

February is National Heart Month

By Robin Watt

There are numerous factors that affect your heart's health: blood pressure; diabetes, cholesterol being not just significant, but factors over which you have *some* control.

Blood pressure is the measurement of how forceful the heart pumps your blood. The "top" number is the systolic pressure - the pressure when your heart pushes the blood out and into the arteries. The "bottom" number is the diastolic pressure - the is lowest pressure when your heart has relaxed between beats. It's important to know your numbers because they are a good representation of what's happening inside your body. Your blood pressure can be affected by many things: exercise, pain, getting up too fast or a sudden surprise. But those types of impacts are temporary. However, many illnesses have a longer term impact on blood pressure and recognizing a consistent change from your normal BP may be the first step to treatment and maintaining a healthy number.

Do you know your A1C? Your A1C (also known as HbA1C) is the average of your blood glucose levels over the past several months. I think few folks realize how diabetes affects their heart and blood vessels. Constant high blood sugar can damage your heart and blood vessels by causing plaque to build up, hardening your arteries and eventually leading to heart disease. Getting you're A1C to a healthy level and managing your daily glucose levels will have multiple health benefits.

So **what is cholesterol?** Cholesterol is a waxy substance throughout the body. It's not "bad" unless you have too much of it. Your body needs it to build cells and make vitamins and other hormones. But too much cholesterol can pose a problem. Cholesterol comes from two sources. Your liver makes all the cholesterol you need. The remainder of the cholesterol in your body comes from foods from animals. For example, meat, poultry and dairy products all contain dietary cholesterol.

LDL cholesterol -LDL cholesterol is considered the "bad" cholesterol because it contributes to fatty buildups in arteries (atherosclerosis). This narrows the arteries and increases the risk for heart attack, stroke and peripheral artery disease, or PAD.

HDL cholesterol -HDL cholesterol can be thought of as the "good" cholesterol because a healthy level may help protect against heart attack and stroke. HDL carries LDL (bad) cholesterol away from the arteries and back to the liver, where the LDL is broken down and passed from the body. But HDL cholesterol doesn't eliminate LDL cholesterol. Only a fraction of blood cholesterol is carried by HDL.

Triglycerides -Triglycerides are the most common type of fat in the body. They store excess energy from your diet. A high triglyceride level combined with high LDL cholesterol or low HDL cholesterol is linked with fatty buildups within the artery walls, which increases the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Information from the American Heart Association

HIPAA Information by Linda Eargle,



1. The EMR is responsible for knowing where the computer is at all times.
2. When documenting patient information on the computer, ensure that others do NOT see the screen.
3. When you've written down medications on the patient information form, but the patient refuses transport, you should either leave the completed form with the patient or shred the paper as soon as you return to the ready room. That form is protected information.
4. SCC EMS HIPAA procedures on written information.
 - The yellow sheet is the only place where patient information should be written.
 - If a rare occurrence requires the EMT to note medical information, do not include any patient identifying information.
 - All written information should be shredded at the squad as soon as possible is preferable, but before the shift is over is expected 100% of the time.
5. Individuals, even volunteers, may be fined up to \$10,000 per violation and/or sentenced to federal prison.
 - If you have a question about HIPAA policies, feel free to email me at Lindaea@scc-ems.us or call me. I'm on team 7.

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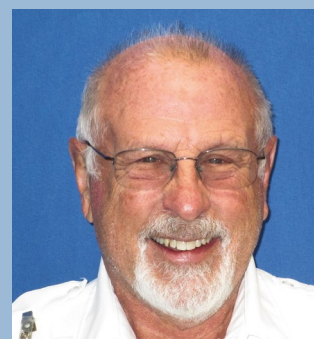
Team Captains

Team 1	Mike Stephens
Team 2	Betty Richner
Team 3	Walt Bowers
Team 4	Gerald Eckman
Team 5	Rich Bothroyd
Team 6	Ed Whitehead
Team 7	Bob Butenhoff
Team 8	Tom Murphy

The Siren

February 2025

Newsletter of Sun City Center Emergency Squad



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February is Heart Month HIPAA Notes Team Captains

One twelfth of the year is already gone and if its any indication – the year will be over in a blink!

Thank you all for your dedication in 2024 – there were many challenges and we survived due to your commitment.

This year we are planning two community meetings for the Spring – Disaster Planning on April 24th and a repeat of the Advance Life Decisions on May 2nd. Both of these events will be held at Kings Point and Community Hall. Stay tuned for details, but mark your calendars!

Recently our EMTs have reinstated service discussions and issues. These meetings provide a forum for discussion about how we can better serve our residents; best practices on and off the ambulances and "after action" reviews of specific cases. These meetings will soon expand to be "Crew Meetings" so that our ambulance and van crews all have an opportunity to participate.

We have received several donations recently; one from Valencia Lakes for \$2200 from their Thanksgiving "Turkey Trot" fundraiser. We also received \$5700 Check from the Sun City Center Bingo Club. We appreciate their donation.

At the end of 2024, we finally got Kings Point to sign a 3-year bulk contract for continuing our service. This contract requires a \$2.50/monthly fee added to each home's HOA fee. This comes to \$30/year/home or the equivalent of 8 cents/day. This is the amount that KP residents have paid since 1987 and it has never gone up.

Before 1987, Kings Point received emergency service from the Apollo Beach Rescue Squad. Initially, Our organization was funded entirely by residents of Sun City Center through a variety of programs. But the SCC community hasn't made consistent donations for almost 30 years and I have made it a point that there should be parity between Kings Point and the SCC Community Association. I will be pursuing that this year and it will one of my major goals.

Welcome to 2025 – a quarter of this century is almost over! Thank you again for your contributions to our community.

Updates and Reports

February Birthdays

Name	Date
Edward Cohen	1
Dorothy De Coux	4
Dorothy DeCoux	4
Barbara Capron	6
Debra Schulenberg	6
S. Diane Hathaway	6
Chris Kerler	7
Barbara Schneider	7
Emily Lahti	9
Carol Hillberry	10
Marty Heiss	11
Randy Heath	12
Robert Jensen	13
Margaret Covert	13
Diane Neyenhouse	14
Valerie Cook	14
Helenanne Frobose	17
John Colburn	18
Ronald Claeys	21
Sue Baker	21
Judy Myette	21
Elizabeth Schneider	21
Bertil Johnson	22
Sandra Andel	23
Chris McCann	28
Dempsey Scott	29
Tom Murphy	29

Anniversaries

Name	Team	Award
Kathleen Sutherland	1	1
Jim Sutherland	1	1
Craig King	3	1
Barbara Hutcheson	5	1
Dorothy DeCoux	8	1
Curt DeCoux	8	1
Terri Reed	1	3
Patty McClure	2	3
Dave McClure	2	3
Donna Manship	8	10
Bill Grussi	2	10
Jan Huber	2	15
Helenanne	6	15
Betty Richner	2	15

SQUAD ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

When: Tuesday, March 25, 2025 at 10AM. Where: Florida Room, Atrium Building at the Sun City Center Community Association on Cherry Hill Drive. The Annual Membership Meeting is held to update the Membership regarding the status of the Squad, including business and financial status; elect new members to the board of directors; and to present any important business matters for the Membership to consider and vote on.

This year there will be no election since there were three openings on the board and three qualified candidates applied. The new board members will officially take their seats on the board as of March 9th. A Board Organization Meeting will be held immediately following the Annual Meeting to elect the Corporate Officers and conduct initial business.. We look forward to seeing everyone at the Annual Meeting to hear about the past year and share ideas about the coming year.

Turkey Trot Donation

The Sun City Center Emergency Squad thanks the Robin Hoods of Valencia Del Sol for their generous Turkey Trot 2024 Fundraiser donation of \$2,253 presented to the Squad in January, 2025. The Squad truly enjoyed their participation in the Turkey Trot 2024 Fundraiser Event. Chief Mike Bardell, Sun City Center Emergency Squad; Chair Lynn DiCerbo, Turkey Trot Fundraiser, Robin Hoods of Valencia Del Sol.



January Statistics

Ambulance Runs	298
Fall calls	147
% of calls	41.9%
Van Runs	71
Blood Pressures	53

What's New?

EMT Meeting Notes by Vicki Kosin, EMT

Recently the EMT's were invited to participate in an informal discussion at the Training Center. The topic of discussion was CPR. 35 EMTs and a few EMRs attended and participated.



The American Heart Association (AHA) states that more than 1000 victims per day experience sudden heart attack syndrome. Of these, the likelihood is that only 40% of these victims survive, the difference is likely the prompt administration of CPR. Bystanders, albeit not efficiently trained, can increase the survival statistics with CPR.

These are the 7 simple steps of CPR:

1. scene safety
2. check for a response
3. call 911
4. check for pulse and breathing
5. begin compressions
6. provide rescue breaths
7. continue cycles of compression and breaths

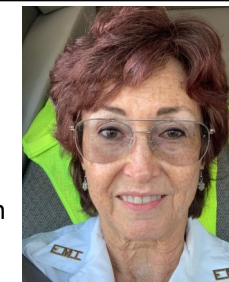
This was followed by a discussion of on-duty CPR experiences. A call may seem to be a "routine" lift assist, but during the assessment may develop into a cardiac event. Administration of CPR may save a life. Remember to document what you noted upon arrival and all that you did for the patient.

During the second part of this meeting, Dr. Ksabati provided fundamental training on the use of the new EKO 500 stethoscope and answered many of our questions.

Thank you to all who attended and participated, making this discussion a success.

Crew Tips by Robin Watt, EMT

When going to any of our local assisted or independent living facilities, consider taking the AED as a matter of habit. The last thing you want, is to have to send your EMR or driver back to the ambulance to retrieve the AED. Running down the stairs or waiting for an elevator would result in a delay of treatment, which could make a difference in the patient's survival. Keep in mind, that whoever calls us, may not be able to accurately tell us the patient's problem – people fall because they have heart attacks or strokes, and it may not be obvious to the caller.



Community Resources

We are incredibly fortunate to live in a community that not only has numerous resources to assist us as we age, but we also many people who are willing to help. For all who are new to the Squad, please be aware that we maintain a list of local resources for people in the community who do not need our services, but still need assistance of some kind.

This list, shown in the photo, is a printed card; it includes phone numbers support groups, food resources like meals on wheels or food pantries, transportation services, helplines for the Crisis Center, Disabled American Veterans and mental health resources. There should be cards kept on the ambulances and vans and should be available at the front desk as well. If you have neighbors who need a little more assistance getting by, you might consider taking them a copy.

Each year we update this list with current phone numbers; add new groups and delete groups that no longer exist.

