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Boating Incident Puts Emergency Response System to the Test

By EMS Division Chief Bruce Nedelka



in years.

The Virginia Beach Marine Response Team (MRT), along with Police Marine units, divers and the Fire Boat, arrived promptly to find a 13-year-old girl frantically screaming for her life as her leg was entangled in a motorboat's propeller. The boat's captain held her head above water as personnel positioned flotation devices around her.

As more units responded, a unified command was established, including EMS, fire and police teams working together to develop a plan to free the girl. As minutes

It was the most talked-about rescue of the summer. On a hot afternoon in late June, emergency crews received a call about a "swimmer in distress." What happened at the scene, however, was the most daring and dramatic water rescue

ticked by, the water became choppy, creating additional pressure to act fast.

Word about the call spread to the city's boat mechanic, Ryan Prichard, who contacted his father John, also a mechanic. Mr. Prichard rushed to the scene from his business just blocks away, and after several intense moments of working with the dual-propeller assembly, he was able to remove it and free the girl.

With the help of dozens of responders on shore, the girl, who remained in critical condition, was guided to the Ocean Park Volunteer Rescue Squad ambulance. She was transported to Nightingale, which was waiting nearby to airlift her to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital.

"This case tested the capacity of the teams and equipment of Virginia Beach's Emergency Response System," says EMS Division Chief Bruce Nedelka. "Years of training, quick action and a unified command at the scene came together to save this girl's life, and her leg."

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Chief Bruce Edwards

Chief Edwards Elected Chair of Va. State Board of Health

In 2009, the Virginia State Board of Health added a requirement that there be representation from Emergency Medical Services; just two years later, Va Beach EMS Chief Bruce Edwards has been selected by Governor McDonnell to chair the board.

"EMS has not only been approved for a dedicated membership seat representative of EMS, but that EMS representative has earned the respect

and credibility of the members to be elected Chair," says Gary Brown, Director of the State Office of EMS.

Chief Edwards has been Virginia Beach Director of EMS since 1984 and is in his 45th year as a rescue squad volunteer.

"It's a great honor to represent Virginia's EMS community," says Chief Edwards. "I will continue to work closely with the Commissioner of Health and the entire staff of the Virginia Department of Health to ensure the health and safety of all Virginian's and visitors to our Commonwealth."

EMR: 'A Step in the Right Direction'

It's been more than a year since the Virginia Beach rescue squads implemented an Electronic Medical Records (EMR) system, and according to EMS Captain Christi Budy, it's definitely a step in the right direction.

It has changed the way information is gathered on every case, which has been an adjustment for our EMS providers who have always handwritten reports. The goal is a more streamlined process in the communication and continuum of care between first responders and hospitals.

"The information we upload about our patients can be accessed by hospitals, so ideally, they can preload it while we're in transit and speed up the overall admissions process," says Budy. "This open dialogue is good for everyone involved."

The new EMR system also includes a "Repeat Patient" function that enables EMS providers to easily access patient history. In a situation where the patient is unresponsive, this feature could save a life.

One other objective of the new system is to enable EMS providers to receive feedback on the status of a patient's care after they are admitted. This allows the provider to know the outcome of that patient's diagnosis and treatment and is useful information for treating future cases.

"We collect between 100 and 150 reports each day," says Budy. "With the old system, it was impossible to sort through the reports to collect data manually. Now, we can access information about calls and treatments, which can be used for training.

"Making a change like this is never simple," she adds. "But the value in using EMR is that it's making system-wide improvements for both the providers and our patients."

Now Married, Rachelle Friedman Continues to Display Amazing Spirit

All of us in Hampton Roads continue to follow the story of 25-year-old Rachelle Friedman of Virginia Beach who suffered a paralyzing neck injury in 2010 when a friend playfully pushed her into the shallow end of a pool at her bachelorette party, causing a crippling C6 spinal injury that left her unable to walk or feel sensation beneath her collarbone.

Displaying a remarkable spirit, Rachelle, who was treated following the freak accident by members of the Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad, never quit on herself or her pending marriage to Chris Chapman. In mid-July they were married in Raleigh where the couple lives.

Coverage on the Today Show led to an outpouring of support from many corners. 1-800-Registry paid for her wedding and honeymoon in Fiji. And Project Walk in California, a center known says Friedman for "getting people out of wheelchairs," donated treatment that the couple otherwise could not afford.

The rescue squads wish Rachelle and Chris a long and happy marriage.



Eddy Cairns and MaryAnn Hoban from the Va. Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad with Rachelle Friedman at her wedding on July 22, 2011.

Mission: To provide services to the community which preserve life, improve health and promote the safety of citizens and visitors who live, learn, work and play in our community. This mission is accomplished through a systems approach focused on providing timely responses; high quality patient care services; public awareness and education; proactive safety interventions; and all hazards readiness.

Vision: We are a leader in the emergency medical services field and the community is confident in our services.

The Virginia Beach Department of EMS Call Stats

| YEAR 2010/2011 | CALLS FOR SERVICE |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 3rd Quarter 2010 | 10,444 |
| 4th Quarter 2010 | 9,397 |
| 1st Quarter 2011 | 9,058 |
| 2nd Quarter 2011 | 10,017 |
| Total | 38,916 |

THE COUNCIL OF VIRGINIA BEACH VOLUNTEER RESCUE SQUADS, INC. INCLUDES:

Ocean Park Volunteer Rescue Squad
Davis Corner Volunteer Rescue Squad
Chesapeake Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad
Princess Anne Courthouse Volunteer Rescue Squad
Creeds Volunteer Rescue Squad
Kempsville Volunteer Rescue Squad
Blackwater Volunteer Rescue Squad
Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad
Plaza Volunteer Rescue Squad
Sandbridge Volunteer Rescue Squad
Virginia Beach Volunteer Water Rescue Team

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**VOLUNTEER
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VIRGINIA BEACH**

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Moving on up!

Congratulations to the following individuals who have advanced to the current EMT certification levels!

(JUNE 2 – AUGUST 31, 2011)

Life

Christie Collins
Brittany Coutcher
Paula Elkin
Janet Stinson

Alex Fogle
Jennifer Fryday
Derek Fuller
Cheryl Harris
Nathan Hilton
Johannes Hirt
Sarah Huber
Kenneth Hudgins
Michael Jeannotte
John Jennings
Angie Keith
Jennifer Le
David McCollum
Tara McKelvey
Courtney Noffsinger

Jing Cao
Brian Corcoran
Cory Geoghegan
Bradley Graham
Melani Graves
Michael Green
Kelly Fairhurst
Leroy Hall
Erica Harland
Elizabeth Hobbs
Kelsey Hottle
Ruth Holden
Lilbeth Hunton
Charles Hurd
Rachel Hux
Morgan Jones
Brendan Kearney
Jason Kinlaw
Winnoga Kohn
Ngan Lam
Heather Lee
Kathleen Mabry
Cory Mason
Stephanie Mazarakis
Emily Mills
Adam Minsker
Brittany Mitchell
Ramin Mohammadi
Nicholas Oliver
Stephanie Patsel
Kimberly Prendergast
Steven Roeder
Antara Rowe
Phoebe Sanyer

Timothy Seibert
Kelsey Shirk
Anthony Sickell
Rachel Simmons
Edward Stack
Jennifer Thomasson
Mallory Trower
Susan Uremovich
Anthony Veverka
Elena Vogel
Kathleen Whatley
Roy Wilde
Kulakarn
Wiriyaamnuaiphorn
Jonathan Yoder
Laura Yoder

Elizabeth Haines
Alexis Higgins
Brittany Hutton
Jacqualyn Irons
Axia Jelderks
Jennifer Jessup
Min Joo
Adam Juma
Gregorio Kabigting
Richard Kreemer
Wendy Kujawa
Melinda Lackore
Michelle Lale
Rachael Lawrence
Douglas Lovelace
Maggie Mack
Jameka Mackey
Lisa McLeod
Elizabeth Mitchell
Brooke Moulton
Oliver Onwubunta
Michael Onyeuma
Corey Palmer
Sidney Roeder
Noel Ross
Dewyonna Shields
Clifford Smith
Samantha Smith
Rebecca Timmons
Toan Tran
Nelson Villamon
Brooke Wilson
John Wiseman

EMT-P

Paul Carr
Robert Gramkowski
Daniel Molochko
Scott Peer
Daniel Pelzel

EMT-I

Kristine Benadum

EMT-E

Dwayne Morris
Susan Palmer
Joseph Zaller

EMT-B

Joshua Allard
Paul Brown
Blake Caduff
Annette Cersley
Chelsea Crisp
James Cromwell
Carlos Diaz
Catharine Ferguson

BLS-Intern

Robert Beasley
Kyle Bentz
Alison Blair

Student

Rachel Atkisson
Jacqueline Banks
David Bissell
Michael Bohan
Rosalynn Briggs
Deborah Coley-Mills
Lynne Contreras
Charles Crews, Jr.
Neva Crews
Robert Crofton, Jr.
Benjamin Dubinsky
Christina Ethridge
Lauren Garland
James Goodridge
Kathryn Gorby

Congratulations to the Second Graduation EMT Class of 2011!

The Virginia Beach Department of EMS held a graduation ceremony on September 6 recognizing 38 new EMS volunteers who completed their EMT-B certification. More than 140 friends, family members and colleagues gathered at the EMS Training Center, where EMS Chief Bruce Edwards congratulated the graduates.

Kneeling: Brittany Shinault, Kimberly Meinweiser, Brittny Abney-Smith, Nam Nguyen, Reia Brown, Jose Hernandez, Victor Parker, Kathryn Ramirez

Second Row: Instructor Lani de Forest, Kerry-Ann

Thompson, David Pagtalunan, Laura McFie, Jacob Hughes, Kathryn Golino, Corey Bailey, Kim Hodges, Taneta Mccaw-Dieudonne, Lynda Hailey, Valerie Hudgins, Jennifer McGhee

Back Row: Chief Bruce Edwards, Charles McLeod, Jason Nestor, Matthew Murphy, Julia McFie, Richard Cox, Timothy Jones, Sarah Ammons, Mark Molavi, April Teaford, John Neumayer, Johnathan Lawrence, Christopher Schleh, Brian Holland, Aaron Magana, Kyle Spruill, Todd Smits, Megann King, James Taylor, Sandra Smith, Workshop Coordinator Mel Losick



VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Sarah Platts, Search and Rescue

Years of service: I worked on ambulances as a cardiac technician in the early 90's and came back to the service in 2007 with search dogs and joined the SAR team.

How did you become involved as a volunteer with the Search & Rescue Team? I was volunteering my time to local police departments, helping with missing person cases. The captain of the SAR team at the time saw the value of my trailing dogs' abilities to find missing persons in an urban setting and recruited me.

What do you enjoy most about working with Search & Rescue dogs? The fact that they don't understand how unique they are with the job they do. What is extraordinary to us is just everyday stuff to them, and they do it for so little. A chance to chase a ball,

play a game of tug, or a simple "good dog" is their only reward for performing miracles.

What surprises you about what the dogs are able to do? They have this amazing nose and ability to follow the unique odor of a single person no matter where he or she has gone and no matter how many other people have walked there.

Why do you continue volunteering? On the surface, I believe people should volunteer their time in some aspect of their community. Deep down, I know what it's like to have a loved one missing and not know what to do. So many people helped me in that situation, so I'm using the skills

they gave me to pay it forward and help others.

What is the most important thing people should know about what you do? They need to be aware of the availability of this local resource and that they should not wait to report a loved one missing. The quicker it gets reported, the faster we can get more eyes looking for that person, and the greater chance the outcome will be favorable.



Search and Rescue volunteer Sarah Platts, pictured here with her three dogs (from left to right), Ben, Sam and Jack.

IMPORTANT DATES

14th Annual Operation Safe Haven at Plaza VRS

Date: October 31

Time: 6 – 8:30 p.m.

Address: 3610 South Plaza Trail, Virginia Beach

A safe alternative to Trick-Or-Treating! Come celebrate Halloween at this family event, including a haunted house, games, face painting, a costume contest and more. Admission is free, but attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items. For more information, email christie00@cox.net.

2012 Scholarship Opportunity

The Langhorne & Pulley Scholarship Fund is a joint partnership of the Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad and the Virginia Beach Rescue Squad Foundation. It is open to any active operational or administrative member of the rescue squad system (and dependents) who has completed at least four (4) years of service and meets the other eligibility requirements listed in the Scholarship Guidelines. Applications must be delivered via fax or email by 5 p.m. on December 1, 2011, or postmarked by that date. All information, including the Scholarship Guidelines and Application, can be found at www.vbrescuefoundation.org under the "Grants/Scholarships" tab.

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