

Rob Lewis: interim EMS Manager at South Pointe

Rob Lewis, RN, EMT-P, a firefighter/paramedic at Macedonia Fire Department, emergency department nurse at Sagamore Hills Medical Center, and EMS instructor at South Pointe Hospital, is serving as interim EMS manager at South Pointe. Look for a full profile on Lewis in the next issue of the *Siren* newsletter, and you'll find out how busy this individual is, with full- and part-time work, plus a new baby boy, Tyler, who joins big brother Justin, 3. ■

EMS School boasts top pass rate in Ohio

In December, a class of EMT-Basic students graduated from the Cleveland Clinic Health System—School of EMS with a first-time pass rate that continues to be one of the best in Ohio. According to results of the National Registry examination, the school's paramedic program ranks among the state's top performing schools. The last class had a 90% first time passing rate. The State of Ohio average is currently only 70%.

In addition, a class of 17 first responders recently graduated from the school's new off-site training center, which is located at John Carroll University. ■

You know you've been in EMS too long when you...

- ...mention "Johnny and Roy" and the newbie asks, "Who?"
- ...remember when nasal airways were orange rubber
- ...were taught to never put an NRB on a COPD patient
- ...can still remember that infant obstructed airways called for two breaths, four back flows and 10 chest compressions
- ...know how to use a Thomas half-ring and a Spanish windlass
- ...respond to the house of a "frequent flyer" and can't understand why you're picking up someone else
- ...remember the two-part monitor and defibrillator
- ...have an EMT number lower than 1000 and medic number lower than 1500
- ...quit trying to correct people when they call you an "ambulance driver" ■

The above is courtesy of E. James Cole, former manager, School of EMS.

Extreme EMS: How to Handle Intense Calls

The following article is based on a talk by E. James Cole, MA, REMT-P, WEMTI, EMSI/T, former manager, Cleveland Clinic Health System—School of EMS. Cole made the presentation at Huron Hospital's annual trauma symposium.

Our scenery is changing rapidly. And we're not talking about mountain views, seascapes and pastoral landscapes. We're talking about the scene of calls, which are oftentimes more intense—thanks to the popularity of extreme sports like skydiving, wind surfing and rappelling, as well as the threat of disasters like bioterrorism, nuclear accidents, and viral or bacterial plagues.

In recent years, EMS professionals have had to prepare for calls that are dramatic departures from the routine. Extreme situations may:

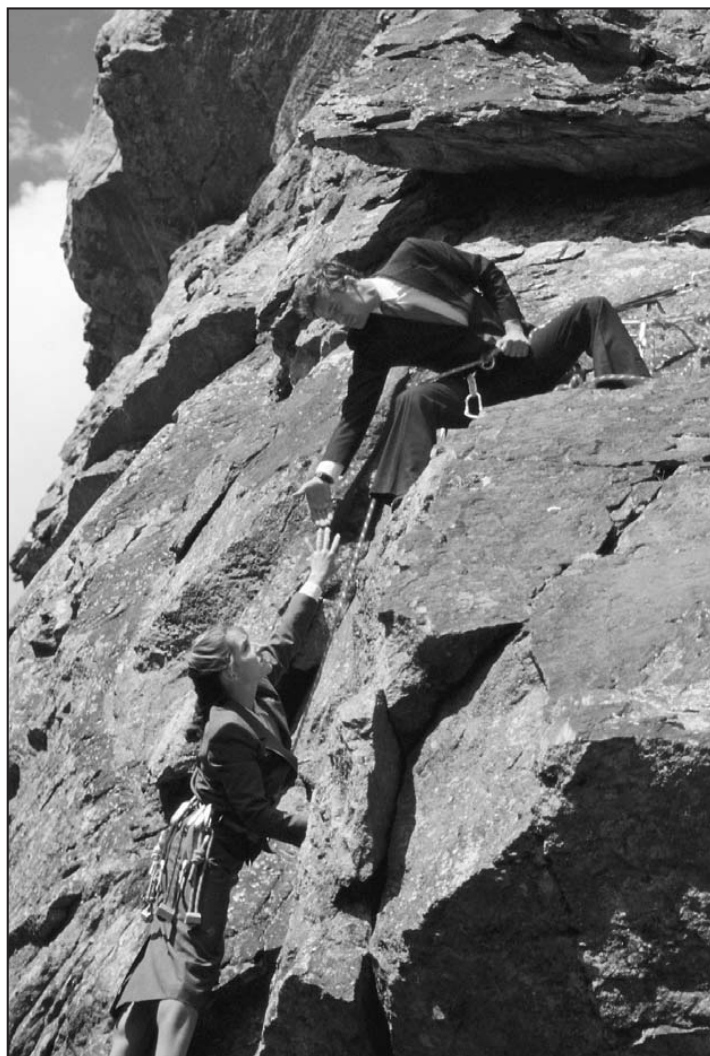
- involve a high number of patients
- occur in remote locations, such as caves or wildernesses
- require extended patient care without easy access of transport
- call for skills beyond common training
- compel EMS to travel across and work in uninhabitable environment or terrain
- necessitate equipment beyond available resources
- result in difficulties accessing patients

Extreme EMS refers to medical emergencies, in which the location, severity, complexity or circumstances require greater knowledge, skills, materials or facilities beyond the current or common capabilities to sustain life or prevent long-term disability. In these cases, patients are generally more than an hour away from definitive care.

While "street EMS" has evolved from a national curriculum mandated by the Department of Transportation (DOT), protocols and training for "extreme EMS" are still in the early stages of development and do not yet fall under a national coordinating body. Additional differences between the two forms of EMS are included in the box to the right.

Wilderness EMS

A rapidly growing branch of EMS, Wilderness EMS requires advanced training. More than 1,000 individuals throughout the United States are certified at this level. National standards of care are determined by the Wilderness



Rappelling is an example of an extreme sport that may require extreme EMS, if an accident occurs.

Street EMS

- rapid notification
- rapid response
- short-term exposure
- scene more easily controlled
- access to equipment
- easily navigable terrain
- close definitive care
- protocol driven

Extreme EMS

- delayed notification
- slow response
- long-term exposure
- very uncontrolled scenes
- limited resources and supplies
- difficult terrain
- distant definitive care
- driven by improvisation

Medical Society. Certifications for Wilderness EMS include:

- Tactical Medic
- Wilderness Advanced First Aid (WFA/A-WFA) – 16 to 32 hours of training
- Wilderness First Responder (WFR) (DOT plus Wilderness curriculum) – 80 hours of training
- Wilderness EMT (WEMT) – 181 hours of training
- WEMT Upgrade Module – 48 hours of training for EMTs, RNs, and MDs/DOs

- Wilderness Advanced Life Support (WALS), with certification available for advanced medical professionals who undergo 36 hours of training

Response to EMS calls in the wilderness may require the following skills:

- long-term care strategies, such as extended wound and fracture management
- team management to account for food and shelter for extended days
- ability to clear c-spines
- environmental emergency management
- outdoor survival skills, including weather forecasting, and rope and knot tying
- advanced pharmacology and nutrition knowledge
- map, compass and search skills
- technical rescue skills

Improvisational techniques

Since standardized equipment is often unavailable in the wilderness setting, EMS providers may be forced to modify patient assessments and treatments. These modifications may include:

Airway modifications:

- when airway maintenance is difficult, positioning the patient becomes the priority
- pinning the tongue to the lip may be a necessary skill
- modification of c-spine support is challenging

Breathing modifications:

- assessment of sounds, movement and injury patterns is essential
- need to use naked ear to a potentially bloody chest
- lack of surgical procedures, as in needle decompression, leads to high mortality from chest injuries

Circulation modifications:

- use of end organ assessment is vital
- follow the acronym P for pulse and S for skin, scan, squish, see the injury and shock management
- lack of sterile gauze and materials increases chance of infection
- oral rehydration is essential when safe to do

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Mass casualty drill tests safety forces

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Thirteen fire/EMS squads recently participated in a mass casualty drill involving five different scenarios, including 110 “victims” of an anthrax exposure. The drill, which was hosted by the Hillcrest Region, was held at Ursuline College, and “victims” were transported to Euclid, Hillcrest, South Pointe and Richmond Heights hospitals.



First responders triage “victims.”

“Our main goal was to test interoperability among the safety forces,” says Jane Pavlick, RN, CEN, EMT-P, LNC, emergency management specialist at Hillcrest Hospital. “We felt that we met our goal and had a successful drill.”

In addition to the fire/EMS squads, other participating safety forces included:

- **the Hillcrest technical rescue team**, which responded to the staged drowning of a manikin on Ursuline’s campus
- **Hillcrest Hospital’s emergency response team**, which decontaminated “victims” in its specially designed decon units
- **the Hillcrest negotiating team**, which dealt with a mock hostage situation

- **the SPAN bomb unit** that handled a pretend dirty bomb threat at Hillcrest Hospital

- **the Hillcrest negotiating team**, which handled a staged hostage situation
- **the Southeast hazardous materials team**, which dealt with the anthrax scenario

- **The American Red Cross and ARES** (ham radio operators), who took on the responsibility of tracking “victims.”

Pepper Pike served as incident command for the 13 squads, which came from Beachwood, Chagrin Falls, Chesterland, Euclid, Gates Mills, High-



A rescue worker stages a medical problem during the Hillcrest Region mass casualty drill.

land Heights, Lyndhurst, Mayfield Heights, Mayfield Village, Pepper Pike, Russell, Solon and South Euclid. The roles of victims were played by volunteers from the participating hospitals, students from Ursuline and Case Western Reserve University, Boy Scouts, and other volunteers. ■

‘Extreme EMS’
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Environmental concerns

For patients who have been exposed to the elements, rescuers should help them by:

- removing wet and soiled clothing
- redressing them in non-cotton, dry fabrics
- providing shelter from wind and elements
- covering the patient’s head and trunk
- not attempting to externally reheat hypothermic patients

The preceding information is a basic outline of a few of the skills needed for extreme EMS work. For further information, contact the SOLO School of Wilderness and Emergency Medicine at 888-SOLO-MED. ■

Got something to say?

We want to hear from you.

As an EMS professional, you’re this newsletter’s best source of information. Story ideas include interesting squad runs, job tips and unusual hobbies or second jobs.

We’re also interested in receiving letters to the editor. This is your chance to make suggestions, compliment coworkers or get something off your chest. So... contact Anne Gallagher, at 330-656-3068 or gallcomms@aol.com. ■

From concrete laborer to ED physician: Dr. Sauto brings vast experience to Hillcrest

Maybe you don’t want to know where Jim Sauto’s hands have been. Years ago, he worked as a diaper delivery man and as a laborer for Alpha Pre-Cast, for which he helped build the concrete breakwall off the inner harbor in Cleveland.

“I was always interested in doing something with my hands,” says Dr. Sauto. “When I was young, my mother had seizures, and I wished I could do something to help her. I also watched ‘Emergency’ on TV. So I was trying to decide between going into EMS or working as a forest ranger.”

The park system’s loss was emergency medicine’s gain. After graduating from the former Brentwood (now South Pointe) Hospital paramedic program, Dr. Sauto worked as a firefighter/paramedic for the Willowick Fire Department and as a paramedic for private ambulance companies and the emergency department at Mt. Sinai Medical Center. Meanwhile, he tried to obtain a full-time position with a fire department.

“I got tired of part-time jobs, and was also wondering what happens to our patients after we drop them off,” he says. “So I considered going into nursing or respiratory therapy. I’ve always been interested in airway and ventilator management, EKGs and so forth.”

Dr. Sauto received an associate degree in respiratory care from Lakeland Community College. From 1986 to 1996, he was employed as a registered respiratory therapist at various hospitals in the Greater Cleveland area. He also became certified in ACLS, ATLS, BCLS and PALS.

“I had lots of encouragement from coworkers, most notably Tony Kosoglov, M.D., who said I should advance further in the medical field,” Dr. Sauto says. “So I went to Baldwin-Wallace



Jim Sauto, MD, uses a tongue depressor and flashlight to check a patient’s throat at Hillcrest Hospital’s emergency department.

College and obtained a bachelor of science degree in Allied Health Sciences, while working full time.

“A great EMT instructor who started my career in emergency medicine and truly influenced me in a very positive way is Dave Linn, a Beachwood paramedic/firefighter,” he adds. “I was also encouraged and inspired by my first paramedic partner, Matt Tooker.”

After receiving his doctor of medicine degree from Wright State University School of Medicine in Dayton in 2000, Dr. Sauto served as a resident in emergency medicine at both MetroHealth Medical Center and the Cleveland Clinic Foundation. Following his residency, he worked as an emergency physician at Parma Community General Hospital and then at the Cleveland Clinic.

This past summer, Dr. Sauto joined Hillcrest Hospital’s emergency department. “I know a lot of people who work at the area fire departments because I’ve worked with them as a paramedic and

respiratory therapist,” he says. “Sometimes former coworkers will come in and be surprised to see me here. They’ll look at my nametag and say ‘Hey you’re a doctor now!’”

“I enjoy making sense out of chaos in the emergency department,” he adds. “We have a great group of people here. No one has a bad attitude. Since we’re so busy, we don’t have much time to socialize. Sometimes medics may take this the wrong way and think we’re unfriendly, but that’s just a misunderstanding.”

Dr. Sauto resides in North Royalton with his daughter, Ciara, 6; son, Nick, 4, and wife, Isabel, a part-time ICU nurse at St. Vincent Charity Hospital. In his spare time, Dr. Sauto likes playing with his children, spending time with his family, and participating in activities at their church.

“I enjoy talking with patients because I’m definitely a people person,” he says. “I like the fact that I’m making a difference in peoples’ lives.” ■

Meet Tom Beers Huron's new EMS manager serves as advocate for squads

While pursuing a bachelor's degree at the University of Dayton, EMS work never even crossed Tom Beers's mind. Then one night his roommate, who was a premed student, asked Beers to accompany him on a run with the university's full-time, student-run EMS squad.

"I didn't want to go, but he insisted," says Beers. "So I helped him respond to a call dealing with a student who had tried to commit suicide. I discovered that I really enjoy being in the role of a lifesaver. After that first run, I decided that's what I wanted to do with my life."

By Beers's senior year, he was assistant chief of EMS operations for the 70-person university squad. When he graduated in 1998, he enrolled with the paramedic program offered by the Cleveland Clinic Health System—School of EMS. He was certified as a paramedic in 2000.

For a three-year period, Beers was the Midwest regional coordinator for the National Collegiate EMS Foundation (NCEMSF), with responsibility for relations between the foundation and individual colleges and universities within the region.

"This was a voluntary position, but I enjoy reaching out to younger students who are considering careers in the public safety forces," he says. "In 2002, I coordinated the first NCEMSF regional conference in the country, held at the University of Dayton. It was a huge success and set the precedent for future conferences in other regions."

From 2001 to 2003, Beers was a firefighter/paramedic with the Dayton Fire Department, where he served as EMS instructor and EMS bike team director. From Dayton, he went to Cleveland



Tom Beers, EMT-P, EMS manager at Huron Hospital, poses in front of a vehicle owned by the Dayton Fire Department, which he formerly served as firefighter/paramedic, EMS instructor and EMS bike team member.

Heights, where he is a firefighter/paramedic. In Cleveland Heights, he implemented a glucometer program and introduced palm technology.

As the new EMS manager for Huron Hospital, Beers says his number one priority is serving as a liaison between the squads and the emergency department (ED), for which he'll act as an advocate for EMS. He also plans to improve the ED entrance, create an EMS recognition program, institute new protocols and educational programs, and develop ways to have equipment returned faster and in better condition.

"I really like the job," he says. "I enjoy the challenges presented by the

high numbers of penetrating and blunt trauma cases we see here at Huron. The diversity of calls is another nice aspect. We get to meet people in extreme situations, and we have the opportunity to make bad situations better. The stories here are incredible, and we see many interesting, almost surreal situations."

A graduate of Lake Catholic High School, Beers resides in Willoughby with his wife, Shannon, a paralegal. The couple is expecting their first child in June. In his spare time, Tom Beers enjoys reading suspense novels. He also likes riding his specialized competition mountain bike. During a recent 10-mile bike race, his chain broke and he had to

jog several miles with the bike on his back. He still came in third place.

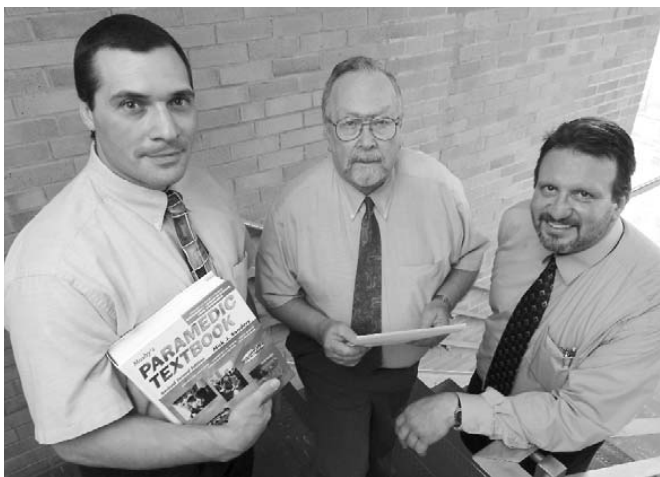
Not surprisingly, Beers is certified as an EMS cyclist for the International Police Mountain Bike Association. He is also certified in ACLS, Advanced BTLs, confined space rescue and entry, AHA CPR for the healthcare provider and HAZMAT operations. He is a fire prevention inspector, Ohio fire and arson investigator, and a BLS instructor.

Beers fulfilled a military obligation, and was stationed in Oklahoma. He is also a published author. His article, entitled "The 11 Principles of Leadership," appeared in *EMS Magazine's* September 2000 issue. ■

Below, Tom Beers gets serious while on a call.



New instructors join EMS school



New faces at the Cleveland Clinic Health System—School of EMS are (from left) Russ Leonardi, laboratory coordinator; Alex Butman, EMT-P, EMSI, lead EMS instructor for the paramedic program, and Bill Marx, clinical coordinator.

With more than 30 years experience in EMS practice, administration and education, Butman holds a bachelor's degree in history and an honorary doctorate from Central Connecticut State University. He sits on several national EMS committees, is a certified Ohio EMS instructor, authored the first textbook in pre-hospital mass casualty care, and wrote or coauthored more than 26 other EMS texts and instructional video programs.

Recently, Butman received the Rocco V. Morando Lifetime Achievement Award in EMS from the National Registry of EMTs, National Association of EMTs and the American Ambulance Association. He adds this to his already extensive collection of local, regional and national awards, including the National EMS Educator of the Year award, which he received in 1993. ■

ED doctor donates flag that flew over his Afghanistan hospital

The last *Siren* article about Don Spaner, MD, which ran a couple years ago, told of the daring mountaintop rescue that saved his life in Colorado. This time, he was saving other peoples' lives at a field hospital in Afghanistan, just north of Kabul, the capital.

"I got called up by the Army Reserves for the second time since 9-11," says Dr. Spaner, who is medical director of EMS for Hillcrest Hospital. "My 92-day period in Afghanistan was an excellent experience. The troops were amazing. There were many young kids who are mature beyond their years. I always felt safe because I was surrounded by Marines and other soldiers."

"Giving them the flag was a way of thanking them for keeping our homeland safe."

"The medics there do a lot of suturing and high-level care, things they'd never get the chance to do in civilian life," he adds. "If you're a physician's assistant in the military, you function as a physician. If anyone wants a real challenge, they should go into military medical work. I encourage others to sign up and help out."

While at the field hospital, Dr. Spaner dealt with patients who had stepped on mines, people who were injured as they attempted to vote, and mass casualty situations, such as buses blown up by terrorists. Besides his hospital job, he left behind his wife, Pam, and three children aged 10, 12 and 15. He was gone for a total of four months.

When the physician returned, he donated to Hillcrest Hospital the American flag that had flown over his Afghanistan hospital. "While I was there, I was thinking about the folks back home," he said. "Giving them the flag was a way of thanking them for keeping our homeland safe." ■

Trauma symposium features special EMS sessions

For Huron Hospital's annual trauma symposium, held recently at the Intercontinental Hotel and Conference Center on Euclid Avenue in Cleveland, the hospital partnered with Cleveland EMS to present a special EMS-related continuing educational track that was moderated by J. Eckart, Jr., commissioner of EMS for the City of Cleveland. Speakers included:

- Dr. Kenneth Mattox of Houston (keynote speaker)
- Dr. Peter Rhee, director, Navy Trauma Training Center
- Dr. Michael Allswede, a nationally known expert on terrorism, who

discussed "Strategic Medical Intelligence: The Critical Connections between Medicine, Public Health and the FBI"

- E. James Cole, MA, REMT-P, WEMTI, EMSI/T, former program manager of the School of EMS—Cleveland Clinic Health System, presenting "X-treme EMS: Beyond the Norm in EMS"

EMS professionals received continuing education units. Keep on the lookout for information on this year's trauma symposium, which is set for November. ■

AED from police car used to revive full-arrest victim

A full arrest victim is back at work, thanks to the efforts of Boston Heights Fire and Police and Macedonia Fire, as well as the fact that the patrol car was equipped with an automatic external defibrillator (AED).

The incident began when both fire departments received a call for a man unconscious on the 8th tee at Boston Hills Golf Course. Boston Heights police sergeant Ray Heatwall was first on the scene and determined that the man was not breathing and without a pulse. Heatwall initiated CPR with the help of golf course personnel.

Then patrolman Lou Keller and Fire Chief Jim Robinson of Boston Heights arrived. Robinson obtained the AED from the car and gave an initial shock to the downed man. This stimulated a pulse, and the squad assisted the patient's breathing. Suddenly, there was no pulse again, and the patient required another shock. At this point, a Macedonia EMS squad arrived and provided cardiac care.

The Macedonia squad included Kelly Whapam, Dave Morris, Rob Lewis and Dave Chesnick. "They all worked as a team with members of Boston Heights Fire to provide excellent care," says Robinson. "The patient was Life Flighted to the hospital and is now recovered."

Coincidentally, this incident took place just a couple days after the fire departments received AED instruction from Rob Lewis, RN, EMT-P, who serves as EMS instructor for South Pointe, emergency department nurse for Sagamore Hills Medical Center and interim EMS manager at South Pointe. ■

EMS Calendar

February 1

EMT Basic class begins at School of EMS. Contact the school at 216-692-7850 or ssmith@cchseast.org.

February 2

7 p.m.
"Eye Injuries" presented by Jim Sauto, MD. Hillcrest Hospital, Ross Auditorium.

April 6

7 p.m.
Program to be announced. Hillcrest Hospital, Ross Auditorium.

Chief Busher celebrates 35 years in fire service



Chief Joe Busher of the Willowick Fire Department displays a framed resolution that he recently received from Willowick Mayor Lorraine Fende in honor of his 35th anniversary in the fire service. The resolution was presented at a recent city council meeting.

Cleveland paramedic helps deliver baby at Euclid Hospital

A young woman, who was eight months pregnant, recently walked into Euclid Hospital's emergency department with labor pains. Shortly thereafter, the staff delivered her baby, with the able assistance of Doug Sternik, a paramedic with Cleveland EMS, unit 16, which is based at the hospital. Thank you, Doug! ■

New ICU at Hillcrest streamlines care

A new 12-bed intensive care unit (ICU) at Hillcrest Hospital has the potential to reduce emergency department diversions. The new unit is attached to the existing ICU by a connecting corridor. All beds are in single-occupancy rooms, which each have a "personal care unit" with a dedicated dialysis hook-up.

"Since the new ICU expands the number of hospital beds, it may accommodate more patients and ultimately free up space in the emergency department," says Kitty Gabram, RN, EMT-P, director of EMS. "This should further help us cut down on the number of diversions we're forced to make."

The décor of the new patient rooms is consistent with the Cleveland Clinic Foundation's "Healing Hospitality" concepts, and each one has a computer port to facilitate the integration of electronic records. Two new nursing work areas are stationed at each interior corner of the space, and there is a physician dictation/chart alcove.

Adjacent to the ICU are ancillary support areas and offices, including a new staff locker/lounge space and a staff training/conference room. There is also a new 30-person waiting room, grieve/consult room, lavatory and vending alcove. ■

Siren is produced by the marketing department in cooperation with its four EMS departments. If you have a newsworthy story to share or would like to comment on the newsletter, please call Anne Gallagher at 330/656-3068 or the marketing department at 440/312-8751.