



EMSI Regional Safety Committee

December Newsletter

First and foremost,
Happy Holidays! to
you and yours from
the RSC. Though we
will all be working, as is the
lot of emergency providers, I
think we can all benefit from
the lifting of spirit and joy
that the holidays bring.

Come the New Year,
it is tradition to pick
some resolutions to
try and improve
ourselves. **This can
be stressful.** In order to
relieve EMS personnel from

the stress that this can bring,
the wellness subcommittee
of the RSC has thoughtfully
come up with a new program
for January: ***Mind, Body
and Spirit.***

The rules are simple:
The program will run
for the month of
January. Participants
have to meet **one** of
the criteria, during the
month, which shall be listed
following. Those who
participate should e mail me
at the end of the month.
From the list of participants,
three lucky winners will be

awarded large cash prizes
making them *rich beyond*
*their mildest dreams!**

Service chiefs, or their representative, should e mail me with their best estimate as to total number of

participants and the percentage of those who participated, for awarding of the coveted *RSC Fruitbasket!* (kinda like the Stanley cup for EMS wellness.)

Who can participate, you ask? To participate, the candidate must be involved in EMS in some fashion, and must improve their:



Mind: Learn a new skill. Do some reading on a topic you don't well understand. Review a subject and do some teaching, either formally or informally.

Body: Lose a pound. Exercise at least weekly. Stop smoking. Walk. Eat healthy. See your doctor.

Spirit: Go to church. Do a good deed. Donate to a charity. Repair a broken relationship. Mentor a colleague. Do something extra with your kids, and or spouse.

*\$100 gift card

SO, Do you have to do all of the items listed? Naw, just any one from any of the lists, or something of your own choosing, that in a small, but “honest with yourself” way improves you in ***Mind, Body and Spirit.***

Email me at ghellier@nogaems.com near the end of January with the statement “ I solemnly swear that I have improved my (mind, body, or spirit) during the month of January,” ***and you will be in the drawing for Big Bucks!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!***



**Rich Kaufman, NREMT-P,
Regional Education
Coordinator of EMSI, reports
on EMS Operations Day at
Butler County Community
College**

November 23, 2013 at the Butler County Community College, EMT students transitioned towards real world scenarios with the help of many local volunteers. EMS Instructors Sarah Tusing and Kristina Brozenick started with an idea that has become weeks of preparing and planning

which is now known as “Operations Day”. As newer EMS Instructors, Sarah and Kristina observed and recognized that lectures and skill station practice are important and necessary, but still didn’t quite complete the picture for an EMT student. “We wanted to create this to give the



students that AH-HA moment” Kristina stated. With the help of 6 EMS agencies, 2 QRS/ Rescue services and 1 Air Medical Helicopter, along with countless volunteers,

“Operations Day” was achieved.



The day started with a landing zone safety class presented by Nico Soler. As the students practiced Landing Zone Safety, the volunteers went through a briefing by Sarah and Kristina. Reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the “mentors” and for the “patients” so that all evolutions were completed in a safe manner. The review covered proper lifting and moving, stretcher operations, radio usage in case there was a “real”

emergency during the simulations, proper hand hygiene and use of seat belts in the vehicles.



The goal of Operations Day is to provide a “shift” experience for an EMT’s from start to end. On the campus of BC 3, they designed a system of call dispatching where the EMT students were then required to “Respond” in an ambulance as the “Crew Chief” to treat and transport their patient. During the transport segment a Hospital Call In was required and then the patient was delivered to

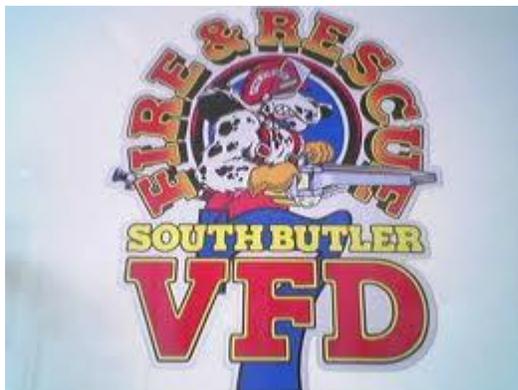
the make shift receiving facility with an EMS to RN report. The students were constantly monitored by experienced EMT’s and Paramedics who provided valuable knowledge and techniques from lifting and moving, scene safety and size up, verbal communications, and professionalism.

There were a total of 8 “teams” of EMT students, that responded to medical emergencies and traumas calls. The day was capped off with a multiple patient incident.





Kudos to Sarah and Kristina, the staff of BC3, and the multiple agencies and individuals, such as friends and family members that assisted their time and voluntary resources to make this successful.



The culture of safety that starts in school is instilled for a life-time.



Participating Services:

Saxonburg VFC/ EMS,
Vandergrift VFC #2 EMS,
Lower Kiski EMS (with the
MERV), Butler Ambulance,
Portersville EMS, Sugarcreek
EMS, Buffalo Twp. Fire/ QRS,
South Butler Rescue, Life
Flight and Armstrong County
EMA.

On Friday, December 20th the EMSI Regional Safety Committee will host their final Regional Safety Seminar at the Westmoreland County Community College.

The first two safety seminars have been very well received, we would like to thank everyone who has taken time out of their schedules for attendance.

There is still time to registry for the final session of 2013. 2 Hours of Medical/Trauma con-ed will be issued to all attendees.

Industry Safety Leaders will provide attendees with details and templates on implementing an effective Safety Committee within your organization that not only complies with the newly enacted EMS Rules and Regulations but will also will promote a safe work environment.

Dr. Paul Paris, EMSI Regional Medical Director, will also lead an interactive discussion on Medical Mistakes and creating an EMS Culture of Safety. Through real life videos and interviews you will see how subtle oversights have set us up to fail and steps that must be taken to overcome these life altering events.

Chris Dell, our Regional Safety Committee Chairman, will overview the “Safety Champions” training that will begin during 2014. This program will take advantage of regional and industry experts to train EMS Providers to become “Safety Champions” within their organizations, who will have the knowledge and tools to affect your Culture of Safety.

Finally, participants will have a chance to interact with the EMSI executive staff to ask questions and receive the most up to date information on the new Pennsylvania EMS Rules and Regulations and how they affect EMS Providers and Organizations.

Please join us on Friday, December 20, 2013 at the Westmoreland County Community College. Registration opens at 08:15, the seminar begins at 09:00 and will conclude by 12:00.

Please RSVP to safety@emsi.org or call 412-494-5579. There is no charge to attend this seminar and multiple attendees from each organization are encouraged.

This event will be held in Commissioners Hall.

Westmoreland County Community College
145 Pavilion Ln
Youngwood, PA 15697

**Brian Shaw, Deputy Director, B.S.A.S,
NREMT-P**

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Letter from the Editor:

Greg Hellier



I love Christmas, I always have. I like how people become kinder, happier, and more generous, as the holidays draw near. Now, I know that doesn't go for everyone, but as a generalization, I think it's true.

As a young man, back in my school days, and for reasons that I don't really remember, I used to save my gift shopping for Christmas Eve. I would get up early, and go to Century III Mall without any real plan in mind. I would park somewhere in the vicinity of where Harbor Freight is now (as in really far away) because there would be so many cars there. I would pick through the merchandise, which at this point in the season, would be scattered about the store like the place had been looted. If I was successful in finding a matching pair of driving gloves for my mother, or unbroken / not unduly soiled gifts for my father or brothers, then I would get in line for the obligatory 45 minute wait to check out. I had to watch my money, because there were no such things as credit cards, and what was in my wallet was it. Those were different days.

My best work memory of the holidays is from my residency. Of the many places that we went to, we staffed a little inner city ER at St. Anthony Hospital, in west Chicago,

which served a diverse population, many of whom were Spanish speaking. Though I was a second year resident, I was the attending of record (those were different days), and I was supervising a bright young first year resident named Ralph. (Ralph has apparently gone on to have a successful career, despite spending time with me). It was Christmas Eve, on the night shift.

We had a fifteen year old Spanish speaking girl as a patient, who had a syncopal episode at home. Communication was limited by the language barrier, but between the family, patient, and staff interpreting for me, and my three years of high school Spanish, I got some idea of the history. The exam was normal, other than a resting tachycardia of about 120, and some mild hypotension.

Being much older and more experienced (an entire year, mind you) than Ralph, I orated about the possible causes of syncope in a fifteen year old female. “Well, Ralph, you better give her a saline bolus, and order a pregnancy test, EKG, CT of the head, and some routine labs.” I paused, weighing the responsibility of mentoring this intelligent soul, and wanting to not miss anything, said “Oh yeah, add a blood gas and a CO level.”

Well, you guessed it. The CO was 27%. We called CFD and they evacuated the house- there were 16 people living there, all of whom promptly came to St. Anthony’s. We had people

on nonbreathers running off of multiple christmas trees sitting in chairs all over the ER.

I like to remember this as a success story, rather than a cautionary tale. Had not serendipity caused me to order the CO level, the family of 16 might not have woken for Christmas. As it was, they were ultimately no worse for the wear.

CO poisoning, at that time, and still to this day in the ER, is only diagnosed upon having suspicion of it. With the CO detectors on your in bags, championed by EMSI and the safety committee, this immediate and potentially lethal threat can be, and has been, on multiple occasions, detected in the field- leading to directed care for the patient, and greater safety for EMS.

Happy Holidays and **Best Wishes** for a safe and fruitful (remember the Stanley Cup!!!) **New Year** from the RSC and me.



PS: If you have an EMS safety or wellness related story, or event, I would like to hear from you. You can write an article of any length, or give me the info. Send me a picture(s) too. I am going to run out of material without you! ghellier@nogaems.com