

FEATURED AGENCY

**TOWN OF NORMAL**

Written By: Chief Michael Humer, EMT-P

**INSIDE THIS**

**ISSUE:**

- Featured Agency:  
Town of Normal
- Coordinator's  
Corner By Greg  
Scott
- Q Tips by  
Becky Altic
- You've Been  
Schooled By  
Michael Crabtree

There have been a lot of changes and growth over the past three years at the Normal Fire Department. When the decision was made to close Lifeline Ambulance service, the Town of Normal needed to educate 19 of our current Firefighters and hire 6 additional Firefighter/ Paramedics. The Normal Fire Department now has 28 Paramedics covering three shifts, as you know this is not a small under taking. The total cost to the Town in training, equipment and overtime was \$650,000. Without the help and support of Heartland Community College, McLean County Area EMS System, Advocate BroMenn Medical Center, St. Joseph Medical Center and the Bloomington Fire Department preceptors we would have been unable to make the program successful. It just wasn't the training that need to be accomplished it was a change in the mind set of the Community.

The Normal Fire Department started responding to emergency medical calls at the BLS transport level in 1974. At that time, the Town of Normal was not charging for any of the Ambulance services that were being provided for. Starting in the summer of 2007 when our ALS Chase vehicle went into service, we started charging for our services. That led to new challenges we had to face. We now needed a billing company and had to educate the public that Ambulance transport was no longer a free service. The call volume continues to grow, before Lifeline covered all the ALS calls for service. We are now responsible for 100% of the 911 calls in the Town of Normal. Last year we had total of 3,731 medical calls and 1,175 fire calls.

We have also had changes in leadership this year, long time Fire Chief Jim Watson retired in July of 2009 after 37 years of service to the Normal Fire Department. I was Assistant Chief and was appointed to Fire Chief in July of 2009. The Department organizational structure was changed to add a second Assistant Chief. Captain John Grussing was promoted to Assistant of Training and Lt. Doug Barnett was promoted to Assistant Chief of Operations. The promotions to Assistant Chief were all internal, so that allowed for several other promotions to Captain and Lt. within the Department.

Looking into the future Normal Fire would like to move forward with transmission of 12 lead EKG's to the hospitals sometime this year. We are now able to provide ride time and preceptors for BLS and ALS students and look forward to working with all of the Mclean County EMS System members in the future. Have a great summer!

## COORDINATORS CORNER

WRITTEN BY: GREG SCOTT

### Leaving Your Mark

What are your goals and personal admirations within the EMS profession? It may be to help out your local community, it may be to pay the bills, it may be to help those in need, or it may be to change the profession for the better. It is important that each of us know why we have chosen to work within EMS. When you are responding to EMS calls, do you think about how much of a difference you are about to make in someone's life? Many times it is easy to forget about how important of a role you play in people's lives. It is easy to get caught up in the routines, the politics, or the negative aspects of EMS but there are many positives that should always be remembered.

The local emergency services have lost three long-time members in the past month. Chief Richard Brucker was with the Cropsey FD for 19 years, Critical Care Paramedic John Longman was with the El Paso Emergency Squad for 29 years, and Deputy Chief David Sessions was with the Randolph Township Fire Protection District for 28 years. These men have left a positive mark on their communities as well as the EMS System. Please take a moment and reflect about these dedicated individuals and the service they provided.

Remember that there are always ways to improve the way we do our business. Search out opportunities to improve your own local EMS organization, the EMS System, the State EMS system, and the Federal EMS system. Vince Lombardi stated, "The difference between a successful person and others is not a lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack in will." Remember to always have the will to be successful within your EMS career. We all have a tremendous amount of talent, knowledge, and expertise that can be pooled together to truly make a difference.

## ALL AMERICAN RECIPES

### All American Dessert

1 lg Berry Blue Jello  
1 lg Red Jello, any flavor  
4 c Water; boiling  
2 c Water; cold  
8 oz Cool Whip; thawed  
4 c Angel food cake, cubed  
2 c Strawberries; sliced  
1/2 c Blueberries

Dissolve berry blue jello in 2 cups of boiling water. In a separate bowl, dissolve the cherry jello. Stir 1 cup of cold water into each bowl. Pour into separate 9x13" pans.

Refrigerate at least 3 hours until firm. Cut into 1/2" cubes.

Place blue jello cubes in bottom of clear glass trifle bowl. Top with 1/3 of the Cool Whip. Add cake cubes, then sliced strawberries. Top with another 1/3 Cool Whip. Add the red jello cubes and then the remaining Cool Whip.

Sprinkle blueberries over top.

### Lemon Firecrackers

2 Sticks butter, room temperature  
1/2 c Sugar  
1 tb Lemon juice  
2 tb Grated lemon peel  
1 Egg  
2 1/4 c Flour  
1 ts Cayenne powder  
1/4 ts Salt  
1/4 ts Baking soda

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the lemon juice, lemon peel, and egg; beat well.

Sift together the flour, cayenne powder, salt, and baking soda.

Beat dry ingredients into the butter mixture. Drop dough by rounded tablespoons onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for 8 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned.



## Q -TIPS

WRITTEN BY: BECKY ALTIC

I've been thinking about the public's perception of EMTs lately. Having been a nurse most of my life, you might think that I was quite familiar with the role of EMTs. I was not. It wasn't until I started in this position that I got an accurate view of what EMTs actually do. And that made me start thinking about what the public, most of who have even less exposure to EMS than I had, might think of this profession.

I review run reports every day. I read the details of the care that you provide. What you write and chart is a direct reflection of what you do. Most times, things are as they should be, but I want to emphasize that attention to detail is vital. Keep in mind that the one person that your documentation can protect is you. It should give an accurate account of what you did or didn't do and why you made that choice. Take the time to use the proper terminology and learn the proper spellings. Remember to include what is and omit what is not pertinent.

The way you present yourself is the first impression the public has of you. It is worth mentioning that a clean uniform and shoes reflect the type of care a patient can expect to receive. Keep your name badge visible, clothing neat, and language appropriate. Let your presence speak of the training and expertise you possess. You meet people when they are most vulnerable. Don't give them a moment's hesitation in trusting the care you are about to provide.

Continuing education is necessary to keep you skills up to date, and to enhance your knowledge base. Make every effort to attend events with speakers and case reviews as well as the required classes. You never know what tidbits you might pick up that will add to the expertise you already possess.

My hope is that the public see you for who you really are- lifesavers. Your job is physically and emotionally taxing. It requires tons of training and a commitment to the public's welfare. There is only one person who can help shape the view the public has of the EMS profession. So go ahead, and expose yourself- in a good way!



# YOU GOT SCHOOLED

WRITTEN BY: MICHAEL CRABTREE

## What's Going on With Certification Titles?

I have received numerous questions over the past few months about “the new EMS certification titles.” Most questions are quite easy to answer. However, I knew we might have a bigger issue when someone told me they had heard “they’re getting rid of the first responders!”

First off, “they’re” not getting rid of the first responders. They’re simply thinking of renaming it. Although the titles may or may not change here in Illinois, there is a movement on the national level to bring more consistency on a national level to EMS practice. Second, who is “they?” Depends on what we’re talking about. For our purposes, it is the state of Illinois that regulates the profession of EMS. Regardless of what happens on a national level, the powers that be at IDPH can choose to ignore the new titles and keep things the way they are.

The “they” trying to bring unity to EMS certification titles is the group of individuals and interested parties who came together from the late 1990’s through 2005 to create a “National Scope of Practice.” This project was funded and sponsored by NHTSA, the federal agency responsible for creating education curriculum for EMS. In 2005 they released the final draft of the National Scope of Practice that plotted out four certification levels of prehospital care: Emergency Medical Responder (EMR), Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT), and Paramedic.

These new titles help bring order to what is otherwise a sometimes chaotic and confusing certification structure. For example, Iowa has 3 different “paramedic” levels and over 30 EMT titles. The figure 1 below shows a general comparison of current Illinois scope of practice with the proposed scope of practice (taken from NASEMSO Gap Analysis Template).

At this time, Illinois has made no definitive decision on what to do with these guidelines. Illinois may or may not adopt these standards and transition to the new Education Standards. If time has taught us anything with Illinois EMS, it’s that this issue will be placed on the back burner until the last minute. In the meantime, let us not worry too much about it and continue to do what we do best: serve the public regardless of our EMS title.

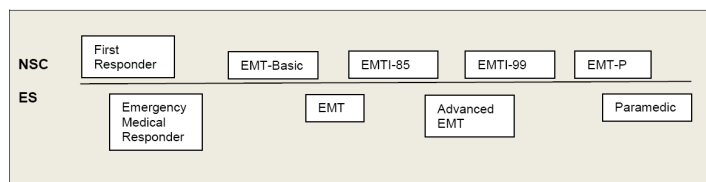


Figure 1. Relationship of NSC to Education Standards