of fun activities like walking, dancing, playing volleyball, swimming, and more. It doesn't need to be hard to be beneficial. Avoid injury by starting any new activity slowly. Be active for at least 2½ hours a week. Include activities that raise your breathing and heart rates and that strengthen your muscles.

[Adding Physical Activity to Your Life](#)

Plan a successful trip

If you are going on a trip, be prepared. Are vaccinations required? Are there special foods, destination, or other things you need to consider ahead of time? If you are taking medications, do you have enough for the trip? Know what's happening en route or at your travel destination.

[What Vaccines Do You Need?](#)

[Spring Break Travel Safety](#)

Watch your step

There may be temptations on your break that involve different or high-risk activity. Think twice before putting yourself at risk for injury. Be sure to use appropriate safety gear before venturing out, such as seat belts, life vests, or knee pads. Remember that unintentional injuries kill more Americans in their first three decades of life than any other cause of death. In fact, injuries (both unintentional and those caused by acts of violence) are among the top ten killers for Americans of all ages.

[Injury Topics](#)

[Water-Related Injuries](#)

Protect yourself from the sun

After a cold winter, it's tempting to stay in the hot sun all day. Although getting a little sun can have some benefits, excessive and unprotected sun exposure can result in premature aging, changes in skin texture, and skin cancer. Always wear sunscreen with at least SPF 15. For eye protection, wear wraparound sunglasses that provide 100 percent UV ray protection.

[Skin Cancer Prevention: Questions and Answer](#)

Eat healthy

Having fun takes energy and fuel. Be sure to eat a variety of foods, including plenty of vegetables, fruits, and whole grain products. Also include low-fat dairy products, lean meats, poultry, fish, and legumes. Drink lots of water and go easy on the salt, sugar, alcohol, and saturated fat. Good nutrition should be part of an overall healthy lifestyle, including regular physical activity, not smoking, and stress management.

Service News

NARH gets new E.D. Medical Director

VAS is pleased to welcome Dr. Heikki 'Heik' Nikkanen, MD, to the northern Berkshire EMS family.

As the new E.D. Medical Director, he will lead NARH's emergency department into the next era, as well as oversee EMS operations.

Dr. Nikkanen is board certified in Emergency Medicine and Emergency Medicine - Medical Toxicology. He is a graduate of the University of Connecticut's School of Medicine and was appointed as an Instructor in Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

Past experience includes working at Brigham and Women's Hospital and Children's Hospital in Boston.

When not working in the clinical setting, Dr. Nikkanen authors publications on topics such as chemical exposure, back pain and traumatic injuries.

2014 Membership Campaign

VAS's 2014 membership campaign is in full swing.

Operating 24 hours-a-day, 7 days-a-week by paid personnel, VAS relies largely on contributions from community members and local businesses.

Donations enable the service to continue providing high-quality emergency medical care to the greater Williamstown area.

Contributions also help fund the ongoing training EMTs must undergo to maintain certification and to purchase essential capital equipment and supplies.

To learn more, please visit:

http://villageambulance.com/maxroot/page_10781.html



Fourth ambulance added to fleet

On Tuesday, March 4th, Village Ambulance Service placed its fourth ambulance in service. With increasing call volume and the need for additional resources, VAS purchased a 2014 Ford E-450 Type III ambulance from Yankee Fire & Rescue located in Palmer, MA. The new ambulance was designed with safety and ergonomics in mind; reflective striping, integrated child restraint seat and a number of safety features within the patient compartment will allow personnel to treat and transport patients safely to area hospitals and other healthcare facilities.



VAS to upgrade communications system

VAS was granted approval by the New Ashford Fire Department and [Silverleaf Resorts](#) - property owner - to place an antenna on the fire department's radio tower on Brodie Mountain in New Ashford, MA. VAS's current configuration consists of a sole antenna, approximately 600 feet high and without repeater capabilities, mounted to the top of its building at 30 Water St., Williamstown. The new setup, using a repeater system, will increase the antenna height to over 2500 feet; thus, drastically improving global communication abilities between the dispatchers, mobile units and portable radios.

The F.C.C. application for two alternative frequencies has been completed and submitted to Pittsfield Communications. Testing at numerous geographical points in Williamstown yielded positive results, with successful contact between a mobile radio and the tower reaching as far as Albany, NY, Lenox, MA and Florida Mountain.

The project, slated to begin in late spring 2014, will cost approximately \$22,000 to complete.

'Given the topography of Berkshire County, with its many mountains and valleys, the potential for poor communication is quite possible without a dynamic radio system,' said General Manager, Shawn Godfrey.

'For the safety of our personnel and patients, it is essential that this communications infrastructure is installed sooner than later', Godfrey added.

Continuous Quality Improvement

**MRSA was found
in 10 of 21
Ambulances**

Importance of Cleaning Ambulances

Do you wash your hands before and after every patient contact? How about the ambulance cot? Are all surfaces of the cot disinfected equally? Does your disinfection include the side rails, straps, and buckles? When was the last time you cleaned the blood pressure cuff and stethoscope that hang in the patient care compartment? How about the provider bench and other working surfaces in the ambulance compartment?

A recent research study published in the Prehospital Emergency Care journal assessed for the presence of Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) in an ambulance fleet of 21 vehicles.

MRSA is a strain of bacteria that is resistant to beta-lactam antibiotics such as methicillin, amoxicillin, and penicillin, which are commonly used to treat bacterial infections.

The research found MRSA contamination in 10 of 21 ambulances. Some of the areas that tested positive for MRSA growth were the steering wheel, left patient stretcher handrail, patient stretcher cushion, work area to the right of the patient, and the yankauer suction tip. The authors concluded the ambulance environment may be significantly contaminated with MRSA and the EMS system could represent an important reservoir in the transmission of MRSA to patients. As a provider you are at risk of becoming a MRSA carrier and bringing MRSA home to your family.

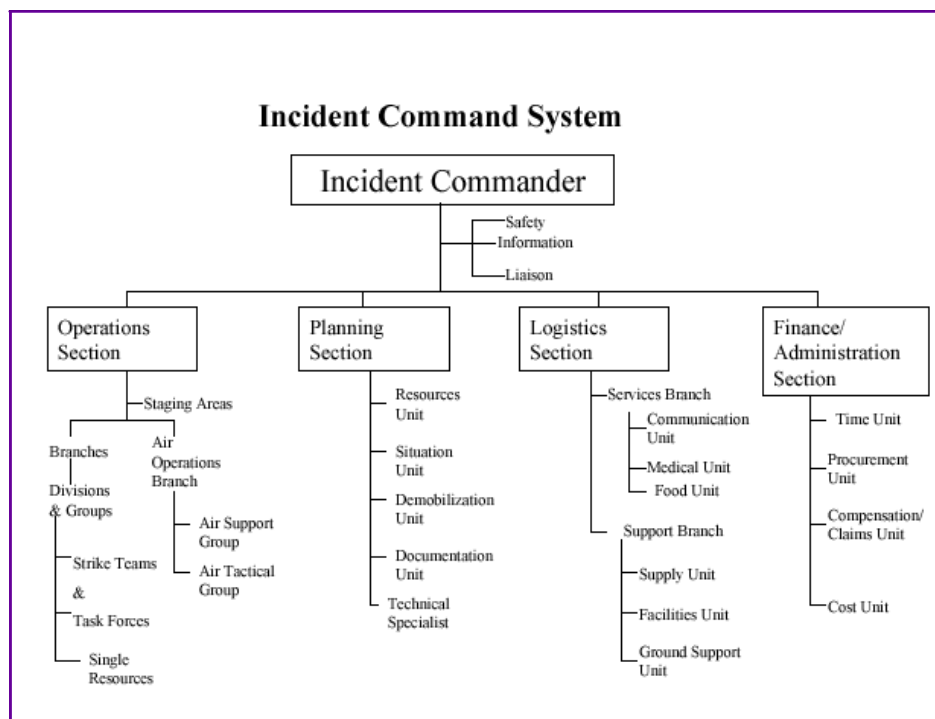
To prevent MRSA transmission:

- Review local policies and procedures for ambulance and equipment cleaning
- Increase frequency of cleaning interior surfaces and equipment patients might not frequently come into contact with
- Always utilize appropriate body substance isolation
- Wash your hands before and after every patient contact

Incident Command At-A-Glance

The algorithm below shows many of the leadership positions in the Incident Command System (ICS). It is very unlikely there will ever be enough personnel to fill all the positions; therefore, the officer listed above is obligated to handle that specific task as well. If you are the first rescuer to arrive on scene, designate yourself as Incident Command. You will remain the Incident Commander unless you choose to hand it off to another qualified rescuer. In addition, be sure to designate an *EMS Branch Director* to handle EMS activity (not *EMS Command*; there can only be ONE command). In short term events, the planning, logistics and finance are likely never filled; however, for long term events, all these areas should be considered.

One area not listed on the diagram is the Public Information Officer. This is a critical area and requires a skilled individual with excellent communication skills. This position can be intimidating, and it is very easy to relay misinformation. If there isn't a qualified person available to fill the PIO position, remember it will be the responsibility of the Incident Commander.



Upcoming EMS Events

Emergency Medical Services Corporation of Berkshire County Presents

5th Annual EMS EXPOSITION

Sunday, May 18th
11 AM - 6 PM

SPONSORED BY:



Come Meet Local Public Safety Professionals!

**Raffles, Prizes &
Interactive Demonstrations!**
Fun for the whole family!



BERKSHIRE MALL

2014



EMS WEEK AWARDS BANQUET

**Awards
Presentation
&
Door Prizes!**

Keynote Speaker!

**Professional
Networking!**



Friday

May 16, 2014

Social Hour: 6:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Buffet Dinner: 7:00 P.M.

ITAM Lodge - 93 Waubeek Rd., Pittsfield

\$30 per person



**To register:
Luanne Weiskotten
County Ambulance
499-2527**

2014 Massachusetts EMS Conference

October 17 & 18



**MASSACHUSETTS
EMS CONFERENCE**



The Massachusetts EMS Conference brings together EMS and public safety professionals through first-rate continuing education, an 18,000 square foot exhibit hall boasting state-of-the-art emergency equipment, and pre/post conference networking events.

Who should attend the conference?

- EMS & Fire Chiefs, Administrators, Managers, Supervisors
- First Responders, EMTs and Paramedics
- Medical Directors, Physicians and Nurses
- Educators
- Other Public Safety Officials

The Massachusetts EMS Conference will deliver:

- Nationally and regionally recognized educators
- Motivated attendees who, like you, are eager to advance their knowledge and skills
- Dependable information you can take back to your department and use right away
- Networking events where you can make new contacts and friends
- Exhibitors with the latest technology to help make your job safer and more efficient

For more information or to register for the 2014 Massachusetts EMS Conference, please visit www.massemsconference.com

VAS 2014 Con Ed Programs

Course Title	Date (s)	Time	Course Location	Instructor	Level (s)	Hours
EMS Systems	Saturday, March 8, 2014	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Jake Pyra, EMT-I	Basic	3
					Intermediate	3
					Paramedic	3
Wellness & Legal for the EMS Provider	Monday, March 10, 2014	6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd., Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	3
					Intermediate	3
					Paramedic	3
EMS Communication & Documentation	Thursday, March 13, 2014	6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Jake Pyra, EMT-I	Basic	3
					Intermediate	3
					Paramedic	3
Human Body Overview	Monday, March 17, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	4
					Intermediate	4
					Paramedic	4
Pharmacology for the EMT	Saturday, March 22, 2014	9 a.m. – 12 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	3
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Medical Assessment for the EMT	Saturday, March 22, 2014	12 p.m. – 3 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	3
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Airway Lab for the EMT	Monday, March 31, 2014	6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Multiple Instructors	Basic	3
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Respiratory Emergencies	Thursday, April 3, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	3
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Cardiology	Saturday, April 5, 2014	9 a.m. – 1 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Shock	Monday, April 7, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Michelle Sawicky, EMT-P	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	Course Location	Instructor	Level (s)	Hours
Neurological Emergencies	Thursday, April 10, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Greg King, EMT	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Allergies & Toxicology	Monday, April 14, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Bentley Munsell, EMT	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Endocrine Emergencies	Thursday, April 17, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Behavioral Emergencies & Restraint Lab	Saturday, April 19, 2014	9 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Multiple	Basic	6
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Trauma Assessment Overview	Monday, April 21, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Greg King, EMT	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Bleeding & Soft Tissue Injuries	Monday, April 28, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Bentley Munsell, EMT	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Facial Injuries	Thursday, May 1, 2014	6 p.m. – 9 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	3
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Head & Spinal Injuries & C-spine Lab	Saturday, May 3, 2014	9 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	6
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Chest & Abdominal Injuries	Monday, May 5, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Environmental Emergencies	Monday, May 8, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Jake Pyra, EMT-I	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	

VAS 2014 Con Ed Programs Cont'd

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	Course Location	Instructor	Level (s)	Hours
Ortho Injuries & Splinting Lab	Monday, May 12, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Multiple	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
OB & Ped Emergencies	Monday, May 15, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Jill Mattison, RN	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Geriatrics & Special Populations	Monday, May 19, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Bentley Munsell, EMT	Basic	4
					Intermediate	
					Paramedic	
Lifts & Moves Lab	Thursday, May 22, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Multiple	Basic	4
					Intermediate	4
					Paramedic	4
Operations & Driver Safety	Thursday, May 29, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Shawn Godfrey, EMT-P	Basic	4
					Intermediate	4
					Paramedic	4
ICS/MCI & Triage Tag Lab	Monday, June 2, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Multiple	Basic	4
					Intermediate	4
					Paramedic	4
Extrication & Access	Thursday, June 5, 2014	6 p.m. – 10 p.m.	Berkshire Mall Rte 7&8 Connector Rd. Lanesborough	Multiple	Basic	4
					Intermediate	4
					Paramedic	4

All continuing education programs listed above have been approved for credit by the Massachusetts Office of Emergency Medical Services

OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Northern Berkshire Morbidity & Mortality (M&M) Sessions

All M&M review sessions are scheduled on the third Thursday of each month from 9am -11am in North Adams Regional Hospital's Clark conference rooms.

All ALS providers are required to get twelve (12) Massachusetts OEMS approved M&M hours every two year recertification period.

Remaining 2014 Sessions: 4/17, 5/15, 6/19, 9/18, 10/18, 11/20, 12/18

(No meetings scheduled for July and August)

Two (2) MA OEMS credits approved for each session



Convenient and Affordable Online ACLS Training

This fast and convenient online course provides immediate access to advanced cardiac life support (ACLS) training. Perfect for health care professionals or anyone needing certification or recertification, eACLS™ features:

- Highly interactive activities that satisfy the knowledge requirements of ACLS training
- Substantial savings over conventional classroom ACLS courses
- Instant continuing education credits upon successful completion of the online course
- Anytime, anywhere learning — at your own pace, and in the comfort of your home or office. Now you can complete the entire course in just a few hours

eACLS™ is developed in partnership with the American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP), a leader in emergency medicine education and health education.

Online Course Information

The course features two components: knowledge review and practical skills-check (available at VAS). If your employer does not require a practical skills-check, you simply need to successfully complete the knowledge portion online before you can print out your course completion certificate and continuing education credits receipts.

[Click here to enroll or for more information](#)