

## NEW MEMBERS – FAQ

### THE EMT CLASS

**1. When will it start, and how long will it last?**

The fall class will start in August 2009. It'll be held two nights each week, usually from 6:00 - 10:00 pm. It's a 144-hour class, and will end in December.

**2. Where will it be and who will teach it?**

A class will be held at the Mountain Ambulance Station beginning in August 2009. There will also be classes in many other locations around the state in both the fall and spring semesters. In Wisconsin, ALL the EMT classes are taught through the Technical Colleges (here, that's NWTC).

**3. What if I miss a class (or two)?**

The State of Wisconsin requires 144 hours of instruction in the EMT class. It's important to attend **all** classes. If something unavoidable comes up and a class is missed, the instructor can help you find a way to make it up.

**4. What will it cost me?**

The Mountain Ambulance Service will pay the cost of the EMT class. The student will pay the cost of the books and other materials (approx. cost up to \$200). After one year of service to Mountain Ambulance Service, the cost of books and materials will be paid back to the student.

**5. What else is required?**

- a. You must become a member of Mountain Ambulance Service (or another service you wish to join)
- b. You must be at least 18 years old when the class begins;
- c. You must have current CPR certification for Healthcare Professionals
- d. You must have proof of current health status and immunizations
- e. You must agree to a criminal background check (in compliance with the Wisconsin Caregiver Law)

**6. How hard is it?**

That depends on you. Some students find it very difficult, while others have no difficulty. The class includes some lectures, some tests, and a lot of hands-on practice. Many students say that no part of the class is extremely difficult in itself, but that there is a lot of information given in a fairly short period of time. Keeping up with the reading helps. For others, it's more of a challenge. They all say it's worth the effort.

**7. I haven't been in school for many years. Will that be a problem?**

Again, that depends on you. The classes contain students from a broad range of backgrounds. Some are fresh out of high school or college. Others haven't been in a classroom for 40 years. The instructors are good, they welcome lots of questions, and real-life experience and common sense is always an asset.

**8. What about the final exam? Is it hard? What if I don't pass?**

Test has two parts, a written exam and a practical exam. Some find one or the other of them difficult – and some don't. Students are encouraged to come in to the station for help – we'll be happy to help you study for the written exam, and practice for the practical. Remember, if you DO fail the exam, you get another chance to take it.

### DRIVER TRAINING

**1. Do drivers have to take the EMT class?**

No. Drivers have to have CPR certification (healthcare provider level), and go through our in-house driver training program.

**2. I'm a good driver, but never drove anything but a car. Is that OK?**

Yes, that's fine. Driving an ambulance is not like driving a car or truck, but that's what training is for.

### MEMORIAL DONATIONS

**I'd like to make a donation in memory of someone. How will that be recognized?**

A plaque or framed document of some kind will contain all the names (similar to what we did when we raised money for defibrillators). It will hang in the public meeting/classroom at the station.

### THE TRUCK

**What kind of truck are you looking for, and what will it cost?**

It's not an ordinary truck. The rescue truck has compartments for easy access to equipment, a winch, and other specialized features. A brand new rescue truck could run in the \$100,000 range. We expect to purchase a used vehicle, in the \$55,000 - \$60,000 range.

### TIMING

**When does the fundraiser end?**

The fund drive will end in August 2009. We hope to purchase the rescue truck in January 2010.

### **3. How does a driver get trained? How long does it take?**

Driver-trainees will go on actual calls with an experienced driver. They will watch, listen and learn on the way to the hospital. On the way back, they will have an opportunity for some hands-on driving experience. A trainee will NEVER drive the ambulance with a patient onboard. When the trainee AND the experienced drivers feel that he/she is ready (a minimum of ten calls), the trainee can advance to full driver status.

## **BEING AN EMT OR DRIVER (Once the training is over)**

### **1. I'm not sure I can handle all the blood and guts. How bad does it get?**

A few calls are bloody, messy and scary, but they are the exception, not the rule. Most calls (well over than 90%) are not. There's no way for anyone to predict how they'll react to that rare scary call, but most ambulance people do what they learned in class – just take a deep breath and let your training take over.

### **2. I live somewhere else, but spend a lot of summer weekends in the area. Is that OK?**

Yes. Some MAS members live and work elsewhere, and help out on the ambulance schedule when they're here for a week or a weekend. We only require that you have someplace other than the ambulance station to stay when you're here.

### **3. I leave for a few weeks (or months) in the winter (or summer). Is that OK?**

Yes. We sign up for time on the schedule one month at a time. If you're going to be gone, and if it's going to be a long-term absence, take a formal leave of absence. If it's short-term, just don't put your name down.

### **4. I'm (name an age). Is that too old (young)?**

EMT's and Drivers must be 18 years of age. Only you know what the limit is on the upper end. Our members range in age from their late teens to their 60's and 70's.

### **5. What if I forget what to do?**

Take a deep breath, relax, and let your training take over. And remember, that's what partners are for. We're part of a team, and whatever one forgets, the other will remember.

### **6. I don't know anyone on the MAS service. Will I fit in?**

Probably. Our members are different ages, from different backgrounds, with different tastes and different styles. We share a commitment to EMS, and a willingness to work hard for something important. We get along with each other pretty well – and we welcome everyone.

### **7. I'm already a licensed EMT/Paramedic/First Responder. What would I have to do?**

If you're licensed in the State of Wisconsin, you'd go through an in-house orientation, and some paperwork to transfer your license to Mountain Ambulance. If you're licensed in another state, it would depend on the state. Stop in or call, and we'll look into it further.

### **8. I'm already a licensed RN/MD/PA/NP. What would I have to do to work as an EMT?**

You would not have to take the EMT-Basic course. You would, however, have to take the EMT Refresher class. (EMS work in the field is not necessarily the same thing you've been doing – it involves different skills, and different protocols). Stop in or call, and we can give you more info.

### **9. How much time does an EMT or driver have to commit to?**

EMTs and Drivers sign up for 12-hour shifts that change at 6am and 6pm (daytime shifts M-F are covered by the full-time crew). People choose their own shifts each month. A minimum of two shifts per month are required in order to keep skills up, but some people sign up for more.

### **10. What about pay?**

A small amount of "run-pay" is available to those who sign up for shifts (and those who respond to second-unit calls). Weekends, the most difficult shifts to fill, earn a higher rate than week nights, which are easier to fill. It is a small amount, not enough to consider a regular job. Stop in or call for more details.

### **11. Do I have to sleep at the station?**

No. We do, however, have a couch, recliners, and a bunk bed at the station. On the one or two nights each year when roads are extremely icy, some members choose to stay at the station. It is not required.

### **12. I have bad knees (or back or ???). Is that a problem?**

Being an EMT or driver sometimes requires some lifting. We don't want any of our members to injure themselves – when extra help is needed to lift or move a patient, we call for more help. If you're concerned about your knees, back or anything else, you should discuss it with your doctor.