

Knightdale Area

Rescue Squad



Knightdale EMS, Inc.

- Volunteers Caring For You
- 1977 – 2005

This article is written as an extraction from a Power point slide story that was prepared by the rescue squad to be used at the local business expo's and at other events where an interest in the organization could be shown. Italicized comments by writer.

Founding

- In January, 1977, a group of interested and concerned Knightdale citizens met with members of the Knightdale Jaycees to discuss the need for, and the feasibility of organizing a rescue squad to provide rapid response and emergency medical service to the Knightdale Area.

Birth

- Following that meeting, on March 29, 1977 the **Knightdale Area Rescue Squad** was incorporated, and eventually coalesced with 18 charter members.
- All members were required to attend and pass the N.C. EMT Course within one year of acceptance into the Squad.

Founding Members

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| • R. Bishop | C. Lloyd |
| • R. Bradford | M.J. Morgensen |
| • R. Cockman | P. Morgensen |
| • R. Couick | M. Murray |
| • T. Gray | P. Potts |
| • S. Hildebrand | D. Stephenson |
| • D. Hinton | A. Watson |
| • M. King | G. Williams |

Beginnings

- The **Knightdale Area Rescue Squad** (KARS) formally began service on October 1, 1977 with a single Dodge ambulance, and operated out of the 2nd floor of the then **Knightdale Fire Department** building.

Phone service and sleeping quarters were provided for the members of KARS as well as the fact that the ambulance was given an internal parking spot in one of the fire bays.

Arrival

- The current Rescue building on 1st Avenue was completed in February of 1978.
- The **Knightdale Area Rescue Squad** had arrived.

The First Year

- During the first year, the members of KARS answered a total of 440 calls ranging from simple complaints such as colds and the flu, to full cardiac arrests, shootings, stabbings, and motor-vehicle accidents.

Growth

- In March of 1978, KARS obtained its first crash truck. This unit was responsible for assisting in extricating patients from motor vehicles and/or any type of incident where tools not normally carried on an ambulance were required.

Expansion

- September of 1978 brought the addition of a second ambulance, this one built by SWAB Manufacturing. This new ambulance was of the modular type currently used by many EMS organizations, not a van converted for use as an ambulance. A boat was also acquired during 1978, giving KARS a water rescue capability long needed due to the many ponds and lakes in the area.

The Jaws

- During 1979, KARS acquired its first Hurst Power Tool, commonly referred to as “the Jaws of Life”. The addition of this tool further expanded the ability of KARS to deal with persons trapped in or under vehicles, tractors, etc....

Improved Cardiac Care

- Also in 1979, KARS obtained a Resusci-Annie CPR training manikin, and an electronic heart monitor/recorder, capable of providing electrocardiograms (EKGs) in the field. While this unit did not have defibrillation capabilities, it enhanced the ability to monitor the patient’s condition.

KARS was composed completely of volunteers who gave of their time without compensation to serve their fellow citizens. KARS operated 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. During a typical year (1980) about 550 calls were answered. A duty crew remained on call at the Rescue building from 7 p.m. To 7 a.m. every night to provide rapid response and Emergency Medical Service whenever and wherever needed to all the citizens in the rescue area.

Advancement

- As the field of pre-hospital emergency medicine continued to mature, so did KARS. By 1982, KARS had achieved certification at the EMT-Intermediate level, thereby allowing members to administer Intravenous (IV) fluids and drugs, perform advanced airway management techniques, and defibrillate patients.

Upgrades

- Over the ensuing years, a third ambulance was placed in service and the first and second ambulances were either replaced or remounted. A newer, more capable crash truck was also purchased, allowing the ever-growing assortment of hardware required for the job to be carried safely.

Renovation

- During this time, the rescue building itself was renovated to provide more space for personnel and equipment. The current layout has six bays, sleeping provisions for nine people, a large meeting hall, a kitchen area, and a lounge area, allowing it to be staffed 24 hours per day.

Plus ça change...

- As volunteers who were available during the daytime hours became increasingly scarce, KARS decided in 1989 to hire two full-time, paid personnel.

Paramedic

- In 1993, KARS, in association with **Wake County EMS**, began providing 24 hour per day Paramedic staffing, thus providing the citizens of the Knightdale community with the highest level of pre-hospital emergency care available today.

Evolution

- As the focus of KARS continually evolved, it became apparent that future growth would be exclusively in the area of emergency medical care. Therefore, in 1994, KARS underwent a name change to become **Knightdale Emergency Medical Service (KEMS)**, a name more representative of the services being provided.

Focus

- In January, 1997, KEMS transferred responsibility for rescue services within its response area to the three fire departments which cover that area:

KEMS Goes Paramedic

- In a continuing effort to provide improved service to the community, KEMS applied for and was granted approval to upgrade it's service to the EMT-Paramedic level.
- On October 1, 2000, KEMS began operating with its own second-duty paramedics.

KEMS Goes Paramedic, II

- KEMS now has 3 full-time EMT-Paramedics on staff. Each of the paramedics works a rotating schedule consisting of 24 hour shifts:

Success

- In the months since upgrading to paramedic level, KEMS has successfully revived several cardiac arrest patients, and positively affected the outcomes for numerous other patients with life-threatening conditions.

Calls Per Year

Past Chiefs (In order) **[Still trying to get these in Chronologic order]**

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| • Robert Couick | Mickey McCoy, 1984 |
| • Kip Boatwright, 1985 | Marshall Carroll |
| • Mike Stuckey | Larry Whittaker |
| • Thomas Morris | Robert Couick |
| • Ralph Gray | Troy Mitchell |
| • S.William Schulz | |

Board of Directors

The board of Directors had the following members at the time of Merging into Eastern Wake.

- Chief **S. William Schulz**
- Asst Chief **Matt Masters**

Membership Roster

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| • Coley, Andrew | Cassedy, Callene |
| • Fraccola, Anthony | Gray, Ralph |
| • Hunter, Kevin | Labrecque, Cheryl |
| • Labrecque, Trey | MacAulay, Michael |
| • Masters, Matt | Masters, Summer |
| • Mitchell, Troy | Mulder, Bridget |
| • Santos, Cassandra | Santos, Cassedy |

Honorary Members

- Steve Hildebrand
- James Pope
- Troy C. Mitchell

*In July 1, 2005 the **Knightdale Emergency Medical Service** ceased to exist as an entity within the town and is now merged with the towns of Wendell and Zebulon in the formation of **Eastern Wake Emergency Medical Service**.*

Wayne Schulz, Mar 2006

Having 2 sons with prior service on the squad.