

APRIL 2019

# THE SIREN

NEWSLETTER OF THE SUN CITY CENTER

AMBULANCE

## From the Desk of the Chief

For those of you that attended the Annual meeting, some of this will not be new information. There are many things that have happened and most have gone on without much fanfare, but deserve recognition.

Several months ago, we had a state inspection. The Department of Health sends an inspector in and checks the vehicles and personnel records along with maintenance records. On this inspection, we received a no deficiencies report.

VFIS is our Insurer. We had a risk assessment about 4 years ago and several recommendations were made. Since then, several changes have been made to the buildings, the Driver's Program, even the layout of the ready room. I asked for a new risk assessment, and I know that seems strange but I felt a lot of work had been done to minimize risk. As a result of this, we received a letter from the Insurer stating everything we are doing either meets or exceeds their requirements and therefore no recommendations are being made.

We are a training site for Pasco-Hernando College in CPR. They have 14 sites and have written that we are their best site. According to them, we are always ahead of any changes coming and implementing them.

We started a Stop the Bleed program and trained 500 people in a year.

Many of you have heard about something called Documed. In short, it is the program we secure patient information on. They had a massive update and it took hundreds of hours putting together and training our people to use it. They were able to accomplish this ahead of schedule. I can't emphasize too much how instrumental IT was in this endeavor while continuing to maintain our network and about 50 computers. It seems like Microsoft has never seen an update they didn't like.

*"Can you please pass along my sincerest thanks to your group for taking such good care of my nephew David Botto. He is in EMT school and did both his rides with your agency. He couldn't speak highly enough about them and everything he learned. He was in awe of the fact that it is a volunteer organization and how dedicated and hardworking everyone was. Thank you!"*

**Sincerely,  
Tammy Zurla  
Fire Marshal  
HCFR Fire Rescue**

Maintenance is not seen by many, unless you're in early. Maintaining a fleet of 8 vehicles isn't easy by itself. Did you ever wonder how the vehicles get sanitized or washed? In addition, they also do maintenance on 2 buildings.

There are many sections and teams on the Squad. I have had the privilege of seeing what all of you

have accomplished. I speak to many people during the course of a year and I can't honestly remember a time that someone has not told me how appreciative and thankful the Emergency Squad was there for them or their family member. You are definitely appreciated!



**Chief Mike Bardell**

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SUN CITY CENTER EMERGENCY SQUAD



# UPDATES & REPORTS

## April Birthdays

John Kunzler	2	Anthony Marro	18
Daniel Zawacki	3	Gene Pliska	18
Marcia Lederberg	4	Sharon Dolan	18
Floyd Curvin	5	Dee Whitehurst	19
Russ Girgenti	6	Mohsen Khalifa	20
Mary Bramel	7	Elizabeth Ellis	20
Jennie Casey	7	Chris Zewin	21
Bud Bergeman	8	Bud Wiehe	23
Betsy McGhee	8	George McInnes	23
Diane Simon	9	Cricket Fraser	25
April Lester	9	Barbara Cunningham	26
Joan Feehan	9	David Graves	26
Linda Conklin	11	Don Marotta	27
Lawrence Bardsley	12	Gretchen Chapman	27
Barbara Cuthbertson	12	Reinhold Baal	29
Frank Gatto	16	Scotti Fortiner	30

## Anniversaries Team#/ Years

Carol Howley	3	10
Chris McCann	1	5
Lois Andress	5	3
Shun Lee	1	3
Roger McCann	1	3
Rosie Lee	1	3
Marlene Hollender	8	3
Mervyn Hollender	8	3
Sharon Privitera	3	1
Sebastian Smith	6	1



## Squad Stats

### Run Reports

<b>Ambulance Runs</b>	<b>412</b>
<b>Van Runs</b>	<b>123</b>
<b>Fall Calls</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Blood pressures</b>	<b>135</b>

### Sick List

George McInnes	WM
Sally Mabeson	T-7
Marilyn Navarro	T-1

## Behind the Scenes

### Keeping the Lights on and the Wheels Rolling—Our Maintenance Crew

From the mundane work of changing light bulbs to the complex tasks of keeping our wheels turning, Dick Schneider and his amazing crew are here every morning to fix anything that occurred overnight or the day before. Dick Schneider, Asst. Chief of Maintenance, has been with the Squad for over 20 years and has probably fixed more than he can recall, from broken plumbing to installing new ovens, to identifying some strange new engine noise and figuring out a course of action. Dick and his crew have done it all. And they are also volunteers.

Ambulance maintenance requires more than just fixing a broken turn signal. There are documents and logs that must be maintained. Every detail must be tracked and every receipt must be kept. There are State requirements and inspections that occur and all the proper documentation has to be available for their review.

Several years ago when the flu was particularly bad, Dick investigated a system for sterilizing the ambulances. After exploring various options, Dick presented the Board with the Autoclave system to provide added assurance that our ambulance units are safe and clean for both our patients and our crews.

And perhaps you've seen the crew that washes and cleans our ambulances several times a week. Dick is there with this crew as well, making sure they have what they need to properly clean our ambulances.

But there's more to the story – if our building leaks during a storm – as it did in January, Dick Schneider got out of bed and came down to the Squad to find a temporary fix. This was necessary since our computers were just below the leak! Then he oversaw the work of the Contractor to make sure it was fixed correctly.

So, when you see Dick and his crew sitting out back by the ambulances, - they are in the "Maintenance Office" having a crew meeting!

(Photo from 2016)



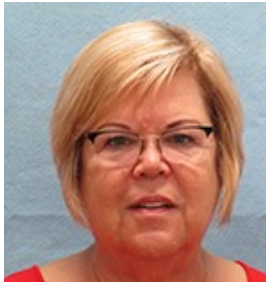
L to R: Mike McClintic, Marty Garner, Jack Riley, Dick Schneider, Robert Bizzano, Kay Bogart and Barry Bogart

# Our People & News You Can Use

## HIPAA –What does it mean to our Squad

By Cheryl Burlage

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) protects the privacy and security of health information and provides individuals with certain rights to their health information.



**HIPAA means you can't share private and personally identifiable information about the patient to anyone not directly involved in their care.** Individual PHI includes many common identifiers, such as name, address, birth date, and Social Security number. Top of Form

Not a HIPAA violation:

Hey fellow EMT/friend, we responded to an exploding colostomy bag call earlier today. It was nasty.

HIPAA violation:

We just responded to Mrs. White at 201 Jones St. She had colostomy and the bag exploded. It was crazy. We took her to St. Joe's South.

With the first example, can you identify the patient? No. With the second, you have personally identifiable private information and that's a HIPAA violation.

**You play a vital role in protecting the privacy and security of patient information.**

### TIPS

**If there are family or neighbors in the home when you arrive and they are not the identified POA, then you must ask the patient for permission to discuss the medical condition in front of them.**

**You can only discuss PHI with your crew who rode the ambulance while in the ambulance.**

**Once you are back at the Squad, you can discuss the case but NOT using the patient name, address, phone number or any other PHI.**

**ANYTHING that comes across the fax or printer that has medical PHI included or is from a lawyer needs to be put in an inner office envelope and placed in the HIPAA Compliance Officer's mailbox (Cheryl Burlage).**

**You MUST use a cover sheet when faxing reports to hospitals.**

## Serving the Senior Patient

Probably 99% of the time, our calls will be to help a senior resident in our community. And while most of us are "there" already, assessing a senior is different on every call, because no two people and no two calls are alike. Here are some thoughts about providing care to folks in our community.

- If your patient is several generations older than you, speak more slowly. Every generation speaks faster than the last. Also consider right off whether or not they have hearing issues. Too often deafness can be confused with dementia.
- To retired folks, every day is Saturday. Using the day of the week to determine mental status won't produce an accurate assessment. Ask other questions – the year; where they are; current President.
- Be prepared to discuss body functions in a professional manner. Extreme constipation can be an emergency.
- Dehydration is probably "the rule" and not the exception. And it exacerbates other issues.
- UTI's (urinary tract infections) can cause behavioral issues that can mimic other problems. Serious UTIs can result in sepsis, if not properly treated.

Always remember, that once they were younger, had amazing careers and families and didn't reach old age by making bad decisions!

## VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH—

### Chris McCann—Asst. Chief of Human Resources

When Chris McCann began with the Squad, 5 years ago, little did she know that she would play such an instrumental role in keeping the Squad moving forward.

Chris started her Squad career as an Emergency Medical Responder, but soon began assisting in our Human Resources office, and was ready to jump right in to take over when she was asked. She has also served as one of our Instructors, helping our new EMR classes learn the Toughbook. Unbeknownst to many, Chris spends many hours each week, interviewing prospective volunteers, giving them tours, ensuring the proper paperwork is completed and making sure they get to training in quick order.

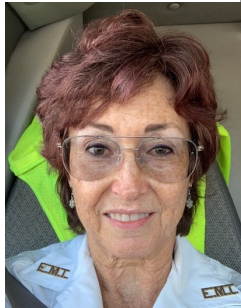
Her efforts for the last five years, have led to better informed volunteers and an improved personnel department organization.



## Squad in the Public Eye

By Robin Watt, Asst. Chief, Public Relations

It's always been an honor for me to represent our amazing organization within our community. But every time each of us puts on our uniform, we are representing the Squad, whether we're on duty, or participating in a community event.



Throughout the year, there are various events where the Emergency Squad is an exhibitor or provides a crew and ambulance for the safety of the public. Included in this edition of the Siren, is a calendar of the events that we usually attend. For some of these, we'll need volunteers to hand out vials of life, brochures or other giveaways; take blood pressures; and greet the public. At other events, we may need a full crew - EMT, Driver, and EMR. At others, any volunteer who would like to help will be welcome! And of course, **every event is a recruiting opportunity**. If you love being on the Squad, it's a great time to tell your friends and neighbors.

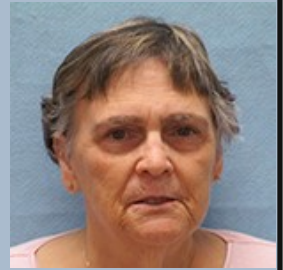
Included on the list are also Squad only events, or those where a spouse or guest is welcome.

Sign-up Sheets will be available in the ready for each event,. If we only need a limited number, their will be spaces for the exact number we need.

Join the fun !

## Safety for All

By Bev LeDoux, Asst. Chief, Safety



Safety is an issue we all need to think about whenever we're on duty. Not just our safety, but our patient's safety and the public's safety should also be kept in mind as well. This should always be a team effort to look out for one another. But here's a few thoughts to consider when on duty:

Always look before exiting the ambulance – are you on the side of traffic? Are you stepping onto a solid surface, high curb or into a ditch? Are their trip hazards?

When moving the gurney, make sure you have two volunteers – one front and one back, to avoid tipping over. Check for obstacles that could hang up a wheel. Narrow sidewalks that slope can also be a challenge to maneuver a gurney around.

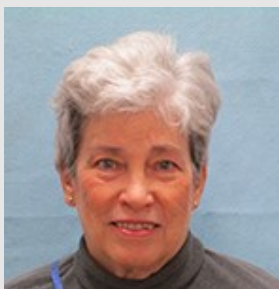
Tell your patient (often if necessary) to keep their arms, hands and elbows inside the gurney when we're moving them.

When backing up the ambulance, having a spotter to assist is helpful. People walk behind us all the time, especially in parking lots.

Be safe everybody! We need you all!

## Toughbook tips by Merrill Pritham,

We have reached the end of the first quarter of 2019 and I'd like to compliment everyone involved in transitioning to Emergency Pro 6. This was a tremendous undertaking involving a lot of people and effort to accomplish. Well done.



Most reports are looking good and I make minor corrections as needed for, address errors like using the patient's home address instead of ours for walk-ins, using the wrong sex (or unknown), using the wrong run number or adding an extra digit, or not citing mutual aid correctly.

"Sick" continues to be used too often and Dr Ksaibati wants to know what is really wrong. Obvious flu-like symptoms can be classified as "pandemic/epidemic", but so many things are not on the list that we need. So, put as much info into the narrative as you can to give me a clue. I have to try to list them for him, but none of us is qualified to make a diagnosis. We can guess, though!

## TEAM CAPTAINS

TEAM 1	ROBERT LEONARD
TEAM 2	BETTY RICHNER
TEAM 3	CHUCK RUSS
TEAM 4	TIM ZION
TEAM 5	KEN RODMAN
TEAM 6	DICK MCCORMICK
TEAM 7	TINA DRURY



Check our website at  
[SCCEMS.com](http://SCCEMS.com)