A message from Hocking Co. EMS Chief Scott Brooker

Mentorship

So, I have been a paramedic since the day that I was born. But OK, not really. To hear some people tell it, though you would think that. Have you ever talked to an EMS provider? If you have, I congrat-ulate you. For most of us, including myself, the answer is no. Think back to when you started, whether it was six months ago, five years or 25 years ago. Go back to when you started, and I think most of us would agree that we were scared out of our minds. The first call you responded on, your heart pounding, shaking and maybe feeling like you didn’t know as much as you should. We knew what we were taught in our EMS provider initial courses, but now— it’s real. Real world with real patients and real partners. Some of those are your best friends, and some of them, well not so much. Can you say about the ones you liked and gravi-tated to? But those were the people that made you more comfortable and were willing to show you how to do things without being critical. As far as things we have learned as experienced and seasoned providers, we often tend to forget about the early days when we were the “new person.” When we first started, we didn’t know as much as we thought we did. Every-one can play a role in nurturing new employees. I know it can be a chal-lenge, but we must have patience. Sometimes crews will complain about the new employee for doing some-thing. My first question to the crew is, “did they know that they had to do that task?” I must make sure that we have established the expectations for them to learn. They maybe are hesitant to jump in on runs, more than likely they are just not wanting to step on anyone toes and they don’t want to mess up. Be a mentor to these folks without having the title. Show them the ropes and help them. Take time to show these folks the right way every time.

Yes, there is a shared responsibility between the new employee as well as the agency. We can even learn from these new people as well. Most of these new hires are like a breath of fresh air. They are excited, motivated and wanting to learn every aspect that our patient, their family or loved one can fly when a pediatric patient is flown, be-cause a parent or loved one can fly with the child. Another plus is proud of the people who are employed by the company. Take pride in what you do and who you are. As a provider it should never be a competition, always strive to help one another. Those new people that you helped along the way; they will always remember what you have done for them. Make sure you look good by making others look good you know. You don’t have to be the best at any thing, just do your best. Always.

Scott W. Brooker, Hocking County EMS chief
Seneca County EMS leans on dedication, expertise of volunteers for quality care

Seneca County EMS uses a community-based system of service that relies on the expertise and dedication of volunteers to provide quality care to those in need.

Emergency Services Director Ken Majors said when he responded to 1,240 runs in 2018. The department runs an Advanced Life Support ambulances and has one fully stocked backup ALS ambulance. The people are 35 full-time employees and 11 intermittent employees. These employees are supplemented by several experienced, talented and dedicated volunteers from across the county.

Majors said he enjoys the "community-based EMS atmosphere."

"Seneca County EMS has a 40-year history of being a community-based system that is supported by county government and delivered by emergency medical professionals at the local level in the townships and villages," he said. "These professionals are primarily volunteers and when they are compensated, it is far less than one wage.

Majors said people from all different trades and professions pitch in to make sure quality care is provided.

"We are a service made up of trade professionals, laborers, factory workers, farmers, students and career medical professionals. We have registered nurses, LPNs, emergency room doctors, veterinarians, truck drivers, firefighters, emergency room techs, construction workers, architects, teachers, electricians and just about every profession or trade you can think of to make up Seneca County EMS," he said.

Majors praised the people who sacrifice their own time to make sure the community is taken care of.

"Our EMS professionals do it for the love of the game," he said. "Take care of our community and it will take care of you. That's the mindset, and that's why I love what I do and who I do it for."

Majors, who is an Army veteran, a paramedic and a registered nurse, said taking care of others has been his life's work.

"Seeing other people succeed in a medical career, in or out of EMS, really makes me feel like I have accomplished something," he said.

Majors said the biggest challenge his agency faces, is finding enough people willing to do the work.

"Rural EMS is challenging everywhere," he said. "We are a primarily volunteer agency, in other areas of the state and country, most EMS agencies are paid. Finding a funding stream for EMS personnel is a key issue. These issues are not unique to Ohio, but they are becoming a major issue locally."

Majors said new products and technology are important in making crews safer, more efficient and more effective.

"CPR devices that don't get tired and do perfect CPR, costs that lift load into the ambulance and video laryngoscopes to aid in the securing of the airway... these are examples of seriously cutting-edge technology," he said.

Not only does technology help the ambulance ride, but also in other ways.

"Liquid suspension in ambulances so that the ambulance rides like a Cadillac instead of a grain wagon," he said as an example. "Geographical information systems that plot the closest, fastest route to the emergency, airbags, supplemental restraint systems and driver assist devices. These all help make the job easier."

Majors said the technology available today is amazing.

"It's very hard to remember how we did all of this 20-30 years ago," he said.

Majors said he believes it is very valuable for the department to be a member of the Ohio EMS Chiefs Association.

"OEMSCA has given a voice to the third-service EMS provider and organization," he said. "We are not fire-based, we are not hospital-based, we are not private EMS contractors. We are EMS providers by choice and profession because we choose to excel in medicine on the front line of health care. We needed a voice at the table where big decisions are made involving the big business that is health care. OEMSCA filled that need and is being led by a determined group of professionals that will see to it that our voices are heard."

Seneca County Commissioner Shayne Thomas thanked Majors and all the Seneca County EMS personnel for their hard work and dedication to providing quality care to those in need.

"It's great to know that the people residents need in their worst moments are cutting the extra work to be as prepared as possible to serve," he said.

Gildone

It was announced this week that OEMSCA President Vince Gildone has served as a paramedic with North-West Ambulance District for 40 years. Congratulations, Vince!