

# Local & Regional EMS News

by Kathy Clayton



*In November, Aircraft Medical, a specialist developer and producer of medical devices focused on the needs of anesthesia and critical care professionals, donated a McGrath portable video laryngoscope to Texas State Technical College–Harlingen for use in the EMT Program laboratory. Roxanne Pena, NREMT-P, EMS Instructor for the Emergency Medical Technology Program accepted the device, and the EMT Program hosted a demonstration offered by an Aircraft Medical representative visiting the campus.*



*Rice Emergency Medical Services (REMS) member Alicia Buck, a Baker College senior and an education lieutenant for the student-run organization, got schooled in driving emergency vehicles through busy intersections and in challenging weather conditions when the Texas Engineering Extension Service brought its driving simulator to the Rice campus. The simulator uses several computers, driving scenario software and three high-definition display screens to help emergency responders improve their skills driving rescue vehicles, such as the new Chevy Tahoe that REMS recently added to its fleet. Photo by Jeff Fitlow, Rice University.*

## Heart attack victim thanks rescuers

In October, Roy Tousley, a 67-year-old CEO from Arizona, suffered a massive heart attack as he walked into Galleria Dallas, and in early November he was out of the hospital and able to thank his rescuers in person.

The first stop was at Dallas Fire-Rescue Station 20 in north Dallas, where Tousley and his wife, Myrna, thanked the crew of paramedics who helped keep his heart beating and transport him to Medical City Hospital.

“My heart goes out to the Galleria for having a defibrillator in that mall, (because) that’s what I am told saved me,” Tousley told area reporters. “That and these gentlemen here at Fire Station No. 20. If it wasn’t for them, I would not be alive today.”

Dallas Fire-Rescue Paramedic Jay Prigmore and the rest of his crew said they were able to save Tousley thanks to others who stepped in first, administering CPR, and to Galleria Dallas for having a defibrillator.

As Tousley told reporters, a close friend who was next to him when he collapsed dropped down to the ground and began doing CPR, but Tousley was unconscious and not breathing. A doctor walking by intervened next and began compressions.

Galleria security quickly arrived with a defibrillator, shocked Tousley’s heart and got it going again. Dallas Fire-Rescue paramedics then arrived and kept Tousley’s heart beating as they rushed him to Medical City Hospital.

Tousley and his wife have a new goal to spread awareness about the importance of knowing CPR and of having defibrillators in public places. Without both, Tousley says he wouldn’t be alive today.

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## Blue Mound FD gets oxygen mask for pets



Ferrets to felines, and canines too, will be breathing easier after smoke inhalation or other emergencies, thanks to the pet-friendly oxygen now available at the Blue Mound Fire Department.

Oxygen Masks for Pets, a nonprofit

organization based in South Carolina, recently made the donation to Blue Mound, one of 34 fire departments in the country to receive the specially designed equipment.

The oxygen masks are specifically designed to fit over the mouths of small pets and will no doubt save the lives of pets that otherwise might be lost because of fires or other emergencies, said Jon Dahlvig, EMS coordinator for the Blue Mound Fire Department.

The need for the masks was underscored recently when a dog was killed in a fire that damaged five apartments in east Fort Worth, Dahlvig said. Each year about 500,000 animals are affected by fire and 40,000 die, according to Oxygen Masks for Pets, which was founded in 2009 and is dedicated to providing the equipment, which costs less than \$100 a set, to fire departments nationwide.

## CLEMC upgrades ambulance

Clear Lake Emergency Medical Corps (CLEMC) recently took delivery on a new remounted ambulance. CLEMC received assistance for the remount of this ambulance from the DSHS Local Projects Grant program, which awarded a \$30,000 grant. By remounting one of the older ambulances, CLEMC was able to save \$60,000 over the purchase of a new vehicle. The remounted ambulance will serve CLEMC District 2, which covers an unincorporated section of Harris County in the Heritage Park area.

The Type III ambulance includes a walk-through between the cab of the

truck and the patient-care area. It can transport two patients and is equipped as a mobile intensive care unit. The vehicle was remounted by Osage Industries with the help of the Phoenix Group of Texas. The remount is part of CLEMC's scheduled fleet replacement program, which replaces ambulances in five-year cycles.

CLEMC is a not-for-profit combination paid/volunteer EMS organization serving the Clear Lake area for thirty-seven years and providing 9-1-1 emergency medical services with five Type III units, two emergency response vehicles and a supervisor mass casualty vehicle.



*Memorial Hermann Life Flight now carries blood products and transfusion equipment on every flight.*

## Prehospital blood transfusion available on Memorial Hermann flights

Memorial Hermann Life Flight announced that all aircraft will now carry blood products. This means life-saving blood transfusions will be available to trauma patients in the prehospital environment throughout Southeast Texas for the first time. All Life Flight air ambulances are now outfitted with new equipment and protocols developed to provide warmed plasma and red blood cells to patients in need. In addition to standard equipment, the helicopters are equipped with a portable fluid warmer, two units of thawed plasma and two units of red blood cells.

The Memorial Hermann Life Flight prehospital blood transfusion program was developed based on research findings that indicate early blood administration is life-saving. Also, warming intravenous fluids has been demonstrated to improve outcomes in trauma patients.

## Thanksgiving homecoming for North Texas man

A North Texas man recently experienced something that hadn't happened in years. He came home for Thanksgiving.

On May 5, 2008, Michael Sherrick, an industrial construction worker, suffered a traumatic brain injury after falling at work. The care he needs has since made it impossible to for him to return home, even for a visit. Michael's fragile medical condition required living in a nursing home.

This year, Fort Worth-based MedStar paramedics here able to bring him to Crowley to join his wife, Rana, his grandchildren and a houseful of other relatives for Thanksgiving dinner. It's part of MedStar's Home for the Holidays program, which pairs paramedics already set aside to handle non-emergency calls with families that have mobility or medical limitations and wouldn't normally be able to be all together for the holiday.

"It's something I guess I never thought would happen," Sherrick's brother-in-law, Don Grazier, told local reporters.

Happily, it turns out that this trip is practice for the future. The family will soon be able to build a handicap-accessible home in rural Wise County. A close friend, a registered nurse, will live with the Sherricks and his mother will live next door.