The “Pres” Corner

You would have to be a hermit living under a large rock not to know we are in the height of the election season. How many of you “like” politics? When I was younger, I never viewed myself as being a “political” person; however, I always loved the challenge of a persuasive debate every now and again. Being an advocate or taking a stand in what I believed mattered, and at times, I was fairly strong in voicing my opinion. (For those of you who know me pretty well—go ahead insert that chuckle here). The NEMSA board, chairs and committee members recently had our annual strategic planning meeting. It was the best meeting ever. EMS and healthcare as a whole is changing right before our eyes, and we ALL need to educate ourselves and plan ahead.

NEMSA is turning 15 years old next year! How many of you remember being a NEMSA Cheerleader in the beginning? I remember Terry Gallagher recruited me. He asked me to be a NEMSA cheerleader, and of course, I looked at him and said YES—realizing I had no clue what I was getting myself into. We need to resurrect the NEMSA Cheerleading Squad! We could hold “tryouts” at the winter and Spring conferences. We need to come up with some NEMSA Cheers and have NEMSA Pep Rallies across the state.

Ok..Ok.. Back to planning ahead and cheering, I would like to ask you – did you know NEMSA has an Advocacy Committee? This committee meets with our lobbyists, state legislators and state & national organizations, basically anyone who will listen to our “Cheers” for Nebraska EMS. This committee is in need of your help. I know we can’t all agree on every issue. If we did, how incredibly boring and stagnant would our world be? This is what we have heard from some of you…

You want to secure State & Federal funding for EMS.
You want to have a voice with our State & Federal legislators.
You want to be recognized as a professional healthcare provider.
You want to provide your community with quality EMS service.
You want quality education.
You want to develop legislation to ensure the future of EMS.
You want more EMS professionals in your area.
You want to make a difference in others’ lives.

We can do all of this and more with all of your help. We will be developing and sharing communications for Advocacy through emails and the NEMSA website. Right now, you can go on NAEMT.org and click on “Capwiz.” It is a legislative service hosted by NAEMT that we can use right at the federal level, and it will even help you find your elected representatives.

Rah Rah Goooo… NEMSA!
Take Care and Be Safe,

Debbie Von Seggern-Johnson
NEMSA President
dvonseggern@unmc.edu

LIKE us on Facebook!
From the Secretary

Hello NEMSA Members,

As I write this, I am watching the news about hurricane Sandy, seeing the extensive damage and hearing of the high number of fatalities. All I can do is think about all of our brothers and sisters in EMS, Fire and Law Enforcement that are responding to this disaster. Be safe my friends. Prayers of safety and protection are being sent your way from all of us in Nebraska.

I can hardly believe that 2012 is coming to a close. It seems like yesterday it was January and we were getting ready for Winter Conference in Kearney. This year’s NEMSA Winter Conference will be January 12-13, 2013 in Kearney. If you haven’t reserved your rooms yet, now is the time to get it done. You can call the following motels: Holiday Inn at 308-237-5971; Wingate Inn 308-237-4400; Hampton Inn 308-234-3400; or Fairfield Inn 308-236-4200.

In case you haven’t heard, the biggest news this year is that Spring Conference is moving to Norfolk. It will be held at the Divots Conference Center on the West side of Norfolk. The dates for the 2013 conference are March 15-17. Now would be a great time to call and get your rooms reserved. You can check out the Norfolk Area Visitors Bureau website at www.visitnorfolkne.com for an extensive list of motels in Norfolk.

Check out the NEMSA website at www.nemsa.org, for all of the conference information. There is lots of other great information located on the website as well.

I look forward to seeing everyone at the upcoming conferences. Take care, and have a safe holiday season.

Pam Stapleman
NEMSA Secretary

NAAP NOTES

I write this letter with a heavy heart as we all mourn the loss of our brother, Gerald Hemphill. Gerald Hemphill was a good man and wore many hats. One of those hats was as a board member of NAAP. He brought ideas and passion to EMS. He had a spark and outlook that was inspirational. I was proud to have known Gerald as well as everyone else involved in NAAP. In this letter from NAAP we remember one of our board members. In closing, our prayers go with Gerald’s family, and we as members share that same spark and passion for EMS.

JJ Wohlers

What is a hero?

Webster Dictionary defines hero as “a man admired for his achievements and noble qualities or one that shows great courage”. Do you know of any such person? That someone who has shown outstanding achievements in the emergency care field that promotes sound principles of emergency care and warrant being called a HERO?

NEMSA has a way to show appreciation of these deeds. It only takes a little time and organization. At NEMSA Winter Conference in Kearney there could be an award presented for such deeds. If you have someone that you would like to submit for the award go to NEMSA.org and download the nomination form that is located under the awards tab. Fill out the form, and write an article why you think the nominee should receive that award. It doesn’t hurt to have others in the community or surrounding area to add letters of recommendation. Compile these letters and the form and send to the NEMSA Secretary, Pam Stapleman, or bring to the NEMSA representatives at the NEMSA booth. If you have any questions, please contact Karen Bowlin, Awards Chair (bowlink@mpcc.edu), or any Board member.
From the Editor

As I sit here and ponder this next newsletter, it brought me a reality check. With all the friends and brethren we all have lost in the past few years, I realize we are all mortal. I guess the thought that crosses my mind is- have I told friends and family, and that includes my EMS family, how I really feel about them? As I am sure that most have thought this lately, I believe that is important to let all the members of your squad, your family, and your friends know that you appreciate who they are and what they do.

In closing, thanks to all my family members for being there for me even though I spend a lot of time doing what I love to do. Without them I could not have become the EMS Provider I am today. Also, thanks to all my past instructors for the knowledge you have passed on to me, and as I continue on my EMS journey. And to those in my EMS family, remember to always be there in times of need.

Now, for something a little lighter…. We are in need of some help to keep this Newsletter growing. I would like to extend an invitation to anyone that is interested in helping gather articles for the newsletter. As most of you know, it takes articles from all the committee’s. Also, we are looking for other EMS stories as well. We could also use help with the area of the featured squad. So, with that being said, Squads- send me your stories and we will see that your story is shared as well as the story of EMS in Nebraska. Send all submissions to arniehiggins@yahoo.com

Arnie Higgins
Editor

One of “THOSE” Calls

We were called to meet a mom and 2 year old boy at our local gas station along the highway. They were coming from a town about 13 miles east of us. The complaint was the boy was vomiting blood. After having the mom and boy loaded in the ambulance, we did our normal vital checks the best we could with a 2 year old that’s not very happy. (Airway was definitely open) Vitals were all good so we decided we could make the transporting trip of their choice to another hospital. This is an extra 10 miles then our normal trip so we had plenty of time to talk to the mother and child and get more information. Mom had told us that he was shopping with his dad and had fallen out of the cart head first onto the floor. He did have a nice size bump on his head. This is why she was so concerned with the bloody vomit. My partner and I started a casual chat with the boy about the usual kids stuff and got it to where he was answering our questions. Eventually we started asking him questions about what he was doing and how he fell. He responded that he didn’t know, he just fell out. Then my partner asked him what he had for breakfast. He answered that he ate skittles for breakfast, just the red ones. Hmmm…. Mom looked a little embarrassed about his breakfast choice but was much more relaxed about the red vomit. He checked out okay and I’m pretty sure he’s eating a much better breakfast.

Do you have one of “those” calls? Submit your story to have published in our next newsletter.
Culture of Safety

Do you have a culture of safety within your service? In a culture of safety, people are not merely encouraged to work toward change; they take action when it is needed. Does this happen in your department or is it “oh that is just the way it has always been done” or “Safety is not my responsibility, so I’ll file a report and wash my hands of it.”

So what is culture of safety? By “culture of safety,” we mean an environment or culture in which quality and safety of care is foremost in everyone’s minds. In an organization with a culture of safety, for example, anyone should feel empowered to raise his or her concerns about quality or safety. No hierarchy or chain of command dictates who is allowed to speak up.

An organization can improve upon safety only when leaders are visibly committed to change and when they enable staff to openly share safety information. When an organization does not have such a culture, members are often unwilling to report adverse events and unsafe conditions because they fear reprisal or believe reporting won’t result in any change.

Senior leaders must drive the culture change by demonstrating their own commitment to safety and providing the resources to achieve results. Their message about safety must be consistent and sustained, as it takes a long time for culture to change.

So what can departments do to work towards a culture of safety? The first is to find areas where the department itself feels there needs to be work. This could be anything from better hand washing facilities to non-slip strips on running boards.

The Prevention committee will be presenting ways to work towards a better culture of safety. If you have a topic that you would like to have presented or information on please contact a member of the prevention or education committee.

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Mark Your Calendar!!

The NEMSA Winter Conference will be held on January 12-13, 2013! We look forward to seeing you there!
ELECTION TIME IS HERE AGAIN!

If you or anyone you know is interested in running for an office with the Nebraska Emergency Medical Services Association (NEMSA) please contact:

Dave Huey at ddhuey@hotmail.com or Tanya Faye rnneeded@yahoo.com.

The positions being elected this year are:

• 1st Vice President
• Secretary
• Board Member at Large

A bio about the person with a maximum of 250 words and a photo need to be submitted by December 31, 2012.

Voting will be done electronically. An e-mail address will be needed. If you have not updated your e-mail address with the membership chairman you need to do so as soon as possible.

2013 NEMSA Spring Conference

The 2013 NEMSA Spring Conference seems like a long way off, but it’s closer than we think. The conference will be held March 15-17th and we are very excited about our new venue in Norfolk at Divot’s Convention Center. The facility is well suited to accommodate general sessions with improved space for breakout sessions. We have been working with the staff and they are committed to helping the committee plan the best ever conference experience for our participants.

We have new events and entertainment for you including Dinner and a Movie on Friday evening featuring “Mother, Jugs and Speed,” and a hypnotist comedian for after the banquet. For this, our 30th anniversary conference, we have brought together your favorite speakers known for excellence in education and good times; Stephen “Murph” Murphy, Kelly Grayson, Scott Crawford and Brian Donaldson, just to name a few. The Center for Preparedness Education is also sponsoring a track this year, and we have added a few new speakers to the agenda. This is your conference and, as always, it is our goal to make it the best experience possible.

2013 NEMSA Spring Conference Committee
NEMSA

Winter Conference

The Only Hands on Conference

January 12th & 13th, 2013  Holiday Inn — Kearney, Nebraska

Visit www.nems.org for brochure or online registration!

Featuring:

Senior Moments * Trauma—Head to Toe * Entrapped Patient/Extrication

EMS & The Law * Autism 911

(ALS) Low Volume...* Dogfighting Skills * Dying Heart

Mark your calendars and plan to attend the
Friday, January 11th  Saturday, January 12th
EMS goes Red, White, & Blue  Banquet & Comedian
Casino & Children’s Games  (Comedian-Jeff Caudil)

We’ll see you in Kearney!