

Spring 2017

## Peninsula Ambulance Corps

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## SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

Did you know that in addition to providing high quality ambulance service to the seven towns we cover when you dial 911, our dedicated EMT's also provide many other services? These include inter-facility transfers, for example, between Blue Hill Memorial Hospital and Eastern Maine Medical Center and between BHMH and Parker Ridge or another residence, assisting at fires and accidents in surrounding towns, and providing ALS (Advanced Life Support) back-up to Memorial Ambulance in Deer Isle.

We stand by at public events such as the Blue Hill Fair, the Jared Grindle Baseball Tournament in Brooksville, Penobscot Days, and the Sedgwick Fire Department's Car Show. If you see us at an event this summer, please stop by as our EMT's welcome questions and will show you the inside of the ambulance.

We offer CPR classes to the Fire Departments of our seven towns at no charge other than \$6/person for certification. Classes are also available to other groups at a cost of \$65-\$85 plus the \$6/person certification fee. To schedule a class, simply call the PAC office at 374-9955.

Our most recent community service was participating in the "Every 15 Minutes" program held April 6-7 at the Deer Isle-Stonington High School. The goal of this program, which takes place at high schools nationwide, is to lead students and par-



ents to think and talk about the unintended, potentially deadly consequences of drinking and then driving--and of texting while driving.

Led by Hancock County Deputy Sheriff Luke Gross, the Deer Isle and Stonington Fire Departments, Sheriff's deputies, Memorial Ambulance and PAC staged a mock two-vehicle accident on April 6th. Students played roles in the program of a drunk driver taken in handcuffs to Hancock County Jail by a Deputy Sheriff, an uninjured passenger in his vehicle, a driver of the hit vehicle who died when ejected through the windshield and was taken by hearse to a funeral home, and his injured passenger taken to BHMH by PAC EMT's Stefan Blanchard and Kendra Clement.

As the 'dead' student said, "You know it's a fake, but when you're covered in fake blood laying on the hood

of a car and they're putting you in a body bag, you can't help but feel like it's a little real."

On Friday morning, the 7th, a mock funeral was held for the deceased victim. The 'drunk driver' sat in the front row and the 'deceased victim' was backstage listening to his own funeral service with words by his parents and friends. "That was way more emotional than I could have thought. I guess I didn't see myself the way other people saw me; so, to hear the things that people were saying and knowing my parents were listening to it, too, was pretty tough."

The message from the 'drunk driver' to all of us is simple: "Don't drink and drive. Seriously. Because the consequences don't just affect you; they affect the entire community, especially in one as small as ours. It just isn't worth it."

## *Letter from the President*

A few weeks ago I read an account of the struggle of a small municipal ambulance service in the words of its fire chief. Calls were up and staff was stretched thin. On call staff was paid a token amount except when actually responding to a call. Overall it just wasn't enough. The financial burden was heavy and a sense of the strain on personnel and the chief lifted right off the page.

The chief referred to Peninsula Ambulance Corps as a "private" service that could do non-emergency transports between healthcare facilities to augment its income, suggesting he might try and do the same. We are a private, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization and we do inter-facility transports. It helps, but it's no silver bullet. Being private (non-municipal) does us no favors with respect to income from services rendered either. What it does do is enable us to partner with the communities at large to raise additional funds from all the service towns (there are seven) and individual citizens. It is slow, hard work building those coalitions but carefully and properly done the result is impressive.

In all the years that I have been aware of PAC, the six and then seven town governments have not failed to support our request for aid. Given the current state of politics in this country, that is remarkable. We should bottle the magic formula and send it to Washington.

Some credit certainly goes to those people from the community who serve on the PAC board for their efforts, some more to the town governments for their support, and a large measure to all of us together for addressing the need with dedication and generosity.

My suggestion to the fire chief? Don't underestimate the people that you serve. There is a well-spring of energy and support waiting to be tapped. They will help you support your service. In that sense of community you will find yourself energized.



To learn more about PAC, visit us at [www.peninsulaems.org](http://www.peninsulaems.org), where you can now donate online.