

# Lights & Sirens

SUMMER 2017



40 YEARS  
1977 - 2017

## Emergency vehicles go wireless island-wide

San Juan Island Emergency Medical Services (SJIEMS) responders can now make cellular calls from nearly anywhere on the island, thanks to the installation of dual cellular antennae and universal wifi routers on all emergency vehicles.

Any islander knows there are pockets throughout the island where cellphones drop calls and wifi is not available. This has been a challenge for SJIEMS personnel when responding to 911 calls. The new system now provides wireless connectivity in many remote locations. The long-range goal is island-wide coverage.

Although this technology is already in place in most EMS, fire, and police departments across the nation, SJIEMS just recently upgraded their system after the budget was approved in the last levy.

“We are much more effective with this state-of-the-art system,” says SJIEMS Chief Jerry Martin. “It will give us the ability to exchange information with dispatch in real time, and with physicians at Peace Island Medical Center (PIMC). If we need to get a patient off the island, we can arrange for air transport more quickly, and then alert another hospital.”

The system essentially functions as a mobile hotspot, with cellular antennae reaching out to mobile data computers installed in every rig. These computers will run a program allowing responders to communicate with dispatch, and, through digital maps, display the 911 location and track the vehicle until it reaches the scene.

Secure connections will allow only authorized



New computers in vehicles display 911 locations on digital maps.

devices and first-responder users—police, fire, SJIEMS, and other emergency response personnel—to access the LAN-Cell and internet wherever they are dispatched.

Future plans include communicating with the PIMC database from each vehicle. This will allow emergency responders to interact with health care professionals to evaluate, diagnose, and treat patients. Through this link with the hospital, data such as electrocardiograms, blood pressure, and oxygen saturation levels will be transmitted from the field to the emergency room before the patient arrives. That information, combined with access to patient records, will help determine treatment.

“One of the biggest benefits of this new equipment is that we can diagnose a patient more completely in the field,” says Martin. One example is a new way of evaluating mental health patients, an area where San Juan Island is taking the lead. “We will be able to talk directly with the hospital staff from our emergency vehicles, determine what type of care is needed, and possibly save a trip to the hospital. It’s all about better patient planning.”

## Notes from THE CHIEF



Hello fellow islanders,

*Lights and Sirens* is a newsletter for our neighbors in the San Juan Islands. We will be informing you about services and activities of San Juan Island EMS (SJIEMS), and including useful, preventive medical information. In this issue, I want to share two issues with you: Strategic Planning and Community Paramedicine.

### Strategic Planning

#### Mission:

Expanding the scope of excellent patient services and education to meet the challenges of our changing island communities.

#### Vision:

Providing exceptional, compassionate patient care through education, response, and transport.

Strategic planning is necessary for the success of any organization.

We want to strengthen SJIEMS through utilizing our energy and resources effectively, ensuring that our employees and members of the community share common goals, and regularly assessing our objectives in response to changing needs.

The key to a successful emergency service is a positive relationship between the people who

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## New address posts are easy to spot

Walk out to the road in front of your house, and look at your address. Is it clearly visible? Can you see it easily at night? If not, finding your residence could be difficult, even with GPS. To make sure you can be found quickly in an emergency, San Juan Island EMT Association is selling blue and white posts with reflective numerals at a reduced cost of \$30.

The 30-inch post can hold up to five digits, which EMTs will affix for you. If you need assistance with installation, EMTs, Sheriff’s deputies, and firefighters will all be pitching in to help. These three associations will share the proceeds.

Pick up your post at the San Juan County Fair (August 16-19), or through Karl Kuetzing at 360-378-5152, ext. 4, or [kkuetzing@sanjuanems.org](mailto:kkuetzing@sanjuanems.org).



INSIDE ... New EMT graduates • Stroke symptoms • Medical directives



SAN JUAN ISLAND  
EMERGENCY  
MEDICAL SERVICES

1079 Spring Street  
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

ECRWSS  
Postal Customer

PRSR STD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Friday Harbor, WA  
Permit #9



**San Juan County  
Public Hospital District #1**

**Board Commissioners**

J. Michael Edwards  
Monica Harrington  
Mark Schwinge  
Barbara Sharp  
Bill Williams, *Chair*

**Superintendent**

Pam Hutchins

\*\*\*\*\*

**San Juan Island EMS Staff**

**Chief Administrator**

Jerry Martin, *Paramedic*

**Administration**

Tina Lynch-Teilmann, *Administrative Assistant*

**Operations**

Kaitlyn Johnson  
*Public Information Officer & Logistics  
Coordinator, Senior EMT*  
Karl Kuetzing  
*Director of Operations, EMT*  
Lainey Volk  
*Community Paramedicine, Senior EMT*

**EMS Supervising Physician**

Sean Stone, *MD*

**SJC Medical Program Director**

Michael Sullivan, *MD*

**Paramedics**

Weyshawn Koons,  
*Director of Emergency Response – 911*  
Kyle Davies  
Ryan Nelson  
Noah Waldron

\*\*\*\*\*

**San Juan Island EMS  
Volunteers**

**Senior EMTs**

Steve Alluise  
Dan Bacon  
Deanna Banry  
Brad Creezy  
Tom Eades  
Tad Lean  
Margaret Longley  
Herb Mason  
Francis Smith

**EMTs**

Jeff Asher  
Steve Brumsickle  
Christine Bush  
Karen Chadwick  
Gabrielle Conway  
Isla Cropper  
Robin DeLazerda  
Kati English  
Devon Foss  
John Gossom  
Erin Graham  
Doug Harmon  
Maddy Harmon

**EMTs (continued)**

Michael Hartzell  
Michael Henderson  
Joaquin Hubbard  
Jesse James  
Adrian Kilpatrick  
Cheyenne Mauldin  
Humberto Orozco  
Ian Randall  
Arna Robins  
Dave Stanford  
Rachel Svejcar  
Gilbert Venegas  
Nicolas Wainwright  
Matthew Wickey

**Support  
Officer**

Debbie Grimes

\*\*\*\*\*

**Lights & Sirens  
Newsletter**

Julia Vouri, *Editor*  
Alice Shull, *Designer*

**CLASSES & EVENTS**

*For more information, or if you don't see a class listed, contact  
Lainey Volk at lvolk@sanjuanems.org or 360-298-3378.*

**Safe Sitter®**

**For ages 11 and up**  
*San Juan Island*

**July 5-6, 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.**

Cost: \$75

San Juan Island EMS Building  
1079 Spring Street, Friday Harbor  
*To register, contact Island Rec in  
Friday Harbor at 360-378-4953.*

**Blood Pressure Clinic**

*San Juan Island*

**Last Thursday of each month.**

**11 a.m. - noon**

FREE

Mullis Community Senior Center  
589 Nash Street, Friday Harbor

**Blood Pressure Check,  
First Aid & Emergency Care**

*San Juan Island*

**August 16-19, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.**

FREE

San Juan County fairgrounds

**CPR/AED**

*San Juan Island*

**June 27, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**July 8, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

Cost: \$25

San Juan Island EMS Building  
1079 Spring Street, Friday Harbor

**Updated CPR guidelines**

How long has it been since you took a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) class? Chances are the American Heart Association guidelines have changed since then. Here are the most current instructions:

**Don't "look, listen, and feel" before calling 911.** Instead, call 911 immediately, and start CPR as soon as possible.

**Change the order of steps.** Instead of "ABC" (opening the airway, applying rescue breaths, and delivering chest compressions), think "CAB" (chest compressions, airway, breaths). Starting with chest compressions is the first major change since CPR was introduced in 1960 because it's the single, most effective way to save a life.

**Compress harder.** Instead of pushing one-and-a-half to two inches into the chest on each compression, push at least two inches or more. Don't worry about cracking a rib. Saving a person's life is the first priority.

**Compress faster.** Deliver compressions in time to the Bee Gees song, "Stayin' Alive," which is about 100 compressions per minute.

**Never give up.** Keep delivering chest compressions until help arrives.

*Note that some classes may be added after this newsletter goes to press. If five or more people are interested in a class on first aid, CPR, or AED use, Lainey Volk will be happy to schedule one for you. See contact information above.*

**Islanders express gratitude for EMS care**

Just to thank you for your quick response to my faulty Med Alert call (don't know how I activated it). It is very comforting to know the whole procedure works (key in lock box, search through the house, etc.)

*Virginia Breedlove*

Thank you for the extraordinary ride last Friday evening from the San Juan Yacht Club to the E.R. It was my pleasure to join you. Saving EMS in the last levy was one of the most important things that could have happened in this community.

*Rob Callegari*

Dear Francis, Rebecca, Noah, Karen, Dave, and Katie,  
Thank you so much for another rescue Sunday eve. You are kind and caring.

*Don and B.J. Craddock*

Dear FH EMTs,

You came out to my house early Saturday morning after I awakened with tachycardia (180 bpm). I was so thankful to see the aid car with Noah pull into that long, narrow driveway! .... I feel confident that the EMTs on this island will be here in a jiffy to convert my heart-beat back to normal in less time than it takes to say, "You're going to feel a pinch here." So, thank you again.

*Sincerely, Karen J. Downing*



*Lights & Sirens is published three times a year by the San Juan Island Emergency Medical Services. It is delivered to all the residents in Hospital District #1, which includes the islands of San Juan, Henry, Johns, Spieden, Shaw, Brown, Pearl, and Stuart. We welcome any feedback or questions. Please e-mail us at info@sanjuanems.org.*

## ... Act F.A.S.T. after a stroke for best chances of recovery ...



Weyshawn Koons, senior paramedic for San Juan Island EMS

When San Juan Island EMS paramedic Weyshawn Koons recently responded to a call, she found an elderly man who had collapsed in his kitchen. “We knew this was a potential stroke because the patient’s wife told dispatch half of his body was not working,” she says. Because of the skill of the EMS team, and the convenience of the local hospital, the patient recovered fully.

The call went smoothly. Dispatch personnel recorded the time the patient collapsed, which is critical for determining the right treatment. Koons and EMTs administered care in the ambulance, arranged for the use of the computed tomography (CT) machine at Peace Island Medical Center, and wheeled the gurney right into the room. “The doctor listened to my report

as we loaded him onto the scanning bed,” says Koons. “The time from the call to 911 to the time the patient received the scan was 18 minutes. It was phenomenal.”

Because a CT scan is the only way to determine the course of treatment for a stroke, the patient needs to be scanned as soon as possible. If the right treatment is administered within three to four-and-a-half hours of having a stroke, the chances for recovery greatly improve.

“If someone waits a couple of hours before calling us, that window can close pretty quickly,” says Koons. “Even if you’re not sure you’re having a stroke, call 911 immediately. We’d rather rule out a stroke than wait until it’s too late.”

### WARNING SIGNS OF A STROKE

#### Face drooping

Ask the person to smile.  
Does one side of the face droop?

#### Arm weakness

Ask the person to raise both arms.  
Does one arm drift downward?

#### Speech difficulty

Ask the person to repeat a simple phrase.  
Is their speech slurred or strange?

#### Time to call 911

If you observe any of the above signs, call 911 immediately.

### Other symptoms may include:

- Sudden numbness, tingling, weakness, or loss of movement in the face, arm, or leg, especially on only one side of the body.
- Sudden vision changes.
- Sudden trouble speaking.
- Sudden confusion or trouble understanding simple statements.
- Sudden problems with walking, dizziness, loss of balance, or coordination.
- A sudden, severe headache that is different from past headaches.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Neck stiffness.

### DID YOU KNOW:

*According to the American Heart Association, 80 percent of all strokes are preventable.*

### Take steps to prevent a stroke

- Keep your blood pressure in check.
- Stop smoking.
- If you have diabetes, control your blood sugar.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Get at least 30 minutes of activity daily.
- Manage your weight.
- Control high blood cholesterol.
- Talk with your doctor if you have atrial fibrillation or heart or artery disease.
- Limit alcohol intake to two drinks per day for men and one for women.

### A WOMAN’S STROKE SYMPTOMS CAN VARY

In addition to the symptoms listed above, a woman may experience hiccups, dizziness, headaches, atypical chest pain that may be mistaken for heart disease or indigestion, and numbness of the entire body. Pregnancy also increases the risk of stroke, particularly in the final months, and in the period immediately after delivering a child.



**Congratulations to the new EMT graduating class**, pictured here with the airlift crew. Standing, from left: Nicolas Wainwright, Cory Harrington, flight nurse Lydia Kleine, LaRen Gevaart-Rossie, Karey Keel-Stidham, Micki Nichols, Levi Rodriguez, flight nurse Kathleen Horr, pilot Randy Hayes, Ian Randall, and paramedic Weyshawn Koons. Lower, from left: Volunteer Clayton Banry, Rachel Svejcar, Christine Bush, and Matthew Wickey. Not pictured: Gilbert Venegas and senior EMT Kaitlyn Johnson.

## SUMMER SAFETY TIP

### Bee stings: When to call 911

The dog days of summer bring flowers, barbecues, the San Juan County Fair...and bees. Most people stung by a bee, wasp, or yellow jacket don’t need medical care, and experience mild pain or itching, redness, and slight swelling.



However, if you are allergic to bee stings, or suffer several stings, you may experience a severe reaction with local swelling and itching. Call 911 if you have swelling of the throat, face, and lips; hives; flushed or pale skin; a headache; dizziness or fainting; nausea and vomiting; abdominal cramping and diarrhea; or trouble breathing or swallowing.

If you are allergic to bee venom, or are taking medications such as beta-blockers, be sure to wear a medical I.D. bracelet and carry an epinephrine auto-injector such as EpiPen with you.





**Peace of mind through  
EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS**

**Medical directives:  
Are yours in order?**

Advanced care planning is the best way to ensure you receive the treatment you want at the end of your life. Don't wait until a medical crisis occurs before putting your wishes in writing. If you are unable to speak for yourself, you may not get the care you desire. Plus, you may place your doctor, caregiver, family, and friends in a traumatic situation.

*There are three legal documents to consider.*

**Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care**

In this form, you legally name the person who will speak for you if you cannot.

**Living Will**

Use this document if you want to refuse life-sustaining medical treatment in the event of terminal illness or injury, or permanent unconsciousness. Note that this does not replace the POLST (see below).

**Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)**

If you have an advanced illness, use this medical order to summarize the care you want—or don't want. Remember, medical professionals such as your doctor, paramedics, and EMTs are required to carry out life-sustaining treatments such as CPR unless you have a POLST or Do Not Resuscitate (DNR) order stating differently. This form must be signed by you or your durable power of attorney, and your doctor. The bright green POLST form moves with you from one care setting to another. Post the original in a visible location in your home, such as on your refrigerator. Brief and easy to read, this is the most important document for emergency personnel.

For more information, go to [sanjuanems.org](http://sanjuanems.org), click on "Patients," and then click on "Medical Directives." To get a copy of these forms, talk with your doctor, or send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to the **Washington State Medical Association (WSMA), Attn: Advance Directives (Living Will and Durable Power of Attorney) or POLST, 2001 Sixth Avenue, Suite 2700, Seattle, WA 98121.** Once you complete the forms, give copies to your health care proxy and doctor.

**Next issue: A look at hospice services on San Juan Island.**

**Congratulations on a job well done!**

**APRIL**

*EMT of the month*



**John Gossom**

John Gossom is one of the kindest and most accommodating volunteers around EMS. He is always willing to stay late or take on extra assignments. Known for his patience and easy-going personality, he helped prepare the most recent class of EMTs for final testing. John works at San Juan Healthcare, and will soon be leaving the island to train as a paramedic, a long-time dream.

**MAY**

*EMT of the month*



**Kaitlyn Johnson**

A senior EMT, Kaitlyn Johnson has been with San Juan Island EMS for more than 12 years. She currently works full time as an EMT, logistics coordinator, and public information officer. Her favorite part about being an EMT is knowing she has the skills to help in an emergency when responding to a 911 call. Kaitlyn is an avid trail runner, and participates in several ultra runs a year.

**JUNE**

*EMT of the month*



**Francis Smith**

Francis Smith is a senior EMT. He has been with the agency for 12 years, and was a District 3 fire captain for 17 years. Smith is currently organizing a cardiac event response team of Cape San Juan and Cattle Point residents who have completed the CPR/AED course through San Juan Island EMS. Francis and his wife, Rebecca, a retired EMT, are avid yachties, travel trailer rats, and birders.

(Continued from page 1)

call 911 and the emergency personnel who respond. Occasionally, SJIEMS receives feedback from islanders we have served. Most of our customers are happy with our service. Less frequently, we hear that we fell short of expectations. We value all responses. Positive feedback lets us know that we are on the right track. Negative feedback reveals areas that need improvement.

We are committed to working closely with island residents to evaluate our quality of service and community expectations. Is our service timely, effective, efficient, and affordable? Our staff strives to be compassionate and to present a positive and helpful perspective. How do we measure up? We want to hear from you.

Later this summer, we will be forming a group of islanders to serve on a Strategic Vision and Planning Committee. If you are interested in participating, please contact Tina Lynch-Teilmann at [tteilmann@sanjuanems.org](mailto:tteilmann@sanjuanems.org) or 360-378-5152, ext. 0.

**Community Paramedicine**

Prevention is the major component of San Juan Island's Community Paramedicine program. By preventing medical emergencies through home health visits and collaboration with other community health services, we hope to reduce the number of 911 calls, emergency department visits, and re-admissions to the hospital.

One of our primary goals is prevention of falls among older adults because we receive such a high number of calls for serious, fall-related injuries.

The overall objective of this program is to identify islanders in need, determine the type of care they require, and pair them with the right provider or service. We are currently compiling a resource list of community organizations and

identifying gaps in medical and social services on the island.

Our local committee is comprised of local public health departments, hospice, Peace Island Medical Center, and fire departments from San Juan, Orcas, and Lopez islands.

The purpose of this committee, which includes many fire and EMS departments, is funding and standardization of the community paramedicine system. One important outcome will be working as a team to ensure that all residents get the care they need.

I look forward to the opportunity to further improve our performance and the quality of service offered to our community.

My warmest regards,

Jerry Martin  
Chief, San Juan Island EMS

**FREE: Carbon monoxide detectors  
In memory of Kelli Ashcraft**

If you don't have a carbon monoxide detector in your home, pick one up at San Juan Island EMS or contact Lainey Volk at 360-298-3378. The detectors are free; donations are welcome. If you would like help with installation, contact the San Juan Island Fire Department at 360-378-5334. For more information, go to [sanjuanems.org](http://sanjuanems.org). Be sure to join us for our next carbon monoxide safety education class, which will be offered in the fall.