



Lifeguard Newsletter

January 2013

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When contacting Lifeguard through your local dispatch or by calling (800)223-6627, please be ready to provide the following:

- Your general location & type of Emergency
- Identify frequency that Lifeguard will be using to speak with ground units
- Identify who Lifeguard will be speaking with

*Lifeguard Air
Ambulance
1026 A Ave N.E.
Cedar Rapids, IA
52406-3026*

Going the Distance to Save Lives

Angels Among Us

December 10, 2012. Three crewmembers of REACT Helicopter Service out of Rockford, Illinois are killed when their helicopter goes down.

January 2, 2013. Four crewmembers of Mediflight Helicopter Service out of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma are injured when their helicopter experiences a hard landing.

January 2, 2013. Three crewmembers of Mercy Air Med out of Mason City, Iowa are killed when their helicopter goes down.

All three are en route to transport critical patients and had not picked them up. No patients were injured in these incidents.

Every year, approximately 400,000 patients are transported by helicopter. More than 100 people, including patients, have died in medical helicopter crashes since 2003. (NTSB) In 2006, the Federal Safety officials have made concerted efforts to address medical aircraft safety. But this isn't about statistics. This should be about the people, for without the people there would be no statistics. This is about those who make the statistics. This is about you and me.

Many members of the EMS community have been mourning the loss of these crewmembers. We may not have known them personally, but you do know them, because we are them. They are us. We are the nurses who have decided to go further outside the traditional aspects of nursing. We are the nurses who have decided to literally "step outside the box". We go to the scenes to see the worst, no longer hearing it second-hand.

We are the medics who have stepped into another sort of vehicle. We have accepted the challenges of working in yet another and different environment with even less access to our patients. We have challenged ourselves also by coming inside to work in the emergency departments of the hospitals.

We are the pilots who are charged with the safety and protection of our crew. We now listen to chatter of the crew as they care for their patients quickly. We make the final decision of whether to fly or not to fly and live with that decision.

The crew members of REACT who died while responding to a call are: Andy Olesen, Pilot; Jim Dillow, RN; and Karen Hollis, RN. The names of the crew of Mercy Air Med are Gene Grell, Pilot; Russ Piehl, Paramedic; and Shelly Lair-Langenbau, RN.

Memorial services were held for both crews. Many members of EMS, both ground and air, Law Enforcement and Fire communities were present at both. At the end of the memorials, a bell was rung 7 times. The first 6 rings are indicative of the fact that the crews responded, served, protected, defended, sacrificed and suffered. The final bell ringing indicates loss of life. The Bell of Honor pays tribute to fallen emergency responders, as well as police, fire and military personnel.

Be safe out there and up there. Your mission for every shift is simple. It is to complete your transports safely and then to go home at the end of your shift. If we take any message away from this, it is to love what you do every day, in your life and in your work.

References: 1.National Transportation Safety Board; 2012; website
2.Mercy North Iowa;2012;website

Requesting Lifeguard:

Remember if you are unsure whether you'll need Lifeguard, you may tell dispatch that you would like to place Lifeguard on "stand-by".

The crew will prepare for lift-off while awaiting the "go-mission" call. This saves minutes on lift-off time

because the crew is already at the helicopter, and ready for lift-off.

You can also request Lifeguard to be an "in air" standby. This is a good option for when call are a distance away. There is no charge if Lifeguard is cancelled.

Updates & Reminders:

Get your calendars out! We will start scheduling Safety Classes May 1st.

The Iowa Air Medical Safety Committee is asking that all services use law / mutual aid without tone codes for all communication with an incoming helicopter.

Saying Goodbye

We would like to say good bye to one of our long-term pilots. Richard "Dick" Miller retired in December 2012 after 31 years of being with Lifeguard. Dick graduated from Iowa City High School and went on to college at the University of Iowa. While at U of I, he was active in Army ROTC. He was also the Army Maintenance Officer while in ROTC. Upon going to Vietnam, he became a helicopter pilot.

When he returned home, he was discharged from active army. He traveled to Utah and ran a bar with a buddy. Apparently he was bored...so he decided to sign up for the Utah Army National Guard, became full-time National Guard and then full-time National Guard Maintenance Officer. One day he heard about this up- and- coming air medical transport program in Cedar Rapids, Iowa that was looking to hire pilots. He applied. He was hired. He was the first full-time pilot for Lifeguard Air Ambulance. Initially the program flew a Huey, then a Bell Long Ranger and recently a Bell 407.

In 1999, Dick became Director of Operations and also Flight Instructor for the service. Dick decided to retire this past December after many years of being with Lifeguard. In his spare time, Dick has fun flying his personal plane, traveling about. He also flies a Russian Mi-2 helicopter for the University of Iowa for research. He is married to Carrie and they have a dog.

It has been a joy working with Dick these many years and we will miss him. Since his retirement, there has been a bit of shuffling around. Michael Cufu accepted the position of Director of Operations and is testing for Flight Instructor. Dennis Lang accepted the position of Chief Pilot.



Upcoming Educational Opportunities

January 26	Cedar County EMS Day	Tipton, Iowa
January 30-February 2	Working Together Conference	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
February 8, 15 and 22	48 Hour Refresher	Kirkwood Community College
February 11	Fundamentals of Critical Care	Lincoln, NE
February 12	Fundamentals of Critical Care	Omaha, NE
February 13	Fundamentals of Critical Care	Des Moines, IA
March 2	Hiawatha EMS Day	Hiawatha, IA
March 2	Iowa County EMS Day 2013	Williamsburg
March 22-March 23	Code 1	Kirkwood Community College

Rural Health Care Grant

The Rural Health Care Grant was established in the early 1980's, during the farm crisis. The Foundation developed the idea of giving small matching grants for rural ambulance services. A number of corporate gifts originally established the fund, and in 1995, St Luke's associates designated money to this fund. Since that time, other friends of St Luke's have contributed to this fund. Since its inception, this grant program has awarded over \$275,000!

As part of St Luke's Health Care Foundation's Rural Health Care Grant, 9 eastern Iowa organizations have received portions of \$20,540 in grant monies.

The following organizations received grants for 2012:

Benton County Volunteer Program—\$1300 for transportation expenses for volunteer drivers

Delhi Volunteer Fire Department—\$1197 to help purchase an automatic defibrillator

Elberon Fire and Rescue will receive \$5000 to help purchase a cardiac monitor

Jefferson-Monroe Fire Department—\$310 to repurpose an ambulance as a 1st Responder Unit

Manchester Fire Department—\$295 to purchase a carbon monoxide oximeter

Newhall First Responders—\$4000 to purchase a CPR compression device

North Benton Ambulance—\$2750 to purchase a King video Laryngoscope and Autovent.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program—\$5000 to help pay for transportation for volunteer drivers.

Volunteer Services of Cedar County—\$687 to pay for volunteer drivers transportation expenses.

Congratulations to all these programs as they provide a much-needed service to the communities!

When you see any of the providers, thank them for their service!!