

SOLID *Gold*



Meet the 23rd Annual Braun Industries/ZOLL Medical EMT/Paramedic of the Year

EMS Career Spans Most of a Lifetime

Stanley Waldrip, Jr., EMT-P/AAS, has been in EMS for most of his life—since age 15 to be exact. Waldrip, recipient of this year's Braun Industries/ZOLL Medical EMT/Paramedic of the Year Award, began his career with Jacksonville Volunteer Rescue in Jacksonville, NC—a career his parents told him would never last. In 1987, while still in high school, he won the North Carolina Governors Award for Youth Rescue of the Year, then went on to graduate at the top of his paramedic class at Catawba Valley Community College, where he earned an associate's degree in emergency medicine. After graduation, he went to work for New Hanover EMS near Wilmington, NC, and stayed there for 17 years before moving to his current position with Pender EMS & Rescue in Rocky Point. Waldrip explains why he left after so many years with one agency.

"Wilmington is a pretty big city, and I started to get a little bit burned out," he says, "so I moved to Pender where the pace is slower. In Wilmington, we worked 12-hour shifts and averaged about 14 calls per shift. Pender County works 24-hour shifts and averages about 9 calls in that time. Working the 24-hour shifts also gives me more time off with my family."

When asked what he finds most satisfying about his career, Waldrip doesn't hesitate: "I love doing public relations," he says. "I love going to the schools to teach the kids about safety and show them the ambulances. I love having one of the kids come up to me in public and tell

his dad, 'I met this guy at school. He drives an ambulance.'"

As a member of the New Hanover County Board of Health and New Hanover County Public Health and Safety Committee, Waldrip worked to promote health and safety in the community, and started a Boy Scout Explorer Post for New Hanover Regional Medical Center EMS to encourage young people to get involved in EMS. In 1992, when EMS was taken over by the medical center, Waldrip noticed that most of the publicity was focused on the hospital and very little on EMS, so he and a few others started their own association. "Soon people from agencies outside of New Hanover wanted to join, so we opened it up to Eastern North Carolina, and we now have more than 500 members," he says. "Our job is basically to promote EMS and to give us a voice in government. One of our biggest accomplishments was getting a law passed to ban cell phone use while driving."

In addition to his work in Pender EMS, in 2007, Waldrip and other members of the Wrightsboro United Methodist Church went on a medical mission to Jamaica, where they checked blood pressures and blood sugars on more than 250 people, and distributed donated over-the-counter medications and eyeglasses to those in need. High airline costs and the price of gas will prevent them going back this year, but a team is making plans to visit some of the poorer areas of Appalachia in the Smoky Mountains to provide similar care.



Judy Flood, a retired New Hanover paramedic/field training officer, was pleased to hear her former colleague had won this award. "Stanley is a great paramedic," she says. "I always enjoyed working with him. He was fun and witty, and we worked well together, no matter how bad a call was. He's very caring and was so good with patients and their families. It's a stressful job, but he always had something funny to say or some way to keep us from getting bogged down in that everyday stress."

Greg Holloman, human resources manager at Pender EMS, has known Waldrip for several years and has nothing but praise for his former colleague. "We worked together in Wilson for a very short time, then at both New Hanover and Pender," he says.

"He's a good person who goes out of his way to help everyone he can. We've both grown and changed with EMS, and EMS has grown and changed with us. He helps a lot with children's activities and tries extremely hard to go beyond just running ambulance calls."

Stanley Waldrip will be recognized during the EMS EXPO's opening keynote ceremony on October 15 in Las Vegas, NV. He will receive a \$1,000 U.S. savings bond, a \$200 EMS Bookstore gift certificate, and free travel, lodging and registration for EMS EXPO.

Meet the winners of the EMS Magazine Gold Award

VOLUNTEER SERVICE: ARNOLD VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

While EMS agencies coast to coast are struggling with volunteer recruitment and retention, volunteerism is alive and well in the small town of Arnold, Nebraska—population a whopping 630. Sounds like a piece of cake, but this 26-member squad covers more than 450 square miles, with a population of over 1,400, and has a 20- to 25-minute transport time to the nearest hospital in Callaway, which requires real skill and good training from a group that consists of 16 firefighters, three EMT/firefighters, six EMTs and one first responder/firefighter. “Sometimes, it gets to be a very long 25 minutes. We don’t have any paramedics, and sometimes we end up with just one EMT in the back of the ambulance, but that’s not very often,” says volunteer member Tammy Weinman. “They’re all very dedicated people who work a lot.”

That’s evident by the fact that, in 2007, the department logged over 370 training hours—156 of them in EMS—and recently purchased several CPR training manikins with funds from memorial donations received over several years so they no longer have to borrow or rent equipment. The training officer, who is also an EMS instructor, is dedicated to making sure everyone keeps up with their training requirements. The department works closely with the community, says Weinman, including acquiring AEDs for their department, three churches, the school and the community center, and teaching volunteers to use them. They also hold training sessions for lifeguards at the community swimming pool, organize an annual fire-prevention program for local preschool and elementary school students, participate in parades, provide backup for local sporting events, and organize EMS and



fire support for the very popular annual Sandhill Open Road Challenge—a race that involves placing 20 EMS and fire vehicles and personnel from eight communities strategically along the route.

Arnold F.D. was one of the first ambulance services in the area to advance to electronic patient documentation and state reporting, says Weinman. “All the EMTs were very willing to take the necessary training to learn this new method and advance as technology advances,” she says. “We also have several members who have taken basic and advanced rope rescue courses, hazmat training and weather spotter training. We recently purchased new weather-tracking equipment that will be used to track storms and keep our community better protected during severe weather.”

Winning the Gold Award is very exciting for a small volunteer service, Weinman adds. Most of the members have full-time jobs and families and still find time to be some of the best EMS responders in the area.

PAID SERVICE: LEON COUNTY EMS

In a state where outstanding, high-quality EMS is the standard, Leon County EMS (LCEMS) of Tallahassee, Florida, is no exception. LCEMS has about 135 employees—70% at the paramedic level—and covers a service area of 671 square miles. The agency has taken a leadership role in local prehospital issues and in statewide initiatives, and has a strong commitment to public education and citizen safety. Medical protocols and equipment are far above average, with a recently purchased intraosseous access device, CPAP and Utstein tracking of cardiac data to improve chest pain outcomes. They are currently implementing updated protocols to include an expanded line of drugs, new airway devices and rapid sequence induction. All calls are screened using the Emergency Medical Dispatch system, and LCEMS recently installed onboard MDTs and GPS to improve response times and ensure accuracy in dispatching. All personnel are required to complete

driver training, and DriveCam video cameras are installed to ensure safety for crews and their passengers.

LCEMS works closely with two local hospitals to improve cardiac, stroke and trauma care, and attends hospital meetings to look at patient outcomes and to recommend improvements to the hospital and prehospital systems. Twelve-lead EKG transmission using Bluetooth technology has recently been instituted. LCEMS started the North Florida/South Georgia Regional Medical Committee, which resulted in sharing radio channels, sharing and coordinating protocols and cooperative efforts with disaster planning. It is the largest EMS agency in the Region 2 Regional Domestic Security Task Force and takes the lead for regional disaster preparedness in the prehospital area.

Leon County has been recognized as a Heart Ready County for its efforts in AED distribution and training. In addition to the AED program, LCEMS

works within the community to teach about EMS, when to call 9-1-1, CPR and AED training, and hands out bike helmets to local children. LCEMS will be applying for accreditation with the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services this year, hoping



to become the fourth EMS system in Florida to win accreditation. The agency's quality management program is progressive. Recently, Six Sigma processes have begun to be incorporated into the QM program and will be enhanced with a new

data collection system and quality management data tracking system.

"We're very proud of what we've accomplished here," says manager Mac Kemp. "We have a great medical director and a group of people who are very progressive. We were given a directive when the county took over a few years ago and it was very simple: Be the best EMS system in the nation. We didn't know if we'd ever achieve that, but we wanted to do the best we could possibly do, and it's been a great experience. We tell the administration we'd like to do something and they tell us to write a proposal and they'll look at it. We have virtually never been turned down for anything. That's where our success comes from: being supported." ■

Each winning agency receives \$1,000, plus free travel, lodging and registration for one representative at the EMS EXPO/NAEMT Annual Meeting in Las Vegas, NV, October 13–17, 2008, where the award will be presented. We would like to thank the following sponsors for their generous support of this award:

