

Martinsville Rescue Squad Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

August 1, 2005

Greetings from the members of the Martinsville Rescue Squad! The Martinsville Rescue Squad is a volunteer group of men and women, dedicated to providing fast, high quality emergency medical service to our community at no cost to those who need us. Our members are a diverse group of all ages, backgrounds, and professions. They are volunteers with strong feelings of community and a belief in service to others.

In this year's newsletter we provide an update on our building renovation project, answer some commonly asked questions about 911 calls, profile another member of our squad, and more. We hope you enjoy the newsletter and find some useful tidbits of information in it.

SQUAD BUILDING RENOVATION COMPLETE

The expansion of the Martinsville Rescue Squad building that began in Fall 2004 is now complete. We now have four rather than three ambulance bays to safely shelter all of our rescue vehicles. The new bays are longer and wider, providing more space to maneuver the ambulances in and out of the garage, saving precious minutes for rescue operations. Inside the main building an additional training room has been added, increasing the space available for training squad members as well as citizens looking to learn life saving skills such as CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation). We also have more office space for administration and clerical duties such as record maintenance and reporting. Finally, the whole building got a facelift to make it more energy efficient, more secure, and more aesthetically appealing.

The squad was able to undertake this project thanks to years of sound fiscal management coupled with strong financial support from residents like you. Thank you all for your support over the years!

The Martinsville Rescue Squad invites you and your family to visit us at our wonderful new building during our Open House Week in September. Visit us for a tour and more on:

Monday Sept. 19th through Thursday Sept. 22nd from 7-9 pm

Saturday, Sept. 24th from Noon to 3 pm

We will serve light refreshments and will provide building and ambulance tours in addition to demonstrations of equipment and first aid techniques. For those of you who do home blood pressure monitoring, consider bringing your home equipment with you. We will happily check it to see if it is providing you with accurate readings.

The Squad thanks Bryan Bradley and our friends at the Martinsville Fire Department for allowing us to operate out of Station #1 in Martinsville during the construction. We are also grateful to Dave Haggerty and Kraft Foods for helping to furnish our building through a donation of much-needed office furniture for the new rooms.



Front side of the squad building viewed from Washington Valley Road.

WHEELCHAIRS NEEDED

Did you know that the squad maintains an inventory of home healthcare equipment to loan out to residents? We can provide crutches, walkers, shower chairs, wheelchairs, and more to residents in need. The equipment is loaned out at no cost and is returned to us when the resident no longer needs it.

Currently, our inventory of wheelchairs is very low. If you have a wheelchair in good working condition that is no longer being used, please consider donating it to the squad. We are a 501(c)(3) charitable organization so your donation will be tax deductible, and you can feel good about letting your unused wheelchair help out someone else in the community.

YOUR EMS QUESTIONS ANSWERED

When I call '911' what information will I be asked to provide?

When you call '911' a police dispatcher will ask for your location, the nature of the patient's injury or illness, and the patient's age and gender. Based on the nature of the injury or illness the dispatcher will ask more specific follow-up questions to determine what resources the emergency might demand. For example, paramedics are dispatched if the illness or injury is potentially an immediate life-threat, and the fire department and gas company are dispatched if symptoms match those of carbon monoxide poisoning. Of course, the squad is dispatched for any medical emergency.

When rescue squad members arrive they will ask detailed questions about the injury or illness. They will also ask for personal information about the patient, including the patient's birth date, medical history, medications currently taken, and any known allergies. ***If you have a significant medical history we strongly recommend that you write or type your name, birth date, medical history, medications list and allergies on a sheet of paper and keep it updated.*** If you ever need the squad, just provide the sheet of paper to squad members when they arrive.

All information you provide to the squad during a '911' call becomes part of your medical record and is confidential. The squad provides this information to hospital emergency department personnel if we transport you to a hospital, but otherwise we do not release this information to anyone without your expressed written consent.

How quickly will help arrive after I call '911'?

If a "first responder" is available, help will arrive in about 2 to 5 minutes. A squad member who is a first responder is equipped with a defibrillator, oxygen, and other tools and supplies to help assess and treat patients. Squad members may first respond based on their availability and how quickly they can get to your location. Bridgewater police officers are frequently dispatched to area 911 calls and often are the first to arrive. Many Bridgewater officers are trained EMTs and all are trained in first aid.

On average our duty crew arrives on location with the ambulance in about 11 minutes. Obviously the ambulance arrival time will be faster the closer you are to our squad building. Ambulance response time can also depend on weather conditions, where duty crew members live relative to our squad building, and the time of day (response is usually slower in the middle of the night when crew members are asleep).

Why did so many people come when I called '911'?

The number of people who come depends on the nature of the emergency and the time it occurs. If your emergency is potentially life-threatening, then a lot of people will probably show up. Responders will likely include 1 or more police officers, 1 or more squad first responders, the rescue squad duty crew (2 to 4 persons) and the paramedics (2 persons usually, but sometimes 3). It may seem like an army, but in a life-threatening emergency there is a lot to do and it must be done quickly. More responders help get the appropriate care rendered more quickly.

If your emergency is not considered life-threatening, fewer people will come to your aid. In this case the responders will typically be only the squad duty crew members and perhaps a Bridgewater police officer.

Will you transport to any hospital?

We will transport to the nearest **appropriate** facility. We will decide what facility is appropriate based on the nature and severity of your injury or illness, as well as other factors.

For example, a patient who has serious traumatic injuries will be taken to the nearest trauma center. Usually this is Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital, but in the northern part of our coverage area it can be Morristown Memorial Hospital. These are the only hospitals in our area that have surgery teams available on short notice.

If a patient has a life-threatening illness and their condition is unstable we will most likely transport to Somerset Medical Center because it is the nearest hospital and it will be critically important to stabilize the patient.

If a patient is stable and does not have a serious traumatic injury we will usually agree to transport a patient to their preferred area hospital. By "area hospital" we mean Somerset Medical Center, Morristown Memorial, Overlook, Saint Peter's, Robert Wood Johnson, Muhlenberg, and Hunterdon Medical Center. Other hospitals take us too far away from our coverage area and we are, after all, primarily an **emergency** service, not a transport service.

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

We will occasionally agree to transport a non-emergency patient to or from an out-of-area medical facility if we have enough off-duty volunteers who are available and willing to do the transport. In these cases we prefer to receive as much advance notice as possible to make the arrangements, but even with advance notice we cannot guarantee an available crew.

If you are a free service why did I get a bill for “ambulance” service?

The Martinsville Rescue Squad is 100% staffed by volunteers and the cost for our supplies and equipment is covered entirely by donations from area residents like you. We *never* bill for our service.

If your emergency was considered life-threatening, paramedics were probably sent to evaluate you and possibly treat you. Paramedics are employed by area hospitals and they are *not* a free service. They will bill for their services and we have been told by area residents that the charge for paramedic services appeared on their bill as “ambulance services”. Please understand that this charge is not from the Martinsville Rescue Squad.

MEMORIAL IMPROVEMENTS IN THE WORKS

Jim Houston, a founding member of the squad in 1957 and member emeritus having served for 35 years, likes to keep his promises. Some years ago Jim committed to his comrades on the squad that their service to the community would not be forgotten. A memorial was created in front of our building by Craig Jenne as his Eagle Scout project. Craig’s great work has allowed us to honor passed members every Memorial Day. But now the squad wants to fulfill Jim’s longtime vision for the memorial by expanding it so that we can affix a name plaque to the memorial for every member who served for 7 years or more. We have begun planning the new memorial and expect to have it done in time for our 50th anniversary in 2007. Jim made the promise. We’re going to help him keep it.

GIANT GIFT IN A SMALL PACKAGE

Thanks to Martinsville resident Jim Glynn, the squad now has what we hope will become a lasting gift and an area landmark. Jim recently gave the squad a redwood tree that he started from seed and nurtured for the past 3 years. Although this type of redwood doesn’t usually like the warm summers and cool winters of New Jersey, Jim has hope that this tree will continue to tolerate our climate and even thrive at its new home at the Martinsville Rescue Squad.

Someday, decades from now, the tree should be an impressive sight. Though it likely won’t grow to be as tall as its relatives from California, it will nevertheless be a tall tree with the classic massive girth and cinnamon hued trunk. We can hardly wait!

We invite you to stop by our squad building every decade or so to see how our tree is progressing and to wish it good health!



Clockwise from top left: Jim Glynn, Sr., Tom Butler, Jim Glynn, and Mark Swartz. Tree is in foreground—look closely!

SPECIAL THANKS

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

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| Bridgewater Dance Academy | Martinsville Partners |
| Dr. Daniel Brainum | Martinsville Veterinary Hospital |
| Gabriel’s Fountain | Martinsville Women’s Health |
| J.V. Franco Associates, A.I.A. | Olly Custom Fashions |
| John-Paul Inc. | Spirits of the Valley |
| John T. Lynch, Attorney | The Martinsville Florist |
| Marjorie L. Rand, CPA | The Redwood Inn |
| Martinsville Inn Caterers | |

QUIZ

- 1) Your child’s nose is bleeding. What should you do?
 - a) Have him tilt his head back until it stops
 - b) Lean him forward and pinch the bottom of his nose shut
 - c) Pack the inside of his nose with gauze
- 2) Which is a sign or symptom of a heart attack?
 - a) Intense, prolonged chest pain
 - b) Feeling of heaviness or pressure on the chest
 - c) Unexplained sweating and weakness
 - d) Shortness of breath
 - e) All of the above

Quiz answers: 1) b 2) e

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48 years of community service

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE – DORIS ZAMPELLA

Doris Zampella is a hard-working businesswoman who has found time in her busy life to be a Martinsville Rescue Squad volunteer. Doris co-manages the Boniakowski Agency, the family insurance and real estate business. She also helped her husband set up a Rita's Ice franchise in Bridgewater and has worked in many other organizations such as the PTOs of her two children's schools. Yet she decided to volunteer for the squad and go back to school to become an EMT. How does she find the time to volunteer when she has such a busy life? According to Doris, anyone who wants to volunteer can find the time. Most Martinsville Rescue Squad members are on call for one 12-hour shift a week. "Since there are 14 twelve hour periods in a week, anyone can find enough free time to volunteer for one shift. And they can remain at home while awaiting a call." She also stated that it is never difficult finding other members to take over a shift when she has a time conflict.

Rescue squad members speak of "giving back to the community" and Doris is no exception. Her mother and grandmother needed the help of a rescue squad several times and Doris knows that the response of the police and the squad added more years to each of their lives. According to Doris, there is a great sense of satisfaction in being able to assist fellow citizens who are in need. Volunteers are able to look back on their lives and know that they have contributed to their community. Furthermore, she feels that volunteerism helps make a community. Neighbors helping neighbors is an essential part of creating a community. It is comforting to know that friends, neighbors or co-workers are looking out for each other.

Doris joined the Martinsville Rescue Squad in February 2004 along with her daughter Jacquelyn. After riding for several months with a duty crew that includes two nurses, she decided she wanted to play a greater role in caring for patients. She returned to school to become an Emergency Medical Technician. She attended classes two nights a week and every other Saturday for three months and by December 2004 she was a fully qualified EMT. Asked if she had had any trepidation about returning to school with younger students she said that she was concerned at first but discovered that "Life Experience" had given her an advantage and she found that she was quite capable of completing the course. She is very enthusiastic about the Squad and plans to spend many more years volunteering.

Doris has made lots of new friends on the squad. "The squad is like a family," she said. She also has learned much from her crew mates, relying on their greater experience. Before joining the squad, she worried that she might not be able to handle the worst situations but she has found that she is "...pretty good in an emergency situation." "We are the first responders and all we are supposed to do is make things better until we can get the patient to the hospital where all can be made right. Our patients and their families are so grateful for our help. They rely on us."



Doris (2nd from left) with her crew—Chethan Mallela, Doris, Alice Hadley, Crew Chief Ana Geraldles, and Eric Huang.