

February 2022

The Siren

*Newsletter of the Sun City Center
Emergency Squad*

AMBULANCE

From the Chief's Desk

I won't say that we're off to a great start this year. We had an unfortunate event that resulted in the resignation of one of our EMT's. I felt I needed to do a thorough investigation to ensure that there could be no legal repercussions against the Squad. Our attorney was consulted and agreed with the approach I took. If you haven't heard about it, please consult your Captain – do not rely on the rumor mill. But by now you should have read the email sent by Chris McCann on February 1st, containing Tom Canady's resignation.

But I'd like to put that behind us and move forward.

Regarding COVID – 19, the month is starting out in a much better way. In Hillsborough County, infections are down significantly. And we are not wearing masks; however, stay tuned: that could always change again and I would rather err on the side of safety and caution when it comes to caring for all of you. This is probably not over and there is every chance this is something that will occur every year.

On another positive note, I met with my administrative staff for the first time in a long time to discuss recruiting ideas. Nothing was off limits and we had a productive meeting. My particular thanks to Teresa Paddubney for being our scribe and capturing all the ideas we generated. You'll likely be seeing some of those become reality in the coming months.

I really believe we are all a little more irritable, short fused, or whatever you choose to call it. We are not used to being locked down or restricted. Can anyone remember the last time you heard a news segment in which Covid-19 wasn't mentioned? I plan to focus less on the news, and more on the positive aspects I have in my life.

Lastly, please be more tolerant of others. We truly don't know all the things others are going through.

As always, my thanks to each of you for your continuing donation of time and energy to our community.



Chief Mike Bardell

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SUN CITY CENTER

EMERGENCY SQUAD



UPDATES & REPORTS

Birthdays for February 2022

Ed Cohen	1st	Helenanne Frobose	18 th
Maryanne Jenkins	1st	Brigitte Austen	18th
Tom Rawlings	2nd	John Colburn	18th
Karen Butenschoen	3rd	Sue Baker	21st
Barbara Caprom	6th	Ron Claeys	21st
Diane Hathaway	6th	Judy Myette	21st
Deb Schulenberg	6th	Elizabeth Schneider	21st
Marilyn Kupka	7th	Bertil Johnson	22nd
Barbara Schneider	7th	Irv Sanders	22nd
Emily Lahti	9th	Sandra Andel	23rd
Carol Hillberry	10th	Barry McKee	24th
Marty Heiss	11th	Annette Rawlinson	26th
Connie Abbott	12th	Erik Sager	27 th
Randy Heath	12th	Chris McCann	28 th
Robert Jensen	13th	Anne McNamara	28th
Valerie Cook	14th	Tom Murphy	29th
Diane Neyenhouse	14th	Scott Dempsey	29 th



February Anniversaries

	Team #
15 Year Anniversaries	
Dolores Whiteside	2
10 Year Anniversaries	
Dick Bishop	0
Kay Bogart	0
Mike McClintick	0
Tim Zion	4
Pam Zion	4
Barry Bogart	4
Bonnie Murphy	8
5 year Anniversaries	
John Dulik	3
Linda Dulik	3
Frank Sponhauer	6
Beverly Brown	6
Elliott Marcus	8
Carol Bippin	7
3 year Anniversary	
Eunice Bembrey	1
Jennifer Meier	2
Jacqueline Potts	2
April Lester	3

Anniversaries Continued

	Team #
3 Year Anniversaries	
Jim Hunton	
Pam Kerstetter	4
Betsy McGhee	8
1 Year Anniversaries	
Roger Sitara	1
Scott Dempsey	1
Joann Sawicki	2
John Smits	2
Ed Whitehead	2
Donna Munz	3
Maureen Kurowski	4
Shannon Bielaska	4
Patricia Bonacum	5
Barbara Rezner	6
Laurel Odmark	7
Gail Roy	8

February is Heart Month—Understand your Blood Pressure

Understanding and knowing what YOUR normal blood pressure is, will help both your doctor and first responders when they are checking your blood pressure.

Blood pressure differs for everyone and is different at various times of day. But you should have an idea of what is normal for you. The chart at the right shows the five ranges recognized by the American Heart Association.

The first number or top number, depending on how its shown or written, is your systolic pressure. This is the measurement of how much force the heart exerts to pump blood OUT of the heart,

The second number is the diastolic pressure: the pressure on your blood vessels when your heart is relaxed between beats.

Keeping a list of ALL your medications is important, but particularly so for heart medications. When your doctor prescribes a new medication, add it to the list and make sure you cross out the old one. If any new medication makes your dizzy, let your doctor know—it might be dropping your blood pressure too low!

BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)	and/or	DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120

What's New?

HIPAA AND LEGAL ISSUES FOR EMS

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 (Personal Health Information) includes many common identifiers, such as name, address, birth date, and Social Security number.

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 a 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 as 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 (Linda Eargle).

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

This article was written several years ago by then HIPAA Officer Cheryl Burlage. It has been reviewed and approved by Linda Eargle, our current HIPAA Compliance Officer.

Statistics and Sick List

January Statistics

Ambulance Runs	378
Falls	142
% of calls	37.5%
Van Runs	106

Blood Pressures	47
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Sick List

Team 1	Gail Letzring
Team 4	Mary Bramel Jack Horan
Team 7	Suzanne McFadyyn Walt Prouty Dennis Nash Sharon Crabtree
Team 8	Ed Cox Debbie Goodrow Lisa Preston



The Emergency Squad was once again the single biggest donor of toys with more than 3400 collected in 2021. The Squad's help is greatly appreciated and the Veterans Funeral Home thanks our member so much for their generosity of both toys and monetary donations..



If you aren't familiar with Amazon Smile, now is the time to learn what it's about.

amazonsmile

It is a charity program that doesn't cost you a dime. Instead, Amazon contributes to the charity of your choice when you sign up and select your favorite charity. Then it donates a % of your purchases to that charity. It's that simple. Learn more at: <https://smile.amazon.com>

Community Relations

By Robin Watt, Asst. Chief, Community Relations

Last month, staff members met to discuss recruiting ideas. It seems it's always a challenge to find new recruits who are willing to go through the training. Numerous ideas were brought up – nothing was rejected.

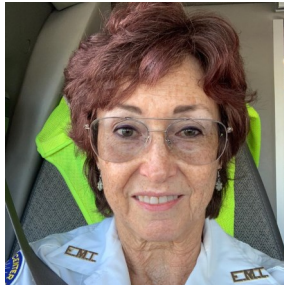
A few of those ideas were:

- Afternoon or evening EMR/CPR classes
- Establish a Speakers Bureau to visit clubs/local organizations
- Newcomers Coffee/Information Meeting
- Hire an advertising agency or marketing consultant
- Put a monthly notice in the local church newsletters
- Create a commercial for Bay News 9
- Create an incentive program for current volunteers to recruit new volunteers
- Invest in an electronic sign

Some of these have been tried before, but are worth trying again.

Still, one of the very best ways to interest friends and neighbors is "word of mouth." Is there someone new in the neighborhood? Take them a vial of life and a brochure and let them know we always need people who want to be of assistance. Invite them to our monthly 2nd Wednesday meeting. Tell them about your own experience on the Squad and how it makes you feel. Tell them what your kids and grandkids think about your volunteering on an ambulance squad!

The Squad has served the community for 57+ years, and we hope to keep it vital and involved many more.




Identifying a Stroke

The chart on the right explains the Cincinnati Stroke Scale. We use these "tests" and observations to determine if someone is having a stroke.

One important thing to note, is that only one of these signs needs to be abnormal to consider if someone is having a stroke. If you are an ambulance crew member and taking the patient to the hospital, you MUST fill out the Stroke form and document the FAST test in the ePCR. Please document the last time the patient was seen as normal.

If you have noticed that a friend or neighbor is having any of these signs – abnormal speech, one-sided weakness or facial droop, (and this is not normal for them) please call for help immediately.


American Heart Association | American Stroke Association
Learn and Live.

The Cincinnati Prehospital Stroke Scale
(Kothari R, et al, Acad Emerg Med. 1997; 4:986-990.)

Facial Droop (have patient show teeth or smile):

- Normal – both sides of face move equally
- Abnormal – one side of face does not move as well as the other side

Arm Drift (patient closes eyes and extends both arms straight out for 10 seconds):


- Normal – both arms move the same or both arms do not move at all (other findings, such as pronator drift, may be helpful)
- Abnormal – one arm does not move or one arm drifts down compared with the other


Abnormal Speech (have the patient say "you can't teach an old dog new tricks"):

- Normal – patient uses correct words with no slurring
- Abnormal – patient slurs words, uses the wrong words, or is unable to speak

Interpretation: If any 1 of these 3 signs is abnormal, the probability of a stroke is 72%

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Left: normal. Right: stroke patient with facial droop (right side of face).


Left: normal. Right: one-sided motor weakness (right arm).

Quality Assurance

by Diane Simon, Asst. Chief QA

It's been a less than sunny month it seems. Time to find that inner happiness and put on the smile to meet and greet our patients and fellow team members.



Reports are improving. WE still have some questions to be answered and we (Chiefs and Captains) are trying to work out details. Kind of like "who's on first" syndrome.

Let's refresh some basics. Please capture the Patient Data on the tabs. When HCFR is on scene first and we are dismissed immediately without having done any vitals or interventions, we have NOT had patient contact. Talking to the patient, especially from the doorway, does not constitute patient contact. Some crews though, are using shortcuts, i.e. "No Patient Contact," if we assess the patient and turn them over to HCFR.

Please remember that on FALLS we should not only be doing a Rapid Head to Toe, but a Stroke assessment as well. Rule out possible causes for the fall. Sometimes it's obvious – like a rug turned over on the floor, or a rough sidewalk, but it does need to be noted on the ePCR. Remember to also check Blood Glucose levels on every fall AND every call where the patient is a Diabetic or has AMS.

I encourage you to review your reports prior to submitting/signing them. I suggest you go into the sign/close portion which brings your report up in a different format for you to review versus tab by tab. Just because you are in "sign/close" does not mean that you cannot continue to edit the report.

You're doing great work and I am blessed by your dedication and care given to the community.

Upcoming:

Kings Point Activities Open House Feb.4th
Jack's Shack fundraiser February 6th

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Team Captains

Team 1	Robert Leonard
Team 2	Betty Richner
Team 3	
Team 4	Tim Zion
Team 5	Ken Ayers
Team 6	Eileen Peco
Team 7	Karen McInnis
Team 8	