



# SHOCKING NEWS



## THE MONTHLY NEWS LETTER OF ROWAN COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES

### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK



HAIL CAESAR !

BY FRANK THOMASON

It's budget time once again! Over the last few weeks all of the administrative staff have been collecting, reviewing, updating and documenting all of our information for submission of the 2007-2008 budget which was completed on-time last Friday. Thanks to everyone including the additional assistance and input from members of the entire department. Here's a glimpse of the highlights (not in any particular order):

- Staff position requests include an emergency planner for the emergency management division, a department technology specialist, a part-time office assistant for EMS documentation billing and review, inspector/investigator positions (3) for the fire division with related equipment, and upgrading of six positions in the EMS division for field training officers and shift sergeants.
- The *addition* of a new EMS station and crew in western area of the county.
- Equipment requests include replacement/upgrade of the mobile air supply (MASS) unit, two replacement ambulance units, two replacement staff vehicles, replacement station equipment for Stations 86, 84, 83, and 87, upgrade/replacement of stretcher units (3), updating/replacement of capnography units, a emergency generator for Station 84, and a second laptop computer for each front line ambulance unit.
- The addition of mobile CAD and AVL to the department's vehicle fleet.
- Paving of driveway and parking area at Station 84.
- Additional training funds & equipment including a new computerized pediatric mannequin to comply with state standards, replacement tables, chairs and updated technology for the training room.

In the coming weeks, Tom, Beth and myself will meet with county administration as the budget continues to be developed. Our department was very successful with our budget requests for this year and it is my hope that trend will continue for the upcoming year. More to come - so stay tuned!

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## KUDOS

To Paramedics **Tamara Earnhardt** and **Anne Godfrey** for services rendered on March 27, 2007 at a traffic accident on N Cannon Blvd. In an email received from Kannapolis Fire Captain T J Cook, noted "The patient had multiple fractures and a possible head injury and was flown to CMC. Both the EMS crew (Tamara and Anne) and our Engine Company worked very well together to expedite the transport of the victim to a level one trauma center. It is the coordination of both agencies that contributed to what I feel will be a positive outcome. Again, thanks for all you guys do."

To EMS Division Paramedics **Tim Martin** and **Julie Strickland** for care rendered on November 18, 2006 to Ms. Barbara Dunn of Monroe, NC. In a note to the county, Ms. Dunn said "...and thank you for such kind, considerate care."

To EMS Division Paramedics **Tamara Earnhardt** and **Ken Goforth** for care rendered on September 24, 2006 to Ms. Nancy Hathaway of China Grove. In a note to the county, Ms. Hathaway said "I appreciate your help during that time. You were very kind to me and I won't forget it."

### [MESSAGE FROM THE EMS MANAGER](#)



BY [BETH CONNELL](#)

### Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment and retention of EMS employees concerns everyone. Experienced employees know the shortcuts and have contacts in public safety and medical professions. They can benefit their patients.

Experienced employees can also benefit new coworkers and new paramedics. The first and easiest step we can take to improve recruitment and retention is to welcome new employees. Give them pointers and share your knowledge. Save your opinions and let new employees come to their own conclusions.

In the short term we can improve retention through participation. Come help on an interview panel or assist with a CE class. Offer to help with public relations. We need voices to do public safety spots on local radio. Apply to be on the ATLAS team, as we need more SWAT medics. If none of these opportunities interests you, then there are other opportunities.

For the next fiscal year we have submitted expansion requests to reclassify 6 EMS positions. These are for a Shift Captain and a Field Training Officer (FTO) for each shift.

These positions create career advancement opportunities for current employees. Shift Captains would be in the chain of command below the Assistant Shift Supervisor. FTOs would work with new employees providing on the job training. An FTO might also assist with remediation of employees. FTOs would work with shift supervisors and our Training Officer.

The Recruitment and Retention Committee was instrumental in these expansions because they wrote the job descriptions. If you see Renee Greene, Aaron Thurston, Lennie Cooper or Daniel Robinson, please recognize them for their work on the project.

All field EMS positions, from supervisor through EMT were reviewed for possible reclassification. Most of you filled out position classification forms last fall. Human Resources studied these forms. A salary survey was done to see how our salary table compares to other counties. We have passed on to Human Resources several salary surveys and other information, which could justify a pay increase. Hopefully, this work will result in an across the board adjustment for EMS 24/48 employees. The Board of Commissioners will consider this information during the upcoming budget process for all positions up for reclassification this year.

In the long term we will submit other expansion requests. Details are still being worked out.

### Expansion Crew

I did request an expansion for a second station 84 crew with a station. Tentative locations were in Cleveland. Response time data that was presented at the commissioners' retreat underscore the need for the additional staff. While this is an expensive item and may turn out to be cost prohibitive, the commissioners recognize the need for additional EMS response units in the county.

### *YO QUIERO TRAINING*



BY LENNIE COOPER

Not much to say about training this month. As you have seen there are plenty of "extra" training opportunities available. In May we will be doing our annual Haz-Mat Refresher. Tamara will be taking care of this class. We are working to get the VFIS drivers training instructor class scheduled. After Haz-Mat we take a training vacation until August. Those participating in VFIS training and those needing initial drivers training will likely have classes in June and July.

Just a little reminder that the upcoming documentation class on either 4/10 or 4/12 is mandatory. Your attendance is expected. Failure to be present at one of the classes will be addressed through the disciplinary process. All staff is affected. Both full and part time

are required to attend. We have identified documentation deficiencies that are serious enough to warrant an attorney doing this class. Your participation is appreciated.

The suggestion box seems to be working great. The process so far has been to check the box and send the suggestion to all the Administrative staff. Any staff member can address the issue. All issues should be addressed and information sent back out so that everyone knows we are taking the suggestions seriously. You have the option to sign or otherwise indicate your identity if you so desire but it is obviously not required. It is however, nice to be able to give credit when credit is due for a positive suggestion.

So far I have taken suggestions in favor of classes on Gang Awareness and Self Defense. I am working on making these classes a reality. I suspect that at least one will be incorporated into the next quarterly day class. There was also a suggestion to place English to Spanish dictionaries at the stations and Spanish phrase books on each truck. I am also taking care of this request. The Spanish phrase books are pricey at about \$35 each with shipping so please take care of them when they reach the trucks. There are other items being discussed so you can expect additional feedback from the process.

Now for the monthly soapbox. I have heard it several times lately, heard it in the past and even said it myself in the past, "morale sucks around here". There are issues, some that we may be able to control, many that we can't. It seems that those complaining must have forgotten that dissatisfaction often lies within. When I have complained about morale, I have done my part to fix it. A positive attitude, a smile, professional demeanor, pride in your chosen profession all contribute to increased morale.

Your attitude is not the responsibility of the County Commissioners, County Manager, Director of Administration, Emergency Services Manager, EMS Manager, Training Officer, EMS Supervisor, Assistant EMS Supervisor or your peers. It is your responsibility alone. Try it, look in the mirror before your next shift and tell yourself a couple of things: "Wow, I look good in this uniform!" and "I love my very important job!" You will have a better outlook, your patients will receive a better level of care and you may even influence your coworkers.

If you don't believe you can influence others, look at those people that seem to always be happy. You know who they are; I won't name anyone for fear of leaving someone out. But if I did, they probably wouldn't care because they don't let the small things get them down. When you think about those folks, also think about those around them. Do they seem to be surrounded by other happy people? Of course they are. They are infectious. You can be too. It's up to you. It can't be mandated, bought, given or otherwise manufactured from outside of YOU.

When was the last time you explained your job to another person outside of the profession? Or took a little extra time with a student for a reason other than to make them look bad or make fun. Did a little extra for a family member. Held the door for John or Jane Q Public while in uniform. All of these things reflect positively on the profession as a whole as well as you individually. Positive vibes being sent your way do a lot to

improve your outlook. Many thanks to the “Positive Pauls and “Positive Peggys“, you know who you are and your attitude is appreciated. That all I got say bout that? If ya need me call me.



***EMILEE GAIL POTTS***

***BORN***

***MARCH 27, 2007 AT 1:28 P.M.***

***6 1/2 LBS.***

***19" LONG***

***DADDY KELLY AND MOM ARE DOING GREAT.***

## [DOCUMENTATION / SCHEDULING / COMPUTERS / OH MY!](#)



BY: [TJ BROWN](#)

Well, 1/4 of the year has already come and gone. Hard to believe Easter has come and gone. Daylight savings time came earlier than it was suppose to, causing many things to have to happen on the background to make sure our computers updated correctly. To my amazement, there were no problems with time change that I know of. I'm sure Lennie will be mentioning it in his article, but we are going to have a very good documentation review class this month. I'm not sure what all the details are, but I feel comfortable saying that we have not done a documentation class like this since I have been employed here. It will be a unique learning experience for me, and every other employee here.

I want to talk briefly about the class that I will be doing in April. It will be toward the end of the month, tentatively the week of the 23rd. I have had a brief preview of the new Field Data software. One change that I'm excited about, is the ability to set times to be required so that you get a reminder that they were not entered. There are several new fields, and there has been some re-design on the patient tab. Some changes include: in the medical history section, there is now a place to put the dosage of the medicine. The allergies section is now broke out between Medicine Allergies and Food/Environmental Allergies. The medicine allergies are now based off of the medication list, instead of different list. Other changes include modifications to the: provider impression, signs/symptoms, delays, EMD Card Number, Procedures/Treatment, there is now an Exam button, and several other changes. The biggest reason for this major overhaul to the software is the national initiative call NEMESIS. With this initiative comes new definitions or modified definitions that we will be discussing.

Another change that is coming is new email address. Sometime in the not so distant future your email address will change. It will be your first name a period (.) and your last name @rowancountync.gov i.e. [john.sharp@rowancountync.gov](mailto:john.sharp@rowancountync.gov) Mail can currently be sent to your address in this format. Formal instructions will come out, as we know more at a later date.

As always, keep up the good work with your data collection. Missing PCR's are very few. Please continue your hard work.

Until next month,

TJ

MONTHLY CALL STATISTICS



TJ BROWN

**February  
Calls by Unit**

	827	117	12%
	836	91	9%
	844	155	16%
	851	166	17%
	855	156	16%
	862	140	14%
	873	149	15%
Total		974	

**Calls by Type**

Transports	697	72%
Cancellations	112	11%
No Transports	116	12%
Moveups	49	5%
Total	974	

**Destination**

RRMC	494	71%
NEMC	153	22%
DRMC	6	1%
LNRMC	7	1%
IMH	1	0%
Davie	0	0%
Stanly	0	0%
Lexington	0	0%
VAMC	16	2%
Other	20	3%
Total	697	

## *FROM THE FIRE SIDE OF THINGS*



BY TOM MURPHY, FIRE MARSHALL

This is my third month with the county and I continue to learn new things about my position. I'm knee deep in budget preparations for my office and will soon begin reviewing the fire departments' budget requests for the coming year. The vacant Asst. Fire Marshal position has been filled by Jason Burnett. He works at Rowan Cabarrus Community College and is a firefighter for South Salisbury. I'm working toward full time inspectors/investigators and hope to have them on board by this summer. I'll keep you posted on the progress. I'd like to thank all those who have called or stopped by to offer their support or words of encouragement as we move forward in new directions.

## *EMS EXPLORERS*



BY LYNETTE RACKETT

The Explorer program has been up and running for two months now. We now have 12 members, and meet every other Monday evening. You might see some of our explorers in some of our in house continuing education programs. I ask that everyone please keep in mind to watch the language around these kids, and also not to complain and gripe about our service. Most of these kids are going to be our future EMT's and Paramedics. And with our current staffing problem, no one is going to want to work here if they hear nothing but negative comments about our service from it's own employees.

We are scheduled to have our CPR classes on May 14th and 28th from 1900 to 2100 both nights. I am in need of a CPR instructor to teach the classes on those nights. I am also in need of some help to teach the classes too.

I am also looking to form somewhat of an Advisory Committee for the Explorers. This committee would be responsible for various tasks. The Advisory Committee would be to come up with program ideas or different things for the Explorers to do. Also they would be responsible for adding to the policies and procedures. This committee would be great for people who want to volunteer but don't have a whole lot of time to do it. This committee would meet about once per month.

In closing, I would like to thank all that have volunteered so far. You know who you are.

Lynette