

**Alameda County
Emergency
Medical
Services**

EMS NEWS

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**A Division of the
Public Health
Department**

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TEN STAR AWARDS PRESENTED AT EMS WEEK LUNCHEON

EMS Week 2007 was May 20 - 26. This year's theme was *Extraordinary People, Extraordinary Service*. To recognize our own extraordinary people, EMS Star Awards were presented at a celebration luncheon May 16th at the San Leandro Community Center. Dr. Cesar Aristeiguieta, State EMS Medical Director was the keynote speaker.



Dr. Cesar, as he is more commonly known, and Michaels King, EMS Director

This is the second year EMS Star Awards have been presented. The individuals were nominated by co-workers, bosses, teachers, friends and EMS agency staff. A committee selected the person(s) who best exemplified the criteria. ...and the winners were:

THE BEN MATHEWS CAREER LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Recognizes an individual whose contributions to prehospital care have been consistent and long lasting, representing, in effect, a lifetime of outstanding service to the profession and the public.

Jim Pointer, MD EMS Medical Director

The individual honored with the Ben Mathews Lifetime Achievement Award portrays an exemplary leader and role model in every aspect of the EMS system. As a well known educator, researcher, editor, publisher, Dr. Pointer strives for quality and best practices. He is well known

for his proactive, innovative, visionary, and ambitious projects. For many years, he has been the catalyst for changes in EMS policy and standards of practice.

Dr. Pointer has been involved in emergency medical services since 1975. His research interests have included paramedic triage, competency issues involving new and inexperienced paramedics, and legalizing prevention activities for out-of-hospital providers. He pursues each project with passion, critical analysis, and demonstrates courage and commitment to state-of-the-art EMS administration, management, education, technology, and policy and research. He believes fundamentally in the impact of grounded and thorough research, and has undertaken written positions on controversial but important issues that affect the care of our patients. Most important, we know him as for his compassion and humor.

STAR OF LIFE AWARD

For exemplary medical skills, outstanding actions, and contributions to the delivery of emergency care to the residents of Alameda County; representing the ideal paramedic.

Elsie Kusel, Paramedic, American Medical Response



Elsie Kusel has been a paramedic with AMR and its predecessors for over 21 years. Her behavior over the years has exemplified the AMR Mission of

Patient Focused, Customer Centered, Caregiver Inspired. Unarguably Elsie is one of the most well liked, compassionate care-

givers AMR has ever seen. Elsie has been a Preceptor & FTO for over 16 years mentoring hundreds of interns and newly hired paramedics. She has proven her dedication to the community by leading the AMR Special Events Community Education Team in educating the community on issues such as drug abuse, bicycle/helmet safety and ambulance operation procedures. Most important, Elsie always has a smile on her face even when she is running her 15th call in the middle of the night!!

HEART OF EMS

For exceptional compassion in the performance of his job, an advocate for patients' rights, volunteers to enhance the EMS community, and is a role model for co-workers and others in EMS in Alameda County.

Bryan Ward, Paramedic, Berkeley Fire Department

Over 15 years ago Lieutenant Bryan Ward took it on himself to fill a void in the community by creating a volunteer first responder program that provided first aid services during Cal football games at Memorial Stadium. Bryan developed a relationship with the UC Berkeley athletic department to get off-duty fire fighters to respond until the arrival of first responders and transport resources.

Hundreds if not thousands of fans who have become sick or injured during a UC sporting event have received assistance from Bryan Ward's Cal Medic Program. Not only has Bryan demonstrated leadership but he has also shown compassion for patient care and the importance of early medical intervention.

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RISING STAR AWARD

For the outstanding individual who is new to the field of prehospital care, showing rapid improvement, exemplary skills, and taking on added responsibility.

Brian Rivas, Paramedic, American Medical Response

Brian Rivas began his career in EMS in 2001 & more recently, became a Paramedic in November of 2005. He has quickly made a name for himself amongst his peers. Brian is well liked and respected, for providing the utmost compassion to his patients. On several occasions, his partners have reported actions that are above & beyond on the most basic of medical calls. Paramedic Rivas is extremely competent for being a new ALS provider. His documentation is thorough and he frequently calls in for clinical review of his calls to insure that he made the best decisions for the patient. Brian has a real gift for connecting with his patients. He not only excels in his medical skills, but more importantly, Brian is a wonderful caregiver.

SIREN AWARD

Recognizes an individual, or a team of individuals from one or multiple agencies, who performed exceptional or heroic actions and/or exemplary team work in saving or attempting to save the life of another.

The UC Berkeley Police Department AED Program

The UC Berkeley Police Department had three AED saves in just the past seven months. Dr. Cindy Chang, head team physician spearheaded the purchase of AEDs in 2003. Within two weeks the first deployment occurred at the football stadium.

AED LIFE SAVER AWARDS

October 21, 2006

Officers Andrew Frankel and John Lewis of the Berkeley Police Department were on patrol when a citizen told them about a person having a seizure. The patient was turning blue and the officers could not feel a pulse and began CPR. Just then UC Berkeley Bicycle Of-

ficers Tom Syto and Ryan Murray, arrived on scene and requested an AED. One was brought from a patrol car and the patient was defibrillated. He was transported by Berkeley Fire. He was breathing and color was returning to his face.

December 6, 2006

Mike Capbarat, a junior at UC Berkeley and a member of the baseball team was walking to class when he noticed an elderly gentleman collapse to the ground. The man was former chancellor and professor emeritus Albert Bowker. Mike speed dialed the athletic department to mobilize their AED. Two graduate students Athena Perry and Stephanie Green began CPR. Brian Schulman, Barry Parsons, and Ann Caslin of the athletic department arrived with the AED. Shocks were delivered. Other responders include UC Berkeley Police Officer Hatcher Parnell and members of the Berkeley Fire Department. The patient was transported to Alta Bates breathing and with a pulse. Pam Isom trainer of the UC Berkeley PD CPR/AED program was also recognized.



Professor Bowker meets his "life-savers"

March 6, 2007

A citizen came into the UC Berkeley Police Department to get help for someone who had collapsed at the coffee shop across the street. Sgt. David Eubanks grabbed the AED and responded with Officer Sean Tinney. They took over CPR and shocks were delivered. The patient regained pulses and was transported by Berkeley Fire Department.

BEAR HUG AWARD

For addressing the unique emergency medical needs and reducing death and disability of children and youth with serious injuries or illness; working to provide better healthcare access, and making a difference in the lives of children in Alameda County.

Bonnie Lovette, RN Jennifer Chaves

Bonnie and Jennifer were nominated for this award because of their involvement with a Special Needs Starter Kit given to parents with a severely injured child, or a child newly diagnosed with a special need. Children's Hospital partnered with Kohl's Department store to make the kit available. Both Bonnie and Jennifer were instrumental in getting this project implemented. In addition...

Bonnie Lovette is the Injury Prevention Coordinator in Trauma Services at Children's Hospital & Research Center Oakland and an Alameda County Safe Kids Coalition member for approximately four years and is a member of the Executive Board.

Jennifer Chaves truly exemplifies what it means to dedicate ones professional life to keeping kids safe and free from unintentional injury, suffering and harm. Jennifer has worked for the Kiwanis California/Nevada/Hawaii Foundation since 1999, and has been a member of the Alameda County Safe Kids Coalition since 2002.

CIRCLE OF LIFE AWARD

Recognizes an individual or organization that worked to reduce preventable injuries to the older population, raising awareness regarding the need for injury prevention programs for older adults, worked with seniors for better healthcare access, and/or made a difference in the lives of seniors in Alameda County.

Karen Smulevitz

Karen works tirelessly with and for the older adult community. As a Healthy Living - Successful Aging Leader she does presentations promoting healthy lifestyles including diet and exercise. She is a member of the California Alliance for Retired



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DEPARTMENTAL RECOGNITION

Each year during National EMS Week, we ask our many provider agencies to participate by selecting outstanding members of their organization for recognition.

The selection criteria includes:

- * Volunteers in their community or the EMS community by mentoring or working with groups or individuals
- * Improved an existing department/agency program
- * Implemented a new program or service, or took on a difficult project to improve patient care
- * Excels as a first responder/EMT or paramedic/RN

ALAMEDA FIRE DEPARTMENT

Beyond Kim (Paramedic)

Eric Alianza (EMT)

ALAMEDA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

John Hartmann (Paramedic)

Gerard Rawson (EMT)

AMERICAN MEDICAL RESPONSE

Will Nichols (Paramedic)

Karen Bell (EMT)



Karen Bell,
EMT of the Year
from AMR



Will Nichols,
paramedic of the Year
from AMR

BERKELEY FIRE DEPARTMENT

David Sprague-Livingston

(Paramedic)

Darren Bobrosky (EMT)



Chief Deby Pryor congratulates Darren Bobrosky and his search & rescue dog Milos

CAMP PARKS FIRE DEPARTMENT

Richard Martorano (EMT)

William Leconte (EMT)

Todd Bradley (EMT)

Eric Martinez (EMT)



Camp Parks recognized two citizens, Mr. Bill St. Clair and Ms. Tammy Bellinger, who started CPR during a recent save.

EMERYVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Dennis Bluth (Paramedic)

Jerome Davis (EMT)

FREMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT

Frank Carlucci (Paramedic)

Ron Martin (EMT)

HAYWARD FIRE DEPARTMENT

Tom Alves (Paramedic)

Michael McCaffrey (EMT)

LIVERMORE LAB FIRE DEPARTMENT

Eddie Dwyer (Paramedic)

Mike Moyles (EMT)

LIVERMORE/PLEASANTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

Kenneth Atkinson (Paramedic)

Matthew Thau (EMT)

NEWARK FIRE DEPARTMENT

Mark Lewis (Paramedic)

Steve Bernard (EMT)

OAKLAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Nicko Georgatos (Paramedic)

Larry Hendricks (EMT)

PIEDMONT FIRE DEPARTMENT

Scott Mundy (Paramedic)

John Fitzpatrick (EMT)

ROYAL AMBULANCE

Gary Cruz (EMT)

UNION CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Carl Denyer (Paramedic)

Sam LoBese (EMT)



Chief John Speakman, emceed the departmental recognition awards

In Memory Of...

EMS honored members of the EMS Community who died in the past year. Those honored were:



*Marc Rice
American Medical Response
July 7, 2006*

Marc Rice worked for AMR for 17 years and was based out of Alameda County Operations. He was a loving husband, father, friend and colleague. Marc will be remembered for his gentle spirit and the compassion he showed to not only his patients, but co-workers as well. He will be greatly missed.



*Lt. Kevin Reed
Oakland Fire Department
January 20, 2007*

Lt. Kevin Reed was a member of the Oakland Fire Dept since 1990 and was promoted to Lt. in 1997. In addition to being one of the most loved members of the OFD, he was a loving husband to his wife Debbie for 14 years and father to daughter Jessica, age 9, the apple of his eye. He was an avid Giants and Raiders fan but spent hours volunteering time at Children's Hospital, Special Olympics, Random Acts, Dads Club at Kensington Hilltop School and refereeing high school football games. Kevin will be missed by all.



*Battalion Chief Angelo Primus
Oakland Fire Department (retired)
January 23, 2007*

Chief Primas was an Oakland native. He was a devoted husband, father and an example and role model. He had many family members in the department and was a mentor to all. Angelo joined OFD in 1983 and worked in suppression, fire prevention and training, as well as being a member of the crew at Station 8. He retired in March of 2006 after serving for 23 years. Chief Primas will be dearly missed.

EMS Star Awards (Continued from page 2)

Americans, a senior advocacy group, she volunteers at the Red Cross, is a board member of United Seniors of Oakland and Alameda County, and as a Senior Action Council leader she recently made a presentation regarding the issue of senior homelessness. She does volunteer work with the Red Cross, is certified in CPR and is getting her certification in Disaster Response through Oakland Fire Department training.

CIVILIAN HERO AWARD

For taking on an EMS related cause or safety concern within the community that benefited the residents of Alameda County

Eugene Casey

Mr. Casey was present when a co-worker collapsed in cardiac arrest. Mr.

Casey performed CPR while 911 was activated. Fire arrived, defibrillated the patient, and the patient was transported. After a rocky hospitalization, the co-worker Mr. Randy Sandberg was discharged home neurologically intact, due in large part to early CPR and early 911 activation. We invited Mr. Sandberg to attend the luncheon but he was on a business trip - that's what it's all about!



HOSPITAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

Presented for participation in a pre-hospital event, or situation of exceptional nature, that made a significant contribution to EMS service.

Ginger Miramontes, RN, Eden Medical Center

Ginger is the Trauma Services Coordinator at Eden Hospital & has worked there for over 18 years. The "Every 15 Minutes" program is an emotionally charged program conducted for teenagers across the nation designed to instill the potentially dangerous consequences of drinking alcohol. This powerful program challenges students to think about drinking, personal safety, and the responsibility of making mature decisions when lives are involved. The program has been offered at more than 16 local high schools. Ginger Miramontes has had a tremendous impact on the students, their friends and families.

FROM THE EMS MEDICAL DIRECTOR

A View From The Other Side - By Jim Pointer, MD

Note: In this issue, I attempt to provide an inside look at care from “the other end.” I was impressed with the skill and concern that my physicians, nurses and technicians exhibited on a daily basis. However this country’s system of health care is fraught with opportunities for error. Time is of the essence and costs drive resources. Is there the opportunity for “rounds” between shifts? Does the tech who performs the vital signs know the significance of an oxygen saturation of 90% and will he/she report that to the nurse or physician? Will the busy emergency physician remember to read the patient’s EKG prior to emergency surgery? The answer to all of these questions, based on personal experience, is “No, not always!” Again, this fact is not an indictment against a particular hospital or a specific system. It is a sign and symptom of a far more important issue – the delivery of health care in the United States. While I will not be providing any earth-shattering revelations, I hope that my experiences can provide some insight of the hospital experience and show the importance of the “EMS piece” in the overall healthcare puzzle. The opinions here are those of the author only.

The bright lights and the exclamations, “Are you awake?” brought me to a state of semi-reality. An experienced looking, middle-aged nurse with a tag, “Mary, RN,” peered at my IV line, my NG tube, and my Foley simultaneously. Are you having any pain, honey?” I didn’t have to think to quickly realize that yes, something in my abdomen was a 10 out of 10 and a very angry smiley face on the pain chart.



“Yeah, I need some pain medicine.”
“OK, honey I’ll check your orders and the doctor.”

Although I was regularly asked the intensity of my pain, its location, character, and duration, relief often took many minutes to hours. By the way, the commission (JCAHO) that accredits hospitals to be certified by Medicare (and other third party payers) requires this regular assessment of patients’ pain.

Enough of my pain complaints. What’s it like on the “other side?” I’ve been an emergency physician for about 30 years. Did that experience help me to cope as a patient?

First, a little bit about my condition. In 1989, I was diagnosed with stage 3A Hodgkin’s disease. I received half dose, total daily medication and a spleenectomy. Both of those treatments, later, came back to cause difficulty. Between 1997-2006, I required hospitalization on 30 occasions for non-surgical treatment of bowel obstruction. The obstructions were due to the unnatural effects of radiation on my bowel and the scar tissue (adhesions) that formed from surgical manipulation.

Finally, after an adverse reaction to morphine (blisters that covered my entire right forearm and hand – by the way, no epinephrine was indicated or administered - why?), the pain was relieved with IV fentanyl. Fentanyl is the best of all the narcotic parenteral analgesics. Thanks to the efforts of Berkeley Fire Department’s Chris Van Luen, the state Emergency Medical Services Authority is considering a request from EMS and Berkeley Fire to pilot this drug (it is currently illegal in California). Fentanyl has fewer of the histamine side effects than morphine (itching, redness, rash, and cramping). These side effects are not only inconvenient and potentially dangerous but also they often are incorrectly considered as allergic reactions or even anaphylaxis. In essence, fentanyl is

the best drug in its class. Hopefully, we will begin to collect data in Berkeley, and subsequently throughout our system to prove that fentanyl belongs in the paramedic scope of practice.

Finally, my pain was relieved. At last I was able to better concentrate on the care that my nurses, doctors, and technicians provided. This fact is so important. Multiple caregivers, multiple shifts, changing assignments, fragmented communication, and ever poor handwriting all provide an environment conducive to errors. No one wants to make mistakes, but they are made! The Institute of Medicine has reported that hospital errors account for 98,000 deaths per year and this number has been challenged as being too low. The message: ensure that a friend or relative is prepared to serve as your advocate if you are hospitalized. It is even better if your “watchdog” has medical training.

The day after my pain level was down to “5,” I was given double doses of the medication that I regularly take for hypertension. My last blood pressure had been 108/72. I probably didn’t need one dose of Altace and Norvasc, much less two! So, I did what seemed reasonable and rational. I asked to see my chart! Even though patients have the legal right to their medical records, my nurse, previously my “advocate,” refused, saying, “It’s against hospital policy!”

I was not about to back down. My wonderful wife, a nurse-attorney, shall I say, “facilitated” the previously unknown act of reading my own medical record. Within an hour, six hospital officials were crowded into my small hospital room.

Next time, why and what happened...

ALAMEDA COUNTY

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

- Scott Haggerty *District 1*
- Gail Steele *District 2*
- Alice Lai-Bitker *District 3*
- Nate Miley *District 4*
- Keith Carson *District 5*

HEALTH CARE SERVICES AGENCY

- David J. Kears, *Director*

PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

- Anthony Iton, MD, JD, MPH *Director/Health Officer*

WHAT'S NEW ON THE WEB

- Replacement algorithms for Adult v-fib/v-tach and ROSC policies.
- Information on the new NREMT testing process.
- Updated staff directory and program assignments.



EMS WEBSITE: ACGOV.ORG/EMS



NEWS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Phone Number Change - The phone number for the hyperbaric chamber at Eden Medical Center has changed to (510) 889-5073. Please make this revision to the Crush Injury Syndrome policy on page 9 of your field manual.



EMS Staff at the Awards Banquet.

CHILDREN'S DAY HELD DURING EMS WEEK



ALCO Sheriff's Department search & rescue dog Pele "searching" for a child from Washington Elementary School hiding in the bushes

Alameda County EMS hosted an EMS Week Children's Day event on May 22, 2007 inviting students from two local elementary schools. Assumption and Washington Schools, both from San Leandro, sent 120 4th and 5th grade students.

Many agencies were on hand to talk to the students: US Geological Service (USGS), Alameda County Fire Department, Alameda County Sheriff Search and Rescue, San Leandro Police, California Highway Patrol, American Medical Response (AMR), Lawrence Livermore National Lab Dispatch, American SPC Association, and Community Agencies Responding to Disasters (CARD). The EMS Injury Prevention staff had information tables on car and car seat safety, bike and helmet safety, water safety, home safety, earthquake preparedness and poison (medications and home products) safety.

Students rotated through 14 exhibits to learn about EMS and safety. USGS geophysicist Chris Dietel talked to the children about earthquakes and had a portable seismograph, fault board and cut away seismometers. Children saw a fire truck, ambulance, police motorcycle, and two search and rescue dogs.



Geophysicist, Chris Dietel from the USGS talked to the kids about earthquakes

They learned about the 9-1-1 system, and what they can do to prevent injuries by using car seats, wearing bike helmets and being aware of how to be safe. The children were able to talk with and ask questions to a variety of professionals including: fire personnel, EMT's, paramedics, law enforcement, nurses, and public health staff.

This was the fourth year EMS hosted Children's Day. At this fun event each child was given a backpack to put together their own disaster kit and informational materials on safety and health.