

PRESS RELEASE

5/18/2007

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Emergency Personnel Recognized During EMS Week May 20-26

The Okaloosa County Board of Commissioners is proclaiming May 20-26, 2007, EMS Week, in honor of Emergency Medical Services. Furthermore, May 23 is proclaimed as EMS for Children Day.

The theme, "Extraordinary People, Extraordinary Service," is part of a national celebration recognizing and honoring the high-level emergency care given by EMS providers as well as those that treat children and saves lives overall. Emergency medical service teams consist of emergency physicians, emergency nurses, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, firefighters, educators, administrators and others.

Okaloosa County EMS is committed to the development of training programs, guidelines and equipment for its emergency care providers to provide children with optimal pediatric care, as well as meet special needs.

"Recently, it seems we as a nation are experiencing numerous emergencies and even natural disasters, which highlight the efforts of these 'Extraordinary People, providing Extraordinary Service.' I can't think of a better reason to thank them," stated Okaloosa County Commission Chair Don Amunds.

"I can describe EMS personnel in one word – dedicated," stated Public Safety Director Dino Villani. "They provide lifesaving care 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and I encourage everyone to observe EMS week by recognizing them for their dedication all year long," he added.

(info boxes (2) follows)

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EMS Division Highlights

- New, innovative Continuous Positive Airway Pressure respiratory equipment added to all ambulances and Beach Safety Units.
- Coordinate with GulfFlight1 medical helicopter in Okaloosa County for rapid transport.
- Basic Life Support ambulance now licensed to assist with local and out-of-state transfers.
- Purchased a new ambulance and two transport vans. Transport vans will be used for non-emergency calls, freeing ambulances for emergencies and minimizing response time.
- Provided Training on Automatic External Defibrillators & CPR to local schools, County Warning Point & Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office.
- Partnership with Okaloosa Walton College to support the new Paramedic Program.
- The State of Florida's *first* "Heart Ready County," and received "Heart Ready" recognition from the American Heart Association three years running.
- Transported patients "Home for the Holidays," to be with families in Okaloosa County, a positive program for residents each year.

1ST ANNUAL EMS WEEK FOOD DRIVE

MAY 24, 10 AM-2PM

- **Look for the Okaloosa County EMS Ambulance at Publix in the Paradise Point Shopping Center at Brooks Bridge**
- **Drop off your *NON-PERISHABLE* food items.**
- **Goal is to *FILL* the Ambulance with *FOOD*!**
- **All food will be donated to the Okaloosa-Walton United Way for Local Food Banks.**
- **This is an opportunity to say "*Thanks*" to EMS providers who protect the health, safety & welfare of our community!**

NATIONAL EMS WEEK MAY 20-26, 2007 – "*Extraordinary People, Extraordinary Service*"