



PR and Media Relations

As always, I'm available to assist any local chapter with PR and media ideas that they may have to support and promote their services to their local communities. Get out there and advertise who you are and what you do. The more information and education paramedics provide, the better the perception and respect you'll receive from your local governments and communities as a whole.

Please contact me at: ggillies@ontarioparamedic.ca



Professional Paramedic Association of Ottawa

By Suzanne Noël, BSc, CFC, PCP

The weather has been beautiful, the nation's capital is swarming with hundreds of thousands of tourists and we are hitting record numbers as far as paramedic volunteer time goes.

"Hair Raising" Event A Huge Success

One male and several female employees of Ottawa Paramedic Service were sporting much shorter hairstyles lately, thanks to the speedy scissors of stylists from Riccioli Salon on Rideau Street.

Annik Lagassé coordinated an extremely successful hair donation event for the Angel Hair Foundation, a charity providing real hair wigs for children suffering hair loss due to illness and disease.

With the demand steadily increasing, the Angel Hair Foundation is constantly in need of both hair and monetary donations to make these wigs for many deserving children. In order to make one wig, 12 to 15 braids of hair are required as well as \$800 to \$1,000 for manufacturing costs.

Due to the generosity of several volunteers, this event was a tremendous success, collecting 18 braids and \$1,762 to help create new wigs.

Although some of the donors grew their hair for months in order to prepare for this event, it took only mere minutes to snip all the braids and even shear the entire head of Martin Massé, the lone male donor.

Following the hair cutting, all who donated were treated to refreshments courtesy of Mr. Lawrie and Mr. Boyer from Rideau Street Loblaws. We were also provided with the best sandwiches in the city thanks to Paul Di Rienzo from Di Rienzo Grocery on Beech Street (a paramedic favourite).

Annie Lord-Stephens walked away the winner of a great spa treatment from Third Avenue Spa on Bank Street, a prize drawn from among the names of those who donated hair.

Special thanks go out to Danny Gerges, the owner of the Riccioli Salon, hairstylists Tanya Gauthier, Dawna Harris and Deborah Montague-Ferry, stylist assistant Kurt Mansergh and paramedic Lysa Gubbles for photographing the event.

Last but not least, thanks to everyone who donated hair to help make some great kids happy: Amanda Hagman, Karine Kettler, Karen Gervais, Krista Shipman, Annik Lagassé, Trina Bazinet, Christine Samson, Paula Palazzo, Annie Lord-Stephens, Yvonne Malbasha, Elizabeth Graham, Isabelle Dumas, Marianne Hoad, Nadine Leduc, Martin Massé, Talia Roseshter and to our one anonymous donor.

Anaphylaxis Support Group Attends Info Session

Following a successful "kids concert" last March, the Ottawa Anaphylaxis Support Group (OASG) and the PPAO continued their ongoing collaboration with an information session for parents of anaphylactic children.

Darryl Wilton spoke to the group at paramedic headquarters on the roles paramedics play during anaphylactic reactions.

During the question and answer session, President Wilton had his work cut out for him, answering some very interesting and thought-provoking questions



OTTAWA PARAMEDICS, communications officers and family members proudly display their donations.

from the audience. For example, have you ever thought about what could happen if you had just eaten a peanut butter sandwich and had to attend a call for a child having a peanut allergy?

Parents also wanted information on what to do if they needed paramedics while out on a boat in the middle of a lake. Wilton explained that it is very important to know the address of the marina you are departing from or returning to because that would be the most logical address for paramedics to respond to in the event of an emergency (seeing as the middle of a lake has no address). Parents even asked why paramedics suggest taking patients to the ER even if epinephrine had relieved the symptoms? Wilton explained the significance of biphasic anaphylactic reactions and the importance of continuity of care.

Following this, the group was taken on a tour of headquarters and shown everything from a fully stocked ambulance to the decontamination bay.

Those in attendance were so interested in all they were seeing and hearing that the session even ran over an hour late to fit in all the questions and if Karen Eck from the Ottawa Anaphylaxis Support Group didn't call it quits, we were sure these parents were ready to stay at HQ all night.

The PPAO would like to thank the OASG for their ongoing efforts to enhance the relationship between medics and anaphylactic families and for their generous donation of \$300 to the new Helping Every Local Paramedic Fund.

PPAO Golf Tournament

It's time to work the kinks out of your swing for the annual Clyde Flinn Memorial Golf Tournament! Come and enjoy a great day on the links at the Greensmere Golf and Country Club in Carp this August 27th, beginning at 08:30 a.m. You may even win a brand new Cadillac if your golf skills are up to "par" and you make a hole-in-one.

Please submit one cheque for \$340 for each team foursome, payable to the PPAO. To pre-register, send an e-mail with a list of foursome team members (including team captain) to golf@OttawaParamedics.ca. The deadline to submit payment is July 31st—no exceptions!

GOLF RULES!

CLYDE FLINN MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

The late Clyde Flinn was a popular paramedic who used to work in Ottawa.

Unfortunately, Clyde Flinn is no longer with us as he lost his battle with cancer.

This very popular golf tournament was started 17 years ago as a paramedic fund raiser.

This year, all proceeds are going to the Helping Every Local Paramedic (HELP) Fund.

Volunteers needed now! Contact golf@OttawaParamedics.ca if you can help.

DETAILS

Greensmere Golf and Country Club

Mon Aug 27th, 2007 (08:30hrs)
1717 Bearhill Road RR2, Carp, ON

Bring \$\$\$ because everything you put in could be going back to you!

TONS OF PRIZES

BEST BALL WILL WIN BIG!

REGISTER: golf@OttawaParamedics.ca

Fee: \$340.00 per Foursome
(make one \$340 cheque payable to PPAO)

Registration Deadline: July 31, 2007

OttawaParamedics.ca



There will be several raffles and great prize giveaways throughout the day so bring extra cash to secure a chance at winning.

All proceeds will be donated to the H.E.L.P. Fund to assist local paramedics in time of need. Remember, what you put in could come back to you when you and your family need it most. Thanks for your continued support!

Volunteers Needed

If you have ever thought about donating a few hours of your time to your community, the PPAO has many opportunities for you to do just that at your convenience.

The OttawaParamedics.ca website receives numerous requests on a daily basis from groups wanting a couple of paramedics to display their ambulance and provide information on their career.

The requests come from many sources, including elementary schools, high schools, Girl Guides and organizers of community events such as local fairs.

Our best efforts are done to accommodate all requests but we need to build a bigger volunteer list to keep up with the growing demand for paramedics who volunteer their time in the community.

These events are extremely important for increasing community awareness of exactly what skills paramedics provide. It is not uncommon to have local councillors attend these events and ask medics several questions about our skill set, medications or equipment.

If you are tired of being referred to as an "ambulance driver" or being mistaken as having the same training as firefighters, these events are your chance to give the public the correct information about what skills paramedics provide.

You would be surprised at the amount of interest and numerous questions people have when you park your ambulance and display your equipment on a table at a local fair. People ask anything from "can you check my blood pressure" to "what does atropine do." I haven't done one event where someone hasn't come over to say "thanks" to paramedics in general because another medic provided such excellent care to a family member.

One of the best things about volunteering is dealing with the children!



ABOVE: Suzanne Noël gives Councillor Doug Thompson his annual check-up.

AT RIGHT: A future paramedic applies an ECG with the instruction of Darryl Wilton.



The excitement they have while trying on a Tyvek suit or uniform item is amazing. They love to see what it feels like to be immobilized on a spinal board or have their arm bandaged in a cling to 'fake' a cast. Most kids quickly learn how to attach ECG electrodes to their parents just by figuring out what RA, LA, LL and RL stand for. Who knows ... maybe we could even teach 6-year-olds how to diagnose 12-lead ECGs!

The PPAO can arrange for more than just a stocked ambulance to ensure your presentation is exciting and educational. We have an entire multimedia system available for our paramedics that comes complete with a laptop computer, video projector, sound system and even has some awesome videos of medics in

action, as well as TV interviews featuring paramedics explaining different aspects of our job. We also have a large canopy for outdoor events, brochures, display boards of medications and Child Find ID cards.

Do you want to attend your child's school to talk about your job for a few hours? We have made it easy for you to organize your own community event at a place of your choosing. All you have to do is fill out our Special Events Request Form in the Member area on the OttawaParamedics.ca website. Just enter your name, the date, place and time of the event and select any equipment you want to use and it will be ready for you to come and pick up on your event day. You will even be supplied with a digital camera to take photos.



The PPAO diligently tracks volunteer hours from each of our members and we are also working on having Ottawa Paramedic Service recognize these hours because the cumulative volunteer time Ottawa paramedics put in throughout the community has always been very impressive!

Beginning this year, all events will also be documented and photographed for the new yearbooks we are going to distribute to all of our members.

To add your name to our volunteer list please contact Sue Noël at: printmedia@OttawaParamedics.ca

Another Successful EMS Week!

Take a city that is growing at an astonishing rate. Add an enormous babyboomer segment that is aging every day, faster cars, more aggressive sports, hundreds of thousands of tourists and top it all off with a new strain of highly contagious diseases with no known cures. You have only begun to discover some of the ingredients that are fuelling the need for "Paramedics of the Future."

This is exactly how we sold National EMS Week 2007 to the media and it turned out to be an enormous success

thanks to the efforts of many paramedic volunteers.

We decided to have a theme for the week and chose to focus our efforts on the younger members of our community during our many "Paramedics of the Future" events.

Thanks to a terrific response from local groups we actually extended EMS Week another seven days in order to schedule everyone interested in learning about paramedics.

During the week of May 14 to May 20 over 400 local Brownies, Scouts, Sparks, Girl Guides and Pathfinders visited paramedic headquarters

The groups started off learning about our medications and participating in an equipment demonstration. This was followed by a tour of the building, a look inside vehicles like the ambulance, PTL cars, the gator and a visit to the decontamination bay. Out of all the visitors we were very lucky and experienced only one casualty who accidentally stepped in front of the automatic showers in the decon area—haha!

We actually had a sunny and warm long weekend and were able to bring our display back to the Byward Market (Ottawa's hottest tourist trap) to get ourselves out in the public eye. A tent, ambulance and equipment were set up for people to try and medics answered questions all afternoon. It was perfect timing for the event as thousands of people were down in the market anticipating the Ottawa Senators win in Game 5 of the Eastern Conference finals. Several hockey fans stopped by for a peek at our gear before game time.

Local schools were also recipients of paramedic visitors over the week. Volunteers visited schools each day of the week with ambulances, equipment and video presentations, which were thoroughly enjoyed by all in attendance.

In order to accommodate rotating shift patterns, we held two staff appreciation meals paid for by Ottawa Paramedic Service and the PPAO.


A and C platoons were treated to a lavish breakfast buffet cooked up by John Rathier and Stephanie Mills at the beginning of the week. John and Stephanie are veterans at preparing meals for large groups as they regularly do so for a local Scout camp.



COORDINATOR Bob Davidson flippin' burgers at the staff appreciation BBQ.



SEVERAL "FUTURE PARAMEDICS" trying on uniforms at HQ.



B and D platoons didn't get the experienced chefs cooking for them, but three dedicated medics took their turns on the huge barbecue at headquarters, grilling burgers and hot dogs for over eight hours straight! I think the three medics went home with heat stroke from cooking all day on the hottest day of the year.

This could not have been pulled off without the help of all our volunteers, so a very big thank you goes out to Rob Ashfield, Bob Davidson, Lindsey Dejong, Chantale Dumas, Darrell Drew, Giuseppe Federico, Amanda Hagmann, Natalie Labelle, Stephanie Mills, Mary Ann Mountain, Jeff Nelson, Sue Noël, Hans Oberholzer, Tim O'Neill, John Rathier, Yannick Roussel, Deanna Schofield, Dan Shugar, Matt Smith, Mathieu Tanguay, Cassie Willard, Rob Wilson, Darryl Wilton, Jan Woods and everyone else who helped out!

Thank you to all the equipment supply technicians and equipment controllers for ensuring our equipment was ready and an even bigger thanks for putting it all back together for us at the end of each night!

Operations Coordinator Bob Davidson also deserves a special thank you for his assistance leading up to EMS week and for helping us to ensure everything would run smooth over two very stressful weeks.

We already have plans to make next year's EMS Week even bigger so please volunteer your time to help us ensure this can happen! If you are interested in helping out next year, please e-mail Sue Noël (printmedia@OttawaParamedics.ca) to put your name on the contact list.

