

EMT Response

By R. Whitelavich—Paramedic / Firefighter

BEEP...BEEP...BEEP is all you hear as the pager starts to go off. "Lackawanna County to 24-9 respond to 424 Route 106 for a 56 year old female with chest pain." You check the time; it is 7:15 PM. You hurry, pulling on your shoes and grabbing a jacket as you head out the door to another exciting call. While starting your car you recognize the address and think "I hope Mrs. Smith is alright." You radio Lackawanna County dispatch that you are on the way. As a trained Emergency Medical Technician you review the state protocols with regards to treating chest pain. First thing is call Lackawanna County and request a paramedic unit. You carefully navigate your vehicle through the darkened streets making your way to the Fire Station. Upon arriving you notice three other vehicles and think "Good! We have enough help this time."

You and your partners get onboard the ambulance and start enroute to the scene. On the way Lackawanna County calls and advises the patient is also short of breath and dizzy. You discuss what equipment will be brought into the house and who would be taking charge of the patient. When you arrive on the scene, you are shown into the kitchen where you find the female patient sitting in a chair and clutching her chest. She is very pale, sweating heavily and breathing rapidly. She tells you that she started to have pain in her chest about one hour ago and it was radiating into her left arm. She also tells you she feels sick to her stomach.

As you collect the information you feel very calm because the 120 hours of emergency medical training is guiding the care you are giving. You place the patient on oxygen, get all her medications and ask all the appropriate questions. Your partners are reassuring the patient's family and getting the stretcher ready for her. You get a quick set of vital signs and place her onto the stretcher. When you are loading the patient into the ambulance, the paramedics arrive and you tell them the patient's condition. They then take charge of the patient. You help them assemble their equipment and transport her to the nearest hospital emergency room. Upon arriving you move her to a hospital bed. You then go and clean the ambulance.

While returning to the station, you discuss what needs to be restocked. At the station, your crew washes the ambulance while you do the necessary paperwork. You check the clock and it is now 8:45 PM. You think that wasn't so bad, only an hour and a half. As you are getting ready to return home, you congratulate your team on a job well done.

Fire Fighter's Journal

By L. Fliedner—Fire Fighter / EMT

I learned early that what I choose do is risky, and we as firefighters train for real life scenarios, potential problems and, as best we can, for the completely unexpected. So when the message from the pager, said a chimney fire, I couldn't have expected this...

The house wasn't too far from mine and I arrived before the engine. I heard someone say everyone got out but that a guy had gone back inside for his pets. When I got to the open front door I could see the fire was quickly spreading up the mantle and toward the ceiling in the living room, so I stayed at the front door to call for him, but he screamed he wouldn't leave until he found the dog, the bird and the gerbil. He found the bird in the kitchen; unfortunately it didn't survive. After calling for "Fluffy" once, the dog was spotted running for the street. He motioned that the gerbil was upstairs, by then I insisted that he leave because thick black smoke was already banking down the steps. The guy left his house under protest and proceeded to lecture me about his family, private property and that I had no right to take him out of his house, oh yeah did I mention that the fire started to extend into the living room and the furniture was now starting to burn. After putting the fire out, thankfully, our guys found the gerbil. It was still alive in an upstairs room.

It's amazing the devotion to pets that will make people go back inside a burning building. Don't get me wrong, I love my dog and would do anything to help her, but not at the cost of my life. In the end the guy was grateful his wife, two children and two of his pets survived and apologetic for the way he treated me.

When I have told this story in the past, questions always arose of how heartless I am towards pets. My only response... I explain to them that when you practice your family fire drill in your home, someone needs to be responsible for getting the pets out and if they can't, then tell the fire company when they arrive and if it's possible, they will do their best to save them, but your life and the lives of your family come first.

Do you have a family fire drill? Many families don't! Step back and objectively think about what you would do in case of a fire in your home. Could you come up with a fire drill plan? Of course you could! Who else but you and your family know your home and the best ways to exit in an emergency. **Make a plan for all seasons! Involve the whole family and Practice..Practice..Practice. A pet's life is also worth saving!**

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In This Issue

Fire Fighter's Journal

EMT Response

2004 Annual Response Report

Fire Company Funding

Why Do We Do This?

Can YOU Do This?

Coming Events

Emergency Dial 911

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Greenfield Township
Volunteer Fire Company
Fire/EMS Station 24

424 Route 106
Greenfield Township, PA 18407

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2004 Response Report

By F. M. Bales,CFPS—Fire Chief/EMT

During 2004 the company responded to 366 calls for assistance summarized as follows:

Type	Count	Percent
<u>FIRE</u>		
Brush/Grass/Trash	4	1.1
Cancelled	4	1.1
Controlled Burn	2	0.5
Mutual Aid Drill	9	2.5
Relocate/Cover Area	5	1.4
Structure	35	9.5
Vehicle	5	1.4
Sub Total	64	17.5
<u>PUBLIC SERVICE</u>		
Assist Gov't/Police	4	1.1
Assist Resident	8	2.2
Other Public Service	3	0.8
Water Removal	5	1.4
Sub Total	20	5.5
<u>RESCUE</u>		
Missing Person	1	0.3
Vehicle Accident	51	13.9
Sub Total	52	14.2
<u>HAZARDOUS CONDITION</u>		
Carbon Monoxide	4	1.1
Gas Leak	4	1.1
Other Condition	3	0.8
Power Lines Down	4	1.1
Wind/Flood/Snow	2	0.5
Sub Total	17	4.6
<u>FALSE ALARM</u>		
False/Malicious Call	5	1.4
Steam/Dust/Other	9	2.5
System Malfunction	21	5.7
Wrong Location	2	0.5
Sub Total	37	10.1
<u>MEDICAL EMERGENCY</u>		
Medical Emergency	141	38.5
Standby	35	9.6
Sub Total	176	48.1

For more comprehensive information, visit our web site at www.greenfieldtp.com.

Our dedicated service to Greenfield Township continues as it has since the company was formed in 1965.

Fire Co. Funding

By A. F. Karolyi—Administrative Member

As all fire companies, GTVFC is always looking for ways to increase our funding. Since we are a non-paid volunteer organization, we do not have any salaries accounted for in our budget. Yes, we do have a budget, surprise! Our budget is prioritized since some items are a “must” (you can’t operate apparatus without fuel or ambulance calls without medical supplies). Others are flexible since our income is unpredictable.

We have five sources of income; **Ambulance Services; Our Annual Fund drive; Fund Raising Activities; Greenfield Township Supervisors; (in decreasing order) and Grants.** We have to apply for grants in competition with all other fire (30,310) departments in the country. Our budget is based on only four of the five sources. The source we cannot depend on is **Grants.** Although we apply to Federal and State agencies for as many as we are eligible, competition is very strong and grants are awarded based on **need not want.** An example; GTVFC was very fortunate to have received a grant in 2003 towards purchase of a new fire engine. Without that grant, we would not have been able to purchase a new engine for more than 15 years. Would you want to put your life, home or family on the line with a 20 year old piece of equipment?

Many people in our area read the paper where GTVFC received a grant, in 2004, which could have been considered a large sum of money. All grants are **purpose specific**; that is, **grants cannot be used for general operating expenses.** The 2004 grant was to replace breathing apparatus our fire fighters need to enter burning buildings. Again, would you put your life on the line (when it fails the user dies) with equipment that is 10 years old? All grants are **specific** to purchase equipment to protect our fire fighting members and provide better service to our community. Very often people do not realize how expensive fire and medical equipment is. For example, the protective clothing for a fire fighter costs \$2000 (not counting the \$3500 breathing air apparatus) and only lasts on average 3 years. **Some of our residents, having read about the grant received, reduced or eliminated their contribution to last year’s annual fund drive.** In some cases with good reason. However, GTVFC’s expenses have also increased, but we cannot cut back on our services. **When help is needed, or homes are in jeopardy, we cannot and will not refuse to respond! Please respond to your fire company’s fund appeal with the same generosity and dedication that your fire company has to you!**

Why Do We Do This?

By E. Lubash—President / EMS Captain

People ask us why we spend so much time doing something you are not getting paid for. As members of Greenfield Township Volunteer Fire Company, many of us spend countless hours in training, work nights at the station and answering calls at all hours of the day and night, in addition to fund raising. When called upon we drop everything and respond to assist those in need. We have been called away from Thanksgiving dinner with our families to provide medical assistance or on Christmas morning, when others are opening their presents, we are out fighting a chimney fire in the freezing cold. There aren’t any of us who haven’t asked ourselves, “Why do we do this?” We remind ourselves we do this to provide a necessary service to our community. We constantly train to update our skills and expand our knowledge in Fire, EMS and Rescue to be the best we can be. We work every Tuesday evening to maintain our vehicles, equipment and building. We work at fund raisers because without them we would not have the vehicles and equipment to help our community. We take pride in the service we provide. **“Why do we do this?”** Read the following letters we received recently and you will realize: **This is why we do this!**

“On July 11, 2004, you responded to the scene of an accident at 7:33AM. The accident was in front of Harmony Heart Camp by Heart Lake on route 107. You saved my life and for that, I cannot thank you enough. After 11 days in ICU, and 7 more in a room at CMC, I was finally able to return home. No one thought I would return to work at Burger King, where it is busy and hectic all the time, until at least Christmas, but because of the quick response and wonderful care you gave at the scene and on the way to the hospital, I returned 10 days after I came home, on August 9, 2004. The cookies and thank you letter are probably trivial, but just know that what you did that day is greatly appreciated and will never be forgotten. I plan to attend Wilkes University this fall after graduating from Lakeland in June.

*P.S. My parents are also eternally grateful.
Thanks again,

Robyn”*

“On October 4, 2004. your company along with many neighboring fire companies responded to a fire at our family business. We wish to express our appreciation for the great job you did to fight our fire. It is unbelievable that you took the time to safeguard our computers, paper data and personal

property and memories Whenever we tell anyone involved with insurance how you preserved everything in the office, the response is always the same; “You just don’t see that very often.” Thank you for all the personal time you give to our community, for all the time you spend training and for always being there when we need you.

Sincerely,

Lynch Bus Service”

Can YOU Do This?

By A. F. Karolyi—Administrative Member

GTVFC is important to the community. We provide life and property saving services. Just review the 2004 Response Report. Each response is a story, some dramatic, some ordinary. All are service by the GTVFC family to their community. However, the plight of all volunteer fire companies is difficultly attracting new members. Why? Some say the volunteer fire company concept is of a different era, one in which our parents grew up. Others, moving into the area, are used to paid fire departments. We agree old time volunteers are a thing of the past. We subscribe to current concepts of firefighters certified to federal/state requirements. We have more certified members than some municipal companies. **We need your help, so we ask, Can YOU Do This?**

- **Firefighting-(5) Fire Fighters and/or Rescue Staff**
- **Non-Firefighting-(3) Fire Apparatus Drivers w/CDL**
- **Non-Firefighting-(3) Ambulance Drivers no CDL**
- **Administrative- (5) Fund Raising,Publicity,Marketing**

YOU Join—We Train—No Cost to YOU

Coming Events

- Apr. 24th, **Fire Hall Breakfast**, 8:00AM to 12:00 Noon
- May 29th, **Fire Hall Breakfast**, 8:00AM to 12:00 Noon
- June 26th, **Fire Hall Breakfast**, 8:00AM to 12:00 Noon
- July 31st, **Fire Hall Breakfast**, 8:00AM to 12:00 Noon