

Martinsville Rescue Squad Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 1

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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 describe our growing cooperation with the Green Knoll Rescue Squad, review the importance of recognizing the signs and symptoms of stroke, profile two families who volunteer for our squad, and more. We hope you enjoy the newsletter and find some useful tidbits of information in it.

For more information about our squad please visit our new web site at <http://mrsquad.org>.

THE BUTLERS DID IT — 30 YEARS OF SERVICE!

This September Tom and Donna Butler will complete their 30th year of volunteering for the Martinsville Rescue Squad. Imagine — 30 years of volunteer service! Most of us don't stay in one community for 10 years, let alone 30 years. Most of us seem to have our lives so full of working, raising a family, and dealing with life's trials and tribulations that we can barely consider volunteering at all, let alone doing it for 5 or 10 years. But 30 years?

Let's see, that was 5 Presidents ago. It was before the Iran Hostage Crisis and the US was only a few years removed from Vietnam. Bridgewater's population was far less than half of what it is today. I-78 wasn't completed and the Bridgewater Commons did not exist. Loft Farm in Martinsville really was a farm!

A lot happens in 30 years. For the Butlers, their 2 children grew up, got jobs, and got married. After retiring as Superintendent of 14 years for the Chester School system, Tom has gone on to serve as Interim Superintendent for 18 other school districts in New Jersey. Donna has served as a substitute teacher in the Bridgewater school systems for 13 years. Through it all the Butlers volunteered. During those years Tom and Donna estimate they responded to over 1500 EMS calls for the Squad. Those calls include 5 lives saved with CPR, one newborn delivered safely into the world, and many residents grateful for the care and support they received from Tom and Donna.

A lot of memories and stories accumulate in 30 years. For example, even today, Tom and Donna's grown children can recite the old radio call letters for the Martinsville Rescue Squad. When a family conversation shifts to something about the squad someone will inevitably begin "KBR365 Martinsville Rescue Squad ...". That's because every call dispatch began with those letters. After years of hearing it you can't help but remember it. And it isn't just squad members and their families that memorized it. One squad member's parrot would squawk out the call letters on command!

Most memories are good ones. Like the emergency call for the little boy who had his hand caught in the dryer. The police and the Squad's duty crew responded. While the crew pondered how to safely cut off the front of the dryer, Donna went over to the boy to reassure him. As she talked with him she noticed that the boy appeared to be holding something in the hand that was stuck. Donna told the boy "Let go!". He did and his hand came right out! Another happy ending!

Tom and Donna have been stalwarts of the Squad. Tom served many times as Squad President and Trustee, while Donna has often taken on administrative support roles like Secretary, Membership Chair, and Squad representative in district and statewide first aid meetings.

The members of the Martinsville Rescue Squad on behalf of the residents of Martinsville and Bridgewater extend their congratulations and heartfelt thanks to Tom and Donna for 30 wonderful years of service. They have been outstanding role models in our community for a long time and we wish them all the best in their future endeavors.



Tom and Donna in front of the Squad's banner.

COOPERATION IMPROVES SERVICE

Have you occasionally noticed Bridgewater's Green Knoll Rescue Squad ambulance on the streets in Martinsville and the Washington Valley? We have been experimenting with an innovative coverage sharing arrangement with the Green Knoll squad to better match Bridgewater's EMS needs with the availability of EMS volunteers.

The arrangement started in 2005 with Martinsville helping Green Knoll on weekends and Green Knoll helping Martinsville on Friday nights. This matched the strength of each squad with the needs of the other, which allowed both areas to have EMS coverage. The arrangement worked well and so we have expanded our level of cooperation this year.

In February our squad began providing EMS coverage for the Green Knoll squad on Tuesday nights. Green Knoll reciprocated by providing coverage for Martinsville on Monday nights. The arrangement once again proved beneficial and so in May we began cooperating on weekday daytime coverage.

Both squads are happy with the expanding cooperation as it allows us to continue to provide our normal high quality EMS coverage 7 days a week for 24 hours a day, while lowering the overall cost of coverage and lessening the demand for volunteer staffing.

Of course you, our customers, still come first! We review every call to make sure that each 911 caller receives a prompt, courteous, and effective response. We remain committed to providing you with the very best service possible. But now "we" means the members of both the Martinsville Rescue Squad and the Green Knoll Rescue Squad.

SEQUOIA UPDATE

Under the watchful eye of donor Jim Glynn, our giant sequoia tree survived the winter and has sprouted 7 inches of new growth so far this year! Coupled with its outward growth the tree has quickly outsized its original protective cage. It is now sporting a new 2006 silver chicken-wire cage that is four feet tall. We're hoping that the ample space of its cage will encourage our tree to grow even faster. Of course, sunshine and rain will probably help too!

How big will it get you ask? Well, the largest tree in Sequoia National Park in California is 272 feet high and 36.5 feet in diameter. It is estimated to weigh 2150 tons. Dating by growth rings shows that some sequoias are 2300 years old, and some estimate that sequoias might live closer to 4000 years! Our seedling has a lot of challenges to overcome to approach those measurements, but the Martinsville Rescue Squad plans to stick around for the duration to help it along the way.



Squad member Nancy Fry checks to see how much the tree has grown this past year.

SOME FACTS ABOUT OUR SQUAD

Our Service:

- We answered 720 calls for help last year. 256 of these calls were considered potentially life-threatening.
- 189 calls were traumatic in nature. 464 were medical. 67 were in support of the fire department.

Our Costs:

- Ambulance operations, equipment, and supplies cost over \$35,000 in 2005.
- Insurance cost the squad almost \$21,000 in 2005.
- A new ambulance costs approximately \$130,000. We need a new one about every 10 years.

Our Members:

- We have 61 active volunteer members. 38 are EMT-Bs. 10 are Ambulance Drivers. 6 are Support Members.
- Members contributed over 30,000 hours of volunteer service in 2005.
- *Independent Sector*, a nonprofit organization, estimates that volunteer time was worth \$18.04 per hour in 2005.

Did You Know? — Thanks to community support we're free, but with no volunteers and no donations we would charge about \$600 per call to provide 24 x 7 EMS coverage to Martinsville and Bridgewater.

DON'T IGNORE THE SIGNS OF STROKE !

Would you recognize the signs and symptoms of a **STROKE** and would you know what to do if someone you love was experiencing these symptoms?

Each year about 700,000 people in the United States suffer a stroke. Stroke is the 3rd leading cause of death, behind only heart disease and cancer. Stroke, however, is the leading cause of serious, long-term disability. Advances in medicine in recent years have greatly improved the prognosis for those who have had a stroke, particularly for those who get immediate treatment when stroke signs occur.

A stroke occurs when the blood supply to part of the brain is cut off or greatly decreased. About 80% of all strokes are caused by a clot that abruptly blocks the arteries leading to the brain. For this type of stroke, called an ischemic stroke, rapid recognition of the symptoms and rapid treatment, possibly with "clot-busting" drugs called thrombolytics, can limit the damage caused by the stroke and decrease recovery time. The key is to recognize and treat within 3 hours of the onset of the stroke. So recognizing the signs and symptoms of stroke and taking fast action are critically important.

The most common sign of stroke is sudden weakness of the face, arm, or leg, most often on one side of the body. Other common signs include:

- Sudden numbness of the face, arm, or leg, especially on one side of the body
- Sudden confusion, trouble speaking or understanding speech
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

The signs of a stroke depend on the side of the brain that's affected, the part of the brain, and how severely the brain is injured. Therefore, each person may have different stroke warning signs. Stroke may be associated with a headache, or may be completely painless.

If you see someone having any of the signs listed above, call 911 and seek medical help immediately. Stroke is a medical emergency. DO NOT try to diagnose the problems by yourself and DO NOT wait to see if the symptoms go away on their own! Even if the symptoms pass quickly they could be an important warning that requires prompt medical attention. Ignoring the symptoms leaves a stroke victim much more vulnerable to permanent disability and a diminished quality of life.

For more information about strokes, prevention, treatment, and recovery see these web sites:

- <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorials/preventingstrokes/htm/index.htm>
- <http://www.strokecenter.org/>

SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to the following Washington Valley businesses and organizations for supporting our squad through fund drive contributions and donations of goods, gift certificates, and coupons for prizes at our annual installation dinner:

A Yarn For All Seasons	Christ Presbyterian Church	John-Paul Inc.	Redwood Inn
Alfred A. Gelfond & Co.	Dunkin Donuts	Logo Gear	Rita's Ice
Baby & Co.	E.A. Boniakowski Agency	Marquee Video	Sal's Talk of the Town
Bank of America	Falcone's Restaurant	Martinsville Exxon	Signature Interiors
Bebe Nails	Fawn Jewelers	Martinsville Partners	Spirits of the Valley
Beverly Hills Hair Co.	Fullerton Ford	Martinsville Pharmacy	State Farm Insurance
Blessed Sacrament	Gabriel's Fountain	Martinsville Post Office	The Martinsville Florist
Blimpie Subs & Salads	Golden Key Realty	Martinsville Veterinary Hospital	The Purple Rose
Blue Star Cleaners	Heads Up Haircutters	Martinsville Women's Health	Town & Country Power Mower
Bridgewater Dance Academy	High Performance Tube, Inc.	Neil's Nosh	Trio
Business Services of America	Janeen's	Park Cleaners	Warrenville Hardware
Chimney Rock Inn	Joe's Pizza	Pizza Brothers	

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VOLUNTEER PROFILE – STEPH AND ABBY LANDAU

The Martinsville Rescue Squad has benefited over the years from family volunteering. We currently have three husband and wife teams on the squad and seven parent and child teams. Volunteering together is a great way for families to spend time together while fulfilling common desires to help friends, neighbors, and our community in general.

Steph and Abby Landau are one of the parent child teams on our squad. They joined together this past February shortly after Abby's 16th birthday (the minimum age to become a rescue squad cadet). We think it's safe to say that they enjoy rescue squad volunteering because in May they joined the Green Knoll Rescue Squad and this fall they plan to enroll together in an Emergency Medical Technician training class.

Their enthusiasm for EMS volunteering comes naturally. As a young man, Steph got a great deal of EMS experience riding as an EMT for the Warren Township Rescue Squad, Rutgers EMS, and later with Muhlenberg Hospital's paramedic crew. Career and family responsibilities curtailed his volunteer work but he always told his family stories of his rescue squad days. Even as a five year old, Abby listened and knew that she would join a squad as a cadet. Almost to prepare for that day, she often served as her family's "nurse", taking care of small injuries, and her first Scout merit badge was for First Aid. Steph always told her that when she turned 16 they would join a squad together.

Steph has his own IT business, Landau Consulting, and he and his wife Mary home school their four children. His business gives him a fair amount of flexibility to volunteer, but work obviously comes first. Volunteering for the squad fits well into his business model, because he can spend much of his duty shift at home working. He stops work to respond to the occasional duty call, but he is able to schedule the uninterruptible aspects of his work around squad responsibilities. He rides two shifts a week with the Green Knoll squad and weekends for both Martinsville and Green Knoll. When work permits he will answer a "general" call as part of a second crew. Abby usually rides with Steph, although she will run down the street to catch a ride with another squad member when Dad is not available. She likes riding with her Dad as they work well together, often knowing each other's thoughts. Abby makes a deliberate effort to learn from every call. She looks forward to taking on more responsibilities once she is an EMT. Abby keeps fit practicing Karate and she also belongs to a theatre group, all this on top of her schoolwork.

The Landaus agree that most squad calls are not life threatening in nature, but they realize how much comfort people take knowing that professionals are there to help. "I get a strong sense of satisfaction knowing that I was there when someone was in need and I was of assistance", Steph said. When calls are serious, "people's lives might be different if we were not there to help."



Steph and Abby are shown here during a volunteer day for the Green Knoll Rescue Squad. They also volunteer for the Martinsville Rescue Squad.