

# Martinsville Rescue Squad Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Greetings from the members of the Martinsville Rescue Squad! In this year's newsletter we profile several members of our squad, discuss some of the key results of our Fund Drive Survey, fill you in on our building expansion plans, and more.

The Martinsville Rescue Squad is a volunteer group of men and women of various ages and talents, dedicated to serving the community and making the squad the best in the area. Our members are a diverse group of men and women from our community just like you. They are volunteers with strong feelings of community and a belief in service to others. In this newsletter we profile three members of our squad—Donna Zarelli and a husband and wife team, Fred and Clara Kolarsick.

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## VOLUNTEER PROFILE – DONNA ZARELLI

Donna Zarelli, mother of two teenage boys, has been an active member of the Squad for seven years. In addition to serving as an EMT, Donna has helped the squad with office and membership administration functions and currently serves as the squad's Training Officer.

Prior to becoming a squad member, Donna held various positions in corporate America. At the time she joined, she was working at home and felt that she "...should be doing something more with my life." She wanted to "give back" to society. She discovered that volunteering for the Martinsville Rescue Squad was a great way to do just that.

Once she joined, she found a nurturing atmosphere. She and her fellow volunteers worked together like a family, drilling often and talking about ways to do even better after each and every call.

Donna got her EMT certification during her first year on the squad. She wanted to do even more, so in her second year she became a CPR Instructor. After four years of experience as an EMT, Donna decided that she enjoyed health services enough to make it her new career. She returned to school to earn a nursing degree. An education grant, available to rescue squad volunteers committing to four years of service, helped defray the cost of her degree. Today Donna is an RN at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick.

Memorable experiences are part of the history of every squad member. Donna's most memorable experience happened close to home. "Miss Molly", a friend and neighbor who was 85 years old, went into cardiac arrest. Donna responded from home to start care for Miss Molly. Thanks to her training and ability to perform CPR on her neighbor and to a fast response from the Squad and the paramedics, Miss Molly, five years later, is still playing bridge, attending senior activities, and enjoying her life.

When Donna was asked how she has personally benefited from volunteering for the squad she said, "Helping others to go on with their lives is an uplifting and enriching experience for me. The camaraderie of an extended family with common goals and common ground is part of the experience. I cannot give it up, it is an important part of our community and it needs us."



## FUND DRIVE SURVEY RESULTS

We want to thank all of you who responded to our annual fund drive request. Your tax-deductible donation is being put to good use and the Squad greatly appreciates your ongoing support.

This year, as part of our Fund Drive, we included 5 survey questions. Most of you took the time to respond and we are using your input to improve our service. We thought it important to share with you the responses to several of the questions and to comment on them.

70% of those responding thought it “very important” that our service is free of charge. We have no plans to convert to a paid service, but we did want to understand how important the “free” aspect of our service is to you. Because of a shortage of daytime volunteers, some squads in our county have a paid daytime service and those squads do bill residents for their service. We are not in that situation yet, but if our ability to get daytime volunteers worsens, someday we too may face the undesirable prospect of needing a paid daytime service.

In answer to the question about how soon you expect help to arrive when you dial 911, about 65% of respondents expected help to arrive within 10 minutes. On calls where either the Bridgewater police or a squad member is able to respond directly to the caller’s location, that help typically arrives within 5 minutes. Direct responders, however, are not always available. For calls in our squad’s primary coverage area, our squad and the ambulance, on average, are on location in 10 minutes. Given that most members are responding from their homes or businesses to our squad building and from there with the ambulance to the location of the call, the 10 minute average response is about as good as it can get.

Lastly, we asked you what inhibits you from volunteering for the rescue squad. About 25% of respondents stated that they were too old to volunteer. We encourage those of you who believe that to read the profile of Clara and Fred Kolarsick on the back page of this newsletter. Our squad has many active members who are beyond the traditional retirement age. Their wisdom and experience have made our squad one of the more successful volunteer squads around! In answer to this same question, over 40% of respondents indicated that their work and family obligations prevent them from volunteering. Rescue squad volunteering is probably less demanding than you imagine. Most of our volunteers spend most of their volunteer time at their home or business. It is only when a call comes in that we spring into action. Our profile of Donna Zarelli may interest those of you with work and family demands.

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Will the Martinsville Rescue Squad, Martinsville Fire Department, or the police be able to find your home in the event of an emergency?

Squad members and firefighters are occasionally frustrated when dispatched to a home or business only to have difficulty finding the house or business place because its number is poorly marked, obscured, or not marked at all. Now is a good time to check your house number. Check the following:

- Is your number visible from the street?
- Can it be seen regardless of the direction your house is approached?
- Can it be seen at night?

Don’t wait for a 911 emergency to discover that emergency workers cannot easily find your home or business because the number is not easily seen!

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**Did You Know**—Throughout the USA the number for poison control is **1-800-222-1222**.

## BUILDING EXPANSION PLANS APPROVED

The Martinsville Rescue Squad has received approval from the Bridgewater Township Planning Board to expand the squad building by 2,280 sq. ft. The planned expansion will cover the need for larger training facilities, more office and storage space, and larger bays to house the squad's two ambulances, crash/rescue truck, and the off-road emergency vehicle.

The present building was built in the 1960's to house two small Cadillac ambulances and the 15-18 squad members. With the present membership at about 50 members, expansion is critical to a smooth operation. Ambulances and necessary equipment that are kept in the garage are so large that there have been problems maneuvering the rigs so they fit into the bays that house them. The off road vehicle is housed in a tent located in the parking lot behind the building.

The meeting room is also inadequate for the growing membership. For example, from a training perspective, EMT certification requires 120+ hours of training. Recertification, done every three years, requires another 48 hours of continuing education. The addition will allow for training sessions to be held at the building instead of at various EMS education sites around the state.

Thanks to the squad's Building Committee, Treasurer, and Trustees, a financial plan is in place to cover the expected \$350,000 to \$400,000 cost of the renovation. Construction costs will be paid for with existing squad funds, donations from the public, as well as a mortgage. With all the preliminary plans in place, the squad is hopeful construction can start by September, 2004.

## BLINK! BLINK! BLINK!

Do you know what that flashing blue light in the vehicle following your car means? Well, it is an EMERGENCY blue light and it is only used by Rescue Squad or Fire Department Members when they are responding to a 911 call.

The vehicle, by flashing the blue light, is requesting that other vehicles on the roadway yield the right of way so they may safely pass and respond to their respective stations.

When you see a vehicle with a flashing blue light, please pull to the side of the road, stop and allow the vehicle to pass. By doing this simple act, you will help improve the response time of the emergency workers.

It will take you only a few seconds to yield the right of way and it will mean a great deal to the family that called 911. The bottom line, however, is that yielding the right-of-way to vehicles with a flashing blue light is required by New Jersey State Law.

## SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to the following Martinsville businesses for their contributions to our annual fund drive:

Alfred A. Gelfond & Co.	Martinsville Inn Caterers
Cardillo and Co.	Martinsville Partners
Dr. Daniel Brainum	Martinsville Veterinary Hospital
Gabriel's Fountain	Martinsville Women's Health
J.V. Franco Associates, A.I.A.	Park Cleaners
John-Paul Inc.	

- 1) What should you do if you burn yourself on a hot barbecue?
  - a) Run cool water over the burned area
  - b) Put ice on the burn
  - c) Put butter on the burn
- 2) Your child falls and knocks one of her teeth out. You should:
  - a) Place the tooth back into the socket
  - b) Place the tooth in a cup of milk
  - c) Place the tooth in ice water
  - d) Either a or b

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## VOLUNTEER PROFILE – CLARA & FRED KOLARSICK

Clara and Fred Kolarsick, both now in their eighties, are active members of the Martinsville Rescue Squad. Clara is an EMT with the squad and Fred is an ambulance driver. Together they have been a long-time part of the squad's Wednesday Day Crew. Neither one of the Kolarsicks had any previous medical experience prior to joining the squad. Clara taught art after earning a Masters Degree and continues painting watercolors and decorating her home. Fred served in the Navy during World War II and is retired from the automobile industry.

Clara first heard about volunteering at a talk given by a squad member at their church. Following the talk, Clara, then in her early 70s asked, "do you take people as old as I am?" and was told "absolutely yes." Fred who was not interested in being an EMT but "wouldn't mind being a driver" was told, "Oh, we could use you!" Now beginning their twelfth year with the Martinsville Rescue Squad, the Kolarsicks are enthusiastic about their volunteer experience. Not only do they like being able to assist people in their community in need of their skills, they have in Clara's words "...met a lot of nice people and some of them are among our very best friends." The squad is like a family. Both agreed that if a person is new to a neighborhood, joining the local rescue squad is a perfect way of meeting local people.



"One of the nice things about the squad is the diversity of ages" according to Clara. Anyone joining, who is worried about fitting in, will find someone close to his age - from teenagers to people in their sixties and seventies. When asked about other benefits of working with the Squad she stated, "I think that volunteering is very helpful for people to help them keep young, keep active, keep interested in what is going on around them..." Many of the people that Clara helps are younger than she. She feels that people who don't stay active and involved can get depressed and extended depression can make a person sick. Both of the Kolarsicks agree that serving in a Rescue Squad meets their need for helping others and gives them a strong sense of community.