

## Robinson named Summit County Firefighter of the Year



Jim Robinson

**B**oston Heights Fire Chief Jim Robinson was recently presented with the "Chick Markley" Firefighter of the Year Award from the Summit County Firefighters Association.

He was nominated by Steven Soblosky, president of the Boston Heights Firefighters Association.

The award recognizes individuals who demonstrate extraordinary commitment to the fire service, family and community service. As Chief Robinson accepted the award during a surprise ceremony in front of more than 200 guests, he thanked his community, village administration, and especially the firefighters in his department. ■

## Huron Hospital trauma symposium draws EMS crowd

**A**pproximately 150 healthcare professionals, including a number of EMS providers, attended the 11th Annual Trauma Symposium held November 5 at the InterContinental Hotel & MBNA Conference Center in Cleveland. Presented by Huron Hospital's trauma center, in partnership with MedFlight of Ohio, the symposium focused on penetrating trauma, with special emphasis on the management of vascular injuries.

Once again, the symposium included a special EMS track, which was moderated this year by Tom Beers, EMT-P, EMS manager at Huron Hospital. The track featured:

- Howard Werman, MD, speaking on "Controversies in Field Fluid Management"
- Alex Butman, BA, DSc, NREMT-P, EMSI, manager of the School of EMS—Cleveland Clinic Health System, who presented "Doing a More Meaningful Trauma Assessment"
- Kenny Hoffman, RN, CEN, EMT-P, CMTE, who addressed "Child Abuse: From Discovery to Prosecution"

In addition to presentations, the day-long symposium included a continental breakfast, exhibits, a luncheon, and a keynote speaker, Rao Ivatury, MD, professor at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical Center, who spoke on "Advances in the Management of Penetrating Trauma." Attendees received continuing medical education units. ■

## Answering the call Local EMS pros head south to assist hurricane victims

**I**n the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, a number of local EMS providers headed South to assist victims of the devastation. Shortly after Katrina hit, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) sent out a request to fire departments across the nation for two-person teams that could volunteer for 30-day stints. During the volunteer period, fire departments paid the volunteers' normal salaries, with the expectation that FEMA will reimburse them.

Here are stories of a few individuals in our area who answered the call.

### Living in a tent with 200 others

Chief William Shaw of the Solon Fire Department selected members John Coyne and Matt Eshleman to respond to the FEMA call because both are firefighters and paramedics with water rescue training. In addition, Coyne has extensive training in rope rescue, and Eshleman is skilled in handling hazardous materials.

"It was a great experience," says Coyne. "We got to see a lot and know what these people went through. We both felt that we contributed to the emergency efforts and are glad we went. We were proud to represent our city and department."

Coyne admitted that the 30-day mission "was a long time to be away from family." He left behind his wife and two children, aged 12 and 14, while Eshleman missed his girlfriend and parents.

After two days of training in Atlanta, the duo flew to Gulfport, Miss., where they were based outside the city at a NASA facility. There, the Wildlands firefighters had set up a camp that included a huge tent, which housed Coyne and Eshleman, along with about 200 other people. The Solon men commuted to and from their work in Gulfport, about 40 miles away.

"Going door to door, we helped canvas about 71,000 people in Gulfport," Coyne says. "Eventually, we were assigned to set up a disaster recovery center, with several strike teams under our direction. This was a place where people could come to register with FEMA and get questions answered. Our job in Gulfport was basically community relations, which meant showing FEMA's presence."

The day before the Solon men left, they traveled to New Orleans. "There we saw ghost towns because the people had been displaced," says Coyne. "Biloxi and Gulfport were hit hard. Only founda-



John Panzero (left) and Gino Carcioppolo, firefighters and paramedics with the Mayfield Village Fire Department, display some of the mementos from their 30-day volunteer stint assisting hurricane victims in the South.

tions of homes were remaining. There were two floating casinos on barges that were pushed up on shore. One had landed on a building. They were imploded and cut up."

### Processing masses of evacuees

When members of the Pepper Pike Fire Department heard about the hurricane disaster, several of them wanted to immediately travel to the disaster area on their own time. "But then FEMA put out the request for 30-day volunteer periods, and we wondered who could live without a pay-

After a four-day indoctrination in Atlanta, where they received FEMA uniforms, ID badges and government credit cards, the two men were deployed to Alabama to work with evacuees. "There was such a large influx of evacuees in the area that there were not enough people to handle them," says Majeski. "We signed people up for FEMA aid and for counseling with the American Red Cross, and we worked to get people in temporary housing."

"While I was working with the Red Cross, one family came in a car from Huntsville, Alabama," he says. "A mother and two children came into our office, and the woman said that someone should talk with her husband. He hadn't eaten in a few days and didn't want to take assistance from the government. We talked with him and

convinced him he needed to be strong for his family.

"We helped him find employment, and his new employer gave him and his family temporary housing," notes Majeski. "The guy was typical of a lot of people down there. They had been average, middle-class folks, and now they had no home or job."

*"It was a great experience. We got to see a lot and know what these people went through. We both felt that we contributed to the emergency efforts and are glad we went."*

— John Coyne, firefighter/paramedic, Solon Fire Dept.

check for a whole month," says Tom Majeski, firefighter/paramedic.

Majeski represented the department with John Frazier, who also serves as chief of the Russell Fire Department. "Many people were interested in going, but couldn't," explains Majeski. "For John and I, it was relatively easy because our children are older.

## Meet Jonathan Klein, MD

### South Pointe physician thrives on caring for patients

2 **T**he best part of what I do is taking care of patients, whether they have a sprained ankle or are on death's door," says Jonathan Klein, MD. "A lot of the time, families need an explanation of what's going on, and I enjoy helping them. I get great satisfaction out of serving the community and knowing that we're always here for them."

Dr. Klein is co-director of South Pointe Hospital's emergency department (ED), which he has served for five years. "This has been my favorite place to work," he says. "It's truly a community hospital, and we see a great mix of people, including both blue- and white-collar workers. We have wonderful specialists and subspecialists here at the hospital."

A native of Shaker Heights, Dr. Klein attended Shaker Heights High School before transferring to Hawken School for his junior and senior years. Upon graduation, he attended Tulane University in New Orleans for two years.

"I didn't know what I wanted to do," he says. "So I took two years off and traveled around the country. By the time I returned home, I knew I wanted to go into medicine. It was tough getting into med school, but I persevered. While try-

ing to get admitted, I did research with Matthew Levy, a very well known cardiac researcher. This bolstered my credentials and helped me get admitted."

By entering the medical field, Dr. Klein followed in the footsteps of his father, Michael, an obstetrician/gynecologist who helped found the labor and delivery department at Hillcrest Hospital years ago. "His example prodded me to pursue medicine," says Dr. Klein. "He never complained, and he loved what he did."

After receiving his medical doctor degree from Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in 1988, Dr. Klein completed an emergency medicine residency at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Cleveland. Board certified in emergency medicine, he is an ATLS, ACLS, and PALS provider. Before joining South Pointe, he was assistant director of Huron Hospital's ED and medical director for East Cleveland, Lyndhurst and Chagrin Falls EMS.

"As director of the ED, I try to keep the job fun for everyone in the department," he says. "We have a close relationship with the squads, and I thoroughly enjoy interacting with them. I like teaching young paramedics



Jonathan Klein, MD, co-director of South Pointe Hospital's emergency department, pauses in between diagnosing and treating patients.

the ropes. This relationship transcends to the personnel because they look to us for direction, and we look to them to do the right thing."

About 11 years ago, Dr. Klein traveled to Peru on a medical mission. "Through this experience, I gained an appreciation of working in a third-world setting," he says. "Here in the

United States, we have so much technology at our fingertips."

In his spare time, Dr. Klein, who is a resident of Solon, likes to travel, work out and play golf and tennis. Once a year, he serves as the ship doctor aboard an 80-passenger cruise ship called the Sea Cloud. He recently returned from a voyage to France on this ship. ■

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*"I would have liked it if the volunteer firefighters' deployment was more tailored to their abilities and based on their experience with EMS, hazardous materials and so forth. I hope that with new leadership, FEMA will make changes in this regard."*

— John Panzero, firefighter/paramedic, Mayfield Village Fire Dept.

Majeski also tells the story of a man in his late 40s who was living out of his car with his dog. "We finally found a hotel that would accept him and his pet," says Majeski. "It was his first decent meal and roof over his head in more than two weeks."

During their volunteer stint, Eshleman and Majeski stayed in local hotels, private homes and tents. Depending on FEMA's needs, they were moved around from place to place, and their assignments changed daily. "We passed out meals and wheelchairs and built temporary housing, including a 10,000-square-foot structure from a kit," says Majeski. "While building the housing, we found at least one firefighter in our team who knew every trade – from carpentry to plumbing.

"I felt good about what I did," he adds. "But I thought the federal aspect was very disorganized. I think FEMA fell way short of their commitment because they had been looking intently at weapons of mass destruction and had neglected other emergency preparedness. Also, the overall scope of the devastation was overwhelming. John and I used this experience to think about what we can do back at our local level in case of emergency.

"The trip was tough going," Majeski admits. "The mental stress was difficult, and by the end of four weeks, we were feeling homesick. Nevertheless, I'd go back again for a couple weeks with a church group or something if I could help."

#### Overseeing 93 firefighters in Texas

"Both the fire chief and mayor of Mayfield Village wholeheartedly supported us, and FEMA accepted us within a 24-hour period," says John Panzero, who headed South in September with coworker Gino Carcioppolo. The two men, who are firefighters and paramedics, were deployed to Fort Worth, Texas, after processing in Atlanta.

In Texas, the Mayfield Village duo joined a group of 120 firefighters, who were divided into three groups – one that worked the emergency operations center, one that served at the area's 22 shelters, and a roaming division that searched for evacuees. Panzero was placed in charge of this latter group.

"Our initial assignment was to

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— Tom Majeski, firefighter/paramedic, Pepper Pike Fire Dept.

track down evacuees by canvassing the city," Panzero explains. "We set up our own incident command center and set about searching the whole Greater Fort Worth area. In a week's time, our group of 40 firefighters found 9,000 families who had evacuated there.

"I would have liked it if the volunteer firefighters' deployment was more tailored to their abilities and based on their experience with EMS, hazardous materials and so forth," he adds. "I hope that with new leadership, FEMA will make changes in this regard. A lot of

guidelines are antiquated (pre 9-11) and need to be updated.

After working in Texas, Carcioppolo and Panzero were redeployed to Orlando, Fla., for computer training, so that they could log onto the FEMA site and process people. Then the couple was redeployed to Dallas, but in the middle of their redeployment, they were put in charge of the remaining 93 firefighters in Beaumont, Texas.

"We were in a holding pattern, and didn't know where we'd end up," Panzero says. "In Beaumont, we went out to the field and looked at damaged homes and wrote reports on them. We also handed out flyers to people, as part of customer relations work. At large centers, we assisted with food and water

distribution, and we also made first contact with hundreds of residents who had been trapped.

Panzero, who has three children, aged 11, 14 and 20, says, "It was difficult to leave my family, but they were supportive. It was nice

that we were able to help. We were able to be first responders in Beaumont. That was the most gratifying experience of the whole trip."

#### Dispensing meds and lending an ear

For two members of the Chesterland Fire Department, the hurricane disaster area happened to be conveniently located. By sheer coincidence, Susie Vigh and Susan Markley were in San Antonio, Texas, when Katrina hit.

Both women, who are best friends,

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# Euclid Hospital's ED expansion includes special EMS areas

Euclid Hospital's \$4 million emergency department (ED) expansion includes new facilities designed to meet the needs of local EMS squads. "Without question, this is a good thing, as well as a needed thing," says Euclid Fire Chief Tom Cosgriff. "Our squads are especially pleased about plans for a decontamination area."

The hospital broke ground in mid October and plans to complete the expansion by December 2006. When finished, the ED will boast 22 treatment rooms, new state-of-the-art equipment, a new ambulance entry point, a large atrium waiting area, an updated EMS report room, and a new EMS storage area.

"We're very excited about this much-needed project," says Marita Volk, MD, medical director of the ED. "The expansion will really help the community by increasing the number of patients who can be admitted to the ED. In addition to boosting patient satisfaction, the project will also enhance our work environment, which is very important for employees – including our EMS squads, which we consider to be part of our team."

Euclid Hospital has one of the lowest diversion rates in Ohio, and those rates are going even lower. In 2004, the hospital managed to reduce diversions by an additional 60%, going from 277 hours on diversion in 2003 to only 92 hours in 2004. The expansion project should reduce diversions even further.

"Although our maximum capacity is 24,000 patients a year, we've been seeing 28,000 annually," says Richard Lowery, director of the ED. "With the expanded ED, we'll be able to handle 32,500 patient visits a year. This will help us achieve our mission, which is to serve the needs of the community. More people are using the ED for their primary care, and we want to meet this need."

## Private, Soothing Environment

In addition to increased accessibility, Euclid's renovated ED will offer patients and their families a more private, soothing and attractive environment.

Currently, there is only one private patient room in the ED, which was built in the 1950s. The remaining patient treatment areas are divided by curtains, and six beds are placed in the hallway to accommodate overflow patients.

The expanded ED will include 16 private rooms for acute-care patients and four different nursing stations. "One of these stations will be 40 to 45 feet long," explains Lowery. "We'll have 12 chairs instead of two, and the entire setup will be much more efficient."

Both Lowery and Dr. Volk have actively involved the entire ED staff in the design of the enlarged space. "The staff has been very engaged in the project and has designed it along with the architect," says Lowery.

## Improved EMS facilities

According to Chief Cosgriff, the proposed decon area is much needed. "Years ago, there were many things we didn't give a whole lot of consideration to, but now there is an increase in the number of threats relating to biological and chemical hazards," he says. "In case

of an emergency, we want to contain the threat, and we wouldn't want a person to come into the ED and contaminate everyone else.

"A lot of people think a biological or chemical attack wouldn't happen here, but I'm not convinced that's the case," adds Cosgriff. "There is also the chance that patients would be trans-

ferred here because hospitals in an attacked area may not be able to handle them all. So ... being prepared and having the decontamination area at Euclid Hospital are definitely good things."

According to Greg Ivanovics, EMT-P, EMS coordinator, the overall layout of the newly planned ED is "impressive." He says, "Much time and effort was spent in the planning of the patient rooms, and the design stretches beyond function and efficiency.

"With our decontamination room, we're continuing to progress in the area of homeland security and patient decontamination," he adds. "This room effectively ties in with equipment currently used by the Euclid Hospital Emergency Response Team to better serve the community in the event of a biological, chemical, or radiological disaster. This is an exciting time for Euclid Hospital and its department of emergency services." ■



Breaking ground for Euclid Hospital's emergency department expansion are (from left) Richard Lowery, director of emergency services, Euclid Hospital; Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones; Senator Mike DeWine; Bill Cervenik, mayor of the City of Euclid; Lauren Rock, chief administrative officer, Euclid Hospital; Tom Selden, president and chief executive officer, Cleveland Clinic Health System – East Region.



This artist's rendering depicts Euclid Hospital's emergency department expansion.

## 'Local EMS Pros' continued from page 2

are firefighters and paramedics, and Vigh was attending a national EMS instructors conference. The American Red Cross approached the conference attendees and asked if they would like to volunteer to assist hurricane victims who had evacuated to the San Antonio area.

"We worked six-hour shifts for four days and did a lot of different things," says Markley. "The first night we worked in an old department store that the Red Cross turned into a shelter to house a couple thousand people. There, we worked in a pharmacy dispensing medications. Over the course of the four days, we also passed out food and over-the-counter medications.

"We also spent a lot of time talking

with people and seeing what they needed," she adds. "You read a lot of negative things about what people did, but I'd say that 95 percent of the people were very grateful."

According to Markley, the worst

*"I was very, very impressed by the Red Cross. In a short amount of time, they set up a clinic, pharmacy, cafeteria, phones and computers."*

— Susan Markley, firefighter/paramedic, Chesterland Fire Dept.

story she heard was the tale of a father with a family of six, who fled their home and tried to wade or swim through the streets. They ended up taking refuge on

a rooftop, where the family was traumatized by viewing bodies that floated in the streets below. After two days, they were finally rescued.

"Our experience was overwhelming and humbling," Markley claims.

"You hear that mostly poor people were affected, but that's not true. I saw people from all walks of life, including wealthy people who couldn't get their money

because the banks froze everything.

"I was very, very impressed by the Red Cross," she adds. "In a short amount of time, they set up a clinic, pharmacy, cafeteria, phones and computers. I don't regret a minute of what we did. I wish we could have done more. The experience makes you appreciate how fortunate you are. I used to think it'd be nice to live down South where it's warm, but now I'm perfectly happy to live in Ohio."

## Share your hurricane story

If you volunteered to help hurricane victims and would like to share your story, please call your *Siren* newsletter editor, Anne Gallagher at 330-656-3068. ■

## 4 EMS courses offered

The School of EMS—Cleveland Clinic Health System is offering the following courses.

**EMT-Paramedic Course #24:** January 10, 2006 to December 15, 2006  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 10 p.m., plus ten scheduled Friday evenings  
Cost: \$2,600 plus books

**EMT-Basic Course #13:** January 17, 2006 to May 26, 2006  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 10 p.m.  
Cost: \$500 plus books  
This course is the prerequisite for Paramedic Class #25 that begins August 23, 2006.

The EMS School is located at the Euclid Hospital Health Center. Since enrollment is limited, interested individuals should apply and enroll now. ■

## EMS Calendar

**November 22**  
7 p.m.

"Burns." Community Room at Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

**December 7**  
7 p.m.

"It's That Time Again ... Hypothermia"  
presented by Don Spaner, M.D. Ross Auditorium at Hillcrest Hospital.

**December 20**  
7 p.m.

"Cardiac Emergencies." Community room at Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

## Got something to say?

We want to hear from you. As an EMS professional, you're this newsletter's best source of information. Story ideas include interesting squad runs, job tips and unusual hobbies or second jobs.

We're also interested in receiving letters to the editor. This is your chance to make suggestions, compliment coworkers or discuss current EMS issues. Contact Anne Gallagher at 330-656-3068 or [gallcomms@aol.com](mailto:gallcomms@aol.com). ■

## School of EMS celebrates paramedic graduation

On October 26, the School of EMS – Cleveland Clinic Health System celebrated the graduation of 14 new paramedics in Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital. The commencement ceremony followed a reception that included hors d'oeuvres and beverages for the faculty, graduates and guests. ■



Proudly displaying their awards at the School of EMS paramedic graduation celebration are (from left) Jack Healey, salutatorian; Cameron McElroy, highest academic average (tied) and second highest skills; Brian Roberts, class representative, highest academic average (tied) and highest skills performance; Dan Yochum, second class representative and leadership, and Eric Mannion, leadership.



The most recent paramedic graduates from the School of EMS, Cleveland Clinic Health System, include (from left) front row: Jeff Ferfolia, Cameron McElroy, Eric Mannion, Ken Ryan and David Soriano; middle row: Dan Yochum, Nate Liptak, Jack Healey, Michael Petz, Brian Roberts and Brian McCarthy; back row: Ryan McElroy, John Rice and John Cary.

Siren is produced by the marketing department in cooperation with its four EMS departments.