

# PULSE LINES

VITAL SIGNS OF OKLAHOMA EMS

Volume 4, Issue 1

Spring 2007



**Serving on Health Care's Front Line**

Oklahoma celebrated EMS Week during a ceremony on the South Plaza of the State Capitol on May 23, 2007, with the National Anthem sung by Stephanie Tomlinson and a fly-by conducted by Air Evac Lifeteam. Special recognition was given to the family of EMT, Janez Y Case, killed in the line of duty during a patient transport. Recognition also was given to Jay Mitchell and members of the Governor's EMS Readiness Task Force for their work evaluating the current EMS system and making recommendations to remedy the instability of EMS services in Oklahoma. State Representative Paul Roan was the guest speaker. He emphasized the need for all of us in EMS to contact our legislators, to rally support for the EMS legislation and to keep this very important issue in the in the forefront.

## EMS WEEK MAY 20 – 26, 2007



Rep Paul Roan, Oklahoma House of Representatives

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Jay Mitchell, Rick Bronson, Sharon Dellavecchio, Bob Hawley & R Shawn Rogers



R Shawn Rogers, Director EMS Division and members of the Governor's EMS Readiness Task Force

# Update: OKLAHOMA EMS DAY AT THE STATE CAPITOL



Oklahoma EMS day at the Capitol was a well-attended event where EMS providers came from across the state to make legislators aware of EMS shortfalls, particularly in rural areas. The EMS division staff did an outstanding job of supporting our constituents while informing our lawmakers. EMS division administrative assistant Sharon DellaVecchio organized, scheduled and "stage managed" the event, ensuring tables, rooms and support. The Regional EMS Administrators and the Training and Licensure and Data sections were represented and available throughout the day.



An estimated 100 EMTs, mostly in uniform, represented more than 20 agencies and 12 EMS providers set up table displays in the 4th floor rotunda between the House and Senate chambers. Most of the EMTs attended an orientation session conducted by

the Governor's Task Force (GTF) leadership. Handouts were provided to explain the GTF recommendations and the legislation currently under deliberation, and a "how-to have effective meetings with legislators" review session was provided.



The EMS providers were uniformly professional and effective. Several media outlets attended, including OETA and KSBI. Although the current legislation was held over by House leadership because of cost, this issue is not dead. We will be doing our "due diligence" during the upcoming year to keep our issues—Oklahoma's issues—in the forefront—both in the media and by your letters to your legislators. Let's make sure that all of our legislators know that there is a way to stop Oklahoma lives from being in jeopardy—THEIR SUPPORT!



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## OSDH EMS Updates:

- **Governor's EMS Readiness Task Force**

The Governor's EMS Readiness Task Force report was submitted in February. The full report is available on the EMS website:

<http://www.health.state.ok.us/program/ems/GTF%20Final%20Report.pdf>

- **AED Grants**

A fifth year of rural AED funding was made available through the federal Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA), but the grant has yet to receive federal funding. Over 400 AEDs already have been distributed statewide through this program, and the state EMS office is coordinating programming upgrades consistent with the latest AHA AED protocol recommendations.

- **EMS Computer Distribution**

The EMS computer distribution continues, with a goal of ensuring each EMS agency statewide has been offered a new desktop PC for access to EMSsystems website and the state EMS data system website. Some of the computers will be "tablet" computers, as part of the data system pilot grant.

- **EMS Package Plan**

Through the "EMS Package Plan" grants, a coalition of the OSDH EMS division, the OSDH Terrorism Preparedness and Response Service and the Office of Homeland Security at the Department of Public Safety are developing resources to bring Oklahoma's EMTs up to national standards. ICS 100, 200 & 700 are available on-line, and an Awareness Level Haz-mat training specific for EMS is under development by contract with OSDH.

A second meeting to develop a Request for Proposals (RFP) was held May 18<sup>th</sup> 2007 in Norman. The goal is to develop regional response units to support HAZMAT operations and regional mass casualty transportation.

- **EMS Data Collection**

The EMS data system continues to improve, with 90% of all agencies reporting data and over 250,000 runs per year entering the database. The new state run form and dataset will bring Oklahoma into compliance with the National EMS Information System (NEMSIS) as well as Oklahoma's needs for information about specific patient populations and treatments.

A \$200,000 grant has been secured from the Oklahoma Highway Safety Office to allow testing of a new "notebook computer" data collection system in rural settings. An RFP for participants will be released this summer. Several agencies responded to a "straw poll" of potential bidders, so a strong statistical study should be possible.

- **Oklahoma Emergency Response Systems Development Advisory Council**

The Oklahoma Emergency Response Systems Development Advisory Council met on February 15, 2006. Among the items of business was a request for the health department to prepare a plaque for the family of Janez Case.

- **"Wide Area Communications" (WAC)**

The Department has begun revising the 1970s vintage WAC, re-establishing the Hospital Emergency Access Radio (HEAR) system as the default standard for EMS communications. The HEAR system is the only statewide EMS disaster communications option at this time.

All EMS providers and hospitals must have and use the system. A letter advising EMS providers that ambulances without working HEAR system radios and encoders will not receive renewal permits has generated a strong response statewide.

A list of radio resources is available from the state EMS office, including vendors for encoders and a list of radio shops with HEAR experience.

# EMS Website Training Update

## EMS Website Training Now Available On Line!

On the login page of the EMS website you will find two new links to Part One and Part Two of the training sessions that recently were added for your convenience.

- <https://www.phin.state.ok.us/ems> is the website address where you will find several helpful links:
- The Customer Satisfaction Survey [https://www.phin.state.ok.us/ems/ems\\_survey/](https://www.phin.state.ok.us/ems/ems_survey/) this survey is anonymous and we appreciate your input.
- The EMS Encoder list at <http://www.health.state.ok.us/program/ems/EMS Encoder List 2.pdf> contains “destination codes” to be used in the reports submitted to the website.
- The two newest links contain step-by-step instructions for entering data in each field on the EMS website. Part One is <http://www.viewletcentral.com/vc/viewlet.html?id=65658465>
- Part Two is <http://www.viewletcentral.com/vc/viewlet.html?id=40698740>
- These training tools can be used for refresher courses and new employees.

We also will be developing training materials for those services that will be participating in the NEMSIS pilot project. Training for this will be conducted in-person and we will add links to the EMS website that contain the new NEMSIS training sessions.

## NEMSIS Update

The Rural EMS (REMS) Data RFP is making steady progress towards release thanks to much hard work by OSDH Procurement staff; OSDH Information Technology staff; and the REMS RFP Team. The Department of Central Services (DCS) reviewed and approved the RFP Apr 20th. The next step is for DCS to issue the RFP and provide us with a close date. As most of you probably already know, this RFP will allow State EMS to purchase software that will assist providers to submit the new NEMSIS data fields on our newly revised run sheets. The target date for the pilot project to begin has been changed to August 2007.

In the meantime, the RFP Evaluation Committee will meet and develop a scoring tool to determine which software vendor is selected. Also, Trauma epidemiologists and EMS staff meet on a continuous basis to formalize the pilot design for this project, including random assignment of participants to the point-of-service and control groups.



## Oklahoma Native American Emergency Medical Services Association (ONAEMSA)



The ONAEMSA is committed to quality enhancement of EMS care to people who reside within Native American communities across Oklahoma by providing assistance in the following areas:

- EMS Training/Educational Opportunities
- Equipment and Supplies to EMS Trainees who have completed EMS Classes and Instructor Classes
- Technical Assistance
- Networking and Coordination with National, IHS and Other Tribal EMS and Public Safety Programs
- Identifying Resources for EMS through IHS, State and Federal Agencies and Other Organizations

You are invited to attend the 2007 ONAEMSA Annual Education Conference on June 25 – 29, 2007 at the Doubletree Hotel in downtown Tulsa. For more information, conference registration and membership application, please go to their website located at [http://www.heds.org/onaemsa\\_home.htm](http://www.heds.org/onaemsa_home.htm).

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# CURRENT NEWS FROM OSDH / EMS TRAINING

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The 2007 re-licensure period is over and Oklahoma's EMS personnel saw a higher-than-usual rate of non-renewal:

Not Submitting Re-licensure Applications, by Level:	Total	2006 Total EMT Licenses Statewide
Basic	530	4,336
Intermediate	84	739
Paramedic	113	1,660
TOTALS	727	6,735

### Applications Pending Renewal

Query Letters Out	37
Must Retest – Late Application	1
Tax Hold	78
TOTAL	116

We were prevented from processing 78 re-licensure applications because of "Tax Holds" imposed by the State Tax Commission. These licenses will be issued as soon as we are notified that the hold has been lifted.

No one may practice as an EMT in Oklahoma without a current license. If you have concerns regarding the licensure status of any of your staff, please confirm with them or by calling our office at 405-271-4027.

You should have a copy of each current license in your employee's licensure file, which should be maintained separately from confidential employment information and accessible to state surveyors during regular business hours.

This summer we will mail the new brochures that cover the new requirements for National EMS Certification to each approved training institution. As long as they last we will be sending First Responder requirements to provider agencies teaching this level. We hope this will supply your organization with enough information to qualify and apply for these national registry CBT tests.

If you have questions or would like more information please contact Kay Hollingsworth at [kayh@health.ok.gov](mailto:kayh@health.ok.gov) or Eddie Manley at [jemanley@health.ok.gov](mailto:jemanley@health.ok.gov).

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## OKLAHOMA EMS IN ACTION

- Kudos to our Oklahoma providers who contributed their time, presence and efforts to EMS Day at the State Capitol and bringing Oklahoma EMS issues to the forefront!
- On Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup> Wadley' s EMS in Purcell celebrated the opening of their new location at 402 W. Washington in Purcell, OK. Congratulations!!
- It is with regret that the EMS Division bids farewell to Dale Adkerson, EMS Coordinator, who has taken a position with the Trauma Division. We wish him well in his new position!

# Three New EMS Area Coordinators Hired

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## Elizabeth Sullivan



My name is Elizabeth Sullivan, and I recently accepted the position of EMS Administrator with the OSDH/ EMS Division. I have been assigned the NE Region of the state, and am looking forward to meeting and visiting with all our EMS providers and First Response Agencies in that region.

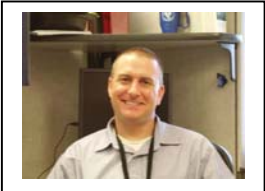
I came to the EMS Division from Collinsville EMS, where I spent the last 10 of almost 18 years of my career in EMS. I continue to reside in Collinsville with my husband Jerry and my children Katie, 18 and Blake, 15.

I sincerely hope that my experience in EMS, from the jump seat to the director's desk, will guide me in my position as a State EMS Administrator, so that together, we can continue to build a stronger EMS foundation in Oklahoma.

Elizabeth can be reached at: [elizabeths@health.ok.gov](mailto:elizabeths@health.ok.gov)

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## Roger Schilling



My name is Roger Schilling. I have been in EMS for 10 years; with the fire service for 11 years; and a paramedic for 7 years of those years. I also have received a Bachelor of Science in Education, and a Master of Education degree, both from Northeastern State University in Tahlequah. I am married and we have two beautiful girls.

Although I have enjoyed working the streets and flying the skies, I feel that this is the time for me to put the boots in the closet and hang the flight helmet on the wall. When one walks into the Department of Health Central Office building, there is a sign that reminds employees that we are not civil servants; we are Ambassadors for the State. I believe that is very true.

I look forward to serving the state and its wonderful EMS system. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with Shawn and the rest of the EMS Division staff. I look forward to assisting you.

Roger can be reached at: [rogers@health.ok.gov](mailto:rogers@health.ok.gov) .

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## Robert Irby: The [New] Inspector behind the wheel



My name is Robert Irby. I am a new EMS Administrator for the Oklahoma State Health Department EMS Division. I will be calling on you folks in your hometowns in the western part of the great state of Oklahoma. I am really excited to be working for and with you. My job is to not only make sure you have the right equipment to do your jobs but also to assist you in improving your EMS services.

I am an old timer in EMS. I started in 1979 working at AmCare in OKC. I started out as an " Aid Car Driver" now known as a Stretcher Aid Van. I worked my way up through all the levels of EMT and Supervisor. I left there to go to work at Yukon EMS, which soon turned, into Mercy EMS. During that time I was really looking for a full time teaching job. I found that job at OSU-OKC. We had a Basic and Intermediate program which we soon turned into a Paramedic Program. After 10 years there I went to work for Response International Group. We trained all levels of 1<sup>st</sup> Response folks (Fire EMS Law Enforcement and the Military) how to search for and remove people and property from multiple story buildings. My major focus there was to teach how to treat and package the patients for removal. Then this job became available and here I am. My area is the West side of the state. I will be seeing some of you soon. If there is anything I can do to assist you please feel free to call me.

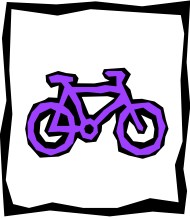
Robert can be reached at: [roberti@health.ok.gov](mailto:roberti@health.ok.gov) .

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# May is National Bike Month!

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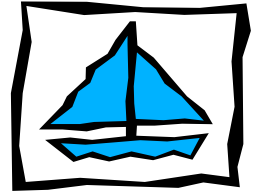
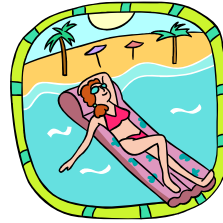


It is hard to believe that it has been 50 years since Bike Month was started in 1956!

Use this month to dust off your bike and start using it for fun, fitness, and transportation. During this month, why not try to get yourself, your friends and family members more comfortable with riding bikes?

Here are some suggestions to celebrate Bike Month:

- Check out the website at <http://okbike.org> to see how you can learn more about bicycling in Oklahoma.
- Check out the website at <http://www.bikeleague.org> to help get you going. On the right side of the page, select Find It under "CYCLING IN YOUR AREA" then enter your zip code to get a list of bicycling resources in your area.
- Ride a bike with your friend, child/grandchild, or other family member around your neighborhood. For mountain bike riders, check out the trails at Roman Nose State Park in Watonga, where the trails offer bikers some of the best riding in the southwest.
- Join your local bicycle club.
- Attend your first bike race.
- Commute to work on a bike.
- Educate yourself about bicycling laws and regulations in your area & then become an advocate.
- Write to your State Senator and/or Representative to ask for their support for more biking trails in Oklahoma (find yours at: <http://www.ok.gov/launch.php?url=http://www.capitolconnect.com/oklahoma/default.aspx> ).
- Be safe (don't forget to wear your helmet) & most of all, HAVE FUN!



## Water Safety Tips

From the National Water Safety Program at:

<http://watersafety.usace.army.mil/safetytips.htm>

With the upcoming Memorial Day holiday and long weekend, many of us will be spending time at one of Oklahoma's 200 lakes. In Oklahoma, drowning is the sixth leading cause of unintentional injury death for all ages combined and the second leading cause of injury death among children 1-14 years (Oklahoma vital Statistics). Also, on average, for every drowning death among children younger than 15, there are five children who received treatment in an emergency department for a nonfatal submersion injury. More than half of these children were hospitalized and at risk for brain damage.

Maximize your safety by:

- You and your family should learn how to swim
- Never swim alone
- Swim only in designated swimming areas

**Boaters! Before Getting Underway: Know your boat and know the "rules of the road." Take a safe boating course.**

- Check your boat for all required safety equipment.
- Consider the size of your boat, the number of passengers and the amount of extra equipment that will be on-board. **DON'T OVERLOAD THE BOAT!**
- If you will be in a power boat, check your electrical system and fuel system for gas fumes.
- Follow manufacturer's suggested procedures **BEFORE** starting up the engine.
- Wear your life jacket.
- Leave your alcohol behind. Work to increase your safety, not increase your risks!
- Check the weather forecast.
- File a float plan with a member of your family or friend.

# TRIBUTE

## Carrol Stamper

Long-time Oklahoma EMT/Lab Technician Carrol Stamper died Friday, May 11, 2007 shortly after being diagnosed with a terminal illness. Carrol became an EMT in the early 80' s and more recently worked as a Lab Technician in Seiling, OK.

## Michael Tiderman

Oklahoma City Firefighter/EMT Lt Michael Tiderman and his son Justin were killed in a head-on crash May 17, 2007. Father and son were returning home to Tuttle, OK after a Little League baseball game.

*Let us honor their contributions to EMS and to the people they served; and remember their families in our prayers.*

## Memorial Day

Memorial day is more than a three-day weekend marking the beginning of summer. To many of us, especially Veterans, Memorial Day is an important day of remembrance for those who died in service to their country. Originally known as Decoration Day, Memorial Day has a history stretching all the way back to the Civil War and because it was a time set aside to honor the nation's Civil War dead by decorating their graves. During the first celebration of Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, after which 5,000 participants helped to decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried in the cemetery.



## Memorial Day, cont'd

### Did you know ...

- During the Civil War, Dr Mary Walker, a female surgeon from New York, was awarded the Medal of Honor for her work as a regimental surgeon;
- There is evidence that women served in the ranks disguised as men—considering that armies on both sides totaled about 1.5 million soldiers, it would not be surprising at all to learn that several thousand of them, at least, were women;
- During WWI, 4,355,000 US forces were mobilized; 234,300 (5.4%) were wounded; and 126,000 (2.9%) were killed;
- During WWII, 16.1 million US armed forces personnel served; 671,000 (4.2%) were wounded; and 406,000 (2.5%) were killed;
- The estimated number of women (in 2002) who were WWII veterans: 210,000;
- A total number of 2,709,965 US military personnel served in Vietnam; 304,704 (11.2%) were wounded; and 58,000 (2.1%) were killed;
- 5,905 military women served in Vietnam;
- Since 2003, 250,000 US troops have been sent to Iraq; 25,242 (10.1%) have been wounded in action; and 3,400 (1.4%) have been killed.



**PulseLines**  
**EMS Division, OSDH**  
**1000 N.E. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**  
**OKC, OK 73117-1299**