

*Maryland Institute for
Emergency Medical Services Systems*



Press Report

April, 2005

MARYLAND COAST DISPATCH

BERLIN, MD
WEEKLY 25,000
APR 1 2005



Capital Clipping Service

154
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Stamp Refuses Director's Job

547FB

OCEAN CITY - Efforts to restructure the resort's public safety agencies under one unified command hit a stumbling block this week when the top candidate declined the position.

Talks have been underway since last year to possibly unite the fire company, paramedics and the Fire Marshals Office under one department. This would encompass the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Company (OCVFC), the Fire Marshall's Office and the Emergency Services Division under one commanding officer.

Clay Stamp was reportedly tapped by the town for the position. Stamp, who now works for the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Systems, retired from the town after serving as its emergency services director.

Stamp retired from the town, a year ago Wednesday, which was also when he made his decision.

"Officially, Clay [Stamp] was offered the job, and, respectfully, he declined it," Ocean City Mayor and volunteer fireman Jim Mathias said.

Ocean City Manager Dennis Dare said Wednesday's deadline was critical since it marked a year from when Stamp officially left the town's payroll. If an employee is hired back after a year, retirement benefits start from scratch.

Dare said the process to find a director is continuing. "I will have some recommendations for the Mayor and Council at their next meeting," Dare said.

OCVFC President and firefighter Steve Hales said this week the group would continue working on its proposal for restructuring the 100-year-old department.

"We're still hammering things out, but we are close, though," he said.

- Benjamin L. Mook



State's health-care system to get overdue exam

The way Maryland regulates the expansion of hospitals, nursing homes and other health-care centers and services is about to get a much-needed exam of its own.

The Maryland Health Care Commission is soon to name a task force to study how it grants, or denies, permission to add new hospital beds or expensive services, such as open-heart surgery suites or burn-care units. For decades, health-care providers have had to apply for a "certificate of need" from the state, providing reams of reports to justify new buildings or specialized services.

Regulators take time to look at not only the need in an area, but also at the economics of the proposals. One goal is to ensure that hospital beds are filled as often as possible and that the level and type of service is appropriate, not overbuilt.

For as long as it has been issuing the certificates, the commission has been a target of criticism.

Some argue that the regulations allow health-care monopolies and restrict newer, better medical technologies.

Hospitals that compete in the same territory, or for the same medical niche, sometimes find themselves locked in months-long skirmishes with neighboring hospitals over expansion.

Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, for instance, is in the process of asking Maryland lawmakers to allow it to open a freestanding emergency room in Germantown. The hospital's executives took the somewhat unusual step of appealing to the state legislature after health regulators refused a certificate for the ER, which would be one of the first of its kind in the state. In the 1990s, Shady Grove met opposition from other Montgomery County hospitals when it sought to open a rehabilitation center for seriously disabled patients at its Rockville hospital campus.

Three other hospitals are in a winner-take-all contest for the right to set up a specialized heart surgery center. Suburban Hospital in Bethesda, Holy Cross in Silver Spring and Clinton's Southern Maryland Hospital Center are all making a case for the coveted certificate. What's not in dispute is the need for another open-heart center in Maryland.

The executive vice president of the Clinton hospital, Michael J. Chiaramonte, says eight out of 10 heart patients from Southern Maryland now go to Washington Hospital Center, miles away in the District, for treatment.

Powerful lawmakers argue their constituents need quality, specialized services closer to home.

"Southern Maryland is woefully neglected in this process," Senate President Michael V. Mike Miller Jr., a Democrat from Chesapeake Beach, told *The Gazette's* Margie Hyslop. "We've got to bypass 60 to 75 miles to go to Prince George's Hospital Center, which is woefully inadequate."

Managing health care — either at non-profit or for-profit centers — remains a serious, complex endeavor. Johns Hopkins Medicine last month received a certificate for new and replacement medical buildings in Baltimore. Price tag for the project: \$578 million.

Hospitals don't rush into major expansions, which require huge investments and years of planning.

Like never before, insurers are forcing

changes in care, in part to drive down costs. Patients are becoming more sophisticated about their treatment opinions. Rapid advances in technology continue to bring about better ways to treat the sick and injured. Some procedures that a decade ago would have required an overnight hospital stay are now routinely performed in ambulatory surgery centers, with the patient sent home the same day to recuperate.

Maryland's health-care regulations appear to be in the middle of the pack when held up against those in other states. That doesn't mean Maryland's rules are perfect, or even appropriate, as the health-care industry evolves. They provided a certain degree of checks-and-balances in an era when health care was simpler.

A checkup of Maryland's rules is in order, and should be done regularly, just like a physical examination. Regulators need to acknowledge the importance of evolution in the marketplace and technology. At the same time, they must strive to keep hospitals financially healthy, with minimally invasive policies and procedures.

RECORD-OBSERVER

EASTON, MD
WEEKLY 5,500
APR 1 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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W4

EMS and fire companies seek \$491,000 in funding for 2006

Konrad Surowiec
Staff Writer

5475

STEVENSVILLE - The 10 volunteer fire and ambulance companies in Queen Anne's County are seeking \$491,000 in county funds for the 2006 fiscal year, said Ted Jackson, chairman of the county's Fire and EMS Commission.

"Our prioritized funding request provides relief in several critical

areas: operational readiness, volunteer retainment, apparatus fleet management, and hazardous materials mitigation," Jackson wrote in a March 8 memorandum to County Administrator Paul Comfort, outlining the needs of volunteer fire and emergency medical services (EMS) personnel.

"Although the county continues to approach growth issues conservative and responsible, Queen Anne's County volunteer departments con-

tinue to experience an increase in emergency calls," wrote Jackson. "Countywide, our call volume has increased by 19 percent.

"Budget constraints in recent years have not allowed the departments to keep pace with operational needs and this is jeopardizing the quality of service that we extend to our customers," wrote Jackson.

See **FUNDS**

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FUNDS

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Page A1

The 19 percent increase in service calls was from mid-2002 to November 2004, said Jackson, who discussed the volunteer fire companies' budget request at the March 24 meeting of the Queen Anne's County Taxpayers Association in the Kent Island Library. He said EMS calls account for most of the increase.

The county Fire and EMS Commission represents 10 volunteers organizations: United Communities Volunteer Fire Department (Romancoke); Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department; Grasonville Volunteer Ambulance Department; Grasonville Volunteer Fire Department; Queenstown Volunteer Fire Company; Queen Anne-Hillsboro Fire Company; Goodwill Fire Company (Centreville); Church Hill Volunteer Fire Company; Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company; Crumpton Volunteer Fire Company. Grasonville has separate organizations for its fire and EMS volunteers; the other eight organizations have EMS divisions within the fire company.

County Commissioner Ben Cassell, also at the meeting, said the funding request from the volunteer fire companies was probably about \$200,000 higher than the amount the companies received from the county in fiscal 2005. He said the county's volunteer departments have done a very good job in getting federal grants through the federal Department of Homeland Security.

Jackson said priorities for the volunteer fire and EMS departments in the coming year include: establishing an emergency response team in conjunction with the county Department of Emergency Services for hazardous materials (hazmat) incidents; buying equipment to enhance firefighter safety and survival; and funding for major equipment purchases.

Operational mandates have "swamped" volunteer firefighters, said Jackson, explaining the days of riding on the back of fire trucks or in open cabs are over. By law, firefighters have to ride in enclosed cabs. Jackson said the departments have bought or plan to buy major pieces of equipment. He said Grasonville Volunteer

Fire Department bought a new tanker, and Crumpton Volunteer Fire Company plans to buy a boat for water rescues.

"These are pieces of equipment that are needed for these fire departments," said Jackson.

Other departments have major building projects planned. Jackson said the volunteer companies receive 50 to 72 percent of their funding from the county. The companies conduct fund drives in their communities, but less than a third of the residents contribute. Jackson said Church Hill Volunteer Fire Company had a 30 percent return, Kent Island Volunteer Fire Department had a 22 percent return, and Queenstown Volunteer Fire Company had a 17 percent return. Jackson said several fire companies have annual carnivals, but rainy weather can wipe out a company's anticipated revenue from the event. Jackson said Church Hill sells barbecue dinners when the stock cars are racing in Dover, Del., but it's hard work for a gain of \$600 to \$800.

Jackson said more people are moving to Queen Anne's County, but most new residents are not joining the fire and ambulance companies. He said paid personnel are needed to supplement the volunteers. Goodwill Fire Department has paid ambulance personnel during daytime hours, and the county Department of Emergency Services has paid EMS staff assigned to the Sudlersville and Queenstown firehouses.

The roughly 500 active fire and EMS volunteers in Queen Anne's County have saved the county a "massive amount of money," said Jackson. "It's important for people to understand that," he said.

The Queen Anne's County Commissioners allocated \$252,000 in the current fiscal year to start the Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP) for volunteer firefighters and medics. Volunteers with at least 25 years of active service can receive up to \$150 a month starting at age 65. Jackson said about 25 to 30 volunteers will start drawing a LOSAP payment beginning in February 2006. He said the pension system is an important "retaining tool" for the fire and EMS community.

"LOSAP does help retain those people," said Jackson. "... It sets up an infrastructure to retain the volunteer system."

RECORD

HAVRE DE GRACE, MD
WEEKLY 2,000
APR 1 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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.x.4..

23

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Ambulance Corps to the rescue

SMB
Congratulations to the members of the Havre de Grace Ambulance Corps who celebrated with their annual Awards Banquet and Installation of Officers at the Bayou Restaurant March 19.

The 2004 Top Responder, and sole member of the 400 Club, was Gail Reeder with 439 calls — what a busy woman! Members of the 300 Club included John Popella, 354; Matt Orf, 327; and Vince Way, 320. The four members of the 200 Club were Jeanell Mathena, 254; Ken Streb, 244; Neil Crouch, 227; and Kym McFadden, 200.

Rounding out the top callers were members of the 100 Club Rob Angelucci, 191; Mark Kane, 184; Mike Fayer, 177; Debbie Way, 176; Chris Kane, 159; Rob Pennington, 156; Martin Walsh, 146; Stacy Daniels, 144; Cheryl Walsh, 130; Jeremy Mothershed, 127; Todd Lynch, 110; Nazir Sadik, 106; Deborah Goll, 105; Bill Reeder, 102; and Susan Angelucci, 101.

In dedicated service to the folks of Havre de Grace and the surrounding area, the Ambulance Corps responded to 2,045 emergency calls last year. Heading up the team this



AMANDA SHAFFER

year are John Popella, chief 5-9; Mark Kane, chief 5-9-1; Gail Reeder, captain 5-9-1; Neil Crouch, captain 5-9-2; and administrative officers Mark Hemler, president; Kymberlie McFadden, vice president; Susan Angelucci, secretary; and Deborah Way, treasurer. Congratulations on another safe and successful year.

Boy Scout Troop 967 of Havre de Grace United Methodist Church enjoyed a weekend of cabin camping March 11 to 13 at Broad Creek Memorial Scout Reservation in northern Harford County. Accompanying the Troop were four new members who have recently moved from Cub Scouting to Boy Scouting, as well as three Webelos members of Cub Scout Pack 967. All of

the boys participated in a nature hike and the building of a 30-foot-long "monkey" bridge made of rope and timbers. While the veteran members worked on orienteering skills, the new members were trained in fire building and basic knot tying, which are part of the requirements for Tenderfoot and Second Class ranks; and the Webelos prepared a foil-wrapped meal cooked over an open fire. Attending Scouts included SPL Kevin Weeks, Chip Compton, David Duncan, Danny Geiger, Keith Lowe, Michael Phillips, Kevin Rapczak, Jesse Rusin, John Rusin, Matt Schulz, Robert Schulz, Dylan Sickles and Tyler Willis. The Webelos in camp were Timmy Corbin, Adam Langhorne and Kenneth Perry. Adults leading and lending support throughout the weekend were Scoutmaster Clark Old, Michael Allen, Pete Langhorne, Nolan Phillips, Dan Rusin and Joe Willis.

The weather was great for their outing, and everyone is looking forward to the next activity, which will be a fundraising Spaghetti Dinner and Bake Sale April 2 at Havre de Grace United Methodist

Please see **SHAFFER, 4B**

SHAFFER: Fire safety program is set

From Page 3B

Church. Their next adventure will be a skills building campout at a nearby farm April 8 to 10. As part of their service requirements, the Troop members will be performing "Adopt a Highway" duties April 20 along Route 7 in Havre de Grace and participating in Riversweep April 23.

The Susquehanna Hose Company, is offering a "Children's Fire Safety Program" sponsored by Joseph L. Davis Unit 47 Auxiliary April 2 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the American Legion, 501 Saint John St. There will be a fire truck and rescue boat on

display, and a light lunch will be served.

Spend the day with local photographer Leo Heppner April 2 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and enjoy photographing the unspoiled beauty of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Watershed. The group will meet at Rogers Tavern in Perryville, so bring your camera and plenty of film or memory cards. To register for this outing, please contact Cecil Community College at 410-287-1000.

The Havre de Grace Arts Commission is pleased to present Ted Brown as Picasso April 3 at 3 p.m. at Havre de Grace United Methodist

Church, 101 S Union Street. Advance tickets may be purchased for \$5 each at the Havre de Grace Visitor Center, 450 Pennington Ave., or at Par Excellence, 452 Congress Ave. Tickets will be available at the door for \$7. Please call 410-939-2100 or 410-939-2134 with any questions.

The Arts Commission has added an additional event to the 2005 calendar. Shakespeare in the Park returns to Havre de Grace this summer July 10. The Olney Theatre will present "Midsummer Night's Dream" on the grounds between the maritime and decoy museums at 7:30 p.m. Bring a chair or a

blanket. There is no admission fee. Please call 410-272-5516 for more information.

Come out and support Meadowvale Elementary School's PTA for the second annual Meadowvale Golf Tournament April 22 at Wetlands Golf Course, 740 Gilbert Road in Aberdeen. The tournament will begin with a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. and

will follow a Captain's Choice format. The \$85 registration fee includes the green fee, cart, continental breakfast, lunch, beverages and many prizes to be awarded throughout the day. It is not necessary to have a foursome; players can be matched up. E-mail your ques-

tions or registration information to meadowvalepta@comcast.net or phone Isabelle at 410-942-0844. The roster fills quickly, so register early.

Happy spring birthday wishes to Rev. John Elledge, March 31, and Richard Burch, April 3. Havre de Grace anniversaries this week include Kathleen Mader and Jim Larrimore, March 30, and Ilene and Luther Vaught, April 3. Best wishes to you all.

Havre de Grace kids have another short week coming up, with the elementary schools having an early dismissal April 6 and no school for students April 7 and 8. Sorry teachers, it's in-service time for you,

back to work.

Havre de Grace's Girl Scout Troops will gather together this weekend for three fun-filled days of Community Encampment. I hope they all have a safe trip and return home with exciting adventures to share — not too exciting, of course. Have a great trip, girls!

Have another super spring week around Havre de Grace, and please feel free to keep me informed about your upcoming celebrations, events and happenings. I can be reached by phone or fax at 410-942-0639 or via e-mail at AmndaroundHDG@msn.com.

SUN

BALTIMORE, MD
SATURDAY 270,113
APR 2 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Dr. John D. Stafford, 66, started emergency medical radio system

By JACQUES KELLY
SUN STAFF

5/1/0

Dr. John D. Stafford, who established an emergency medical radio system for accident victims in the 1970s and was later a Maryland deputy health secretary, died of complications from diabetes March 26 at Greater Baltimore Medical Center. The White Marsh resident was 66.

Born in Altoona, Pa., he was a 1968 graduate of the University of Maryland School of Medicine. He completed his medical internship in the Army and while at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, he worked with patients burned in the Vietnam War. He then completed an anesthesiology residency at Baltimore City Hospitals and earned a master's degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health.

Dr. Stafford became chief of communicable diseases and epidemiology for the state's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene before being named director of a new program, Emergency Medical Services Development. He set up a network that allowed ambulance crews at the scene of an accident or medical emergency to speak to hospital physicians and staff — and hired his own radio engineers and bought his own equipment to save on fees.

"Communication between those at accident scenes and hospitals had been so erratic and it was like dealing with two cans and a string," said George Pelletier, a friend and his former administrative assistant. "His legacy to the state was the development of a communication



SUN STAFF 1974

Dr. John D. Stafford set up a network linking ambulance crews to hospitals.

system for accident situations."

In 1980 Dr. Stafford moved to Pennsylvania to set up a medical helicopter system for the Allentown region. Two years later, he became the emergency medical director for the state of Arizona.

When he returned to Maryland in the mid-1980s, he was named state aeromedical director for the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems. When the state issued bids for new Medevac helicopters, Dr. Stafford wrote the guidelines for the medical equipment they carried.

"He was so earnest and was totally dedicated to public health," said Adele Wilzack, a former state health secretary who is president of the Health Facilities Association of Mary-

land. "Any issue, no matter how small, all got the same degree of his passion and attention."

In June 1989 he became one of the state's three deputy health secretaries. He supervised programs dealing with public health, drug and alcohol abuse, and AIDS. He also helped downsize the Rosewood Center in Owings Mills.

"He was intense about doing the job right. He had a high sense of integrity," said James M. Faulkner, personnel officer for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. "He always had a couple of jobs going at the same time. He was very industrious."

Dr. Stafford then became the medical director of Baltimore Recovery Center, a homeless center in West Baltimore. In 2000 he worked with the state's Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services and revised medical guidelines for prisoners. At his death, he was a consultant to the state's Motor Vehicle Administration medical department and counseled those convicted of drunken driving.

Graveside services will be held at 11 a.m. Monday at Garrison Forest Cemetery on Garrison Forest Road in Owings Mills.

His 14-year marriage to Grace D. Schmid ended in divorce. He is survived by two daughters, Laura Stafford and Diane Hoback, both of Parkville; his mother, Thelma Hess of Fullerton; three brothers, Brooks Stafford of White Marsh; Phillip Stafford of Manteca, Calif., and Randy Stafford of Sacramento, Calif.; and a sister, Bobbi Stafford of Castro Valley, Calif.

ST. MARY'S TODAY

LEXINGTON PARK, MD
WEEKLY 6,000
APR 3 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Fire/EMS Station Selected as "Volunteer Organization of the Year"

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The Prince George's County Volunteer Center has selected a Fire/Emergency Medical Services Station as one of their "Volunteer Organizations of the Year". The Glenn Dale Volunteer Fire Association, Inc. has been selected for their outstanding volunteer work within the community. Bunny LaCour, Chairperson of the Centers Award Program wrote, "It is our pleasure to recognize you for your unselfish dedication and personal commitment through volunteerism. Through your groups volunteer outreach programs in which you participate, you have worked tirelessly to enhance the lives of all of us in Prince George's County. Your contributions have helped to provide a variety of ser-

vices that otherwise would not have been available to many segments of our community."

Prince George's County Fire Chief Lawrence H. Sedgwick stated, "I am extremely pleased that one of our Fire/EMS Stations has been recognized for their volunteer efforts. The dedication and commitment of the Glenn Dale Volunteer Fire Association to the citizens and residents of Prince George's County reflect favorably upon themselves and the entire Fire/EMS Department."

The Glenn Dale Volunteer Fire Association, Inc. is to receive their award at a ceremony on Thursday, March 17, 2005, at Martins Crosswinds in Greenbelt, MD.

Cecilton Fire Company

Annual Awards Banquet

547FD



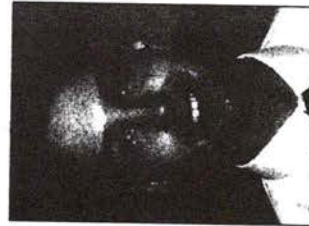
Brandon Dixon
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 123 calls
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 54 calls



Clifton Butch Reed
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 49 calls



Jason Reamy
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 120 calls



John Dixon
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 114 calls
■ The Chief's Award



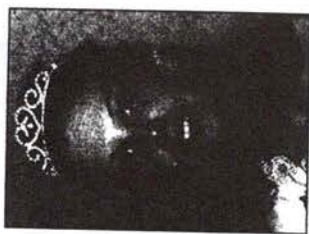
David Kelly
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 77 calls



James Pardee Jr.
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 112 calls
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 95 calls



Mike Cooper
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 71 calls



Nichole Reed
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 82 calls



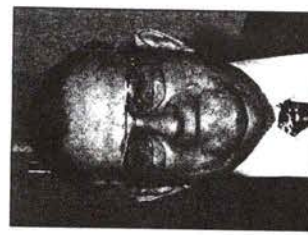
Pamela Hartsy
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 39 calls



Scott Boulden
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 79 calls
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 50 calls



John Aiken
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 112 calls



Thomas O'Neal Sr.
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 81 calls
■ Top 10 EMS Responder, 132 calls



Clay Weisenberg
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 75 calls



Robert Dixon Jr.
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 74 calls



Porter Davis Jr.
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 74 calls

Cecil Whig Photographs by
Adelma Gregory-Bunnell

NOT PICTURED

Traci Enfield

Top 10 EMS Responder, 41 calls



Brian Corbett
■ Top 10 Fire Responder, 110 calls

FREDERICK NEWS-POST

FREDERICK, MD
MONDAY 41,707
APR 4 2005

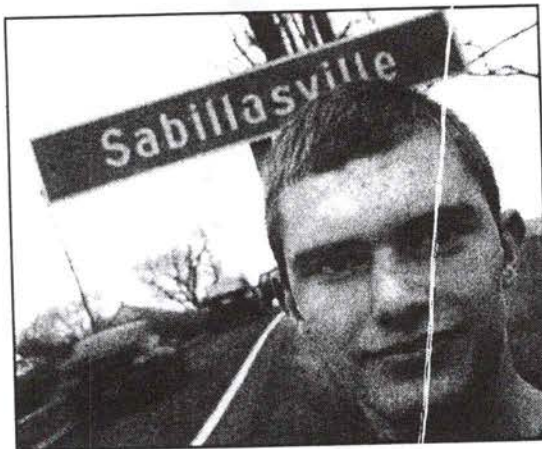


Capital Clipping Service

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Slice OF Life



Staff photo by Bill Green

Colt Black, a Catoctin High School junior, has lived in Sabillasville nearly all his life and says his love of the community prompted him to begin working as a volunteer EMT.

Colt takes aim: fires

By ERIN CUNNINGHAM

News-Post Staff
ecunningham@fredericknewspost.com

SABILLASVILLE — Few 16-year-old boys are dividing their time between school and the firehouse. And even fewer are certified emergency medical technicians.

Colt Black, a Catoctin High School junior, has lived in Sabillasville nearly all his life and says his love of the community prompted him to begin working as a volunteer EMT.

He is a member of Emmitsburg Ambulance Co. and Rocky Ridge Volunteer Fire Co., having signed up to serve as soon as he turned 16 last June.

Before he graduated from his EMT courses last November, he helped with fund-raising and other station events. He also went on emergency calls as an observer.

Since completing his training, he said, he has responded to 45 emergencies. Colt says it's not difficult to volunteer at two stations and juggle high school classes.

"When (Rocky Ridge) has a big fire, I go," he said.

And he spends a lot of time at Emmitsburg Ambulance Co., he said, so he is there to respond to calls.

When he's not responding to fires and medical emergencies, he's working on building a first responder unit in his hometown. He said the community of fewer than 2,000 residents has always relied on emergency service from surrounding communities, like Thurmont and Emmitsburg.

But, he said soon Sabillasville may no longer be a small town. Colt said he wants to start planning for the service now, before emergency response in the town is a problem.

"Volunteering is something I've always liked to do," Colt said. "And it's something I've always enjoyed, and now I want the community to benefit from it."

A first responder unit is similar to an ambulance, but it cannot transport patients. Anyone interested in contacting Colt about the first responder unit can e-mail him at newvolrescue@aol.com.



Capital Clipping Service

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First responders need to be protected from HIV infection

It took me about two seconds to agree to co-sponsor a bill introduced by Sen. Thomas "Mac" Middleton (D-Charles) that will do much to protect the health of our volunteer fire, rescue and EMS first responders.

I was even more convinced that I made the right decision to sign on to this bill when it had its hearing before my committee — the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee. Numerous volunteer fire, rescue and EMS members were in Annapolis to support the bill. In fact we had two of our Southern Maryland volunteer firefighters, Bobby Balta and Danny Davis, sit in on the hearing.

In short, Senate Bill 718 requires a hospital to order an HIV test if there has been an exposure between a patient and a health care provider or between a patient and a first responder before the patient is admitted to the hospital.

Our first responders never refuse medical aid to anyone who needs it. But if they believe there is reason they may have been exposed to HIV while responding to an emergency, they should have the right to know if their own health is in jeopardy so they can seek immediate help to suppress possibly contracting a virus that leads to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

The Professional Firefighters of Maryland, who represent more than 10,000 active and retired professional firefighters, fire officers and EMS personnel are strongly supportive of this bill. They recognize that they "should have no less protection than the health care worker who receives the person in the emer-

gency department or the emergency medical technician at the scene of the fire or accident," according to their testimony.

This issue is vital for our first responders. Maryland's health care workers include more than 58,000 nurses, 15,000 practicing physicians, 30,000 first responders and 165 infection control professionals, according to the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems.

The MIEMSS reports that in 2003, Maryland ranked third highest in the U.S. for reported AIDS cases at 28.5 per 100,000 residents. They also believe that "post-exposure drug treatments administered to an exposed health care worker can be beneficial in decreasing the rate of HIV infection. However, these therapies must be initiated within hours of exposure.

Some have questioned whether this bill is constitutional, citing privacy issues. According to a Maryland Attorney General's opinion it is constitutional.

Also, several other states such as Florida, Nebraska, Montana, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia have similar laws on the book.

Maryland would just be joining that list of states who realize the importance of this issue.

In light of all of this alarming evidence, I see no reason why this crucial bill to protect those who protect us, many of them on a volunteer basis, should not pass.

Sen. Roy Dyson (D-Calvert, Charles, St. Mary's)

The writer is a member of the Maryland General Assembly.

TIMES-RECORD

DENTON, MD
WEEKLY 4,900
APR 6 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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23

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Maryland police chiefs challenge is under way

DENTON - From April 5 through June 5, 2005, the Denton Police will join more than 100 law enforcement agencies across Maryland in an annual effort to educate the public about the life-saving and injury-reducing benefits of safety belt use.

Annually, Maryland chiefs of police, sheriffs, campus safety directors, and Maryland State Police barracks commanders challenge their officers, deputies, and troopers to design community-outreach programs and events, to recruit community partners, and to conduct enhanced educational and enforcement initiatives in an effort to increase safety belt and child safety seat use. As a result of their efforts last year, during the statewide observational surveys that were taken in the spring of 2004, Maryland's statewide seat belt use rate was 89 percent. But even with the majority of Maryland's public buckling up, this means that more than 550,000 Marylanders continue to put themselves in danger by riding unbuckled.

"The highest priority for law enforcement officials is to protect and preserve the lives of the citizens we serve," said Denton police chief

Rodney Cox.

The annual campaign provides a statewide timeframe in which all law enforcement agencies work together to reduce the loss of lives and to reduce the severity of injuries resulting from unbuckled occupants in motor vehicle crashes.

"As a team, we want our message to be clear to Marylanders of all ages: If they are not buckled up, at least one member of our law enforcement team will stop them and issue a ticket, because all of us care about the citizens we serve," Cox continued.

In Denton and other communities in the county, law enforcement officials will be conducting community outreach educational programs.

The health department and other partners in the EMS and health care community also will assist by promoting the lifesaving benefits of buckling up on every ride in every vehicle, and ensuring that all children are properly restrained in an appropriate child safety seat, booster seat or seat belt in accordance with their age and weight. Finally, there will be enhanced enforcement efforts for those who do not heed the call for voluntary compliance.

HANCOCK NEWS

HANCOCK, MD
WEEKLY 2,600
APR 6 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Chief's Challenge Campaign

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From April 5 through June 5 Maryland State Police will join more than one hundred law enforcement agencies across Maryland to participate in an intensive, highly publicized, and competitive annual effort to educate the public about the lifesaving and injury-reducing benefits of safety belt use. Maryland has a rich history of being a leader in safety belt and child safety seat compliance. This is a direct result of the commitment and dedication that Maryland's law enforcement community has made to establishing successful community-based educational programs for and partnerships with the citizens they serve. It also is a well-known fact that in Maryland communities in which friendly educational methods alone do not result in voluntary compliance, officers deputies and troopers do not hesitate to use the final "educational" tool - a safety belt citation.

Annually, Maryland Chiefs of Police, Sheriffs, Campus Safety Directors, and Maryland State Police Barrack Commanders challenge their officers, deputies, and troopers to design community-outreach programs and events to recruit community partners and to conduct enhanced educational and enforcement initiatives in an effort to increase safety belt and child safety seat use. As a result of their efforts last year, during the statewide observational surveys that were taken in the spring of 2004, Maryland's statewide seat belt use rate was 89 percent. But even with the majority of Maryland's public buckling up, this means that more than 550,000 Marylanders continue to put themselves in danger by riding unbuckled.

"The highest priority for law enforcement officials is to protect and preserve the lives of the citizens we serve," said Commander/Lt. Johnston. Accordingly, this annual campaign provides a statewide time-frame in which all Maryland law enforcement agencies can work together to reduce the loss of lives and the severity of injuries resulting from unbuckled occupants in motor vehicle crashes. "As a team, we want our message to be clear to Marylanders of all ages: If they are not buckled up, at least one member of our law enforcement team will stop them and issue a ticket - because all of us care about the citizens we serve," Commander/Lt. Johnston continued.

In Hagerstown local law enforcement officials will be conducting community outreach educational programs at child day care and senior centers, schools, business, and with the help of religious leaders. The Buckle Up Religiously campaign component will be conducted at several churches, synagogues officials in conducting observational safety belt use surveys. The health department and other partners in the EMS and health care community also will assist by promoting the lifesaving benefits of buckling up on every ride in every vehicle, and ensuring that all children are properly restrained in an appropriate child safety seat, booster seat or seat belt in accordance with their age and weight. Finally, there will be enhanced enforcement efforts for those who do not need the call for voluntary compliance.

BOWIE BLADE-NEWS
 WEEKLY
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**Public safety
 needs attention**
 Editor's View / A8

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RACK 'EM UP!
 Scrabble buffs celebrate
 20 years of word play

**Hall Road zoning
 gets county nod**
 Story / A4

The Bowie Blade-News

A Capital-Gazette Newspaper

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2005

50 CENTS

Lack of staff hinders local fire station

By CINDI SAADI
 Staff Writer

A resident's complaint regarding Bowie Volunteer Fire Department Station 39's (Free State Mall) failure to respond to calls for service prompted a *Blade-News* investigation that revealed several response failures by the station due to inadequate volunteer staffing.

Charles Burton, a 37-year resident of Bowie, initiated correspondence with the *Blade-News*, as well as numerous city and county officials after Station 39 failed to respond to an EMS call involving his elderly mother.

Saturday, March 26, early in the morning, family members discovered Burton's 83-year-old mother uncon-

Free State unit sees others responding to calls

scious on the floor of her Long Ridge Lane home and called 911. That neighborhood is within Station 39's first response area.

However, staffing was inadequate at Station 39. An ambulance responded from Station 19 (Old Bowie/Huntington). A paramedic unit responded from Station 43 (Pointer Ridge).

The call was initiated at 7:05 a.m., dispatched at 7:08, the ambulance was on scene at 7:19, and the paramedic unit arrived at 7:26.

Burton's mother and family were grateful for the excellent service she received from responding units. How-

ever, the failed response from the nearest station was the last straw for Burton, who had been composing his list of concerns regarding Station 39's inadequate staffing.

Burton provided the *Blade-News* with a list of 12 failed responses for the station in March. Each incident occurred either on a weekend or on a weekday during a time when career staff are not on duty.

In one of Burton's letters he stated, "Why are approximately 40 percent of Bowie citizens in ZIP codes 20715 and 20720 (served by Station 39) not protected 24 hours a day by paid staff?" Station 39 has four paid personnel

only on weekdays from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m., and two may remain until 5 p.m. on overtime. Weekdays from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m., weekends, and holiday staffing is solely by volunteers.

Station 39's response area includes from Old Chapel Road on the north to Route 50 on the south and from Route 301 on the east to High Bridge Road on the west.

In the past, stations 19 and 43 encountered similar problems with failed responses due to lack of adequate volunteer staffing and the number of career staff gradually increased. Now those stations have four paid personnel on staff around the clock,

which is also the minimum staffing requirement for a ladder truck or heavy rescue unit. Station 43 has two additional paid personnel around the clock to man the paramedic unit.

Burton noted the list of failed responses does not include occasions where an ambulance or truck from Station 39 left partially manned or responded late. Of the list, Burton noted that at least one incident involved a fatality for which neighbors performed CPR while awaiting an ambulance.

Burton added that Station 39 has failed to respond on seven occasions in April, five of which occurred on

(See STAFF, Page A2)

STAFF

(Continued from Page A1)
Sunday, April 3.

"My goal is to get the apparatus staffed. I don't care if the staff are volunteers, paid personnel or a combination. I just want adequate, qualified staff. The lives and property of the citizens are on the line," said Burton.

Prince George's County Fire Department Press Information Officer Mark Brady confirmed that each of the 12 incidents on Burton's list were in fact, failed responses on the part of Station 39. He could not address the additional incidents in April.

"We are aware of the situation and are working with the volunteer leadership to identify a means of rectifying it," said Brady.

Regarding the call involving Burton's mother, Bowie Volunteer Fire Chief Pete Mellits said it was an unnecessary EMS call as she did not end up requiring transport to a hospital. He also stated that Medic 43 never arrived on the scene.

However, Brady confirmed a call record indicating that Medic 43 was on scene at 7:26 a.m.

Mellits stated he would have to examine Burton's list of incidents to comment upon its veracity. Mellits advised that although he has statistics regarding Station 39's failed responses, late responses, and responses with partially manned apparatus, he would not share those statistics with the *Blade-News*.

Burton, who is a retired officer of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service and former volunteer in Prince George's County, noted he has over 50 family members living in the Bowie area and is concerned about the welfare of the entire community.

"There are many good, dedicated volunteers in Bowie and throughout the county. However, the fact remains that at Station 39 the apparatus is not getting out and they are responsible to the public to see that it does," said Burton.

March 28, Burton met with Prince George's County Fire Chief Lawrence H. Sedgewick and informed him of various failed responses from Station 39, noting that for each incident, Station 19 and Medic 43 were dispatched, with the exception of one accident for which Glenn Dale Station 18 responded.

Sedgewick advised Burton to file a formal complaint, noted that he and his staff would follow up on the situation and encouraged Burton to have other citizens come forward.

Mellits admitted there are occasions when the ambulance and/or a truck at Station 39 does not get out due to inadequate staffing and stated it is a fact of the combined career/volunteer system.

"No call ever goes unanswered, but a delay may occur. Our goal is to minimize that delay," said Mellits.

Mellits also admitted that volunteerism is down, which he said is a nationwide problem. Mellits advised that last fall a focus committee was formed

within the BVFD to examine staffing problems and recommend changes.

Volunteers are currently requested to serve one four-hour shift per week. One proposed change would increase that request to include two overnight stays per month.

Consequences for failing to remain active do not usually occur until after two or three months of nonparticipation, at which time, supervisors talk with the volunteer to assess the situation.

Mellits said Station 39 has 61 active/riding volunteers, plus an additional 16 who have fallen out of active certification. Another 75 members are nonoperational.

Mellits noted that 37 of the 61 riding members live in Station 39's area.

According to Mellits, the problem of inadequate volunteer staffing is multifaceted. He stated that factors such as the level of training and commitment required, as well as "union harassment" contribute to recruitment and retention problems.

Mellits also noted that the "one-minute rule" affects response from Station 39 in that when a call is dispatched, the station in the first-due area has one minute to come online to indicate they can take the call. Otherwise the next-due station is contacted.

In addition, Mellits claimed that failures to send out home alerts to Station 39 members occur and cause delays.

Brady indicated that staffing the station with paid personnel would not be the first solution, noting county department shortages.

County Executive Jack Johnson recently proposed 29 new firefighter positions for the budget which, according to Burton, is about six-tenths of an employee per county station. However, staffing Station 39 around the clock would require an additional 12 to 16 positions.

Monday night Burton read his summary of concerns to the City Council and was disappointed when none of the council members had comments.

Burton followed up after the meeting with an e-mail to each council member regarding his disappointment.

He noted that similar to the weekly fire log in the *Blade-News*, citizens are likewise entitled to a weekly list of fire/EMS deficient responses.

Burton suggested that if this information was made available to him on a monthly basis, he would compile a report to keep citizens informed.

Burton advised the *Blade-News* that the morning after the council meeting he received two threatening phone calls

from unknown individuals advising Burton that if he and the media continued to go after the "numbers," he would be taken to court.

Burton was also disappointed that Mayor Fred Robinson merely forwarded Burton's original correspondence to Sedgewick, Mellits and Peters and asked them to review Burton's mother's EMS call and provide him with an assessment.

Burton had already been in contact with all of these individuals and was hoping Robinson would express his own concerns regarding the situation at Station 39.

Peters did not respond to *Blade-News* phone messages prior to press time.

Robinson advised the *Blade-News* that inadequate volunteer staffing is a serious concern and that if the city can do something to improve service, he was sure the council would do it.

"Over the years volunteers have done grand work. I'm less optimistic now because we have fewer and fewer volunteers," said Robinson, noting that many young people now work multiple jobs.

"Another problem is that no one wants to run the ambulance. Everyone wants to run the fire truck because it is more exciting," said Robinson.

Mellits also agreed that EMS tends to be less desirable than firefighting.

Brady noted that 75-80 percent of calls for service are EMS calls. "Personnel are required to be trained to handle both EMS and fire calls in order to make the best use of resources."

A proposed EMS station, to be located near Mitchellville Road and Elder Oaks Boulevard, is another concern of Burton and other area residents who do not believe it should be built until current staffing shortages are resolved.

Mellits, a proponent of the station, said the new station will be operated by the BVFD, but staffed by two paid personnel.

Brady stated that nothing is finalized regarding staffing for the proposed station, and until current staffing issues are resolved, staffing needs for the new station will not be addressed.

HOWARD COUNTY TIMES

COLUMBIA, MD
WEEKLY 20,500
APR 7 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Lisbon/Woodbine

Joanne Weller 410-786-5111 jweller@cms.hhs.gov

Donations help buy CPR device for fire company



547FD ⑨

The Woodbine community's financial support of the **Lisbon Volunteer Fire Company** comes back to support us in our time of need.

EMS Lt. Jody Sharpe wanted me to thank community members for their generous donations. The Lisbon Volunteer Fire Co., recently purchased the \$15,000 AutoPulse mechanical CPR device for use on its ambulance. This device is on the cutting edge of medical technology and has been shown to provide 80 percent of pre-cardiac arrest blood flow with its chest compressions. Speaking on behalf of the Lisbon Volunteer Fire Co.,

Sharpe said they are very proud to be on the forefront of emergency medical technology. Lisbon is the first volunteer fire company in the state of Maryland to independently purchase this device. Thank you for your commitment and dedication to providing our community with the best emergency services available.

AEGIS

BEL AIR, MD
FRIDAY 29, 917
APR 8 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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...it costs us'

Firefighters sound an alarm on budget

by **Matt Ward**
Staff

The group representing Harford's volunteer fire companies broke with tradition during a county budget hearing Thursday to berate the administration of County Executive Jim Harkins in its budget proposal.

"You are coming closer and closer to shutting the doors of the upper county small departments with each budget process," Sharon Worthington, budget chair for the Harford County Volunteer Fire and Emergency Medical Services Association, told members of the Harford County Council Thursday.

The council heard from various county department heads while considering the proposed operating and capital budgets for the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Harkins has proposed \$6,110,172 for the volunteer companies' operating costs, \$2,150,000 or 54.3 percent more than this year's budget.

Included in that increase is \$650,000 to pay companies back for the cost of attending to uninsured patients and \$1 million to establish a rotating fund that a company could use to replace equipment, repaying the fund and passing the fund on to other companies.

But Worthington said the companies don't have enough money to repay such a fund and would end up borrowing from other sources to fund equipment costs.

"It's not a gift, it costs us," Worthington said.

She said the central volunteer association voted to ask that the rotating fund and the EMS support

money — \$1,650,000 in all — be abandoned and the money put into the companies' general operating budget.

County Director of Administration John O'Neill said the \$650,000 figure came directly from the association's EMS committee and said the group might not fully understand the rotating fund.

In addition to the EMS and equipment funds, Harkins' proposal also includes \$405,000 for the implementation of paid EMS services. The only other new funding would be \$95,000 to be distributed among 12 companies, Worthington pointed out, saying: "We do not feel that we will realize that increase [of 54.3 percent]."

Harford County Sheriff R. Thomas Golding also appeared before the council Thursday. His organization

asked for 40 new deputies; Harkins recommended funding for 20.

Earlier in the day, O'Neill offered the halving of the sheriff's request as an example of the administration not fully funding a department's application.

Harkins has recommended fully funding the school system's budget this year, hiring 162 new teachers and boosting teachers' salaries across the board.

In total, the Harkins budget would allocate \$519,117,124 for operating expenses and \$152,766,130 for capital projects.

The sheriff's office would receive \$44,654,761 in operating funds, a \$4,371,903 or 10.9 percent increase over this year's budget.

Harford County State's Attorney Joseph Cassilly addressed the coun-

cil, asking that it fund an additional prosecutor for his office and provide money to retain two employees whose positions had previously been granted.

The council also heard from Ernie Crist of the Harford County Emergency Operations Center, where Harkins has proposed a \$7,495,311 operating budget, \$820,000 or 12.3 percent higher than this year's budget. The 911 center budget would include money to hire five new dispatchers.

While discussing the county Office of Economic Development budget, Councilwoman Cecelia Stepp, a Republican representing Havre de Grace and Perryman District F, said she thinks the office should have more than \$115,000 a year for tourism.

RECORD-OBSERVER

EASTON, MD
WEEKLY 5,500
APR 8 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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MSP Aviation Command marks 35th year of service

547FB
PIKEVILLE - Over the last 35 years, Maryland State Police flight crews have flown more than 110,000 critically injured patients to lifesaving care.

It was March 19, 1970 when an MSP crew first flew a Bell Jet Ranger to the Baltimore Beltway to assist with a car crash. The patient was flown to the Shock Trauma Center at University Hospital in Baltimore, arriving within what Dr. R. Adams Cowley defined as the "golden hour" for medical care.

This year, the MSP Aviation Command is marking its 35th anniversary of providing air medical transport services to the citizens of Maryland. To celebrate, the aviation command will host open houses around the state

through the year.

"The fire and rescue personnel, state police crews and trauma nurses and physicians form a dedicated and talented team that is unmatched anywhere," said Colonel Thomas E. Hutchins, secretary of the Department of State Police.

"Lives are being saved daily in Maryland because of the effectiveness of this system and the commitment of the people who are a part of it."

The MSP Aviation Command is still the only law enforcement aviation unit in the world to handle statewide air medical transport, law enforcement, search and rescue and homeland security.

The command operates a fleet of 12

Dauphin twin jet engine helicopters and two fixed-wing aircraft. The helicopters are based at eight hangars placed in locations that enable crews to reach victims anywhere in Maryland in less than 18 minutes.

State police medevac services are provided free of charge. The command is mostly funded by an \$11 annual fee paid when Marylanders renew their vehicle registrations.

Six crew members have lost their lives while serving in the medevac program. They are Tfc. Phillip L. Russ, Tfc. Thomas A. Noyle, Tfc. Donald E. Parkerson, Tfc. Charles S. Rathell, Cpl. Gregory A. May and Tfc. Carey S. Poetzman.

DAILY TIMES

SALISBURY, MD
SATURDAY 27, 994
APR 9 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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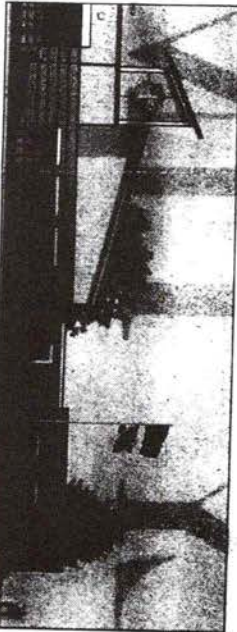
New station: Fire officials look to future

By Montique Lewis
Daily Times Staff Writer

SALISBURY — Next time you drive or walk past the downtown fire station, take a closer look at the peeling foundation, cracks in the sidewalk and cramped parking lot. Both Station 16 and the City Council are making plans to gain access to land for a new fire station on the West Side.

"For quite a number of years, we've been searching for a suitable location," said Deputy Fire Chief Tim Keenan.

Keenan said fire officials want to consolidate training, administrative offices and a working station into one building to operate more efficiently. The current training facility is on Isabella Street and the maintenance and



Times Photo by Todd Duda

An architect's drawing shows the partial east elevation of the proposed new station for the Salisbury Fire Department. Besides a working fire station, the building will also have areas for training, apparatus and equipment, as well as administrative offices.

supply office is in an annex building behind Station 1 on Beaglin Park Drive.

A 7-acre vacant parcel of land between Cypress and Lake streets has been difficult for the council to secure. Negotiations

were unsuccessful between the city and the landowner and it's up to a Wicomico Circuit Court jury to decide its worth, said Paul Wilber, city attorney. Wilber said the court has granted the council's motion to

condemn the property, as the city can condemn a property for a public purpose.

It's extremely vital to house another station on the West Side because if the workers have to respond to an emergency call and the bridges are up, they get stuck, Councilman Gary Comegys said.

Upon entering the first floor of Station 16 on South Division Street, one would notice roller racks with several yellow firefighter suits hanging on them. Scattered cracks in the cement lie underneath various emergency vehicles weighing more than 200,000 pounds.

"We have to take it real slow and not hit other equipment," EMT firefighter John Gray said of the tight space. "It's a hassle."

Keenan said the exits are too small for the vehicles to respond quickly to public needs, creating a safety hazard.

"This building is approaching 80 years old," Keenan said. "This building has served us well and has probably exceeded its service life for personnel safety and population size."

Built in 1928, the second floor isn't accessible for a physically challenged person. There aren't enough bathrooms and there is no central air conditioning.

Some of the renovations previously added to the building, labored by the firefighting crew themselves, included a kitchen, more showers and toilets, generators and offices with space enough for one put shared by two. "When we build this new sta-

tion, we have to think not just on what's going on today ... but look at many years into the future," Keenan said. "We serve not only the city but also the county, too."

The station receives an average of 10,300 fire and emergency calls a year. And that number is rising, Keenan said. They are responsible for Fruitland and Allen, too.

Cole & Russell Architects of Cincinnati estimated costs up to \$4 million, however, that was two years ago, said Salisbury Fire Chief David See.

"I think it's too premature to say how much it's going to cost today," See said.

■ Reach Montique Lewis at 410-845-4656 or mlewis@salisburygazette.com.

CARROLL COUNTY TIMES

WESTMINSTER, MD
SUNDAY 24, 572
APR 10 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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More services to be added

BY JANIE FICHTER
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Westminster Fire Chief Kevin Utz is prepared for more senior housing, and any increase in calls for ambulance service that might come with it.

"We haven't been blindsided by it," Utz said. "We know it's happening, and we're planning for it."

Countywide, calls for emergency medical services have increased about 5 percent from 2002 to 2004 — from 9,070 calls to 9,510 calls. Although Utz didn't say if senior living communities alone contributed to the increase, he has been planning for it.

For three years, Utz has been working with senior housing developers to have them contract their own ambulance and emergency services.

Utz said calls are bound to rise simply because older adults are more likely to use the services.

"Knowing that the building will not be stopped and we want our elderly to be taken care of, we've been asking them to provide their residents with some kind of routine response," Utz said.

Some senior living communities have agreed to pitch in.

Sunnybrook Apartments in Westminster, an

Please see **Services, A9**

Services

From Page A1

expanding senior citizen community, has agreed to contract an emergency service person 24 hours a day, Utz said. Sunnybrook is adding on 75 new apartments to its existing 75.

The Westminster fire department also has worked with Westminster Ridge, a new development, and Carroll Lutheran Village, to have them contract their own emergency services.

Utz said because calls to his fire department are bound to increase, a third ambulance will be added.

"It's definitely something other communities should look out for," Utz said.

Westminster Mayor Kevin Dayhoff also sees the strain on emergency medical services, but he's not sure how to address it.

"I had floated an idea about a fire and EMS impact fee," Dayhoff said. No further steps were taken on that idea.

But, he said, the positive side of having senior communities outweighs the strain.

"They're baby boomers, so they're absolutely wonderful people," he said.

Older adults contribute to the work force, provide volunteer services and quickly acclimate to the community, he said.

It's a growing demographic in the county, and with that, the demand and the pressure for age-restricted housing will rise.

By 2006, Westminster alone will have close to 200 new apartments for senior citizens.

"Each of these individuals is someone's mom, dad, uncle, brother or sister," Dayhoff said.

"We want to care for them."



Capital Clipping Service

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EMS

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In today's reader commentary, a man with more than three decades' experience providing emergency services in Allegany County sounds an alarm about the current and prospective state of the local EMS system. We need to listen.

Francis Mowbray of Barton first details the

■ Veteran responder calls for action

extent of the problem, namely the dwindling number of volunteers who are willing to serve on ambulances. He then attributes the problem to a lack of leadership, primarily

at the county level. Finally, he calls for action of the sort which was required to address school consolidation.

If the volunteer system cannot be salvaged — and Mowbray believes it can — the result will inevitably be paid personnel. That's already happening, with Frostburg EMS paying some daylight crew members. If the paid system expands as Mowbray expects, county taxpayers will likely foot much of the bill, and it could be substantial.

EMS service affects us all. Whether it's a broken bone from a slip in the tub, a child choking on food, or an accident on the road, "but for the grace of God," we all face the prospect of making that desperate call to 911, and then hoping that help arrives in time.

In an increasing number of cases, that help does not arrive as quickly as it should. According to an EMS report presented to the county in December, the Georges Creek Ambulance Service failed to respond to 142 calls in 2003, or more than one-third of its total calls. The no-response rate for District 16 was 25 percent, and at Corriganville, 19 percent.

In response to the December report, the county approved formation of a study group led by state emergency services officials. The group, which is meeting every three weeks, involves the entire EMS community, including individual units, the health system, the county, the 911 office and the fire departments. Meetings are scheduled through August. The group's finished product is expected to include a list of both short- and long-term recommendations.

Mowbray cautions that such studies have been launched before, but they usually come up short on what is needed most: Action. It will be up to the county commissioners to ensure that such is not the case this time.



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County commissioners must 'step up to plate' on EMS

The Emergency Medical Response System in Allegany County is in CRITICAL CONDITION. Mr. Sam Metz wrote Times-News commentaries

READER COMMENTARY

"EMS services must reach out to disenfranchised volunteers," both articles concerning the EMS in Allegany County. Mr. Metz's comments were derived from his years of service as a member and officer of Tri-Towns EMS, and they were right on track. Serious issues continue to plague most of the volunteer emergency medical services, and a serious disconnect exists between those responsible for ensuring services and those trying desperately to provide services. These are tough issues that no one wants to talk about and fewer want to take action to address what are considered "political football" type issues.

I applaud Mr. Dave Ramsey, Region I EMS Administrator, Dr. Fred Miltenberger (deceased) and now Dr. Bill May, Region I EMS Medical Director, the EMS Council and numerous others who serve only in an advisory capacity with no direct supervisory control over the system, yet who have worked tirelessly to develop initiatives of support and guidance to assist the independent

volunteer corporations to improve, only to be frustrated as the system continues to drop deeper. Understaffed ambulances responding to serious emergencies are hard pressed to provide lifesaving medical treatment to those in need, and many times are forced to burden the community volunteer fire companies to provide assistance. Many times life-threatening patients are transported without benefit of Advanced Life Support (Paramedics) or delays result when paramedics from other jurisdictions are called upon to rendezvous with a transporting ambulance. Many times the task of running out to meet an incoming ambulance has fallen on the paid Cumberland City Fire Department, tasking their staffing.

Now, in an effort to address the staffing issues, several volunteer services are looking at hiring paid personnel. While paid staffing will ensure coverage, it is equivalent to a snowball rolling downhill. It will continue to grow. Most start out paying daytime staff when volunteers are reportedly not available to provide coverage. This leads those who volunteer at night and on weekends to ask, if they can pay them, they can pay me, and the snowball continues to grow. Where does this funding come from? Who is going to pay the bill? For that matter, who is going to pay for supplies, vehicles, uniforms, etc. when all funds must be diverted to wages and employment benefits?

A lack of personnel is not a new problem it is a continuing problem that has never been addressed.

I have been involved with emergency services in the county for 33 years and have seen the efforts or lack of efforts in this area. In the late 1990s Mr. Metz, then president of Tri-Towns and I as Tri-Towns Chief, met with the county administrator to discuss the issues surrounding EMS. The administrator was very concerned, empa-

A lack of personnel is not a new problem, it is a continuing problem that has never been addressed.

thetic and well aware of the issues, yet no action was taken. Many times Mr. Ramsey and the Region I EMS Council have met with county officials to discuss the EMS emergency, studies have been done — but little has been seen in action. Thus we are seeing the effects of what many believe to be an attitude of "bury your head in the sand and maybe the problem will go away."

Most if not all of the issues affecting the EMS System can be addressed through one simple initiative, that being "good, effective leadership." That leadership has to start at the county level with the county administrator and county commissioners.

They MUST first admit there is a problem, and then through common problem solving techniques identify the causes, and develop a corrective action plan. As with school consolidation, this means addressing tough issues that will not make everyone feel warm and fuzzy, but are necessary for system survival. I work out of the county through the week, and I am concerned for the health and safety of my relatives and friends. The time has come to roll up our sleeves get to work.

In no way are my comments intended to take away from the many dedicated professionals active in the county, most of whom are my good friends, spending thousands of hours each year volunteering their time, getting out of their bed in the middle of the night, etc. to help their neighbors. These are true heroes.

But the numbers of dedicated volunteers are dwindling at a time when the need can be no greater. The volunteer system is NOT DEAD, the volunteers are there, but they are not motivated, and that is a leadership issue. I challenge the leadership in county government to step up to the plate, accept the responsibility of your office to ensure that citizens and visitors to Allegany County receive quality emergency medical services they are deserving of and equal to those being provided across the state of Maryland.

Francis Mowbray
Barton

TIMES-RECORD

DENTON, MD
WEEKLY 4,900
APR 13 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Colburn thanks lawmakers for a hard-working session

By Richard F. Colburn
State Senator, Mid-Shore

547 EB
ANNAPOLIS - I commend both 37th and 38th District Delegates: Rudolph Cane, Jeannie Haddaway, Norm Conway, Page Elmore, and Addie Eckardt (who was especially helpful to have on the House Appropriations Committee) for their work on local bond bills.

Of course it is instrumental to have Senator Lowell Stoltzfus on the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and to have Delegate Conway as Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee. Together, they secured bond bill monies for every Mid-Shore project for which we required money in the Annual Capital Bond Bill. This is the first year the Senate and the House were both allotted \$12.5 million each for their own bond bills, and although the annual Capital Budget Bill is still being debated, bond bill requests have been finalized.

The 37th District legislators obtained over one million dollars of the total \$25 million allotted for projects in Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot, and Wicomico counties (this includes \$200,000) which was put aside for the Girl Scout camp requests. The Maryland Consolidated Capital Bond Loan of 2005 will appropriate monies to the following

Senate/House bills that we cross-filed:

House Bill 44/Senate Bill 891, sponsored by Delegate Addie Eckardt (Creation of a State Debt - Caroline County - Camp Todd) would have been a grant for \$114,000 to the Board of Directors of the Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay for the construction of a program center in Williston, which is near Denton.

House Bill 1606/Senate Bill 974 will be of interest to many volunteer fire company members across the Eastern Shore. This bill will provide \$200,000 to the Board of Directors of the Maryland - Fire Rescue Services Memorial Foundation, Inc., for the planning, design, and construction of a monument in Annapolis, to honor all emergency fire, rescue, and EMS men and women who have given their lives in the line of duty while serving their communities.

The General Assembly has introduced 1,613 bills in the House with 13 House Resolutions; the Senate has introduced 1,018 bills in the Senate with 11 Senate Resolutions. Approximately 900 of these bills will be passed by the end of session. Legislators will deliberate and vote up to the last minute, and any bill not passed by midnight on Monday, April 11, will be dead at least until the 2006 Session of the Maryland General Assembly Session.

AEGIS

BEL AIR, MD
WEDNESDAY 29, 917
APR 13 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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County paying some of EMS

\$405,000 allocated

By Jessica Aldon
Aegis staff

52HFB

In his State of the County address in February, Harford County Executive Jim Harkins pledged to help fund a paid emergency medical service in the county.

With a continued increase in the number of calls for service and not enough volunteers to handle calls, especially during the day, a paid system has become necessary, its advocates say. Many volunteers have regular jobs and work 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and have spouses who work. The partially-paid system will supplement the volunteer service.

Harkins followed through with his pledge, allocating \$405,000 in his proposed fiscal year 2005-06 budget to help get the supplemental paid EMS service running under the auspices of a new foundation formed by the

Please see **EMS, A8** A

Paid EMS on the way

Volunteer ambulance service in Harford supplemented

EMS, from A1

Harford County Fire and EMS Association. Firefighters will remain all volunteers.

"The money is to help the association get started," John O'Neill, director of administration for the county, said Monday. "They are working on paperwork now."

The \$405,000 allocated by the county executive in the budget is to pay for liability insurance and workman's compensation for the foundation as well as to pay for a part-time coordinator.

"We are also pledged to working with the volunteer fire service to support a countywide, paid emergency medical services supplement to our volunteer EMS. Our volunteer system continues to do a great job; however, increased demand for services is forcing individual volunteer companies to hire paid EMS personnel to supplement their volunteer force," Harkins said in his state of the county address. "The Harford County Volunteer Fire and EMS Association and Harford County government have been working together to plan an effective long-term paid EMS supplement that values our volunteers. We can and we must support this lifesaving service for our citizens."

Some local fire companies have already moved to a paid service, paying some volunteers with incentives, others with cash.

O'Neill said this partially-paid system is a step toward a full-time paid service, but that is way down the line.

"This will help EMS volunteers with doing services during the day when it's dif-

ficult to get volunteers," O'Neill said.

The money in the budget will primarily be used for administrative purposes. Salaries of EMS foundation employees will come from individual fire companies, said Rich Gardiner, spokesperson for the Harford County Fire and EMS Association and the Bel Air Volunteer Fire Company.

"The association is extremely pleased with this funding and much appreciative over Mr. Harkins' continued support of the EMS system in Harford County," Gardiner said Tuesday.

O'Neill said the county and the association hope to get the foundation started some time in the next fiscal year, which begins July 1.

Some of the \$405,000 will go to paying a part-time coordinator of the foundation, which will manage paid staffing for local fire companies that need it. A fire company will request employees for certain time periods and the coordinator will allocate personnel as they are available.

Money to pay the new providers will come from the individual companies. The foundation will bill the fire company for the employee's hours. The fire company will pay the foundation, which will then pay the employee.

Employees with basic lifesaving training will be paid \$10 per hour, while those with advanced lifesaving training will be paid \$15 per hour. No benefits will be paid.

Foundation employees will have to undergo background checks, physicals and skills assessments before they are hired. Once hired, they will be placed in a pool from which they will be drawn to work on an as-

needed basis.

Local fire companies also will receive some other benefits in the new budget, which includes \$1 million to start a revolving loan fund for equipment replacement.

O'Neill said the fund will provide low-interest loans, which the fire companies can use to buy equipment. As these loans are repaid with the nominal interest, more funds will be made available for other companies to buy equipment.

"The money won't be in the budget every year," O'Neill explained. "The fund will be replenished when the funds are paid back."

Also in the budget is money to boost appropriations to each fire company by 2 percent to supplement funds to cover rising cost of fuel and allocate more money for support services.

More than \$650,000 is allocated to compensate fire companies for ambulance expenses that are not fully compensated by insurance and or other payments.

Despite that, some individual fire company officials are afraid some of these programs will hurt some organizations.

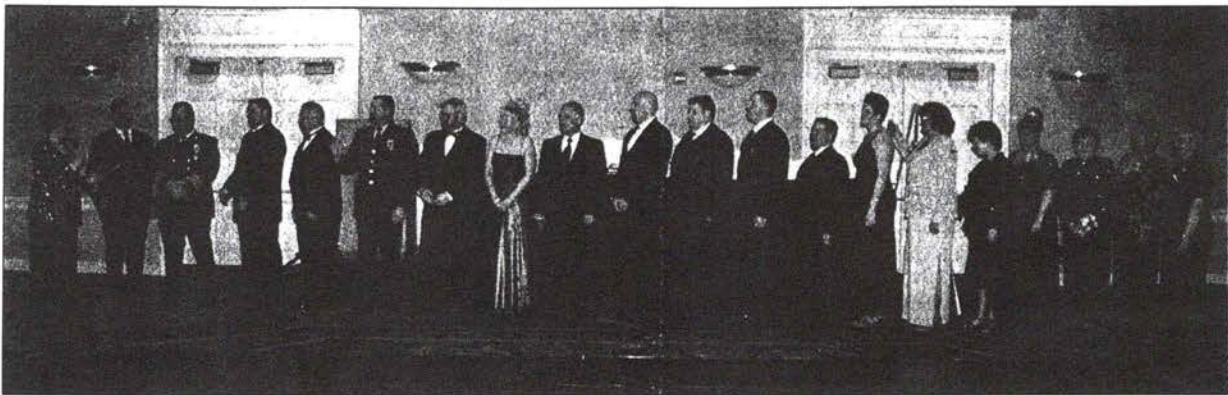
"You are coming closer and closer to shutting the doors of the upper county small departments with each budget process," Sharon Worthington, budget chair for the fire and EMS association, told members of the Harford County Council Thursday. Ultimately, she said, programs such as the revolving loan fund will end up hurting companies in the northern end that will have to end up borrowing from other sources to cover equipment costs.



Capital Clipping Service

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Fire & Rescue Volunteers Mark 50th Anniversary



Mayor Judith Davis (far left) swears in the newly elected officers of the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad and the Ladies Auxiliary.

by Randy Crenweige

On March 12 the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc., (GVFD&RS) and Ladies Auxiliary held their 50th Anniversary Banquet and Awards Ceremony at the University of Maryland, University College, Inn and Conference Center.

Numerous proclamations, awards and certificates of appreciation were awarded to the fire department and its members, firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs).

According to the banquet brochure, "the 50th Anniversary Banquet is proudly dedicated to the men and women who had the vision to foresee and begin the Greenbelt Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue Squad, Inc., and Ladies Auxiliary 50 years ago."

The GVFD&RS and Ladies Auxiliary received proclamations for its 50th anniversary from County Executive Jack Johnson; the Prince George's County Council (signed and presented by Councilmember Douglas J.J. Peters); the City of Greenbelt; the Maryland State Fireman's Association; the Ladies Auxiliary of the Maryland State Fireman's Association; and the P.G. Fire/EMS Department, Lawrence Sedgwick, Jr., fire chief.

The banquet began with welcoming remarks by Jay Remenick, past president; invocation by Greenbelt Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain Kathryn Reynolds; dinner; introduction of guests by Jay Remenick and then presentation of awards by Remenick. Fire Chief Brian Rudy and Ladies Auxiliary President Nancy Remenick. Ladies Auxiliary Chap-

lain Kathryn Reynolds gave the benediction. After the awards ceremony a dance hosted by East Coast Sound Productions, Mike Quaid-DJ, was held until 1 a.m.

The following awards were presented. Firefighter of the Year was awarded to Randy "LR" Krob for his dedication, motivation and enthusiasm. The Combined President and Chief's Award was given to George Moore for his contribution and dedication. The Chief's Award was presented to Jason Morgall. The President's Award went to Teresa Ann Crisman for continued support and dedication. Jason Doane received the Training Award for obtaining Firefighter I, Firefighter II and EMT within a three month period. Honorary Membership was presented to the Greenbelt Mayor Judith Davis and Councilmembers Rodney Roberts, Ed Putens, Leta Mach and Konrad Herling.

Certificates of Appreciation were presented to live-ins Calder "Tre" Robertson, Robbie Tripe, Jason Doane and Frances Caron. Tripe was cited for hard work and dedication. Kelley Piper and Stacy Brown were recognized for creating and maintaining the department's outstanding website.

The administrative officers for 2005 were elected as follows: president, Donald Fleshman; vice president, Jay Remenick; secretary, Wayne Lewis; treasurer, Margaret Dutton; Gene Davis, assistant to the president; and Matthew Palmerton, assistant to the secretary.

The following are trustees for 2004 and 2005: John Daffron, Donald Fleshman, Robert Holland, Randall (Tick) Mangum, Jay Remenick, Brian Rudy and Ken-

neth Stair.

The administrative officers of 2004 were Jay Remenick, president; Donald Fleshman, vice president; Wayne Lewis, secretary; and Margaret Dutton, treasurer.

Line officers for 2005 are as follows: Brian Rudy, fire chief; Jason Morgall, assistant fire chief; Robert Holland, deputy fire chief; Matthew Palmerton and Christopher Ransom, 2005 captains. John Daffron, Kristie Krob and Sean Leahy are 2005 lieutenants.

Line officers for 2004 included Brian Rudy, fire chief; John (Dicky) Wynkoop, assistant fire chief; John Morgall, deputy fire chief; Robert (Tommy) Holland, Matthew Palmerton and Christopher Ransom, captains; and John (Bigger) Daffron, Kristie Krob and Sean Leahy, lieutenants.

Career personnel for 2004 and 2005 include Lieutenant Robert Rouse, Technician William (Fred) Dunn, Firefighter Ivan Beard, Firefighter John Chambers, Firefighter Benjamin Collins and Firefighter Anthony Ryan.

In 2004 there were 1,651 fire calls and 1,796 EMS calls. Top five live-out responders included Andrew Moffitt with 273 calls, Sean Leahy with 246, John Daffron with 169, Kelly Piper with 158 and Marcus Paxton and James Silcox tied with 153 calls each. Married firemen responded to fire and EMS calls as follows: John "LR" Krob responded to 327 calls, John Voigt attended 251, Randall "Tick" Mangum responded to 248, Kristie Krob worked 224 and Matthew Kulle worked 146 calls.

Service awards for five years of service to the department include Joseph Compton III and John Michelitch. Calder Robertson has 10 years of service. Pins for 15 years of service were awarded to Michael Burt, Matthew Palmerton, Tommy Ray, Brian Rudy and Ted Sacra. George Moore was awarded a pin for 20 years of service. Wayne Lewis, John "Dicky" Wynkoop and Jack "Randy" Krob have 30 years of service. John Voigt has been a member of



George Moore, right, receives the service award from Brian Rudy and Jay Remenick. Moore was also honored for 20 years of service.

years. Forty year pins were awarded to Michael Dutton, Robert Pergola and Kenneth Stair. Members with 45 years of service include Dave Hissey and Maurice Palmerton. Those members of the department who have accrued 50 years of outstanding service include Francis "Ben" Kolbenschlag, Robert Mogel, Paul Rousseau and Henry Wynkoop, Jr.

Life members of the GVFD&RS include Harry Atherholt, Barry Bordas, Gene Davis, Margaret Dutton, Michael Dutton, Walter Dutton, D. Christopher Fleshman, William Hissey, Robert Holland, Lawrence Hughes, Vernon Iseli, Emory Kerr, Francis Kolbenschlag, Jack Krob, Wayne Lewis, Randall Mangum, Camillo Mascio, Edward J. Meier, Jr., Billy Mims, Jr., Robert Mogel, Maurice Palmerton, Matthew Palmerton, Robert Pergola, Jay Remenick, Brian Rudy, Ted E. Sacra, Kenneth Stair, James Stratchko, John Voigt, Robert Walter, Mathew Weber, D. Michael Wilson, Henry Wynkoop, Jr., and John Wynkoop.

Ladies Auxiliary Officers include President Nancy Remenick, Vice President Teresa Crisman, Secretary Donna Mangum, Treasurer Theresa Wynkoop, Historian Pauline Bordas, Chaplain Kathryn

Reynolds and Guard Dorth Leslie.

Service awards for the Ladies Auxiliary include five years, F Lewis; 10 years, Teri Heinicke; years, Diane Ronchi; 20 years, Teresa Crisman and Ka Legendre; 30 years, Ka Reynolds; 35 years, Nai Remenick; 40 years, Margi McKenney; and 50 years, Paul Bordas, Cleo Dutton and B Wynkoop.

Ladies Auxiliary Life Members include Pauline Bordas, Mary F Crisman, Teresa Ann Crisman, E (Cleo) Dutton, Kathleen Legendre, Dorothea Leslie, Margaret Kenney, Peggy Pergola, Na Remenick, Kathryn Reynolds, Ter Wynkoop, Diane Ronchi and F Zoellner.

Pauline Bordas received the dies Auxiliary 2004 Preside Award for her unselfishness dedication.

Honorary members of GVFD&RS include Tracy Ander Kay Angell, Stacey Burns, Ke Campbell, Tom Christy, Bob Haines, Debbie Huffman, Bar Johnson, Mary Keller, Earl P Keith Quail, Kim Wells, M Werlein, Trish Williams, St Wisemen, Bill Wolfe and Thor White.



Ladies Auxiliary president Nancy Remenick honors charter members Pauline Bordas and Henry Wynkoop, center, for 50 years of service and Mike Dutton for 40 years.



<http://www.baltimoresun.com/technology/bal-bz.himowitz14apr14.1.6718243.column>

911 service improving for Web calls, cell phones

Mike Himowitz

April 14, 2005

WHAT DO YOU do when there's a fire in the kitchen, or you wake up and hear burglars, or when somebody slips on the stairs and breaks a leg? For almost three decades, Americans have dialed 911.

No matter where we were, those three numbers connected us to local dispatchers who could summon firefighters, police or paramedics. Most of the time, we didn't even have to know where we were. Thanks to technology, the dispatcher already knew and could send help.

But now we're a nation of cell phone users - 170 million at last count - calling one another from cars, trains, bikes, jogging paths, restaurants and locker rooms, not to mention from different cities. And a handful of us are starting to make calls from phones that aren't even phones in the real sense: they're gadgets that digitize our voices, turn them into data and route them over the Internet, a technology known as Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).

The problem with cell phones and, more recently, with VoIP services is that they gained popularity before anyone figured out how to integrate them with the nation's emergency response system.

True, you can make a 911 call from a cell phone or VoIP telephone and you'll probably get someone to answer. But it might not always be the right emergency call center and the person on the other end might have no way of knowing exactly where you are.

Fortunately, that's changing for the better. In Maryland, all but four counties - Garrett, Allegany, Worcester and Prince George's - have upgraded their 911 systems to provide the physical location of cell phone callers within 100 yards or so.

Gordon Deans, executive director of Maryland's Emergency Number Systems Board, said he expects all Maryland 911 systems to be cell phone compliant by the end of June, six months before a deadline legislated by Congress.

How compliant your phone is depends on your carrier and your handset. Some cell phone providers use global positioning system satellites and chips built into newer phones to determine your location. Others triangulate your position using the location of the cell towers in your area. Some, Deans said, use a combination.

His recommendation is to check with your provider. If your phone isn't fully 911 compliant, look for a good deal on an upgrade and get a new phone.

Why the problem in the first place?

Until the late 1960s, to call a local police or fire department, you had to know the local phone number, which

was fine for folks staying at home, but not for travelers.

In regions with many small jurisdictions, those numbers could change every few miles. Nor could police and fire departments know with certainty whether the person calling them was within in their jurisdiction or anywhere near it.

After years of discussion, largely propelled by the country's fire chiefs, Congress and the Federal Communications Commission authorized a national emergency number system in 1967. In January 1968, AT&T announced that "911" would henceforth be the number to call for emergency aid anywhere in the country.

By the way, the first "official" 911 call was made in Haleyville, Ala. a month after AT&T's announcement, but it took decades for 911 systems to reach across the nation, and there are still a handful of counties in rural areas with no 911 service.

In truth, there is still no national 911 system, just a collection of local agreements between phone companies and public safety agencies.

At its heart, every 911 system serves as a direct link between your phone and your community's Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). That's the room where operators take emergency 911 calls and dispatch police, firefighters or ambulances to the trouble spot.

Although the first 911 systems merely connected callers with a local police or fire department, it became obvious that public safety agencies needed more.

The first problem was making sure that 911 calls reached the right emergency center for the caller's location. This sounds like a no-brainer, but it took some technological doing because the areas served by the phone company's central offices didn't always coincide with local political boundaries.

The next step was to provide PSAPs with the caller's phone number and street location. This has long been one of the most important safety features of the 911 system. If you suddenly find yourself gasping for air, and all you have the strength to do is pick up the phone and punch 911, that's all an operator needs to send help.

Once again, in an age of computers and Caller ID, this sounds like a simple job. But the analog phone systems of the 1950s and 1960s weren't hooked into computers the way they are today. The technology AT&T and others developed to provide automatic number identification (ANI) and automatic location information (ALI) was designed specifically for those old analog systems.

Now known as E911 (for Enhanced 911) the technology worked remarkably well for decades - until cell phones created the system of moving targets that existing 911 systems couldn't track without significant improvements and agreements with multiple wireless carriers.

VoIP technology, with its promise of cheap, unlimited long-distance dialing, presents its own set of safety problems. One is that VoIP systems route calls over the Internet, or over their carriers' dedicated networks. They're not tied to the regular phone system at all on the customer's end.

Although they may advertise themselves as replacements for regular phone service, most VoIP providers do not automatically synchronize with local E911 systems. Often they're set up to dial administrative numbers, which may or may not be answered by trained emergency personnel.

Some can automatically pass on phone number and location information to E911 systems, but many users don't

know that they have to provide that information and authorize its use. Even then, the quality of the tie-in depends on what deal the VoIP provider has struck with the local phone company and 911 system.

This has led to some nasty problems with customers who couldn't connect with 911 in emergencies.

In Maryland, Deans says, all local E911 systems have agreed to provide two lines staffed by trained emergency personnel for VoIP customers. However, it may take some time before VoIP providers can automatically pass location and phone number information.

Till then, it's fine to try VoIP, but if you're concerned about reaching police or fire in an emergency, don't give up your regular phone service.

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DAILY BANNER

CAMBRIDGE, MD
THURSDAY 6,750
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Plan for quicker ambulances

By Dave Ryan
Daily Banner

547FB

HURLOCK — Hurlock Mayor Don Bradley, the Hurlock Volunteer Fire Company, Dorchester County Emergency Medical Services and the Department of Public Safety plan to improve the response time of Hurlock's Ambulance Service.



Mayor Don Bradley

"The response time for ambulance service in Hurlock has increased to a point that is unacceptable," a statement from Public Safety Director Steve Williams said.

Mayor Bradley said, "The biggest problem they are having is during the day when they are at work," a reference to the ambulance crews.

He agreed that a Hurlock police officer will be permitted to drive a Hurlock VFC ambulance to respond with the Dorchester County Advance Life Support Unit stationed in Hurlock.

See Response — Page 2

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee to adhere to their wishes," Burn said. "I also amended the bill so that it will not divide the sheriff's office within Dorchester County to phase out

be divided into seven districts. This bill addresses the overwhelming

Response

Continued From Page 1

"This will greatly reduce the response time of an ambulance arriving on location and will insure that a local ambulance is available," the statement said.

It was agreed by all parties that the bill is temporary fix as the long-term plans to implement a Countywide EMS system to replace the current system.

available to the citizens of Hurlock in a reasonable time, a position applauded by the Dorchester County EMS System and Department of Public Safety.

The Hurlock VFC and Police Chief William Lamphere were also recognized for their cooperation and the commitment of their departments.

"I am pleased with the deal," Mayor Bradley said.

Read more comments on this issue at newsblog.info/06/01.

See the Editor Dave R. can be reached at 410-613-1111 or 410-613-1112.



<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/howard/bal-ho.overtime15apr15,1,1964117.story?coll=bal-local-howard>

Firefighters' overtime expected to hit a record

Howard County's bill for the fiscal year is estimated at \$3.3 million

By Melissa Harris
Sun Staff

April 15, 2005

When fire union President Richard L. Ruehl enters a Howard County station on any given day, he is not surprised to find three of the five firefighters on duty earning overtime.

The practice of relying on time and a half to provide basic emergency services has become so widespread that the fire department's overtime bill is expected to reach a record \$3.3 million this fiscal year, or \$1.5 million more than officials had planned.

This week, the department took its first major step toward fixing the problem. It hired 32 recruits, who will fill 22 vacancies and 10 new positions after finishing training. And leaders pledged that they will use a federal grant and savings from the old vacancies to cover the extra overtime and keep the fire department in the black.

Ruehl said Fire Chief Joseph A. Herr and County Executive James N. Robey have pushed policies that drove up overtime, including doubling firefighters' paid personal days and leaving vacant positions open for multiple years as a cushion for the overtime budget.

"We have always maintained that the long-term solution for adequate and safe staffing levels was to hire people, rather than intentionally hold open vacancies to cover for overtime," Ruehl said. "Overtime is a decent short-term fix, but overall it's not a very good practice."

Victoria Goodman, a county spokeswoman, said that tight budgets gave Herr and Robey little choice between overtime and hiring, and that the new recruit class proves that leaders are committed to not overextending their firefighters.

Since July 1, on average, six of the 58 firefighters working every day are on overtime.

Overtime is always a controversial subject for public safety leaders.

Fire departments must maintain certain levels of staffing to respond to emergencies in a timely and safe manner and to keep homeowners' insurance costs low. Circumstances that generate overtime, such as floods or snowstorms, are often unpredictable.

Howard County, however, is expected to be thousands of dollars more over its overtime budget than Anne Arundel County was in 2002. That county's \$7.2 million overtime bill -- just under \$1 million more than was budgeted -- cost its fire chief his job last year.

But a task force formed to investigate Anne Arundel's problem also found egregious abuses, including the use of overtime to renovate a warehouse after the county scrapped the project and the creation of unauthorized positions.

Ruehl, the fire union leader, said that similar examples of mismanagement are not a part of Howard's problem.

Instead, he said he believes Herr, who took the job in 2000 after years with Washington's much larger department, is trying to build a more sophisticated and well-trained force but is doing so with poor planning.

"I would say that there hasn't been as much attention paid to long-term solutions to the problem, as I thought there might have been," Ruehl said.

Fire department spokesman William Mould blamed the overtime on four factors -- only one of which was known at the beginning of the budget process, he said.

First, the fire department offered jobs to 14 paramedics earlier in the budget year, but the effort netted only two. Rather than allow some fire engines to go without a paramedic, Herr staffed them in most cases with people on overtime.

The failed recruitment effort caused a second surge in overtime when Herr opted to train 12 of his firefighters, including three volunteers, to a more advanced medical response level.

Each time a firefighter misses a shift, someone earning time and a half fills the spot. That means each hour of training costs at least 150 percent more than normal.

Another training program, called Urban Search and Rescue (USAR), is responsible for more overtime, but in some ways it is also the chief's saving grace.

A federal homeland security grant will eventually reimburse the cost of training about 40 Howard County firefighters to rescue people trapped under rubble or in other perilous situations. USAR is one of the most advanced disaster response programs in the country.

Finally, volunteer firefighters in West Friendship asked Herr to staff their station with a full-time paramedic at all times. Herr agreed, but he is using people on around-the-clock overtime to do the job.

Making that situation even more expensive, the union insisted that an officer fill the spot because Ruehl said it is "inappropriate" for a full-time firefighter to report to a volunteer.

"These efforts are not overly ambitious," said Goodman, Robey's spokeswoman. "Other initiatives, unfortunately, we can't move forward with at once, but some, like these, we can't afford to delay."

Ruehl added one more reason for the overtime bill. On Jan. 1, 2004, firefighters' paid personal leave days doubled from 28.8 hours to 57.6 hours, or about six days, a year.

Robey offered all county employees the perk during a tight budget year to compensate for smaller raises and fewer hires.

Ruehl said the union tried to persuade county leaders to give employees the cash equivalent of 28.8 more hours, rather than allow them to take more time off, which leads to open shifts and more overtime.

But Goodman said that county leaders did not have the cash, wanted to make the policy equal across all

departments and conducted a study that found Howard was low on personal leave time, compared with its neighbors.

"It would have been cheaper to pay us outright," Ruehl said.

Once the 32 new recruits are trained, Ruehl expects the department's overtime costs per firefighter to shrink, and he said he has repeatedly warned his members that that day is coming soon.

"I've tried to remind them that you don't come to work for overtime pay, you come to work for your base salary and any extras for advanced certifications," he said. "I've also told them to spend it wisely, and not rely on it for daily living."

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Capital Clipping Service

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Island congratulates 9 newly trained EMTs

By CHRIS LAVENDER

Special from The Star Democrat

Hoopers Island residents should sleep better now knowing there are nine new Emergency Medical Technicians living on the island.

The new EMTs joined their family and friends at the Waterman's Cate in Fishing Creek Tuesday night to celebrate and recognize their achievements. The new EMTs include John Blake, Kathy Blake, Sheila Brittingham, Cheryl Centerfeit, Chuck Davis, Marcus Flowers, Teresa Flowers, Brian Nichols, and Jennifer Truitt. They each completed 130 hours of course work between September 2004 and March 2005 which included both practical and written tests.

Before the nine new EMTs completed their course work, there was just one EMT on Hoopers Island, Rosemary Dean.

"We were short-handed for a long time," Dean said.

Several of the EMTs said Tuesday they looked forward to helping their neighbors.

"It will mean a lot to help people here," John Blake said. "We used to have to call other agencies to help us."

Both Centerfeit and Brittingham work at the Dorchester County 911 Center. Each said their EMT training will help them better serve people who call the 911 Center.

"It's great for a tight knit community to know you are helping people in the community you know," Centerfeit said. "We had to depend on surrounding communities before."

Wylie Gray, EMT instructor, helped train the new EMTs. "I have taught for 15 years," Gray said. "I have never had more support from a class."

Richard Yinger of the state EMS board congratulated the nine new EMTs. Yinger said he had met with the state EMS board earlier Tuesday and informed the board of Hoopers Island's accomplishment.

"They thought it was great," Yinger said. "The state board applauded you."

Hoopers Island Volunteer Fire Company President Steve Lewis also congratulated the new nine EMTs. "It's good to know I have got people in the community to help."

Lewis presented each of the nine EMTs with an accommodation from the Dorchester County Council congratulating them for completing the EMT training. The accommodation



Waterman's Cate at Hoopers Island hosted a dinner Tuesday night for nine new Emergency Medical Technicians. Pictured from left to right, back row, are Cheryl Centerfeit, John Blake, Mark Flowers and Jenny Truitt. Second row, from left to right, Brian Nichols and Chuck Davis.

was signed by Dorchester County Council President Glenn Brantle.

Each of the EMTs will have to be recertified in three years, Dean said. Dean said the EMT coursework was administered by Maryland Fire Rescue Institute and Maryland Emer-

gency Medical Systems.

Hoopers Island Volunteer Fire Company's six trustees, John Fetcho, Carlton Thomas, Larry Freidel, Calvin Travers, Tom Bosley and Mike Wiley also attended the ceremony Tuesday night at Waterman's Cate. Dean

said there are 35 active members in the Hoopers Island Volunteer Fire Company.

Dawn Abbott, Waterman's Cate owner, provided a turkey, mashed potato, corn and shrimp dinner for the EMTs and their friends Tuesday night.

PHOTO BY CHRIS LAVENDER

DORCHESTER STAR

CAMBRIDGE, MD
WEEKLY 11,400
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Back on Track will perform at a Relay for Life team dance this Saturday, April 16, including, from the left, Ron Harding, Bruce McWilliams, Lou Ralls, Tim Oakes and Dwayne Elzey.

Back on Track, Remember This to perform at Relay for Life

A number of fund-raising events are on the calendar as Dorchester teams get ready for the annual Relay for Life in June to benefit the American Cancer Society.

Cambridge EMS, Rescue Fire Company and the Cambridge Police Department Relay for Life teams have combined forces to plan a dance this Saturday, April 16, from 8 p.m. to midnight at American Legion Post 91 in Cambridge.

The \$10 donation requested provides admission to a dance featuring

two bands and DJ Ron Bromwell, filling in during breaks in the live music.

The two bands featured are Remember This and Back on Track.

Members of Remember This include Paul Hurley, Paul Cooper, Ray Fisher, Mike Baker, Buddy Mowbray and Darcy Harding. Members of Back on Track include Ron Harding, Lou Ralls, Dwayne Elzey, Bruce McWilliams and Tim Oakes.

Tickets should be available at the door or from members of the Relay for Life teams.



Also performing at the Relay for Life Dance will be Remember This, a band including Paul Hurley, Paul Cooper, Ray Fisher, Mike Baker and Buddy Mowbray. Not pictured: Darcy Harding



Capital Clipping Service

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PHOTO BY NICK MORONEY

Bobby Kimble, second from left, looks toward the camera as he and other members of Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company enjoy a ceremonial "pushback" of equipment into the new "drive-through base" at the firehouse. More photos on page A19.

Sudlersville VFC dedicates firehouse 'drive through'

Nick Moroney
Staff Writer

SUDLERSVILLE — At a ceremony held on April 10, members of Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company (Company 6) celebrated the new extension at the firehouse with town residents and local and area representatives.

Before the addition of the new drive-through base, some firefighting and emergency equipment had to be stored around town for lack of space.

"This building has been a long time coming," said Bill Faust, fire company president. "It's been 10 years since we've had all our equipment under one roof."

The space afforded by the new building offers "a safer environment" for volunteer firefighters and medical teams, Faust said.

"It was not very safe," said Faust, in reference to conditions before the new extension. "Our people were getting dressed as the equipment pulled out beside them."

Faust thanked the county com-

missioners, saying the county initiative offering length of service awards program "has worked well for us" in attracting and retaining recruits.

Fire company chief Malcolm Faust, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Lieutenant Amanda Niehaus and Debbie Shelton, president of the auxiliary, gave brief speeches thanking town residents and volunteers and life members for their contributions to the fire company.

Del. Richard Sossi (R-36-Queen Anne's) congratulated fire company members and said he was impressed by the brevity of the speeches. He joked that he wanted to invite fire company members to Annapolis where they could demonstrate to politicians that "you don't have to take an hour to say something!"

Queen Anne's County Commissioner Ben Cassell called the event "a celebration of community spirit for the whole county."

Cassell noted he had seen Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company trucks "down on the

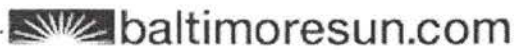
island (Kent Island) and all around" and that Sudlersville volunteers contribute to firefighting and other emergency response efforts throughout the county.

"It's a county effort and we're really proud of it," said Cassell.

Lee Sachs, first vice president of the Maryland State Firemen's Association (MSFA) which represents the vast majority of volunteer companies in Maryland reminded the gathering of the valuable service given by volunteers. He said estimates have been made showing a volunteer contributes work worth \$17.50 an hour.

"Imagine all the hours that people spend here for the community" — imagine how much is saved, said Sachs. He congratulated Sudlersville Volunteer Fire Company members and told them to "be safe."

Sudlersville needs more volunteer firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs). The Volunteer Fire Company is looking for new cadets, 14 to 16 years old. Call 410-438-3155 or log on at www.svf6.com.



<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/carroll/bal-ca.recruits17apr17,1,5893912.story>

Recruits respond to fire department's call

By Ellie Baublitz
Sun Staff

April 17, 2005

In search of new experiences and meaning in her life, Becky Tims decided to become a volunteer with the Sykesville-Freedom District Fire Department.

"I've been a wife and mother, I've worked in an office 25 years, I've never done anything physical like this," said Tims, 45, of Sykesville. "I'm afraid of heights, I'm claustrophobic, I freeze up - if somebody tells me to run, they'll have to carry me out."

Her decision to volunteer came after participating in the department's Firefighter Fantasy Weekend - "not only to challenge myself but also find out what kind of person it takes to get outside their comfort zone to do this," she said.

After struggling into 40 to 50 pounds of firefighter gear, climbing ladders, standing in a burning building and using rescue equipment on a mangled car, Tims felt enough confidence to sign up as a volunteer.

"I want to do hazmat cleanup and rescue support," she said, after being drawn by the action of several accidents and medical calls during a recent weekend. "It was the experience of a lifetime. I'm going to give myself six months and see what happens."

The Firefighter Fantasy Weekend was the culmination of an intensive six-month recruitment campaign, "Who Will Answer the Call?" by Sykesville to see whether an aggressive effort would bring in more volunteers.

"We had a tremendous response," said Bill Rehkopf, Sykesville's public information officer and the force behind the campaign. "We set a goal of 25 new members, and we're at 36 and counting."

Of those 36, nine are in an Emergency Medical Services class and 13 in firefighting class, said Ed Ruch Sr., Sykesville's fire chief.

The rest plan to do fund raising or administrative tasks.

The campaign ran from Fire Prevention Week in October to the Firefighter Fantasy Weekend earlier this month. The department posted large banners at the station, launched a new Web site, sponsored a screening of the movie Ladder 49 and visited the Eldersburg Home Depot and Wal-Mart with equipment, demonstrations, information and membership applications.

The fantasy weekend, where the public was invited to live the life of a firefighter over two days, attracted five women and two men, including Tims' son, Justin, 20. They spent Saturday morning at the Carroll County Fire Training Center in Westminster learning firefighter basics, then stayed that night at the firehouse.

To launch the campaign as a countywide pilot, Sykesville officials asked the Carroll County Volunteer

Emergency Services Association, which represents firefighters and other emergency services personnel, for \$2,000 last fall.

"One stipulation from the county association was for us to come back in May with a report, and I will tell them this is something every department in this county can do," Rehkopf said.

In the past decade, voluntarism has dropped to the point that many companies started hiring paid personnel to staff their stations as the number of calls rose.

In more recent years, CCVESA pushed the county for funding for round-the-clock EMS and emergency vehicle staffing.

"It's the amount of calls: We didn't have the volunteers and we couldn't guarantee the service," said Leon Fleming, CCVESA liaison to the county commissioners. "That's the only way we could guarantee the service to the people was to go to paid personnel."

Figures from the Carroll County Office of Public Safety show an increase in dispatched incidents from 10,728 in 1994 to 15,104 last year. A breakdown in that 10-year period showed fire calls up from 2,031 to 2,401; rescue calls up from 961 to 1,147; and EMS calls up from 6,079 to 9,510.

Fleming estimated that between 700 and 800 active volunteers answer calls, and that another 500 help with fund raising and administrative duties.

No figures were available on the number of volunteers in the county 10 years ago.

"We've been needing volunteers for years - with everybody working dual jobs, long commutes and families, people don't have the time," Ruch said. "The way the community is growing, we're getting busier and busier."

In 1994, Sykesville responded to 704 fire calls and 1,235 EMS calls. Last year, the station ran almost 800 fire calls and 2,000 EMS calls, Rehkopf said.

The word is already out on Sykesville's success with the recruitment campaign.

"Westminster talked about it at our last meeting, and we're going to look into doing something to bring in new people and keep the people we already have viable," said Jeff Alexander, assistant fire chief at Westminster fire company.

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<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/nationworld/nation/wire/chi-0504180176apr18.1.4256422.story>

From the Chicago Tribune

OKLAHOMA CITY: 10 YEARS LATER

New York City: Firehouses and police stations brace for 9/11 trauma

By Howard Witt
Tribune senior correspondent

April 18, 2005

NEW YORK -- Trauma experts commonly predict that the odds of any individual rescue worker at a disaster scene suffering post-traumatic stress disorder increase if there is massive loss of life. They rise further if the catastrophe was caused by an act of terrorism, the exposure is prolonged and rescuers directly experience extreme fear for their own lives. And the risk goes higher still if friends, relatives or colleagues die at the scene.

Every one of those risk factors was present on Sept. 11, 2001, at the site of the World Trade Center attacks in New York, in which unprecedented numbers of civilians and first responders were killed.

Now New York City police and fire officials are groping through uncharted psychiatric territory as they seek to protect the mental health of their entire departments from what could become an unprecedented crisis.

"In most events, the first responders are there in a helping capacity, not in a victim capacity," said Dr. Kerry Kelly, chief medical officer of the Fire Department of New York. "And you're usually there taking care of people who are essentially strangers. In this event, you had first responders who suddenly became part of the perished."

More than 340 New York City firefighters from 61 firehouses were killed when the trade center towers collapsed, many of them caught high in the stairwells as they raced upward to try to rescue victims. An additional 23 New York City police officers died as well, along with 37 Port Authority police officers and 7 paramedics. The civilian death toll was more than 2,300.

For the Fire Department, Sept. 11 was a family tragedy. Despite its mammoth size--more than 10,000 people--the department is really organized around each tightly knit individual firehouse. Many firefighters are closely interconnected through relatives, friends and neighbors, which magnified the impact of each loss.

Worse still, the firefighters were unable to recover every victim, despite spending months at the site in rotating 12-hour shifts, raking the millions of tons of debris down to dust.

"It was the first time in history that we left bodies behind--our bodies," said Malachy Corrigan, director of the FDNY Counseling Service Unit. "I can't overplay how important that was."

Unlike many fire departments in smaller American cities, the FDNY already had a large counseling unit in place at the time of the Sept. 11 attacks that is dedicated to helping firefighters deal with substance abuse problems and the traumas associated with "bad calls" that result in the deaths of civilians or firefighters.

For Corrigan, Sept. 11 meant a rapid and extraordinary expansion of his existing operation--he quickly stationed counselors directly in each of the firehouses where firefighters were lost--but at least he was not starting from scratch.

Nor did Corrigan choose to rely on standard protocols for Critical Incident Stress Management debriefings employed by most other fire departments across the country. He had determined long ago that rigid, large-group debriefings did not fit the insular culture found inside each New York City firehouse. Instead, each fire station conducted the same type of informal, after-action discussions around the kitchen table after Sept. 11 to which participants had long been accustomed.

"They call it a critique so it sounds like business, but they talk about everything," Corrigan said.

He hopes that the huge increases in the counseling unit's caseload indicate that firefighters who need help dealing with Sept. 11 trauma are seeking it out. Before the attacks, the unit handled an average of 600 new clients each year. In 2002, that number shot up to more than 4,500, and it stayed at more than four times the pre-Sept. 11 level in 2003 and 2004, according to FDNY figures.

Other figures, however, hint at the depth of the psychological problems the department is facing. From Sept. 11, 2001, through last January, the counseling unit had diagnosed 1,245 cases of anxiety, 809 cases of marital problems, 675 cases of depression and 394 cases of post-traumatic stress disorder. Alcohol and drug abuse cases nearly doubled from 2003 to 2004.

hwitt@tribune.com.

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DAILY BANNER

CAMBRIDGE, MD
MONDAY 6,750
APR 18 2005



Capital Clipping Service

27 W3
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Public Safety

● The Council agreed to consider as a part of the fiscal 2005/2006 budget deliberations a recommendation from the EMS User Fee Committee concerning a proposed budget which includes funding for the operation and maintenance of the three county-funded ALS stations, while continuing the current flat fee reimbursement per run for Cambridge Emergency Medical Services.

● Submitted a grant application of 445,217.80 to the Maryland Adult Offender Court-Ordered Community Service Program.

CAPITAL

ANNAPOLIS, MD
WEDNESDAY 45,303
APR 20 2005



Capital Clipping Service

4
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23

W3
XX...b

Kent Island: EMS chief named to state panel

Gov. Robert L. Ehrlich Jr. has appointed Scott Haas, chief of the Queen Anne's County Department of Emergency Services, to the state EMS Advisory Council.

The panel advises the state on rules, regulations and procedures for the effective operation of Maryland's emergency medical services.

Chief Haas moves to the state council after serving a two-year term as chairman of the Region IV EMS Advisory Council, covering the Eastern Shore.

"I'm really honored to have been nominated and selected to be the voice of Region IV," he said. "I've just been to my first meeting so I'm learning the functions of the council."

He began his career in emergency services more than 20 years ago when a neighbor kept prodding him to become a volunteer firefighter.

"But then I had a vehicle accident and was transported in an ambulance. I was so impressed by the people and the whole process," he said. "When I recovered I joined the Volunteer Fire Department."

He served as a volunteer paramedic with United Communities Fire Department on Kent Island for six years.

Today, he oversees a staff of 17 full-time and 14 part-time employees.

"We also have just under 300 volunteers in the county. They are the major makeup of the service. They give the time and do the work, but rarely get the thanks they deserve," Chief Haas said.

KENT ISLAND BAY TIMES

STEVENSVILLE, MD
WEEKLY 5,000
APR 20 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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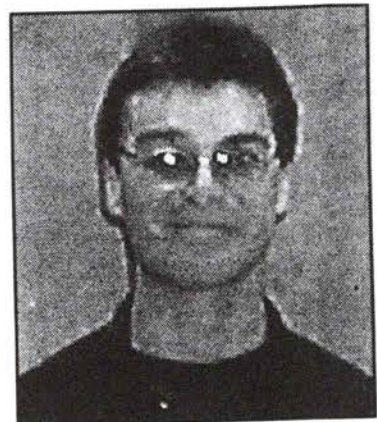
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W3
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Haas appointed to state EMS Advisory Council

547FB
CENTREVILLE — On March 30, Gov. Robert Ehrlich appointed Scott A. Haas, EMS chief for the Queen Anne's County Department of Emergency Services to the State EMS Advisory Council (SEMSAC.) SEMSAC serves as the principal advisory council to the State EMS Board on matters of finance, policy, guidelines, rules, regulations and procedures necessary for the efficient and effective operation of the statewide emergency medical services.

Haas has more than 15 years in emergency medical services and served as a volunteer paramedic for United Communities Volunteer Fire Department, before joining the Department of Emergency Services. Haas has served chief of the Emergency Services Division for seven years and has been responsible for building the EMS Division for the county.



SCOTT HAAS

Prior to this appointment Haas served as chairman of the Region IV EMS Advisory Council.

"Chief Haas' appointment to SEMSAC is quite an honor for the County and for Chief Haas," Commissioner R.O. 'Nemo' Niedomanski said. "It recognizes Scott's leadership and the considerable contributions Queen Anne's County EMS has made at the state level."

TIMES-RECORD

DENTON, MD
WEEKLY 4,900
APR 20 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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.X.3..

23

W3
XX....

House Bill 1606/Senate Bill 974 will be of interest to many Volunteer Fire Company members across the Eastern Shore. This bill will provide \$200,000 to the Board of Directors of the Maryland-Fire Rescue Services Memorial Foundation, Inc., for the planning, design, and construction of a monument in Annapolis, Maryland to honor all emergency fire, rescue, and EMS men and women who have given their lives in the line of duty while serving their communities.



Capital Clipping Service

75 22 11... V2

GC's Homeland Security Funding Reduced For '05

Garrett County will receive \$173,442 from the State Homeland Security Grant Program under the Fiscal Year 2005 allocation, Director Brad Frantz, GC Office of Emergency Management, told the county commissioners this week during a departmental update.

The grant will be divided into two sections, with more than \$160,000 going toward general emergency management items and the remainder to law enforcement concerns. 547FB

Frantz noted that the allocation was considerably smaller than FY 2004, which was \$372,209. That funding was divided into four sections: general emergency management, law enforcement, Community Emergency Response Training (CERT), and a planner's salary.

Part of the '04 funding is being used now. The CERT classes have begun, and security equipment for the courthouse was purchased and recently installed. Persons entering the rotunda for court sessions must now pass through metal detectors, staffed by sheriff's deputies.

Frantz said some of the '04 and the '05 funding will be used to purchase "big ticket" equipment to address communications and interoperability issues.

"I think it's still the biggest issue since 9/11 for us," the director said about the problems that local emergency responders face when trying to communicate with each other in the region's mountainous terrain.

For FY '03 Homeland Security funding, the county received more than \$36,000 for Phase I and more than \$94,000 for Phase II.

Frantz also reported that Garrett, Allegany, and Washington counties had received \$2.7 million from the state's Emergency Numbers Systems Board for an aerial mapping project. Using orthophotography, the project will provide clear photos of the county's topography and structures.

The photos can then be overlaid with information such as road names and surface types, property and sanitary districts, tax maps, and police and rescue jurisdictions. The maps, therefore, will be useful in many areas, including public safety, economic development, property management, and

Continued on Page A-3

Funding Reduced

Continued from Page A-1

planning.

Deb Carpenter, geographical information systems specialist with the Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Development, is leading the project.

The director noted that one of the planes involved in the endeavor crashed and burned at the Garrett County Airport last Thursday, injuring two Mississippi men. Frantz said the mapping project would not be delayed, as most of the photos had already been taken. The orthophotography needed to be completed before the leaves came out on trees.

Frantz added that the

Emergency Numbers Systems Board had also awarded \$677,000 for a 9-1-1 project. The county will use its share to purchase new command center equipment.

Frantz also told the commissioners that a grant had been secured through the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems (MIEMSS). The money will be used to purchase seven more automated external defibrillators (AEDs) for the county's AED program.

"The program is going very well," the director said, adding that it was not costing the county anything in the long run. "It's a grant that's very productive."

The new AEDs will be placed in Southern and Northern middle schools, the Visitors Center, Cherry Hill Assisted Living, Garrett

College, a Sheriff's Office patrol unit, and a Department of Natural Resource's Search and Rescue unit.

Other defibrillators purchased with MIEMSS grants are located throughout the county, including in the courthouse, high schools, and fire and rescue units.

Those wanting the AEDs must agree to receive training on using them before they can receive the devices. Assistant director Phil Rook, GC Office of Emergency Management, provides the training.

Frantz said some persons are hesitant to receive the training because of liability issues. He stressed, however, that there were no problems with liability, as those trained would be covered by Good Samaritan laws.

OCEAN CITY DIGEST

OCEAN CITY, MD
WEEKLY
APR 21 2005



Capital Clipping Service

487
.X.4.. 150 XX... W3

City Hall looks at \$62.2M budget

City will hammer out details in the next few weeks

By Jennifer Lehman
Staff Writer

(April 15, 2005) Over the next few weeks, Ocean City officials will be discussing, debating and preparing the town's annual budget - a financial plan that will provide an economic outline for the upcoming year.



City Manager
Dennis Dare

On Tuesday, City Manager Dennis Dare presented the City Council with the first draft of the budget.

"The preparation of the annual budget may be the most difficult thing we do, but it is arguably the most important," he said. "It is the budget that sets forth the blueprint of

what services we provide."

The proposed budget increases from \$57.8 million last year to \$62.2 million, Dare said, explaining the boost is mostly due to a 16 percent increase in assessments.

In the next month, city officials will lay out funds for municipal services, which include public safety, planning, recreation and economic vitality.

"We are making headway in repairing our infrastructure," Dare said. "I am confident that addressing our needs now, and continuing our cost conscious management, will allow even further tax rate reductions in the future."

Budget hearings began on Wednesday and will continue until May 16, when the first reading will be heard during the City Council meeting.

All budget hearings are open to the public and will be held in Council Chambers of City Hall, unless otherwise noted.

The schedule

- April 18 - 4 p.m. Risk.
- April 19 - 1 p.m. Solid Waste and Recycling; 2 p.m. Maintenance; 3 p.m.

Construction; and 4 p.m. Admin. and Engineering Capital Projects.

- April 20 - 3 p.m. Wastewater.

- April 21 - 1 p.m. mayor and City Council, City Manager, Finance, Legal, and Special Appeals; 3 p.m. Transportation Airport (to be held in the Council conference room).

- April 22 - 3 p.m. Purchasing Vehicle Trust

- April 25 - 1 p.m. Recreation, Parks, Special Events, and Festivals; 3 p.m. Beach Patrol and Golf Course.

- April 28 - 3 p.m. City Clerk, Convention Center, Tourism and Museum.

- May 3 - 3 p.m. Emergency Medical Services; 4 p.m. Police (to be held in the council conference room).

- May 4 - 3 p.m. Communications Electronics; 4 p.m. Fire Marshal; 5 p.m. Fire Company.

- May 6 - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Budget Wrap-Up.

- May 9 - 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Budget Wrap-Up.

- May 16 - First reading of FY-06 Budget.

REPUBLICAN

OAKLAND, MD
WEEKLY 11,072
APR 21 2005



Capital Clipping Service

75
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22

XX... W2

547FB THANK YOU

We would like to thank all those who offered support and concern during the illness of our son Kenny Bratthwaite. The overwhelming thoughtfulness to our family from so many caring people during the last several months is greatly appreciated. The words thank you will never cover how we feel to all who helped and assisted our family.

A special thanks goes to the Mt. Storm Ambulance, EMS, and Valley Medical Transport. Also to the doctors, nurses, and the staff at Potomac Valley Hospital, Pittsburgh Children's Hospital, University of Pittsburgh Presby Hospital, Rehabilitation Center, the Garrett Rehabilitation Services, MeadWestvaco Clinic, an earnest thanks for all the excellent care on behalf of Kenny. We would like to thank all those who visited Kenny and brought gifts to him while he was in the Potomac Hospitals. We are so fortunate to have such considerate family members, neighbors, & friends. We will never be able to thank them enough.

Another heartfelt thanks goes to our co-workers at MeadWestvaco, Mineral County Sheriff's Department, and the Mineral County Courthouse for all the concern and gifts given to us. The support given to us from the staff and faculty at Union Education Complex and the UEC Boosters Club was outstanding and means so much to us. We indeed want to thank the Elk District Volunteer Fire Company for planning and hosting the benefit dinner. To those who assisted with the dinner, namely the Nethken Hill Methodist Church Ladies, New Creek Fire Department, those who donated toward the dinner, namely the Nethken Hill Methodist Church Ladies, New Creek Fire Department, those who donated toward the dinner and most of all those who attended the benefit, we thank you. We would like to sincerely thank all of the local churches for their gifts of love, prayers and support. We know that Kenny had many prayers said on his behalf. To all the churches who placed his name on their prayer chains, we are truly thankful.

We may never know of everyone who prayed for, contributed to, or helped our family in any way during this time, but we will be forever thankful.

Kenny Bratthwaite & Family

ENQUIRER-GAZETTE

UPPER MARLBORO, MD
WEEKLY 9,000
APR 21 2005



Capital Clipping Service

98
X.3... 8 XX... 14

Upper Marlboro woman receives fire/EMS honor

BY JILL MURPHY
STAFF WRITER

In her wallet, Thelmetria Michaelides carries the varied certification cards that reflect the many hats she wears in the Prince Georges County Fire/EMS Department. Beginning as a dispatcher 18 years ago, Michaelides has moved up to lieutenant, capable of investigating fires and defusing bombs.

Her constant pursuit of opportunities to challenge herself within the department recently won the Upper Marlboro resident the title of Emergency Medical Services/Emergency Response Technician of the Year, presented by the County Council of the American Legion on April 18. Her extensive fire and EMS training also won her the Southern Maryland district award, which will be given in the next few weeks.

"I want to experience everything," Michaelides said. "If I am told something is a tough job that women don't have the strength to do, I want to prove them wrong."

Michaelides was studying to be a doctor at the University of the District of Columbia when she was recruited to join the department in 1987. A year later, her career as an emergency medical technician (EMT) took off, and she eventually reached the highest level in the field, EMT/Paramedic.

But she soon became restless

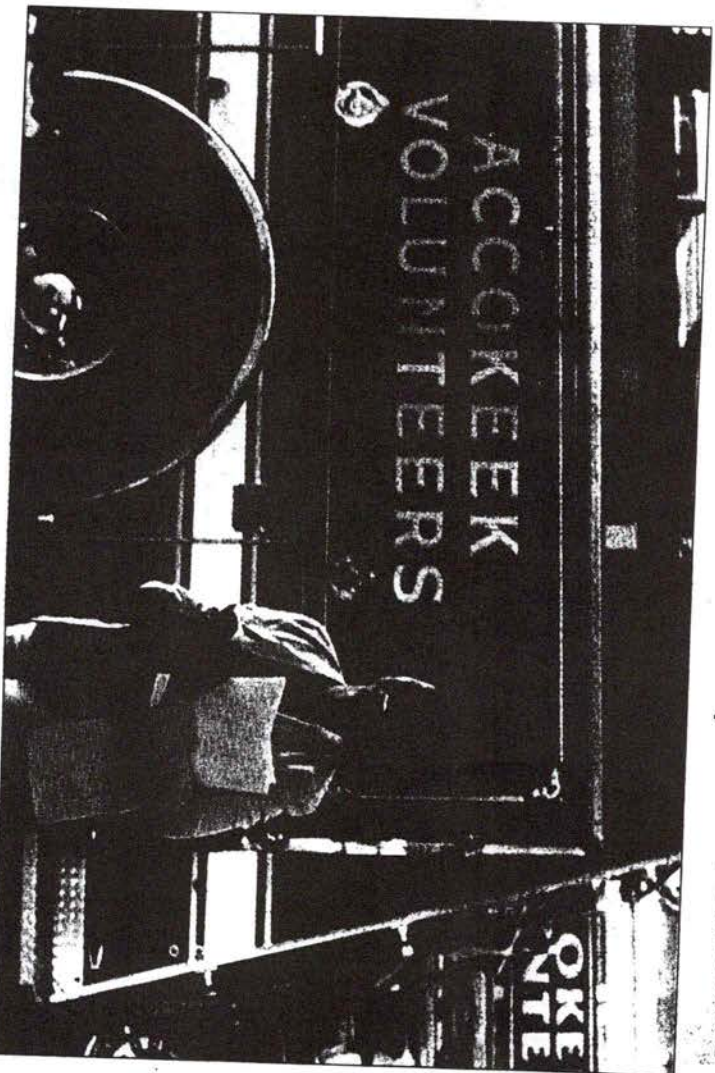


PHOTO BY BARBARA SALISBURY
Lt. Thelmetria Michaelides walks through the Accokeek Volunteer Fire Department after completing paperwork on an investigation regarding a truck fire with one of the volunteers. Michaelides, who has worked with the county fire department for 18 years, was recently named Emergency Medical Technician and Emergency Response Technician of the year.

and in 1992 she said she began looking for other avenues in the department.

"She's always doing something new," Diane Cunningham, a 16-year co-worker in the department, said. "And it's not because she's a firehouse housewife."

doesn't finish what she tries. That's not who she is."

At the time, career options for paramedics in the department were limited, Cunningham said.

"I wanted to be cross-trained as

cause they wouldn't take EMS. There were not enough of us," Michaelides said.

When a pilot program opened in 1998, Michaelides was among

ERT

Continued from Page A-1

the five chosen to take a 12-week accelerated course in fire fighting.

"I just kept pushing," Michaelides said. "I was often fighting alone."

Upon graduating, the first five cross-trained members did not even have a title in the department. Most members referred to Michaelides as a "Paramedic/Firefighter," she said.

Now, there are 240 career Emergency Response Technicians (ERT) in the department. Last month, Michaelides was promoted to Emergency Response Lieutenant.

She forced another door opened in 1999, when EMS em-

ployees were allowed to apply for fire investigation, Michaelides said. After seven weeks of fire, arson and investigation courses and 29 weeks of training at the police academy, she was promoted to fire investigator. In 2003, Michaelides spent a year on the Arson Task Force, hunting the area's serial arsonist.

Yet, every time an announcement for the county bomb squad was posted, Michaelides submitted her application.

"After 9/11, I really wanted to join the bomb squad to learn how to protect my family," said Michaelides, a mother of three.

Finally in October 2004, Michaelides was chosen to attend bomb school.

Of her 32 classmates, the field was narrowed to 10, with Michaelides positioned in the

top four in the class—along with three men.

"After they sent two guys to be certified [as a bomb technician], I started to make inquiries," Michaelides said. "So I was the third to go."

Upon graduating in November, Michaelides became the second female and the first African-American female bomb technician in the county. On April 4, she was called out to her first bomb incident, when a pipe bomb was found in a house up for sale.

"We used a robot operator to go in and get the bomb," Michaelides said. In a 120-pound bomb suit, she used a disrupter to open the end caps before she shot the bomb.

Now, she keeps up her skills as a paramedic working 16 hours overtime every month as

an EMT. Michaelides is also anticipating her captain's exam, which comes up every two years. Although she is eligible to retire after 20 years, she said there is more to accomplish before she leaves.

"I'll go back to school and get my degree in fire science before I leave the department," she said. Then, she hopes to find a job in homeland security. But she will be missed in the department.

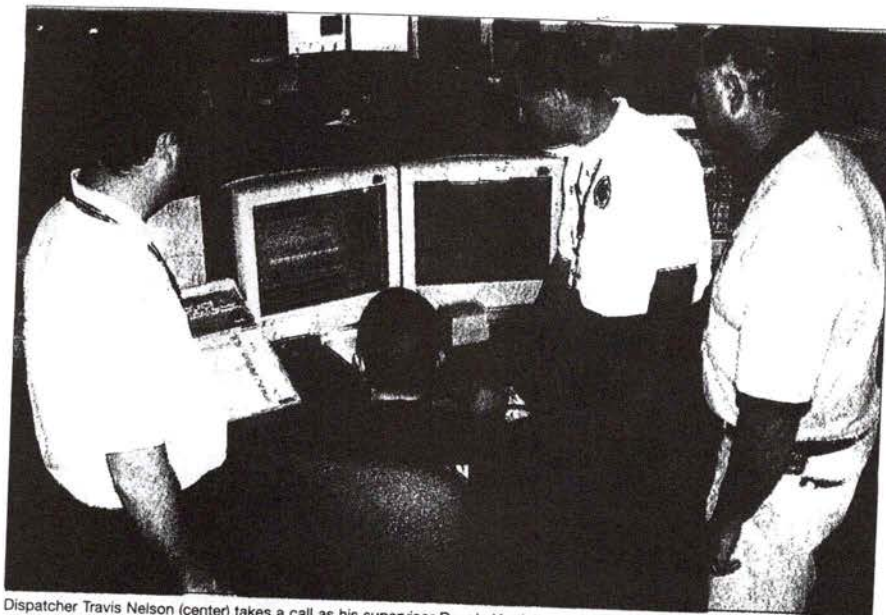
"She is a role model for women," Cunningham said. "Some are following her precedent as an ERT and also a fire investigator. I would say it's her courage to move forward and do what she wanted despite obstacles that inspires others."

E-mail Jill Murphy at jimurphy@gazette.net.



Capital Clipping Service

147 23 11... 93



Dispatcher Travis Nelson (center) takes a call as his supervisor Ronnie Harrison (left) and Robbie Blackiston and Director John Chew look on. A similar photo, below right, was snapped 40 years ago on April 20, 1965, when the central alarm was put into effect and MSP clerks handled the fire calls.

QA's EOC celebrates 40 years

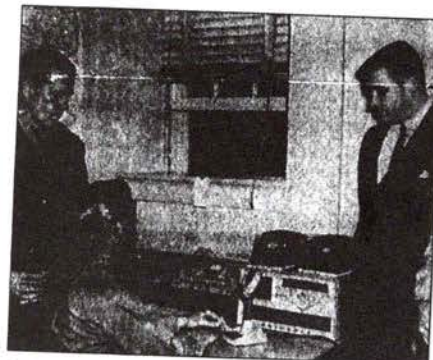
Dan Tabler
Contributing Writer

CENTREVILLE — Emergency communications have improved tremendously in Queen Anne's County from 3 p.m. on April 20, 1965, when Maryland State Police clerks began handling fire calls from a central location.

In that first year of operation from the basement offices of the State Police detachment in what is now the county office building just off Commerce Street in Centreville, the clerks logged just 245 fire and ambulance alarms.

Last year, in the state-of-the-art Queen Anne's Emergency Services Department's ever-expanding building, outside Centreville off Route 304, and inside the sophisticated communications room, a grand total of 42,430 calls were handled by 19 dispatchers.

While the State Police clerks in 1965 also handled their own police emergency calls, the newly-named Fire Board was able to get the volunteer fire companies dispatched quicker with a single telephone number. Prior to that, each town with a fire company in the county had to depend on the siren being sounded by someone in a store or a home without the central system.



In the first year of operation from the basement offices of the State Police detachment, 245 fire and ambulance alarms were logged.

By the way, the first alarm into the 1965 Fire Board was to a grass fire in Grasonville, logged at 9:46 p.m. on April 21.

The Fire Board, which also acted as the Civil Defense warning center, remained here until 1974, when it moved, along with the State Police, into the new County Roads Department building, located just a few hundred yards from the present EOC building.

Two years later, because of the increase in calls for both the State Police and the Fire Board, as the county continued to expand and traffic increased on Route 30 and 301, the county hired its own dispatchers. While the operations were separated, they remained in the same communications room.

See EOC
Page A18



Capital Clipping Service

147 23 83
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Dispatcher Travis Nelson (center) takes a call as his supervisor Ronnie Harrison (left) and Robbie Blackiston and Director John Chew look on. A similar photo, below right, was snapped 40 years ago on April 20, 1965, when the central alarm was put into effect and MSP clerks handled the fire calls.

QA's EOC celebrates 40 years

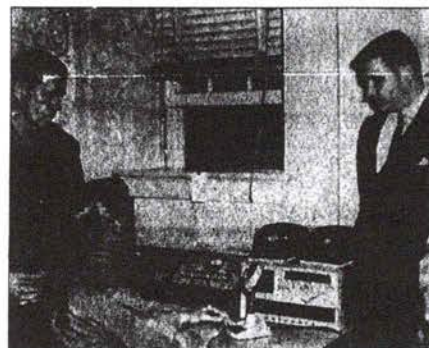
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See EOC
Page A18

RECORD

HA'IRE DE GRACE, MD
WEEKLY 2,000
APR 22 2005



Capital Clipping Service

60
X.4... 23 X1....

EMS pay plan in works in Aberdeen, county

By Jessica Aldon

Local staff

Aberdeen Fire Department, once an all-volunteer organization, is working with other fire companies and the county on a new ambulance service foundation designed to be the basis for paid EMS service in the city that will supplement the volunteer service.

Aberdeen Fire Department has been paying some ambulance personnel for three years.

That was the message delivered Thursday to the Aberdeen City Council Thursday during

Saying an all-volunteer

ambulance service is no longer capable of efficiently dealing with the number of calls for service in Aberdeen and the surrounding area, Rick Kosko, treasurer of the fire department, told the city council the fire department received 3,300 calls for service in 2004.

More than 600 of those calls were for fires and more than 2,000 were ambulance calls. Kosko said the fire department spent about \$4.1 million on those calls.

He also told the city council

it is becoming more and more difficult for the fire department to recruit and keep volunteers. He said the training for EMS workers especially has become more time-consuming, and getting volunteers to commit to training and hours is difficult.

"Our calls for service over the past five years have ranged between 3,300 to 3,500 and we've been paying our EMS workers for three years, to help our volunteers compensate," Kosko said.

He said the EMS foundation is in the works to pay EMS

workers around the county. He said there will be at least one EMT at the firehouse 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Kosko also told the city council the fire department is working on replacing Aberdeen House 3 on Route 22. The project is in its third year and the building has been designed. The fire department is moving into the construction phase of the project, which Kosko estimated will cost between \$750,000 and \$1 million. The county has put \$450,000 in its budget for the project.

The fire company and the

city are also working with the state to purchase the land adjacent to House 3, which starts at the driveway of the fire house to DiMarco Park.

The fire department is also looking at replacing the 30-year-old boiler at the main firehouse on Franklin Street.

Also, at the staff meeting, Aberdeen Police Chief Randy Rudy said, upon residents' requests, police have been doing traffic details in the Windemere subdivision, where residents were complaining people were going too fast. Rudy said 10 citations were

issued between April 12 and 21; 71.4 percent of the citations issued for speeding were issued to Windemere residents. He said the police will continue to do the traffic details until the number of citations issued dwindles.

Aberdeen had a closed meeting before the staff meeting to discuss personnel matters and to discuss with the city's lawyer what to do about the settlement to the Susquehanna River Basin Commission. The city owes money to the SRBC for its water overage problem.

MARYLAND GAZETTE

GLEN BURNIE, MD
SATURDAY 38,000
APR 23 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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W9

Volunteer fire chief demoted

Action follows opposition to new ambulance plan

By JEFF HORSEMAN
Staff Writer

The Odenton Volunteer Fire Company chief was stripped of his rank Tuesday, the latest salvo in a dispute between the company and the county Fire Department over ambulance service.

Chuck Rogers got a letter informing him of his demotion from volunteer chief to volunteer firefighter as efforts to extinguish a fire-alarm brush fire in Gambrills wrapped up, according to Bob Rose, vice president of the Odenton company.

The demotion will last at least 60 days, according to the suspension letter obtained by the *Maryland Gazette*. At the end of that period, Mr. Rogers will have to meet with county Fire Chief Ronald D. Blackwell

to determine whether his rank will be reinstated.

Mr. Rose called the demotion "retribution" for the company's opposition to the new "one-and-one" ambulance plan that went into effect on Monday. One paramedic and one emergency medical technician ride in an ambulance, instead of the old system that assigned paramedics to 15 stations in teams of two. Now 20 stations have advanced care ambulances.

Odenton is still operating under the old system, and hasn't implemented advanced care personnel or services.

Mr. Rogers can continue to volunteer for the company, but no longer has the privileges of an officer. That means he can work on fires, but can't wear an officer's insignia, for

(See CHIEF, Page A12)

CHIEF

(Continued from Page A1)

instance.

Contacted Wednesday morning, Mr. Rogers deferred all questions to Mr. Rose.

County Battalion Chief Frank Stamm confirmed the demotion.

In demoting Mr. Rogers, county Deputy Chief Mark J. Pfister Sr. criticized him for his "willful disregard for the department's Rules and Regulations, Code of Conduct and the safety of the citizens of Anne Arundel County."

The company issued its own release, stating that Mr. Rogers never received a direct order to participate in a new ambulance strategy.

Noting that this is National Volunteer Week — intended to honor volunteers — the release stated that in its treatment of Mr. Rogers, "The Anne Arundel County Fire Department has chosen a very different approach."

The county maintains that the new distribution of paramedics will improve emergency care for all residents. But the Odenton company has a long

list of concerns.

The company strongly opposes a plan to convert its basic, volunteer-run ambulance unit into an advanced one. Basic units have EMTs; advanced units carry paramedics capable of performing more tasks.

The company argues that its basic unit saves the county money and takes the burden off advanced ambulance units by handling low-priority patients.

"You're taking a volunteer service that's of great benefit to the county and casting it aside," Mr. Rose said.

In its list of grievances, the company also maintains that its basic unit is one of the county's busiest, transporting more than 1,200 patients to hospitals in 2004.

Chief Stamm, however, said when other factors such as ambulance prep time are included, they show the need for an advanced ambulance unit in Odenton.

While commending the Odenton volunteer ambulance, Chief Stamm said, "Bottom line, you have to look at what is best for the citizens."

A high percentage of calls for advanced ambulances occur in the Odenton area,

Chief Stamm added. Advanced ambulances typically answer calls involving serious trauma, cardio-respiratory ailments and other conditions.

The county criticized the Odenton company in a statement announcing the new ambulance plan.

"The unwillingness to accept the (advanced) ambulance would have caused a significant service interruption to residents of the West County," the release read.

Mr. Rose said the company has repeatedly asked to meet with Chief Blackwell, but has been stonewalled.

"I don't want to judge the man," Mr. Rose said. "But he seems to have difficulty in making himself available to volunteers."

Chief Stamm said Chief Blackwell has met with volunteers, including those at Odenton, on several occasions.

While describing the action as a "multi-phase process," Chief Stamm said he's hopeful that the county and the company can come to a resolution.

"The department wants to open up a dialogue with Odenton about (an advanced ambulance) down the road," he said.

BRUNSWICK CITIZEN

BRUNSWICK, MD
WEEKLY 3,400
APR 28 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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New fire hall to occupy all of IKO land donation

547FB
Ambulance co. bid for site appears too late

by Donna Lear

The Brunswick Fire Company is moving forward with its plans to build a new fire hall, not on land Co. 5 bought along Rt. 17 but on a parcel of land further west that's being donated for that purpose by the developers of Brunswick Crossing.

This parcel of land within the IKO development was first offered as a building site to both the Brunswick Fire and the Brunswick Ambulance companies.

In our November 29, 2001 issue, THE CITIZEN reported IKO president Lou Iaquinia offered both companies a building site on the Hope Farm, if annexation was approved. Acreage for "public works" was set aside: one acre for a water tower and about 4.5 acres for joint use by the two companies.

It was a good offer for both companies, but particularly for the BFD. IKO offered to buy the building site the fire company would no longer

need for \$150,000, which would be significant 'seed money' for a new social hall.

At the time—a year before the annexation—comments by Clair Ebersole and Roy Lipscomb were positive.

"I'm all for it," said Ebersole, president of the ambulance company. "There is no advantage that I can see to not take Lou up on his offer. You'd have to be a pure fool to turn that down."

"I think it's a good move and will help us get a building sooner," said Lipscomb.

Even then, there were words of caution. Iaquinia stressed he would try to work with the two companies on the plan, but added, "Whether they want to work together is up to them."

In 2001, Lipscomb and Ebersole both said the two companies would not be joined in one large building, but wanted to maintain separate identities.

"If it's going to be one building, they'll have their own separate bays and we'll have ours," said Lipscomb. "There'd probably be a wall dividing the two areas."

The Brunswick Fire Company had been working on plans for a new hall long before Iaquinia's proposal. Lipscomb said they purchased land two years prior to the Hope/Enfield annexation and had already invested significant money on planning, starting with architect fees of \$35,000.

"We asked the ambulance company then if they wanted to build with us on that land," said Lip-

[Cont. on p. 6]

Fire hall

[Cont. from p. 1]

scomb Tuesday. "They said no. When the offer came up again later through Lou, they weren't interested. We moved forward."

After a meeting in Rosemont where the fire company talked to Burgess Ebersole and the commissioners about de-annexing the Rosemont portion of the fire company land, the issue arose again.

Ebersole sent laquinta an e-mail asking if there was any property available in Brunswick Crossing for the ambulance company. Laquinta's answer was no; the fire company was using all of the available acreage for construction of a 100x200 foot fire hall and social hall with 180 parking spaces.

"I thought it was a done deal," said Ebersole of Co. 19's chance for a new hall site, "but we'd really been out of the loop. We never heard anything from the developers until two weeks ago."

Funding an issue

In the meantime, the fire company went forward with plans for the new building, continuing to request Capital Improvement Plan funding from the County, a process begun six years ago. The fire company was approved for CIP funds to build the fire hall, but not the social hall. Funding for planning is to begin July 1, 2005 (FY '06), but construction funding was pushed back from FY '07 to 2008 (July of 2007).

"We didn't want to go to the County for money," said Lipscomb, "but we had to. It costs \$2.5 million to build a firehall. Spreading that out over 30 years gives us a monthly mortgage of \$7,500 to \$7,900. We can't afford that. Asking for CIP funds was a last resort."

After getting funding approval, Lipscomb said he's gone before the commissioners every year to ask that the BFD firehall remain in the CIP. The company has, he said, been working on this consistently for a long time.

People have asked why the County was willing to build on fire company land when it has never been County property, to pay for things not on County property.

Commissioner Mike Cady was at the Rosemont meeting Monday and said that was true, but added a leasing arrangement would be

Lipscomb said as far as he knows, the land would become County property and a 99-year lease worked out, with the County charging the company \$1 per year to lease the land.

Why no more room?

Why doesn't IKO simply provide more acreage, to make space for the ambulance company?

"The parcel has never changed in size," said Jerry Connelly of Pleasants Development, partner with IKO. "It's more complicated than just deciding to give more land."

Land use was spelled out in the annexation agreement and Brunswick Region Plan, Connelly explained, and changing the parcel size could violate both documents.

Even putting both facilities on one parcel has grown complicated. Parking would be greatly decreased for both companies, due to setbacks and building requirements.

Lipscomb said adequate parking is a key issue for the fire company in terms of social hall use.

"Brunswick gets about 75 people in for bingo on Friday nights. If you go out to Lovettsville on Saturday, there are 300 people playing Bingo," said Lipscomb. "I asked them why."

Lipscomb was told two things: parking and stairs. People didn't want to struggle to find a parking space, and then don't want to walk up the long flight of stairs into the current social hall.

"You know the movie, *Field of Dreams*—if you build it, they will come?" Lipscomb asked. "Well, I think of the fire hall like that. I'm hoping if we build it, we'll get 300 people on Friday nights, too. If we build it, maybe they'll come."

Co. 19 wants to share

The ambulance company has similar dreams.

Ebersole said everyone on the ambulance board signed a letter earlier this month, stating they were all in agreement and wanted to talk to the fire company about sharing the parcel of land.

Councilmember Beth Johnson, liaison from the City council to the ambulance company, is working to get both groups together.

Johnson said she became interested in the situation because she believes that "as residents, we should want both of our emergency

and greatest state-of-the-art facilities. Both deserve them."

She spoke to County manager Doug Browning about the situation, asking whether the ambulance company could apply on its own for CIP funding.

"Certainly they could. It wouldn't necessarily be approved, but they could apply," Browning said. "From a cost perspective, in my opinion—and it's just my opinion—one building would be more cost effective to build and maintain."

"But," he continued, "it's up to the two independent companies whether they were interested in that. The County certainly would not impose that on them."

Laquinta said he believes the "ball is in the hands of the fire department and the ambulance service to see if they want to make a marriage."

And both Mayor Carroll Jones and City Administrator Dave Dunn said from the City's perspective, it was up to the two groups to come to a consensus.

"I don't see that we have a place at that table," said Dunn, "especially at the 11th hour—and this is really past the 11th hour."

"This is an issue that must be resolved between Co. 5 and Co. 19," said Jones. "If they agree, we'll support it, but the decision's up to them."

Connelly said the original offer by laquinta goes back to "Lou's father and his desire to do something for the fire company."

"He's really trying hard to do everything right, but we can't solve every problem in Brunswick," said Connelly. "What will be really shameful is if nothing is done—if

the County looks at this and says it's such a mess that they pull the funding. They can change the CIP any time they want.

"We want to build something that will be an asset to the community years down the road," said Connelly. "Do we do something right or do we do nothing at all? We want to be able to do this right." ■

BRUNSWICK CITIZEN

BRUNSWICK, MD
WEEKLY 3,400
APR 28 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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The Citizen — 6

Comment

Urge County to fund fire hall

Sad to see: a situation in which all parties set out with good intentions to work for the best of Brunswick, but things don't turn out as expected.

In 2001, IKO president Lou Iaquina got the local nickname of "Uncle Lou" for the wonderful array of things he promised Brunswick, if the City would only annex the Hope and Enfield farms. One of those things was land for the fire and the ambulance companies to build new stations on. This offer was certainly an important factor for many of the people who eventually voted in favor of annexation.

No one set out to propose a sweetheart deal for just one of the two companies. But the Brunswick Fire Company already had plans in motion to build, kept pushing those plans forward, and has secured a promise of County funding to build an actual hall.

The Brunswick Ambulance Company has not obtained an architect's plan for a building or approached the County each year about CIP funding, as has the fire company.

We, like many other local people, are sad to find that now there's no room on the IKO site for a shared hall or two separate stations. It does seem like the ambulance company is getting a raw deal. On the other hand, the fire company has worked steadily and publicly toward its goal of a new station along Rt. 17.

We urge the County to continue looking favorably on Co. 5's plans and to keep funding in the CIP for the fire hall project. And we urge Brunswick citizens to look for ways to support the ambulance company as it plans for the future. Rosemont residents' discussion of a sizable donation to both fire and rescue companies is certainly a step in the right direction.

GAZETTE (MOUNT AIRY)

MT. AIRY, MD
WEEKLY 10,000
APR 28 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Ambulance Subscription renewal

The Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Co. will be mailing renewal notices for the Ambulance Club subscriptions at the end of April. Subscriptions will be effective from July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006. The Mount Airy VFC bills a patient's insurance for all transports; the average cost of a transport is \$400 to \$500. When the insurance will not cover the charges, the patient will be responsible for the co-pay. Members of the Mount Airy VFC Ambulance Club are not responsible for any amount not covered by their insurance.

Membership is open to all residents in the Mount Airy VFC first due area. The fire company has a reciprocity agreement with Frederick County so residents that belong to the Frederick County Ambulance Club do not need to join both. The Frederick County membership will be honored by the local fire company.

Those not receiving a membership package, but interested in joining can call 301-829-0100, voice-mail number 43, and leave name and address.

MARYLAND REGISTER

ANNAPOLIS, MD
BI-WEEKLY 3,600
APR 29 2005



Capital Clipping Service

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Title 30
MARYLAND INSTITUTE FOR
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
SYSTEMS (MIEMSS) 50 703

Subtitle 08 DESIGNATION OF TRAUMA AND
SPECIALTY REFERRAL CENTERS

30.08.12 Perinatal and Neonatal Referral Cen-
ter Standards

Authority: Education Article, §13-509,
Annotated Code of Maryland

Notice of Final Action

[05-033-F]

On April 12, 2005, the State Emergency Medical Services Board adopted amendments to Regulation .02, the repeal of existing Regulations .03 — .16, and new Regulations .03 — .15 under COMAR 30.08.12 **Perinatal and Neonatal Referral Center Standards**. This action, which was proposed for adoption in 32:2 Md. R. 196 — 201 (January 21, 2005), has been adopted as proposed.

Effective Date: May 15, 2005.

ROBERT R. BASS, M.D.
Executive Director

minium. For example, a statement concerning the right of the council of unit owners to terminate contracts under RP §11-133, without a clear discussion of the impact of the Master Condominium structure on that right, would be misleading. Similarly, a suggestion that a CCRC structured as a condominium would permit a resident to benefit from any increase in the unit's value would be misleading without some explanation of how the Master Condominium structure could affect and perhaps diminish that equity.

Of course, the contemplated development would also be subject to the statutes governing continuing care, which have their own disclosure standards. See Article 70B, §§7 through 23. Similar or additional disclosures could be required by the Department of Aging in the disclosure statement furnished to prospective CCRC residents. Id., §11C(c)(22) (disclosure statement must include "material information concerning the facility or the provider as the Department requires...").

IV Conclusion

In our opinion, the proposed Master Condominium structure would not violate RP §11-133. However, the vendor must provide enhanced disclosure concerning the impact of that structure on the powers of the council of unit owners of the Residential Unit and on the equity interest of the residential unit owners. The General Assembly may wish to consider the desirability of amending the Condominium Act to increase the protection of residential unit owners in a condominium project comprised of a mixture of residential and nonresidential units.

J. Joseph Curran, Jr., Attorney General
Jeffrey H. Myers, Assistant Attorney General
George Hughes, Assistant Attorney General
Robert N. McDonald, Chief Counsel, Opinions and Advice

Cite as: 90 Opinions of the Attorney General 45 (2005)

February 7, 2005

Jay L. Liner, County Attorney
Amanda S. Conn, Assistant County Attorney
Baltimore County Office of Law
Old Court House
400 Washington Avenue
Towson, Maryland 21204

You have asked for our opinion about the extent to which an "event report" created by the Baltimore County Fire Department to record the dispatch of an ambulance is disclosable in response to a request under the Public Information Act. You are primarily concerned with medical information and "patient identifiers" that may appear in that record. In addition, you ask whether the privacy rights of a minor transported by ambulance may be waived by the child's mother, if the mother's parental rights have been terminated by a court.

Consistent with our guidelines for opinion requests from local governments, you provided your own well researched opinion on these questions. In that opinion, you concluded the Maryland Confidentiality of Medical Records Law ("Medical Records Law") bars the release of medical information, as well as patient identifiers, in an event report when the record is associated with the dispatch of an ambu-

lance to a particular address. You argued that, when a patch record is associated with a particular address, medical information that appears in the record could readily be linked to the individual transported by the ambulance. You reasoned that it would therefore be a "medical record" subject to the restrictions on disclosure set forth in the Medical Records Law. You also concluded that, when a mother's rental rights have been terminated with respect to a child, she is no longer a "person in interest" for purposes of the Medical Records Law, and therefore may not waive privacy rights of the child under that law.

We agree that medical information about an individual that appears in an event report should not be publicly disclosed except to a person in interest, although we reach that conclusion by a slightly different route. We do not believe that an event report fits the definition of "medical record" under the Medical Records Law; however, medical information about an individual that appears in an event report must be withheld from disclosure under an exception in the Public Information Act. The identity of the person who was transported by ambulance may be disclosed if it appears in the record.

We also agree with your conclusion that a mother whose parental rights have been terminated is not a person in interest for purposes of the Medical Records Law. Nor would she ordinarily be a person in interest under the Public Information Act.

I Background

A. Ambulance Dispatch Records

Your inquiry concerns disclosure of a type of record entitled "Baltimore County Fire Department Events Report" which is also often referred to as an ambulance or fire "dispatch record." These forms, which exist in both electronic and paper formats, are used to record basic information about every incident to which the County Fire Department responds — e.g., fires, rescue calls, medical emergencies.

For example, when a 911 call requires the dispatch of emergency medical personnel, the event report will include basic information about the 911 call, identify the units that were dispatched in response to the call, and record the times of various events involved in the response (e.g., dispatch, arrival at the scene, arrival at a hospital, return to station, and similar events). The dispatch record may contain medical information about an individual in need of assistance, including the symptoms or condition of an ill or injured individual. It may also include information on the person's medical history or disease status. This information will be used to determine the appropriate personnel and equipment to send in response to the call.

Event reports are maintained electronically by the 911 call center, and in paper form by various units of the Fire Department, for up to six months. A copy printed out by a responding emergency medical services unit is destroyed immediately after the incident. Aggregate data from the reports are submitted to the State and federal governments as part of the National Fire Incident Reporting System program. See <www.nfirs.fema.gov>; see also 44 CFR §§152.4, 152.7. We understand that individual event reports are not otherwise disseminated.

The emergency medical services personnel assigned to an ambulance also create an "ambulance run sheet" for each transport conducted by the ambulance. The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems ("MIEMSS") has approved a form known as the MAIS ("Maryland Ambu-

lance Information System") form for this purpose. See User's Manual for Maryland Ambulance Information System, <www.miemss.org/mais2003.pdf>. The run sheet, or MAIS form, contains detailed information concerning the itinerary of the ambulance during a particular call, vital signs and other medical information about the person transported, and the treatment provided to the patient. *Id.* at p. 2. One copy of the form is sent to MIEMSS, and another copy is left with the receiving hospital for inclusion in its records. *Id.* at p.18; COMAR 30.03.04.04.¹

B. Request for Dispatch Record

We understand that the Fire Department received a request from a newspaper reporter for "any and all information" in its possession concerning a 911 call for emergency ambulance service at a particular address on a specified date during the past year. The Fire Department provided a copy of the dispatch record for that incident, but redacted portions of the record, including the part that described information provided by the caller to the 911 operator as well as a "patient identifier." The newspaper questioned whether the material should have been redacted. This raised the issue of what information on the dispatch record related to that call is available for public inspection and what information, if any, must be withheld.

II

Disclosure of Dispatch Records

A. General Rule of Disclosure

The Public Information Act ("PIA") governs the disclosure of records in the custody of a government entity such as a county fire department. Annotated Code of Maryland, State Government Article ("SG"), §10-611 et seq. There is no question that a dispatch record falls within the PIA's broad definition of "public record." It is "documentary material . . . made by [the fire department] . . . in connection with the transaction of public business." SG §10-611(g).

The PIA provides, as a general rule, that "[a]ll persons are entitled to have access to information about the affairs of government and the official acts of public officials and employees." SG §10-612(a). The statute is to be construed liberally in favor of permitting inspection of public records "unless an unwarranted invasion of privacy" would result. SG §10-612(b). A government agency is required by the PIA to permit inspection of any public record at any reasonable time "[e]xcept as otherwise provided by law." SG §10-613(a)(1). The PIA thus defers to other laws that confer confidentiality on records, or parts of records. In addition, various exceptions in the PIA itself forbid the disclosure of specific types of records, forbid the disclosure of specific information, or give the custodian of a record discretion to withhold certain types of records, or part of a record, if that decision is in the public interest. SG §10-615 through §10-618.

Thus, a fire dispatch record in the custody of a county fire department is open to public inspection under the PIA, unless another law or an exception in the PIA provides otherwise. Cf. 71 *Opinions of the Attorney General* 288 (1986) (recordings of 911 calls themselves are public records available for public inspection, unless an exception to the general

rule of disclosure applies). Two provisions of State law may limit the disclosure of medical information in the possession of a county fire department: (1) the Maryland Confidentiality of Medical Records Act, Annotated Code of Maryland Health-General Article ("HG"), §4-301 et seq.; and (2) the medical information exception in the PIA, SG §10-617(b).

B. Medical Records Law

1. Limitations on Disclosure

The Maryland Confidentiality of Medical Records Act ("Medical Records Law") generally requires health care providers and others to preserve the confidentiality of medical records. HG §4-302(a). Special restrictions apply to mental health records. HG §4-307. However, the restrictions do not apply to "information . . . not kept in the medical record of patient . . . that is related to the administration of a health care facility. . . ." HG §4-302(b)(1).

In certain circumstances, the Medical Records Law allows disclosure of medical records with the written authorization or stipulation of the patient or another "person in interest." HG §§4-303, 4-306(b)(6)(ii). In addition to the patient, the term "person in interest" in the Medical Records Law can include a health care agent, a personal representative of a deceased person, a parent of a minor in some circumstances and an attorney for an individual who would otherwise qualify as a "person in interest" himself or herself. HG §4-301(k). There are also some circumstances, set forth in the statute, in which a medical record may be disclosed without the authorization of a person in interest. HG §§4-305, 4-306. Even when the Medical Records Law allows disclosure of a medical record it restricts redisclosure of the record by the person receiving it. HG §4-302(d).

The evident purpose of the statute is "to bolster the privacy rights of patients. The legislature recognized that, because of the personal and sensitive nature of one's medical records, a patient might experience emotional and financial harm if his medical records are improperly used or disclosed. It was further desired that the Act would enable health care providers to retain the full trust and confidence of their patients." *Warner v. Lerner*, 115 Md. App. 428, 431-32, 693 A.2d 394 (1997), *rev'd on other grounds*, 348 Md. 733, 705 A.2d 1169 (1998); see also Chapter 480, Preamble, Laws of Maryland 1990.

The Medical Records Law controls the dissemination of "medical records" in the possession of "health care providers." Thus, the definitions of those key terms determine the application of the statute.

² A federal law also could potentially govern disclosure of records related to ambulance runs. However, that law apparently does not apply to the Fire Department.

Regulations issued under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 ("HIPAA"), established national standards for the protection of health information in the custody of "covered entities." See 88 *Opinions of the Attorney General* (2003) [Opinion No. 03-022 (December 18, 2003)]. A "covered entity" includes a health care provider that transmits health information in electronic form in connection with a transaction. 45 CFR §160.103. A "transaction" is defined as the "transmission of information between two parties to carry out financial or administrative activities related to health care." *Id.*

You have explained that, while the Fire Department provides health care to individuals in connection with emergency services, it does not bill for those services or transmit health information in electronic form in connection with those services. Accordingly, we agree with your conclusion that the HIPAA regulations do not apply in this context. Compare *Tex. Atty. Gen. Op. ORD 681*, 2004 WL 292160 (municipal EMS provider that transmits health information electronically is "covered entity" under HIPAA). *A*

¹ This use of run sheets is typical of ambulance services. See, e.g., *United States v. Freitag*, 230 F.3d 1019, 1021 n.4 (7th Cir. 2000); see also *Ohio Op. Atty. Gen.* 2001-041, 2001 WL 1246071 at *3 (ambulance run sheets typically are incorporated in receiving hospital's chart for patient to ensure, for example, that medications are not duplicated).

2. Provider

The Medical Records Law defines "health care provider" to mean:

(i) A person who is licensed, certified, or otherwise authorized under the Health Occupations Article or §13-516 of the Education Article to provide health care in the ordinary course of business or practice of a profession or in an approved education or training program;

(ii) A facility where health care is provided to patients . . .

HG §4-301(h)(1). The term also encompasses the agents and employees of a provider. HG §4-301(h)(2).

You advise that all 911 operators and fire dispatchers in Baltimore County are trained as emergency medical dispatchers ("EMDs") and licensed by MIEMSS under Annotated Code of Maryland, Education Article ("ED"), §13-516. In addition, the Fire Department, through its emergency medical technicians, who are also licensed under ED §13-516, undoubtedly provides health care to those transported by its ambulances. Without delving into the question whether the dispatchers themselves "provide health care," we shall assume that the dispatch records are in the possession of a "provider" for purposes of the Medical Records Law.³

3. Medical Record

For purposes of the Medical Records Law, "medical record" is defined as:

any oral, written, or other transmission in any form or medium of information that:

(1) is entered into the record of a patient . . .;

(2) identifies or can readily be associated with the identity of a patient . . .; and

(3) relates to the health care of the patient . . .

HG §4-301(g)(1). "Health care" in turn is broadly defined to include "any care, treatment, or procedure by a health care provider . . . to diagnose, evaluate, rehabilitate, manage, treat, or maintain the physical or mental condition of a patient . . . or that affects the structure or any function of the human body." HG §4-301(f).

A dispatch record is clearly a "written . . . transmission in any form or medium of information." Depending on the precise contents of a particular dispatch record, it may be identified with particular individuals — i.e., the 911 caller and the person in need of assistance.⁴ It may, but does not always, contain information relating to the health care of an individual. In some instances, the caller may relate symptoms or other information about the medical condition of the person in need of assistance. In other instances, the caller may simply report an event — e.g., an automobile accident — from which the need for medical assistance may be inferred.

To our knowledge, the dispatch record is not entered into "the record of a patient." Rather, it is kept in a database of records pertaining to a wide variety of incidents, including 911 calls and other emergency assistance requests, many of which contain no medical information. This database is ultimately

used to report aggregate data to a central database under a federal program. At most, the dispatch record falls within a category of records "not kept in the medical record of a patient . . . that is related to the administration of a health care facility . . ." HG §4-302(b)(1). This is in contrast to the ambulance run sheet, which contains information that becomes part of the patient's record at the receiving hospital.⁵

In our view, a dispatch record is not a "medical record" under the Medical Records Law.

C. PIA Exception for Medical Information

One of the exceptions to the PIA's general rule of disclosure concerns medical information relating to an individual. The statute provides:

(a) Unless otherwise provided by law . . .

(b)(1) Subject to paragraph (2) of this subsection, a custodian shall deny inspection of the part of a public record that contains medical or psychological information about an individual, other than an autopsy report of a medical examiner.

(2) A custodian shall permit the person in interest to inspect the public record to the extent permitted under [HG] §4-304(a). . .

SG §10-617(a)-(b). Thus, regardless of whether medical information about an individual is contained in a "medical record," a government entity may not disclose that information except to a person in interest. To the extent that the medical information is "reasonably severable" from the record, a custodian must allow inspection of other portions of the record. SG §10-614(b)(3)(iii).

The purpose underlying the exception for "medical information about an individual" in SG §10-617(b) is the same as that underlying the Medical Records Law, and other laws that make various health care records confidential — to preserve a zone of privacy for an individual's medical condition and treatment. The exception in SG §10-617(b) applies that policy in some contexts that are not encompassed by the Medical Records Law.

In our opinion, much of the information in a dispatch record will not fall within the "medical information" exception in SG §10-617(b). In particular, the identity of the individual who called the 911 operator or of the person in need of assistance would not fall within this exception or, to our knowledge, any other exception in the PIA.⁶ On the other hand, statements about an injured or ill person's symptoms or condition that have been provided to a 911 operator and recorded on the ambulance dispatch record are "medical information" that must be withheld under the PIA. See 71 *Opinions of the Attorney General* 288, 292 (1986). While the PIA is generally to be construed liberally in favor of disclosure of records, that policy is tempered when disclosure would result in "an unwarranted invasion of privacy of a person in interest." SG §10-612(b).

⁵ An ambulance run sheet may fit the definition of a "medical record," particularly if it records information concerning the patient's vital signs and any treatment administered by ambulance personnel and if it is intended to be included in the receiving hospital's chart. See 2001 Ohio Op. Atty. Gen. No. 041, 2001 WL 1246071 (ambulance run sheet may be a medical record exempt from disclosure under Ohio public records law).

⁶ Compare 22 Kan. Op. Atty. Gen. 37, 1988 WL 429767 (identities of persons transported by an emergency medical services vehicle are subject to disclosure under Kansas open records law); with Neb. Atty. Gen. Op. 116, 1985 WL 168601 (name and treatment afforded patient in county-run ambulance should be redacted from response to public records request).

³ The Medical Records Law does not apply to medical records held by the County Fire Department other than in its capacity as a "provider" of medical care. See 71 *Opinions of the Attorney General* 297, 301 n.6 (1986).

⁴ We understand that only the name of the 911 caller appears in the dispatch record that is the subject of your request, although some descriptive information about the individual in need of assistance also appears in the record.

Thus, to the extent that there is specific information in the record concerning an individual's medical history or condition, it should be redacted before the record is disclosed.⁷ 71 Opinions of the Attorney General 288, 292 (1986). Of course, the individual who has requested the record must be advised of the fact of redaction and the reason and statutory basis for withholding the information. SG §10-614(b)(3).

We understand that the newspaper that made the PIA request has suggested that the Fire Department could redact identifying information about the patient and otherwise disclose medical information in the fire dispatch record without running afoul of the PIA. It argues that, because more than one person likely resided at the address to which the ambulance was summoned, the medical information in the dispatch record could not be precisely identified to one individual. However, we do not believe that a record with medical information need name or identify an individual with precision to fit within the exception. Even when a name or other direct identifier is redacted, medical information might still be "about an individual" if the unredacted information sharply narrows the class of individuals to whom the medical information might apply. The PIA request in question sought information concerning an ambulance run to a specific address on a specific date. Even if information that named the person transported were withheld, any medical information in the record would remain "medical information about an individual" and, given the specification of date and address in the request, could likely be matched to a particular individual. The PIA itself recognizes that an address is an item of "personal information" that can identify a person with reasonable certainty. See SG §§10-611(f), 10-624(a).⁸ In our opinion, a custodian applying the medical information exception may draw the same inference that the PIA itself does.

In sum, information in the dispatch record about the identity of the person who called 911 and the person who was transported by ambulance should be disclosed. Medical information concerning the individual transported in the ambulance should be redacted pursuant to SG §10-617(b).

Finally, in some circumstances, the PIA allows a custodian discretion to grant access to otherwise confidential information for research purposes under circumstances that protect the identities of the individuals to whom the records

⁷ In the situation that prompted your request, we have not had access to the redacted information — and properly so, if it is indeed medical information about an individual. Therefore, we do not assess the merits of the claimed exemption in this particular case. If the matter were litigated, a court could review the redacted information *in camera* to determine the merits of the asserted exemption.

⁸ Although the federal HIPAA regulations on medical record privacy are not directly applicable here, see footnote 2 above, they would lead to the same conclusion. Those regulations anticipate that medical information concerning a patient could be disclosed in certain circumstances when the information is adequately "de-identified" — i.e., the medical information is sufficiently removed from any patient-identifying information that it becomes impossible to associate the medical information with a particular patient. See 45 CFR §164.514(a)-(b). Under those regulations, a record including a street address would not be adequately de-identified. 45 CFR §164.514(b)(2)(i)(B). Similarly, federal regulations governing the confidentiality of patient records related to drug and alcohol abuse programs define "patient-identifying information" to include an address. 42 CFR §2.11.

pertain. SG §10-624(e).⁹ The legislative history of this section indicates that it was intended to allow access to medical information. See Governor's Information Practices Commission, Final Report 544-46 (1982). However, the even report was not sought under this provision and, given that the PIA request cited in your inquiry was directed to a specific 911 call, the research provision of the PIA would not pertain.

III

Person in Interest: Effect of Termination of Parental Rights

You advise that the County received a letter from the mother of the child who is the subject of the dispatch record. In that letter, the mother authorized the release of the child's medical records, including the ambulance dispatch record, to two newspaper reporters. However, the County determined that the mother's parental rights with respect to this child had been terminated by court order three years earlier and that the child was in the custody of a local department of social services at the time of the ambulance call.¹⁰

In your letter, you analyzed the validity of the mother's authorization as follows:

The State medical records law requires a health care provider to disclose a medical record "on the authorization of a person in interest." HG §4-303(a). Thus, the question that must be answered is whether a parent whose rights have been terminated is a "person in interest" under the State medical records law. "Person in interest" is defined as a "parent of a minor, except if the parent's authority to consent to medical treatment for the minor has been specifically limited by a court order" or "a person authorized to consent to health care for the minor consistent with the authority granted." HG §4-301(k)(5)(i) and (ii).

⁹ That provision reads:

The official custodian may permit inspection of personal records for which inspection otherwise is not authorized by a person who is engaged in a research project if:

(1) the researcher submits to the official custodian a written request that:

(i) describes the purpose of the research project;
(ii) describes the intent, if any, to publish the findings;
(iii) describes the nature of the requested personal records;

(iv) describes the safeguards that the researcher would take to protect the identity of the persons in interest; and

(v) states that persons in interest will not be contacted unless the official custodian approves and monitors the contact;

(2) the official custodian is satisfied that the proposed safeguards will prevent the disclosure of the identity of the persons in interest; and

(3) the researcher makes an agreement with the unit or instrumentality that:

(i) defines the scope of the research project;
(ii) sets out the safeguards for protecting the identity of the persons in interest; and

(iii) states that a breach of any condition of the agreement is a breach of contract.

SG §10-624(e). For these purposes, "personal record" is defined as a record that names an individual or, "with reasonable certainty," identifies the individual by an address, description, finger or voice print, number, or picture. SG §10-624(a).

¹⁰ You indicated that the child who was the subject of the record is now deceased.

In our view, since the mother's parental rights concerning the child were terminated in 2001, the mother is not a "person in interest" under the State medical records law. Certainly, the court order terminating the mother's parental rights to the child who is the subject of the fire dispatch record is an order that limited the "parent's authority to consent to medical treatment." HG §4-301(k)(5)(i). Moreover, it is well established that the termination of parental rights ends all rights that a parent may have concerning a child, including the right of a parent to disclose a child's medical records. See *In re Adoption/Guardianship T00032005*, 141 Md. App. 570, 582 (2001) (termination of parental rights severs all legal ties between the parent and the child). Thus, since the child was in the custody of the [department of social services] at the time of the ambulance call, it is our conclusion that we could only disclose the redacted portions of the record after authorization from the [department of social services], which would be the "person authorized to consent to health care for the minor consistent with the authority granted." HG §14-301(k)(5)(ii).

We agree with your analysis and conclusion with respect to the Medical Records Law.¹¹ Cf. 90 *Opinions of the Attorney General* 3 (2005) (in a determination whether to consent to organ donation, guardian of decedent has priority over parent whose parental rights have been terminated).

The same conclusion pertains with respect to the PIA. Under SG §10-617(b)(2), the custodian of a record containing medical information is to permit inspection by a person in interest¹² to the extent permitted by the Medical Records Law, i.e., HG §4-304(a). Given that a mother whose parental rights have been terminated no longer has access to a child's records as a "person in interest" under the Medical Records Law, she is not entitled to access under the PIA.

¹¹ We make two additional observations concerning the Medical Records Law. First, the definition of "person in interest" in the Medical Records Law also includes a "duly appointed personal representative of a deceased person." HG §4-301(k)(3). If a mother whose parental rights had been terminated somehow gained appointment as the personal representative of a deceased child, she would be a person in interest in that capacity.

Second, apart from the authority granted to a person in interest, the Medical Records Law also allows for disclosure of medical records to the immediate family of a patient, unless the patient has instructed to the contrary, if the disclosure is "made in accordance with good medical or other professional practice." HG §4-305(b)(7). However, even if a mother whose parental rights had been terminated could still have access to a child's medical records as an "immediate family member" under this provision, rather than as a "person in interest," she would be prohibited from redisclosing the records to others, except in very limited circumstances. HG §4-302(d).

¹² The definition of "person in interest" in the PIA differs slightly from the definition in the Medical Records Law. The PIA provides, in pertinent part:

"Person in interest" means:

(1) a person or governmental unit that is the subject of public record or a designee of the person or governmental unit;

(2) if the person has a legal disability, the parent or legal representative of the person.

SG §10-611(e). However, we do not believe that this difference enlarges the category of persons who would have access to a medical record or medical information.

IV

Conclusion

In our opinion, when a request for a Fire Department event report is made under the PIA, any medical information about an individual that appears in the report must be redacted, unless the report is being provided to a person in interest. Although a Fire Department event report is not a medical record for purposes of the Medical Records Law, the PIA exception for "medical information about an individual" applies when the report is associated with an ambulance run to a specific address. The identity of the individual transported is disclosable. Finally, a mother is not a person in interest with respect to a child if her parental rights with respect to that child have been terminated by a court order.

J. Joseph Curran, Jr., Attorney General
Robert N. McDonald, Chief Counsel, Opinions and Advice

Cite as: 90 *Opinions of the Attorney General* 60 (2005)

April 13, 2007

Board of County Commissioners
Queen Anne's County
The Liberty Building
107 North Liberty Street
Centreville, Maryland 21617

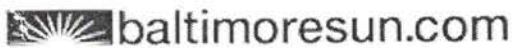
You have requested our opinion concerning the law governing the County's extension of its sewerage system to subdivisions on Kent Island, where many properties have failing septic systems. State funding for this extension would apparently be limited to providing service to developed properties. However, in some of the same subdivisions there are undeveloped lots that are barred by regulation from employing individual septic systems due to lot conditions. State law generally requires that a county sanitary commission provide a connection to a sewerage system for all properties abutting the road or right-of-way in which a sewer line is placed. With reference to four scenarios, you have asked about the extent to which the County may limit new service coincident with the limitations on State funding.

We have taken the liberty of summarizing and reordering your questions for purposes of analysis. Specifically, you have asked:

1. If vacant lots are interspersed among occupied lots within a subdivision and front on the roads and rights-of-way in which the sewer lines will be installed, may the vacant lots be excluded from service?

2. May vacant lots be excluded from service if the lots do not front on the roads and rights-of-way in which sewer lines will be installed? For example, if a block consists of vacant lots on both sides of the street, must the County place a sewer line along the street to serve those lots?

3. Assume that vacant lots interspersed with occupied lots front on the roads and rights-of-way in which the sewer lines will be installed. Assume also that these lots are unbuildable under current septic system regulations, but that development of the lots might be approved if alternative technologies for sewage disposal are employed or if lots are combined to create larger lots that can use conventional septic systems. May these lots be excluded from service? Once the lots become buildable, would the County be required to provide connections to the system for these lots?



<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/local/howard/bal-ho.cautionkids29apr29.1.3396693.story?coll=bal-local-howard>

Children take a stand against unsafe drivers

Caution Kids work to ensure that motorists obey the speed limit

By Tyrone Richardson
Sun Staff

April 29, 2005

More than a year ago, Chelsie, a 15-year-old cocker spaniel, was struck and killed by a speeding motorist, leading its young owners and a handful of neighborhood friends to spearhead an attack to slow down traffic in their Worthington neighborhood.

The group of seven girls -- who live in the Shelley Lane area -- noticed that motorists weren't obeying the 25-mph limit. Members, between the ages of 8 and 13, formed the Caution Kids, and took their tough-love attack on speeders to the streets.

"We usually either tell our moms or tell [the motorists] to slow down," said Emmy Petti, an 8-year-old member of the group.

The children researched traffic and pedestrian safety, and named Garrett Morgan, who invented the traffic signal, the "First Caution Kid." In addition, the girls went door-to-door in their neighborhood, awarding certificates to good drivers and chastising those whom they had spotted speeding.

"They handed out fliers and came around to talk about what was in the flier," said Suzanne Havrilla, 46, a neighbor. "They are making a difference. I drive slowly over the hills, my kids now tease me that I go too slow."

Recently, the children teamed up with county police and Worthington Elementary School in Ellicott City to expand the project through the community. A few weeks ago, police installed a temporary radar board on Shelley Lane, another tool the Caution Kids hope will curb speeding on their quiet street.

Rewarding safety

This month, the girls received a Citizens Award from county police. The award is issued through nominations by officers.

"This is very uncommon to see a group at this age get together to impact the community," said David Proulx, a police spokesman. "There is more of a patrol presence in the community, but [the Caution Kids] voice has more of an impact."

A 4-foot yellow-and-red construction sign at the entrance to Worthington Elementary School marks another achievement for the group, reminding motorists to slow down.

"People stop in the office and say, 'Oh my gosh, I was going really fast.' They notice how fast they really are

going," said Amy Parker, a gifted-and-talented program teacher. The touch fastener sign allows the children to change the message each week, imparting new tips for motorists, such as "Park Your Cell Phone."

Spreading the message

The girls' message is reaching other children in the area. They said other students have erected signs of their own, reminding motorists to slow down and obey the traffic laws.

"You took a situation that was very sad and made a positive out of it," Annette Baldwin, a mother of one of the Caution Kids, said to the group. "That's something to be very proud of."

In June, the girls -- Mallory Baldwin and her sister Taylor Baldwin, Abigail Bickel, Rachel Petti and her sister Emmy Petti, Jaqui McDonald and Maddy Birus -- will hold a school assembly to recruit pupils for their group.

The Caution Kids girls feel so strongly about their cause that they promised "to slow down and obey the traffic laws" when they start to drive -- a promise their parents plan to hold them to.

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Allen residents anxious for ambulance service

■ Fire company hopes to begin running medical calls July 1

By **Tristan Schweiger**
Daily Times Staff Writer

ALLEN — Wilma Thompson knows how long a few minutes can be.

Thompson's husband, who suffers from heart and kidney problems and will soon be going on dialysis, has needed an ambulance before. She said it usually takes about 15 minutes for one to get to their home in rural Allen.

In an emergency situation, that can seem like an eternity.

"My husband is very ill, and we have to rely on Salisbury to get service," said Thompson, an Allen resident of 32 years.

But as of this summer, emergency medical help might be faster reaching the Thompsons and other people who live in their town. If everything goes according to plan, the Allen Volunteer Fire Company will begin an ambulance service on July 1, according to Fred Moore, Allen's fire chief.

Moore said the company is hoping to provide quicker,

better service to the Allen community with an advanced life support professional on duty 18 hours a day, seven days a week.

"In some cases in our area, just because of the physical locations, it takes about 18 minutes to get an ambulance, and we hope to get that time down," Moore said. "We should be able to cut it down to about 12."

Currently, Allen receives most of its ambulance service from Salisbury.

See ALLEN, Page 11

What residents think



"My husband has had a heart attack before, and I know that if I had to call an ambulance, it would take longer than if they were right across the street."

Annette Bynum



"The fact is that the area is growing now more than ever before."

Al Prestileo

ALLEN: Requests county funding assistance

ALLEN, From Page 1

In addition to the paid professional, Moore said the company hopes to have about seven of its volunteers certified as emergency medical technicians to support the ambulance service. The Allen fire company has about 28 volunteers.

The company wants Wicomico County funds to pay for the service, as well as money from billing, according to Moore. The company is asking the Wicomico County Council for more than \$100,000 to pay for equipment and the salary of one-and-a-half advanced life support professionals.

County Council members commended Allen for its work to improve emergency service in the community. But some also said they were concerned about whether the county could afford to give the company the necessary funding.

"It seems like a lot of money for the county, but it's a life safety issue and we have to consider that," said County Councilman Larry Dodd, a professional paramedic in the county.

Anthony Sarbanes, the Coun-

ty Council president, said he saw the service as a move in the right direction and was hoping it would reduce response times for Allen residents.

"I think like all the other volunteer fire services, we're going to try to help them as best we can," Sarbanes said.

The number of ambulance calls from Allen has averaged about 50 per year for the last two years, according to Moore. That's tiny compared to the more than 7,500 ambulance calls handled out of Salisbury, but Moore pointed out that Allen's total is about the same as Powellville's, another small community and one that already has an ambulance service.

Allen's fire company originally wanted to partner with Fruitland's fire department to provide 24 hours of ambulance coverage. But council members said Fruitland declined, already happy with the service provided by Salisbury.

Still, Moore said the 18-hours-a-day coverage should make a

big difference, and that the company would still like to work toward 24-hour service.

"Hopefully, we can cover all the calls in the area," he said. "If we could cover 100 percent of the 50 calls, the 18-hour protection will cover about 88 percent of that."

Furthermore, Allen residents point out that the town is growing and thus requires emergency services more frequently than it once did.

Sarah Palmer, who moved to Allen in the late 1980s, said she's seen a lot of development in the town since she's lived there.

"Since 1989, that was just all field out there," she said, pointing out her window to a collection of houses near her home.

Palmer said she liked the idea of a local service that would provide faster emergency response.

■ Reach Tristan Schweiger at 410-845-4655 or tschweiger@salisburygannett.com.



Times Photo by Todd Dudek

Resident Sarah Palmer talks about Allen's growth and its need for an ambulance service outside her home on Allen Pond.