

Two Firefighters of the Year named

Mike Carroll

Twenty-year veteran Mike Carroll was named "Firefighter of the Year" by the Lyndhurst Fire Department. He also serves as a lieutenant at Russell and is a member of the Hillcrest Technical Rescue team and the Hillcrest Regional Fire Investigation Strike Force, which he helped form.

"The strike force is made up of one or two members from each fire department in the Hillcrest area," explains

"Without the help and support of coworkers, I couldn't have succeeded."

— Mike Carroll

Carroll. "We respond as a team to investigate fires, and this gives our communities a stronger resource of experts. By building experience and working with other experts, we all become better at this type of work."

At Lyndhurst, Carroll developed a comprehensive firefighter orientation program that is used to train new hires. "Without the help and support of coworkers, I couldn't have succeeded with programs such as this and the strike force," he says.

Anthony Walker, Jr.

As nominated by his peers, Anthony Walker, Jr. was named "Firefighter of the Year" for 2004 by the Chagrin Highlands Rotary Club. A part-time Wood-

"I think Tony's shown great patience and skill in the field."

— Lt. Mark McCary

mere Village firefighter/EMT, Walker is also a member of the Village of Highland Hills Fire Department.

His coworker, Lt. Mark McCary, a firefighter/paramedic, says, "I think Tony's shown great patience and skill in the field, and we're honored to have him as part of our team." ■

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 get something off your chest. So... contact Anne Gallagher, at 330.656.3068 or gallcomms@aol.com. ■

Up to the challenge Local EMS pros talk about their most challenging calls

Screaming victims. Or possibly worse: quiet, unconscious victims. A car upside down and filling with gasoline – fast. Or maybe worse: a car nose down in a creek and filling with water – even faster. Or perhaps the worst of all: a gun pointing in your face.

These are just a few of the challenging scenes that local paramedics faced during the past couple years. But you know the saying: When the going gets tough, the tough start intubating

ing the victims, an elderly couple who had been driving too quickly and who went through a gap in the guard rail of a parking lot.

The woman had a severely broken leg, and the man had a collapsed lung. Both were LifeFlighted on separate helicopters. Mann says, "Later on, a police officer told us that when they untied the hose, the car tilted over and immediately filled with water. So it's a good thing we had stabilized the vehicle first."

out, and cars were flying by on the highway. The girl had spun out on the ice, and there were multiple cars and victims."

Since the car was upturned, gas was leaking into it. By making a blanket out of foam, Serge was able to create a vapor barrier. Then he entered the car to extricate the victim. "It was a tough scene," he says.

Sometimes the toughest scenes of all occur when rescuers are off duty. This happened to Serge not long ago



Capt. Dan Serge of the Mayfield Heights Fire Department poses in front of the "Jaws of Life," which he and coworkers use to extricate victims from car crashes.

(or extricating, negotiating or whatever it takes).

According to Lt. Jerry Mann, a firefighter/paramedic with the Warrensville Fire Department, the most challenging call he recently answered was for two people trapped inside a car that was nose down in a muddy creek. "It was quite a scene," he says. "Stabilizing the car was a priority because we were afraid it'd flip over and fill completely with water."

Since the rescue crew did not have enough rope, firefighters used hose to loop through the rear car windows and tie to a guard rail at the top of the ravine. "Firefighter Jim Scampitilla thought of the hose," says Mann. "It just goes to show that you have to think fast on your feet. Nothing's ever the same, and you have to always be ready."

When the rescue team arrived, the creek water was already up to the car's dashboard. While stabilizing the car, Firefighter Greg Ventura entered the sinking vehicle to assist. Once the car was tied up, the paramedics began help-

'Call 9-1-1! Oh, that's us.'

"By far, the most challenging medical emergencies we see are airway problems," says Capt. Dan Serge, a 20-year paramedic with the Mayfield Heights Fire Department. "When people are vomiting, it's especially difficult. One call in particular illustrates this point. We were trying to help a guy in full

"You have to think fast on your feet. Nothing's ever the same, and you have to always be ready."

— Lt. Jerry Mann

arrest who was vomiting profusely.

"As we desperately tried to suction his airway and intubate him, another medic looked at me and asked, 'Can someone call 9-1-1?' I answered, 'We're it! There's no one else to call!'"

Another challenging moment for Serge came when he was called to rescue a young woman who was trapped in a car that had flipped upside down. "It was three a.m., dark, only about 20 degrees

as he was driving home from southern Ohio on I-71. When he was about 15 miles north of Columbus, a semi truck suddenly veered to the left and careened into the other side of the highway, where it struck a car.

"I found one person DOA in the road," says Serge. "The car was upside down, and a couple truckers were approaching the scene. I told them to get their fire extinguishers from their trucks because I was afraid that leaking gas could ignite.

"The car's driver was a young woman," he says. "Her mother was in the back with an occluded airway, and I couldn't remove her because the car was crushed. I directed bystanders to get the girl out while I tended to the mother. I was afraid the car would ignite, and I had the truckers standing by with the extinguishers."

It took EMS 15 minutes to arrive on scene. The squads called in three helicopters for the three victims. The young woman suffered four broken ribs and a concussion. Although the mother recovered, she was partly paralyzed by a back

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injury. The person lying on the road was that of the driver's grandmother.

"Since I became a captain, I spend most of my time behind a desk," says Serge. "We have some pretty talented guys out there, and now it's their time to be on the streets. If you save someone every so often, that's what you're here for."

Midnight car jumper

Paramedic Tony Zorko worked for East Cleveland for four years before he began serving Wickliffe. "In Wickliffe, we basically cater to an elderly population, and have lots of 'I've fallen and can't get up' situations," he says.

Recently, Zorko answered a call from the police department that was anything but mundane. When his squad arrived on the scene around midnight, they saw an injured man lying on the freeway. "We looked around and couldn't figure out how he got there," says Zorko. "There was no motorcycle, car or anything.

"Later we found out that the guy had jumped out of a car as it traveled down the freeway at 60 miles per hour," Zorko explains. "His companions tried to stop him from jumping, but he did anyway. Afterwards, the freeway was shut down."

When Zorko's EMS squad evaluated the car jumper, they found he had a pulse and was breathing, but had suffered a head injury, was disoriented and had an altered mental status. The squad performed basic trauma life support and placed the man on an IV monitor.

"The fire officer on the scene had the foresight to call LifeFlight right away," says Zorko. "By the time we got the patient in the ambulance and started treating him, the helicopter arrived. It was a smooth transition."

Split-second decisions

According to an East Cleveland paramedic who asked to remain anonymous, the large number of penetrating trauma cases he and his coworkers sees can be a challenge. "We have a high volume of calls and run about 15 calls per shift," he says. "We have a split second to make a decision because we technically only have 10 minutes by the time we arrive until we're underway to the hospital.

"It's important to know your job and your protocols," the paramedic adds. "If you find that you're second guessing, you should pick up the phone and call med control. We've also discovered that the public needs to be educated more about what warrants a call to 9-1-1.

"A lot of times I walk out of here and think, 'Why am I here?'" he says. "You do it because this is what you do, and hopefully you're good at it." ■

EMS pros up close New EMS instructor at South Pointe is flight paramedic

"My main goal is to continue teaching EMS because it's my way of giving back to the EMS community," says Mark Dailey, NREMT-P, EMSI, CMTE. "I got into education to keep my nose in the book and to give me a better knowledge base. At this point in my career, I'm well established and feel committed to sharing my knowledge and expertise with others."

Appropriately, Dailey, 37, is the new EMS instructor at South Pointe Hospital. Since 1992, he has also been involved with other education and

training programs, including paramedic programs, throughout the Greater Cleveland area. Overall, he has 19 years of combined experience in EMS, critical care transport, management and EMS instruction.

In addition to teaching, Dailey serves as a flight paramedic and base site and education coordinator for University Hospitals MedEvac, which is operated by CJ Systems Aviation. "Although I still fly one day a week, I mostly do administrative work for this job," he says.



In his new position as EMS instructor at South Pointe Hospital, John Dailey, NREMT-P, EMSI, CMTE, teaches EMS skill.

Euclid Hospital employees attend bioterrorism course in Alabama

A team of six Euclid Hospital employees recently attended a leadership course on bioterrorism in Anniston, Ala. The course was sponsored by the United States Department of Homeland Security through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute.

Hospital employees attending the course included Rich Lowery, emergency department (ED) director; Greg Ivanovics, EMS coordinator; Helen Cooper, ED patient care coordinator; Danielle Olds, infection control practitioner; Fil Scafidi, manager engineering, and Cindy Radigan, clinical nurse manager, medical/surgical unit.

"This course made our hospital more aware of the potential hazards of bioterrorism and made us rethink parts of our plan that we currently have in place," says Lowery, who serves as chairman of the emergency management committee at Euclid Hospital. "It also helped us incorporate needed updates into our ED renovation project and gave us a better understanding of the incident command system that fire departments use routinely."

The four-day, scenario-based training course was held in an actual 100-bed hospital, which was set up so that students could perform drills in real



Taking time out from a leadership course on bioterrorism held in Alabama are (from left) Greg Ivanovics, EMS coordinator; Cindy Radigan, RN, nurse manager; Richard Lowery, RN, director of emergency services and security; Danielle Olds, infection control practitioner, and Fil Scafidi, manager, plant operations. Not pictured is Helen Cooper, RN, emergency department.

time. In this realistic setting, instructors assisted healthcare professionals in developing appropriate responses to attacks involving weapons of mass destruction (WMD). The team learned valuable lessons by participating in functionally realistic and technically correct exercises.

"The FEMA experience made me more aware of the responsibility of the hospital to build strong relationships within the community," says Ivanovics. "A bioterrorism, chemical, radiological, or natural disaster demands the

"My administrative position with MedEvac enables me to make a difference in the operations," Dailey says. "When I'm flying, I enjoy the challenge of taking care of complicated cases. Recently, for example, we took care of a young girl with significant injuries. After treatment, she may be able to recover completely. It's nice to be able to see people walk out of the hospital."

Dailey began his career in 1986 as a basic EMT/firefighter with the Brecksville Fire Department. In 1988, he became a Nationally Registered Paramedic (NREMT-P), and in 1990, he started working for Lakewood EMS. He began his job with MedEvac in 1999. From 1989 to 1999, he also worked as a Brecksville police officer, with active participation as a tactical paramedic on the SWAT team.

In addition to being a NREMT-P, Dailey is an instructor for ACLS, PALS, BCLS and EMS and is an instructor/trainer for CPR. He is also a Neonatal Resuscitation Provider (NRP) and a Certified Medical Transport Executive (CMTE), a certification he earned by attending a two-year school at the Medical Transport Leadership Institute.

Dailey lives in Cleveland with his wife, Susan, and sons Matthew, 7; Mitchell, 4, and Stephan, 1-1/2. An avid fly fisherman, he enjoys fishing in the Rocky River Reservation. "I also work on countless projects and home, and the kids are always in my shadow. I count my blessings each day." ■

planned response of all of the community's resources."

Course objectives included:

- recognizing the essential preparedness, planning and operational components necessary for a hospital to sustain a targeted level of service during and after a WMD incident

- reviewing and enhancing the appropriate segments of a hospital emergency plan

- comprehending the basic Hospital Emergency Incident Command System (HEICS) framework for local, regional, state and federal responses to a WMD event

- recognizing situations that require enhanced communications resources from outside the hospital

"This session is a must for all hospital members of HEICS because it offers an essential way for hospital personnel to understand the critical components of a designed emergency management plan," says Lowery.

Ivanovics adds, "The skills and expertise of professionals within the community, brought together through education, training, and a shared vision will make a big difference when disaster strikes. You can't anticipate everything, but preparedness really softens the blow." ■

Hillcrest-area pros caught fire/EMS 'bug' as teens

Like moths drawn to flames, many firefighters are attracted to the fire service at a young age. They seek the excitement of chasing down fires, the warmth of camaraderie at the fire station, the adrenaline rush of rescuing people, and of course, the satisfaction that comes with knowing they made a difference. Just as moths begin life in an undeveloped form, many current fire service leaders began their careers as teens.

Cadets, Explorers and junior firefighters are a few of the names given to young people who are involved in high school vocational programs that help prepare teens for careers in EMS and the

“At that time, the system for notifying us about emergencies was very unsophisticated,” says Ekstrand. “This was before pagers or cell phones. When a person called the fire department number, it rang in the firefighters’ homes, and the wives would start a phone chain. When we went out on a call, we rode on the back of trucks. Obviously, safety was not stressed as much as it is now.”

As a cadet, Ekstrand learned first aid via an American Red Cross training session and assisted in fire department jobs. “The experience was good because the older firefighters included me in the

“I learned a lot because the departments train cadets with the idea that they’ll become career firemen. Explorer or cadet programs are positive programs that build a good resource pool of future firefighters.”

— Mike Carroll

fire service. The Explorer program is affiliated with Boy Scouts of America.

“I know a lot of career firefighters who caught the firefighting bug in high school via Explorer or cadet programs,” says Mike Carroll, a full-time firefighter/paramedic for Lyndhurst and part-time lieutenant at Russell. “They’re positive programs that build a good resource pool of future firefighters.”

Cadet examples

When Eric Ekstrand was 16, he began serving as a cadet at the Chesterland Volunteer Fire Department, after a friend at West Geauga High School asked if he were interested. He joined two other cadets at the department, and the teens were allowed to leave school for fires.

team and never made me feel like a kid. This was especially important to me because my father was somewhat of an absentee parent. So these men served as my male role models. I saw that they did their jobs for the love of our community.”

When he turned 21, Ekstrand was no longer considered a cadet, and by the time he left Chesterland, he was a captain. He is now a full-time lieutenant/paramedic for Solon, and also works in promotional advertising.

According to Mike Carroll, his work as a cadet involved much shuttling of equipment to assist in EMS and firefighting work. “We participated in non-hazardous activities and weren’t allowed to have direct patient contact, drive a department vehicle or rush into



Posing at the Solon Fire Department, where he is a full-time lieutenant/paramedic, Eric Ekstrand shows off his Chesterland Volunteer Fire Department patch, which he served as a teenaged cadet.

burning buildings,” he says. Carroll began serving Russell at the age of 15 before his sophomore year of high school.

“I got interested when a friend’s dad asked me to go to a meeting with him,” he explains. “Everyone was real nice, and it seemed like a lot of fun. So I signed up. I learned a lot because the departments train cadets with the idea that they’ll become career firemen.” ■

From cadet to vet

As teenagers, the following firefighters participated in Cadet, Explorer Scout or Junior Firefighter in the Hillcrest area, before going on to full-time positions in the fire service. They are listed beneath the department they first served, and the department they currently serve is mentioned after their names.

Bainbridge

Current Chief Brian Phan – University Hts.
Gene Martin – Pepper Pike
Tim Taylor – Solon

Chagrin Falls

Jake Fried – Solon

Chesterland

Current Chief Bill Russell was Cadet
Brian Ford – Lyndhurst
Matt Harrill – Westlake
Mike Vatty – Willoughby

Karen Moleterno – Cleveland
Hopkins Airport Fire Dept.

Eric Ekstrand – Solon

Mayfield Hts.

Gino Carciopolo – Mayfield Village

Mayfield Village

Bill Turner – Highland Hts.
Bob Serecene – Strongsville

Pepper Pike

Scott Gilman – Lakewood

Russell

Current Chief John Frazier – Pepper Pike
Scott Hahl – Highland Hts.
Mike Carroll – Lyndhurst
Brian Harding – Bedford
Phil Corpora – Beachwood
John Bryan – Cleveland Hts.

Solon

Chris Stacy – University Hts.

Willoughby Hills

Tom Majeski – Pepper Pike

NOTE: If you began your fire/EMS career as a teen and are not included in this list, please email your name and departmental information to gallcomms@aol.com and we'll mention you in our next issue. Please put "Siren newsletter" in the subject line of your email.

Euclid FD upgrades with three new 12-leads

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Thanks to a generous grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the City of Euclid Fire Department recently acquired three new LifePak 12s manufactured by Medtronic, Inc. The grant was written by Capt. Frank Prijatel and Platoon Chief Dave Scrijner.

"This is quite an upgrade over our old LifePak 11s, which are now obsolete," says Prijatel. "The City of Euclid, which has a population of about 52,000, had 5,397 EMS runs last year, and quite a few of these were for cardiac problems. Considering that more than 30% of the population consists of senior citizens, this is no big surprise."

The LifePaks, which cost approximately \$19,000 each, are used every day by the squads. The new equipment offers automatic pulse oximetry and blood pressure cuffs. "We can pace through the defibrillators, which is an advantage," says Prijatel. "The machines are programmable to our protocols and can print out everything we do. This is really good for record keeping."

This was the fourth FEMA grant proposal Prijatel wrote and achieved. He has become so well versed in grant writing that he was recently asked to be a grant evaluator for a week at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Md. ■

McNamara sets record for most medals of valor

When Battalion Chief Tim McNamara recently received his fourth medal of valor, he became the most decorated firefighter in Cleveland history. In addition to being a Cleveland firefighter, he is an emergency department nurse at Huron Hospital.

McNamara earned his most recent medal when he saved the life of a toddler who was trapped inside the third floor of a burning home. When firefighters tried to enter the house, 1,000-degree-plus heat kept them from going further than the second floor. If they wanted to save the two children on the third floor, they'd have to do something different.

While firefighter Chris Baepler held a ladder, McNamara climbed to a third-floor window, where he found a 12-year-old boy coughing and soot-covered. As McNamara helped him out, the boy said there was a baby still inside. Two other firefighters entered through the window, and using thermo-imaging, found a little boy, about two years old, in the smoke-filled room.

The rescuer handed the boy, who felt lifeless and was not breathing, to McNamara. Cradling the child, McNamara began blowing air into the small lungs. After 20 breaths, there was still no sign of life, but McNamara, who has eight of his own children, was not about to give up. Finally, after 30 breaths, the boy began breathing again.

Apparently, when the heroic McNamara is around, everyone can breathe more easily. ■

EMS Calendar

August 17
7 p.m.

"The Threat of Terrorism" presented by Jane Pavlick, disaster specialist, Hillcrest Hospital. Location: Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital.

August 23
7 p.m.

"Penetrating Trauma." Community room at Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

September 21
7 p.m.

"Pre-hospital Treatment of the Burn Patient" presented by Nancy Grossclose, RN, Wooster EMS. Location: Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital.

September 27
7 p.m.

"Pediatric Emergencies." Community Room at Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

October 5
7 p.m.

Continuing education program. Topic to be announced. Location: Ross Auditorium at Hillcrest Hospital.

October 25
7 p.m.

"Street Drugs." Community Room at Sagamore Hills Medical Center.

Siren is produced by the marketing department in cooperation with its four EMS departments. If you have a newsworthy story to share or would like to comment on the newsletter, please call Anne Gallagher at **330/656-3068** or the marketing department at **440/312-8751**.

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