



Highland Hills FD Captain Receives Special Recognition

Jerry Fioretti, a part-time captain and medical officer for the Highland Hills Fire Department, was recently featured in *PCA Truck Stop*, a quarterly publication for Progressive Insurance auto claims field specialists. At Progressive, Fioretti's title is central support representative.

Fioretti serves on Progressive's emergency response team, which is charged with leading evacuations, if necessary. In addition to his EMS work with the fire department, his



emergency medical skills recently came into play when he rescued an injured bicyclist, while serving as a volunteer for Pedal to the Point, an annual bike race and fundraiser for the National Multiple Sclerosis Society.

When Fioretti, who is a member of the Northeast Ohio Medical Reserve Corps, was called to the scene of the bicycle accident, he arrived in his red Dodge Durango, began treating the patient, called for assistance, and had the patient life-flighted to the nearest hospital. She survived. Shortly after this event, an off-duty firefighter and paramedic, who was at the scene, sent an e-mail complimenting Fioretti on his adept handling of the situation.

The color red dominates Fioretti's world. Progressive coworkers refer to his red Durango as the resident fire truck. During the holidays, he wears a red Santa Claus suit to bring smiles to nursing home residents and people associated with non-profit organizations.

It is no surprise that in the summer of 2006, Fioretti received his industry's "Lifesaver Award" for helping others and for his willingness to go over and above what is expected of him.

Check out www.cchseast.org/EMS

For the latest information on educational opportunities and local EMS news, visit www.cchseast.org/EMS, the EMS Web site sponsored by Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron, and South Pointe hospitals. This one-stop Internet site offers EMS resources, information and news pertaining to Northeast Ohio.

The site includes a calendar of special events, electronic copies of this newsletter, educational course offerings, links to other popular EMS-related Internet sites, and forms that can be downloaded, printed and faxed for class registrations.

Local Hospitals Partner with EMS to Take Patient Care to Next Level

Through the formation of an EMS council, several area hospitals are partnering with local EMS providers to enhance patient care by standardizing protocols and equipment, sharing resources, investigating the implementation of electronic run reporting, and becoming more involved in the communities they serve.

Fire chiefs and other EMS leaders from throughout the Greater Cleveland area attended the EMS council's January meeting to learn more about this alliance. In attendance was Muhammad Samad, deputy director of Cleveland EMS, who says, "I'm happy to see the Cleveland Clinic hospitals put forth this very important effort."

According to Jack Gustin, EMS administrator, "Pre-hospital care should be led by pre-hospital care providers. We're committed to working hand-in-hand with fire departments and ambulance services. We're here for you, not for us. And we're all working together toward better outcomes for our patients." A former paramedic, Gustin is president of Lakewood Hospital.

The EMS council currently includes Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron, Marymount, and South Pointe hospitals. The Cleveland Clinic's other regional hospitals – Fairview, Lakewood, and Lutheran – will soon join the council, as part of the Clinic's effort to strengthen overall operations across the system and more tightly integrate the health system as a community resource.

To provide leadership for the group, Bill Sillasen, RN, EMT-P, was named EMS director for the Cleveland Clinic regional hospitals, and Don Spaner, MD, a Hillcrest Hospital emergency medicine physician, has agreed to serve as medical director for the EMS council.

"Our goal is to continue to offer dynamic, current, and effective EMS continuing education units for all providers and communities."

— Bill Sillasen, RN, EMT-P
EMS director for Cleveland Clinic regional hospitals

As a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves, Dr. Spaner has been serving active duty in Iraq since December (see article on page three). In his absence, he sent comments to the EMS council. "I see the importance of working with the fire departments and communities, and I'm eager to work as a team on the path toward EMS excellence," he says.

Dr. Spaner will return in March. During his two-year term as medical director of the EMS council, his role will be to:

- provide leadership
- work with other EMS medical directors in the system, who include Dr. Frires at Huron, Dr. Kline at South Pointe, and Dr. Volk at Euclid
- meet regularly with EMS council members
- review protocols and make revisions

Education is key

While discussing the overriding mission of the EMS council, Sillasen notes, "Education is the crux of what we do." Concurring is Greg Ivanovics, EMT-P, EMS manager at Euclid Hospital, who says, "Our goal is to continue to offer dynamic, current, and effective EMS continuing education units for all providers and communities.

"Many hospitals try to offer more with less, but we have a more-with-more philosophy," he adds. "We can offer more with a unified hospital system, unified mission, unified goals, and a unified plan."



Karen Shelby, RN, EMS-I, EMS education specialist at Hillcrest Hospital, discusses new EMS protocols with Lt. Bruce Elliott, EMT-P, EMS coordinator at Mayfield Heights Fire Department.

The Cleveland Clinic regional hospitals are coordinating their educational efforts to provide:

- an annual review of class dates, times, and topics
- an EMS presenter (or lecturer) database
- the coordinated utilization of presenters throughout the entire hospital system
- monthly EMS continuing education inservices
- onsite run reviews and equipment training
- a medical control sponsor system
- American Heart Association courses through the School of EMS
- online EMS continuing education, which may be offered this year
- monthly newsletters and EMS continuing education postings

Currently, the Cleveland Clinic regional hospitals offer the following resources for continuing education:

- the School of EMS on the East Side
- the EMS Academy on the West Side
- EMS managers and EMS medical directors at each hospital
- an annual geriatric conference at Euclid Hospital
- an annual trauma symposium at Huron Hospital

"We're committed to working hand-in-hand with fire departments and ambulance services. We're here for you, not for us. And we're all working together toward better outcomes for our patients."

— Jack Gustin
President of Lakewood Hospital, former paramedic,
and EMS administrator for Cleveland Clinic regional hospitals

"Our hospitals are pulling together to provide the best support possible for our pre-hospital providers," says Jeff Wilson, EMT-P, EMS manager at South Pointe Hospital. "By forming the EMS council, we're taking a step in the right direction toward unifying our hospital system and solidifying our partnerships with local EMS organizations, so that we can all serve our communities to the best of our abilities." ■



Heart patient Timothy Gullatta of Parma beams with delight when he is reunited with his Highland Heights Fire Department “rescuers” (from left) David Saltenis, Bill Bernhard, David Soriano, and Jeremy Smelcer.

Highland Heights EMS Plays Key Role in Impressive Save

Luck was on Timothy Gullatta’s side. Okay, maybe he wasn’t so lucky to suffer a 100% blockage of his artery. But when he did, everything went as smoothly as possible.

A couple days before his heart attack, his workplace had installed a new automatic external defibrillator (AED). Coworkers, trained in AED use, did a fine job in assisting Gullatta. Arriving on scene shortly thereafter was a Highland Heights squad consisting of paramedics Bill Bernhard, David Saltenis, Jeremy Smelcer, and David Soriano. They skillfully followed protocols and transmitted EKG readings to Hillcrest Hospital.

“I expect my squads to do a good job, and this one certainly came up to my expectations,” says Chief Ed Bencin of the Highland Heights Fire Department. “I have a very good crew on all the shifts.”

At Hillcrest, medical professionals rely on EMS providers to take the first step in initiating treatment. This is especially critical in cases of heart attack, for which the hospital recently created a new program, called Code Crimson, which is reducing the time it takes to treat patients with confirmed ST Segment Elevation Myocardial Infarction (STEMI).

“EMS squads under our medical control have been essential in helping our Code Crimson team reduce heart attack treatment times,” says Mary Ann Dyer, RN, clinical nurse specialist in Hillcrest’s emergency department (ED). “They provide an invaluable service by transmitting EKG readings to us and stabilizing patients at the scene and on route to the hospital.”

According to Vladimir Veckstein, MD, a Hillcrest Hospital cardiologist, “We’ve achieved such great success with Code Crimson that Hillcrest now ranks in the top 10% of hospitals nationally, in terms of heart attack treatment times. It’s extremely rewarding to be able to intervene earlier because it means our patients have better outcomes.”

When the Highland Heights squad arrived at the ED with Gullatta, the Code Crimson team was ready and

waiting to take over the patient’s care. Before Code Crimson was put in effect, it typically took 140 minutes from a patient’s arrival in the ED to the point of balloon inflation (which opens up the blocked artery).

Since Code Crimson was put into effect in June 2006, the door-to-balloon medical response time has dropped down to 76 minutes. In Gullatta’s case, the time was a mere 69 minutes.

“I really think EMS should be recognized more for the valuable work they do,” says Gullatta, a 49-year-old Parma resident. “I want to shake the hands of everyone who helped me. They gave me another chance at life that I shouldn’t have. I’m really lucky to be here. Everyone at the hospital was very nice, and the nursing was fantastic.”

Hillcrest’s ED director, Brian Kirkland, DO, is thrilled with what Code Crimson has achieved. “It’s amazing what you can accomplish when you roll up your sleeves and work together. Everyone at the hospital has been more than willing to come together and cooperate because the outcomes are so outstanding for our patients. It’s very touching for all of us.” ■

“I expect my squads to do a good job, and this one certainly came up to my expectations.”

— Chief Ed Bencin
Highland Heights Fire Department

Call for Nominations

Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron and South Pointe hospitals are calling for nominations for the recognition of excellence or exemplary performance while in the course of duty as a firefighter and/or EMS provider working under the medical command of any of these four hospitals or the Ashtabula County Medical Center.

The region is calling for peer nominations within the EMS and firefighting communities throughout the 2006 year for awards to be presented in 2007. Categories for recognition include:

Community Education Award

For the Fire/EMS provider who has implemented safety and/or educational programs for the general public that have made a local impact.

Excellence in Professional Standards Award

For the Fire/EMS provider who continually performs to the best of his or her ability and sets the standard of professional conduct each and every day they wear the uniform.

Heroism and Bravery in the Line of Duty Award

For the Fire/EMS provider who performed a life-saving intervention and/or went into harm’s way to save another human life during the 2006 calendar year.

Nomination forms can be picked up from any EMS office at Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron or South Pointe hospital or can be downloaded from the web site at www.cchseast.org/ems.

Blank nomination forms will also be available in each issue of the *Siren*. ■

2007 Recognition Awards

For Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron and South Pointe hospitals

Name of Nominee: _____

Nominee’s Dept: _____

Nominated for Award: Community Education Award Excellence in Professional Standards Award
 Heroism and Bravery in the Line of Duty Award

Date of event for which individual is being nominated (if applicable): _____

Describe the events or reasons why you feel this person is eligible or should be nominated for recognition (use additional paper if needed):

Please add documentation if available or give us information as to where we may find information on the described event or program:

Nominee’s supervisor and phone number: _____

Your relationship to nominee (i.e.: friend, boss, colleague): _____

Your name and phone number (optional): _____

Thank you for your submission. The names of the award winners will be announced in May of 2007, and the awards will be presented during the 2007 EMS Week at a special awards ceremony and banquet. Please send this completed form to your local EMS coordinator or fax to 216.761.7826.

Euclid ED Showcases Futuristic Technology

When you want to design an emergency department (ED), try going to an empty warehouse. That's what the Euclid Hospital ED staff did. And it worked out quite well, thank you.

"We decided to build a sample room the way we wanted it before we got involved in the work and expense of installing our actual patient rooms," says Rich Lowery, RN, director of Euclid's ED. "So our staff – including nurses and clinical leaders – went to an empty warehouse room that was bare down to the drywall, and we designed it the way we thought it should be.

"A lot of thought went into every little detail," he adds. "For example, we realized that physicians always examine patients on the right side of the bed. So everything the doctors need – such as otoscopes,

"It's a pleasure to work in our new patient rooms. They're very modernized, and everything's at our fingertips."

— Gloria Lawson, RN

ophthalmoscopes, and monitors – is right at their fingertips. We even placed the light switches there instead of by the doorway."

The 23 treatment areas in Euclid's ED include private examination rooms, a women's treatment room, trauma unit, observation unit, and decontamination and isolation room. They are part of a \$4.8 million expansion project that opened last fall, doubling the space of the old ED.

"We love our new space," says Marita Volk, MD, medical director of the ED. "Our designated triage room helps us do a better job of streamlining the flow of patients. Our new nurse call system is beautiful. It's no longer necessary for patients to call out, 'Nurse!' And our new monitors enable the staff to follow trends of our patients' pulse oximetry, heart rate, and blood pressure without leaving the nursing station."

Perhaps the most notable feature in the new rooms is the instrument panel mounted in the wall at the

head of the patient beds. Resembling something you might find in the cockpit of a spaceship, it is full of equipment that can be clipped on and off the panel. Even the telephones can be clipped off for easy use by patients. (In most EDs phones are mounted on the wall.)

"We did not want our rooms to be ugly, sterile environments," says Lowery. "So we placed all the equipment behind the patients' heads or in locked equipment closets. All the patients really see is a flat-screen TV, which has cable. They don't have to look at urinals, IV equipment, or anything like that."

Each room lets in natural light and is decorated in earth tones. The staff chose not to install countertops or cabinets that could become collecting spots for clutter and bacteria. Gloves in all sizes are mounted in handy boxes on the wall. Patients' clothes hang from hooks on the wall where they are readily seen. In this way, the ED avoids the old problem of finding belongings in cupboards that were left behind by patients.

While the physical attributes of the expanded ED are impressive, one of its most innovative aspects is relatively unseen. This is a new call system that has transformed the ED from a loud, chaotic place to a more serene work environment. When staff members enter the ED, they sign onto a computer screen, and the system activates a signal sensor that they wear on their badge.

Working like a homing device or global positioning system, the sensor tracks the location of every staff member – from technicians and secretaries to nurses and doctors. In this way, other members of the staff can know who is in a particular room tending to a patient, and they can easily contact them via an intercom system connected to each room.

"It's a pleasure to work in our new patient rooms," says Gloria Lawson, RN. "They're very modernized, and everything's at our fingertips. The morale of the staff is way up. Patients love it too. The first thing they comment on is the flat-screen TV. They can see daylight. They really like that and their privacy. Repeat patients say that this is so much nicer." ■

The following article is reprinted from *The Plain Dealer's Sunday*, December 24, 2006 edition.

From hell-raiser to healer: 'Wild' one now doctor in Iraq

From *Plain Dealer* staff reports

Dr. Donald Spaner always liked the action of trauma medicine. He has seen his share as an emergency physician at Hillcrest Hospital in Mayfield Heights for 12 years.

But this month, Spaner went from treating car accident victims to patching combat soldiers.



Donald Spaner, M.D.

The 47-year-old doctor, a lieutenant colonel in the Army Reserves, is serving in a medical unit in Iraq.

The assignment is another turn in Spaner's unusual life. He was a hell-raiser who barely made it through high school. His transformation from leather-clad, street-fighting Hell's Angels-wannabe to doctor was chronicled in *The Plain Dealer* in 1997.

"He was so wild," a childhood friend told the newspaper then. "People probably thought he'd be dead a year or two after graduation."

Instead, Spaner joined the Coast Guard. He liked the feel of saving people, plunging into Lake Erie for a rescue. He went on to paramedic school, worked for an ambulance company and decided to pursue medicine. He had a plastic surgeon remove tattoos that ran up and down both arms because he didn't think a doctor should scare his patients.

After a residency at the former Mt. Sinai hospital, Spaner went to work at Hillcrest.

In recent years, he has been called away from his wife, Pam, and their three children to serve in Afghanistan and Egypt. He is expected to serve in Iraq for three months.

"He feels it's his job, his calling not to fight the war but to take care of the soldiers who are fighting it," said Pam, a urological oncology nurse at Cleveland Clinic.

Spaner e-mails friends and family regular updates from the war. He is allowing *The Plain Dealer* and Cleveland.com to post his digital diary.

You can read these "Postcards from Iraq" at www.cleveland.com/iraq. ■

Updates Make Protocols More User-Friendly, Standardized across Hospital System

After a nine-month effort, Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron, and South Pointe hospitals have implemented a new set of protocols, which are now standardized across the four hospitals. Protocols established by each emergency department's medical control now give the same medical guidance, and the booklet outlines the protocols in a much more user-friendly manner.

"We looked at each hospital's previous protocol book and picked the best format, design, and organization," says Greg Ivanovics, EMT-P, EMS manager at

"The new protocols are a good change for EMS. The standardization is a good thing to have because it gives us a better understanding of med control's expectations."

— Lt. Bruce Elliott, EMT-P
EMS coordinator at Mayfield Heights Fire Department

Euclid Hospital, who was responsible for developing the new books. "We also looked at other hospitals around Ohio and chose what we liked and didn't like. Then we developed our own format and content and made many, many revisions."

In an era of diverseness, the new protocols bring a level of uniformity to EMS work. "The new protocols are a good change for EMS," says Lt. Bruce Elliott, EMT-P, EMS coordinator at Mayfield Heights Fire Department. "The standardization is a good thing to have because it gives us a better understanding of med control's expectations.

"It's a smoother transition of patients if everything's standardized across the board and everyone knows what they're expected to do," he adds. "It's easy to navigate through the protocol books because sections are color-coded and the text is easy to read. Karen Shelby at Hillcrest trained us. She's good to work with and very helpful. The whole process has been a smooth transition for us."

Two additional Hillcrest emergency department members were integral to the development of the new protocols and helped train EMS providers. They are Don Spaner, MD, and Kitty Gabram, RN, EMT-P, who recently retired after serving as EMS manager for many years.

Ivanovics notes that some of the protocols needed to be revised to be more current with what's going on in the field. "Our new protocol books are radically different from the old versions," he says. "Everyone's happy with them." ■



Lt. Bruce Elliott, EMT-P, EMS coordinator at Mayfield Heights Fire Department, waxes a presentation on new EMS protocols that were recently updated by Euclid, Hillcrest, Huron, and South Pointe hospitals.

University Heights Squad Revives Unresponsive Patient

It's not often that EMS can revive a lifeless 88-year-old. Yet a University Heights squad recently accomplished this unusual feat.

"This was the best pre-hospital care I've seen in 20 years," says J. C. Cohen, MD, the Huron Hospital emergency department physician who was on the case. "They brought the woman back three times from death."

Paramedics Mike Ceraolo, Brandon Hope, Damon Picone, and Peter Pucella used a Lifepak 12 defibrillator and capnography, which is the monitoring of a person's respiratory carbon dioxide and is used to confirm that EMS has intubated properly and has gained access to a patient's lungs.

"Capnography had been exclusively used in the hospital setting," explains Randy Witzak, EMS coordinator for University Heights. "A few years ago, it was made available to pre-hospital providers."

The run began with a 9-1-1 call made by an elderly woman's healthcare aide. When the squad arrived, the aide told them the patient was not breathing and unresponsive. The paramedics called for additional manpower and found that the woman was in tachycardia with a pulse. They used a bag-valve mask to provide oxygen and assist with breathing.

When the patient went into defibrillation (defib), they shocked her with 200 joules. She went into asystole, and the squad began CPR. After three minutes, the patient went

into super ventricular tachycardia. Medics used an intraosseous needle to establish an IV. Then the patient went back into defib, the squad shocked her again, and she went into asystole.

Medics then intubated and confirmed lung access with capnography. CPR was resumed. The patient went into sinus arrhythmia with a pulse and remained in that state until arrival at the ED. "We don't have a lot of saves in the field," says Witzak. Given the patient's age, this was a surprising outcome."

Dr. Cohen adds, "When the patient arrived at Huron, she was in a stable and greatly improved condition. The run report was excellent, and the performance by this squad was outstanding." ■

EMS Calendar

February 20

6 p.m.

"Pre-hospital Considerations When Caring for the Developmentally Disabled Patient" presented by Shelly Orlowski, director of client safety and training, Rosemary Center. Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital. Refreshments provided. CEUs awarded through the School of EMS accreditation #320. For more information, contact Greg Ivanovics, EMS coordinator at 216.692.8648.

March 12, 13, and 14

"ETOH Poisoning" presented by Tom Beers, EMT-P, EMS manager at Huron Hospital. Location: Huron Hospital cafeteria conference room. Refreshments provided. Please pre-register by calling 216.761.6900.

March 14

7 p.m.

Continuing education. Program topic to be announced. Ross Auditorium at Hillcrest Hospital.

March 20

6 p.m.

"Pre-hospital Environmental Emergencies" presented by James Sauto, MD, Euclid Hospital's medical director, emergency medicine. Location: Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital. Refreshments provided. CEUs awarded through the School of EMS accreditation #320. For more information, contact Greg Ivanovics, EMS coordinator at 216.692.8648.

April 17

6 p.m.

"Pre-hospital Stroke" presented by Mike Joyce, PA-C, emergency department Euclid Hospital. Location: Waltz Auditorium at Euclid Hospital. Refreshments provided. CEUs awarded through the School of EMS accreditation #320. For more information, contact Greg Ivanovics, EMS coordinator at 216.692.8648.

April 23, 24, and 25

11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

"Child Abuse" presented by Michelle Sorrell, RN, unit coordinator, Huron Hospital emergency department. Location: Huron Hospital cafeteria conference room. Refreshments provided. Please pre-register by calling 216.761.6900.

Special Note:

South Pointe Hospital holds several classes a week at off-site locations (usually at area fire departments). For class dates and times, please check www.cchseast.org/EMS or call the EMS office at 216.491.6431.



University Heights firefighters and paramedics (from left) Pete Pucella, Brandon Hope, and Damon Picone show off the Lifepak 12 defibrillator that helped them revive a lifeless 88-year-old. Not pictured is Mike Ceraolo, who was also on the run.

School of EMS Courses: Register Now

Paramedic class 26 and EMT basic course 17

The paramedic course will start at the end of August, 2007, and the basic course begins in June, 2007. Since spaces in both of these classes are being accepted on a first-come, first-served basis and are filling fast, interested candidates should submit an application and set up an interview as soon as possible.

SEMS 2007 AHA refresher courses

The American Heart Association refresher courses listed below will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the School of EMS classrooms on the 3rd floor of the Euclid Hospital Health Center.

- **BCLS (CPR) one-day refresher courses** – Jan.18, 2007 or July 19, 2007
- **ACLS one-day refresher courses** – Feb.15, 2007; May 17, 2007; Aug. 9, 2007, or Nov. 15, 2007
- **PALS one-day refresher courses** – March 22, 2007 or Oct. 18, 2007

EMT-basic renewal

Those needing a Basic EMT refresher may instead use 40 hours of continuing education distributed over key topics. By attending a specified 40 of these 48 hours, most of the state or national registry required hours will be provided.

There is no charge for refresher courses for individuals who serve with a fire department or EMS service in the region. *However, you must pre-register for any of these courses.* Since space will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis, we recommend that you apply as soon as possible.

To register for any of these courses, contact:
Registrar, School of EMS
Euclid Hospital Health Center
18901 Lake Shore Boulevard,
Euclid, Ohio 44119
216-692-7850 / fax: 216-692-7857
e-mail: sems@cchseast.org

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