



RESCUE



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SPOTLIGHT ON... By Steve Carden

LIABILITY ISSUES & THE EMERGENCY SERVICE ORGANIZATION

We must face the facts. We live in a very litigious society and have seen lawsuits become evermore common when people feel they have been injured or wronged, or maybe at times when an easy buck is seen possible. The days of the good ole' boy theory and 'we just done the best we could' are slowly but surely becoming a recipe for disaster for any member or agency counting on that defense making a difference in a civil lawsuit.

We have a responsibility to ourselves, our agencies, our members, and the public, which we serve to take the proper steps to limit the number of accidents, deaths, and injuries that can and do occur in the emergency services.

A few areas can be focused on that can reduce exposure and help avoid the accident that all too often spawns a search for the person to blame or 'cause' that resulted in the loss.

Review Your Mission: Too many departments spread themselves too thin trying to expand their call volume and duplicate services already being provided by similar agencies. **Do what service(s) that is needed and make a commitment to do it well.**

Set & Enforce Reasonable Member Standards: Every department should adopt reasonable membership standards. All too often no background checks are performed on new applicants, and appointments are made to leadership positions with a failure to have done any background investigation. How many units regularly check their member's driver's license and auto insurance status? Three real world examples right here in Tennessee I am aware of should not have and maybe would not have happened were similar standards followed. 1. A Chief Officer of an organization is discovered to have a felony criminal conviction, later resigns, but public trust in Unit is damaged. 2. A Junior firefighter is dismissed from one unit after admitting to

arson; a short time later is accepted as a member in another local fire department. 3. A regular driver of emergency agency vehicles is discovered to have a revoked driver license status. Any of these situations could have resulted in negligent findings under areas of civil liability.

Train and Equip to Perform: Regular training can help prevent accidents, which can result in reduced liability exposure, and prevention of the accident or occurrence is what we should aim for. Training should be realistic and should be documented. It should also be ongoing and verifiable. The old axiom in court in regards to records is ...'if it isn't documented, it didn't occur'. New laws such as the Vanessa K. Free Act raise the bar requiring annual training in emergency driver operations. Failure to heed such statutes will expose not only the member to a tremendous liability, but the agency and it's officers to indirect, or vicarious, liability. Overloading & exceeding the weight limits of apparatus & trailers is another common occurrence. Safety and dependability of the very equipment we depend on to answer the call must be paramount. Proper personal protective gear and individual equipment, as well as proper training for each member that performs specific mission tasks should be strived for. Remember, liability can come from within as easily as outside the organization. A wrongful death suit brought by a family of a member killed in an incident can devastate all involved and can focus directly on whether the agency had improperly trained or equipped the member. Many scenarios resulting in death or serious injury to a member could expose the agency and it's officers to serious scrutiny as to whether they allowed the member to perform above their training or worse yet, failed to train, or directed them to do something they were unqualified to do.

Continued...

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE... By TARS State President - Jim Williamson

I hope that everyone had a safe and prosperous holiday season. Hopefully everyone had an enjoyable time at the convention in Chattanooga. Thank you to all that attended and those of you that competed, great job. Thank you to the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Rescue Squad for putting on a great event. Start making your plans to attend this years convention in Kingsport, there will be something for everyone to do. I would like to take this time to thank each of you for electing me as your state president. It is truly an honor for me to serve you in this capacity. If myself or any of the state officers can help you please call on us anytime night or day. The state officers met in November to set committees, brainstorm

and do some problem solving. The state officers have been presented with several challenges this year. We are looking forward to developing clear goals and objectives to effectively promote, represent and protect each and every one of our members. Rusty and the training committee have set the training schedule for this year. I challenge each of you that have not taken a class recently to make plans to attend at least one. I think that you will get your moneys worth. Also, I would like to encourage each of you to make plans to attend the February and June region meetings. It will help you make new friends and visit with some old friends that you haven't seen for a long time.

Continued...

State Vice President – Kenny Blaker

I would like to take the time to Thank Everyone for their support at the convention this year. It was a pleasure seeing everyone again, we had a good turn out and a Great convention.

As your State Vice President I would like to encourage all of you to keep up your training, hard work, and supporting your squad. As your Vice

President I will work to the best of my ability to serve this Association to strengthen the membership and training. I am available for any suggestions, questions, and comments, at any time. If you need to talk to me I am just a phone call away. My dedication to this association is very sincere, I am willing to help you and let you help

me to better this association in the future. Please do not hesitate to give me any suggestions toward membership, training, or any business that may help better this Association and the Family we have together.

*"I hope everyone had a -
Merry Christmas & Happy New Year
God Bless All!"*

Dujuana Weaver - State Historian

I hope everyone had a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. I would like to thank all of you for your support during elections at convention. It is truly an honor to be elected as a State Officer of such a great organization. I look forward to working with you all this year.

Start sending in your pictures for the State Scrapbook and also getting your unit's scrapbook

ready for convention 2008. I would like to see a record number of entries this year. Also let me know of any special events your squad will be hosting. If I can be of assistance to you just give me a call or e-mail me.

Again thank you for choosing me as your State Historian. May God bless you all with a happy, safe and prosperous year.

John Weaver – Region IV Vice President

Hope you all had a wonderful holiday season. 2008 is going to be a great year. Thank you for allowing me to serve you once again as your region VP.

We have a couple of training opportunities this year here in region IV. If every squad in our region sent just one person we would fill up these classes. Lets get our classes full this year. If you haven't been to a college class in a while, you are in for an experience. Our resources here in region IV are excellent but we all need to keep our training up to date. When we keep training current we make better rescuers.

On our region travels I found a sign hanging in a squad building, it is very simple but I thought I would share it with you because I liked the message.

CODE OF A RESCUE SQUAD MEMBER

My duty is to save lives and to aid the injured

I will be prepared at all times to perform this duty quickly and efficiently

I will place it before personal desires and comforts

THESE THINGS I DO THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE

Don't forget if you need help, it is just one phone call away. it doesn't matter if it is one squad or all twenty-six squads, help will be on the way. I look forward to seeing you all this year either at training, region meetings or convention. Stay safe, take care and God bless each of you.

Jim Houston – Region II Vice President

The annual Tennessee Association of Rescue Squads Convention in Chattanooga has come and gone. A great time was had by all! Our hats are off to the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Rescue Squad who went all out to host the convention. All of the comments I have heard about the convention are positive; we were blessed with good weather for the outdoor events.

I would like to thank the Region II Rescue Squads vote of confidence in me to be their next Vice President for the next year.

The holidays are past and I hope that Santa was good to each and everyone. Now that we are in the new year, before we can turn around twice it will be time for the regional meetings. Please mark your calendars for Saturday, February 9, 2008 when Monroe County will host the Region II Meeting. The regional meetings are where you hear the latest happenings in TARS and meet with friends and other squad members.

As you make your plans to attend the February meetings, give the host a call and let them know how many will attend from your squad. If I can be of help to you or your squad, feel free to call me.

Vanessa K Free Program for 2008

Several changes are being implemented in the Vanessa K. Free training program. We had originally issued wallet cards with a 2 year expiration date and noted the requirement of annual training to remain valid. This system was intended to keep documentation fees at a minimum for the participant and lessen the administrative task of annual card replacement on the State Office staff. While the idea was well meaning, the reality was a number of people were confused as to whether they had to take the training every year, the online system of documenting the renewal of such training became very cumbersome for the instructor to navigate regarding renewal classes, and a number of departments wanted new cards anyway so additional c.e.u.'s could be issued for that year's training. So effective this year we will issue a wallet card with 0.3 c.e.u. with a 1 year date and reduce the annual fee to \$5 per participant. In classes submitted under the Full EVOC class title a wall certificate and wallet card will continue to be issued for the fee of \$10. Since the VKF curriculum is required to be included in the full EVOC program, a separate class does not need to be submitted under that VKF title. The card and certificate will reflect VKF having been included in the training.

The departmental certified roster option will remain for the VKF program as well for agencies that simply wish to document their having completed training in compliance with the Act. No individual documents i.e. certificates or cards, nor c.e.u.'s will be issued under that option. The agency will receive a single certificate in the agency's name with a certified

roster of the attendees for filing. The class will also become a permanent record on the web-based database. Around one third of the departments participating in the TARS VKF training program has chosen this means of documentation and the annual fees are based on a bulk scale of students that averages less than 50% of individual document costs.

The third training module for the VKF program will be released in April at the 2008 instructors update. The educational focus of the final installment will be Prevention of Apparatus Overturns and Personal Owned Vehicle Response. A frequent question posed is whether a person must start out their training with VKF module 1? The answer is no. Any one of the 3 modules are designed to exceed the State Law's requirements under the Act and may be used in any order. Certain components of each module such as the review of statutes regarding emergency response, key points regarding both civilian and emergency driver reactions, and a written test will prove to be repetitive. But the educational focus of each module will differ in an effort to make responders aware of the highest risk exposures in emergency response. It also gives an instructor a slightly different class to teach for a three year cycle vs. the same "old" thing every year to enhance the class attention factor. Ideally, a responder will receive a total of 9 hours of varied driver training over a three year period that will benefit not only the motoring public, but their own lives which are put at risk during every call.

EMS CORNER

Report from the Tennessee Emergency Medical Service Board By Tim Bell, NREMT-P, CRT - TARS Representative

***EMS is Growing in Tennessee:**

The EMS community is growing in Tennessee. EMS is currently the third largest healthcare profession with about 18,000 currently licensed and certified personnel- First Responders, EMTs, Paramedics and Emergency Medical Dispatchers.

***Existing New Changes for First Responders:**

In 2007, I was appointed as Chairman to an Ad Hoc Committee to study First Responder Rules, Regulations and completion rates from First Responder training programs. The First Responder Committee proposed changes to the rules and passed them forward to the Board to consider for rule making changes.

At the November 2007 EMS Board meeting, the Board passed approved rule changes that will affect First Responders. Although the amendments are not written into the law as of yet, we expect the rules to be in effect in 2008.

The proposed rules were passed for the Rule Making Process. The rules were passed by the Board in November 2007, and were forward to the Office of General Counsel (OGC). OGC currently has the new rule changes and will send them to the Attorney General later this year.

***The changes consist of the following:**

1. Lowering the age for certification of the First Responders from age 18 to 17 years.
2. Allowing EMT and Paramedic instructors to teach First Responders without having to retest at the First Responder level. This would allow EMT and Paramedic instructors to teach at or below their level of training.
3. Changing the required hours of training from a set number of hours. The changes will include a minimum number of hours and attendance. Hopefully this change will promote First Responder training in High Schools throughout Tennessee.

While these changes may not sound like Earth changing events, we believe that they will help to change the face of EMS in Tennessee by allowing high school age persons to become First Responders and perhaps encourage more young people to choose EMS as a career or for community service.

It is a pleasure to continue to serve you, TARS and the EMS Board. Should you have any questions of comments, or should you require any information about the EMS Board, please feel free to contact me. Also, please visit the TN EMS website at <http://health.state.tn.us/ems/index.htm> and the TARS website at <http://www.tnars.org>

2008 TRAININGS & MEETINGS SCHEDULE

Due to the growth of our Squad/Department Level Instructor I System, the following changes were implemented last year regarding annual updates.

- * A two year certification period became effective for Level I Instructors last year.
- * The annual fee will remain unchanged at \$10 per year. It will be collected bi-annually.
- * Instructors that did not attend last year are required to attend this year to avoid loss of Instructor Certification.
- * Some locations for the 4 regional updates have changed to better centralize access and accommodate the larger attendance.

Times and subject breakdowns are as follows (All Times Local). No pre-registration is needed.

Extrication (9:00 am - 12:30 pm, Lunch 12:30 - 1:30 pm,
Bloodborne Pathogen 1:30 - 2:30 pm, EVOC/VFK 2:30 - 4:00 pm.

APRIL 2008 - INSTRUCTOR UP-DATES - FEE: \$20 (2 YEAR FEE)

4/05 - Reg I - Morristown

4/12 - Reg II Roane County

4/19 - Reg III-LaVergne Rescue

4/26 - Reg IV- Humboldt Area

* Driving directions are available for each location on the website www.tnars.org from the homepage link titled "Updates and Meetings".

2008 RESCUE COLLEGE

SCHOOL BUS - FEB 22-24
GILES CO RESCUE

SCHOOL BUS - FEB 29 - MAR 2
ROANE COUNTY RESCUE

SCHOOL BUS - MAR 7 - 9
DEKALB CO FIRE DEPT

ADVANCED EXTRICATION
MAR 14 - 16, HARDEMAN CO

INST I - EVOC/VKF/BBP
MAR 28 - 29, Murfreesboro, TN

BIG RIG RESCUE - MAY 2 - 4
GREENEVILLE RESCUE

TRENCH RESCUE - MAY 16 - 18
MONTGOMERY CO EMS

SWIFTWATER I, MAY 30 - JUN 1
EAST POLK/OCOE RIVER

SWIFTWATER II - JUN 27-29
RELIANCE/HIwassee/Tellico

FARM RESCUE - JUL 11 - 13
NEWPORT RESCUE

SWIFTWATER I - JUL 25 - 27
EAST POLK/OCOE RIVER

DIVE RESCUE I - AUG 8 - 10 @TN
FIRE CODES ACADEMY

TRENCH RESCUE - AUG 8 - 10
DECHERD FIRE DEPT

ADVANCED EXTRICATION -
AUG 22-24 - Morristown Rescue

SWIFTWATER II, AUG 29-31
RELIANCE/HIwassee/Tellico

SWIFTWATER I - SEPT 12- 14
EAST POLK/OCOE RIVER

DIVE RESCUE II - SEPT 5-7 TENN
FIRE CODES ACADEMY

BIG RIG RESCUE - SEPT 5 - 7
OBION COUNTY RESCUE

INST I VEHICLE EXTRICATION
SEPT 12-14 - LaVERGNE Rescue

STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE Rescue
OCT 17 - 19, NEWPORT Rescue

SWIFTWATER II OCT 17 - 19
RELIANCE/HIwassee/Tellico

(Rope Rescue Class Schedule
Available On-Line)

* TRAINING FEES * - TARS - \$70 * ASSOCIATE MEMBERS - \$85 * NON-TARS - \$110 - Training classes and dates are subject to cancellations or rescheduling. - COURSE DESCRIPTIONS AND A PRINTABLE APPLICATION ARE AVAILABLE ON LINE AT WWW.TNARS.ORG

EVENTS CALENDAR - 2008 MEETINGS

FEB. REG MTGS

Reg I - Washington Co - Feb 2
Reg II - Monroe Co - Feb 9
Reg III - Coffee Co - Feb 16
Reg IV - Humboldt Area - Feb 23

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARCH 29, 2008
DOUBLETREE HOTEL
MURFREESBORO, TN
Reservations - 615-895-5555

JUNE REGION MTGS

Reg I - Church Hill - Jun 7
Reg II - Union Co - Jun 14
Reg III - Cannon Co - Jun 21
Reg IV - Paris-Henry Co - Jun 28

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

JULY 26, 2008
DOUBLETREE HOTEL
MURFREESBORO, TN
Reservations - 615-895-5555

2008 ANNUAL CONVENTION - OCTOBER 2 - 4 - KINGSFORD MARIOTT - MEADOWVIEW CONVENTION CENTER
RESERVATIONS - 1-800-831-4004 OR 423-578-6600

TENNESSEE ASSOCIATION OF RESCUE SQUADS

REGIONAL RESCUE COLLEGE COURSES * 2008 SCHEDULE *

ALL RESCUE COLLEGE COURSE FEES ARE:

* TARS - \$70 * * ASSOCIATE MEMBERS - \$85 * * NON-TARS - \$110*

ALL RESCUE COLLEGE COURSES

C.E.U. 1.0 / START ON FRIDAY AT *6 PM AND END ON SUNDAY BY 5 PM

DIRECTIONS AND LODGING INFO AVAILABLE ON TARS WEBSITE

ADVANCED EXTRICATION

Course Description:

The Advanced Extrication Course gives a more detailed use of tools. It also has more one-on-one instruction. The theory of extrication is more complete. This is taught on a Regional basis by College Instructors.

Pre-requisites: Basic Extrication

Course Hours: 20/ Min Enrollment: 20

NOTE: Participants will be required to furnish and wear full protective gear for all field exercises. (Extrication coveralls are acceptable but must do not meet NFPA standards.)

FARM RESCUE

Course Description:

The Farm Rescue Class is designed to introduce the student to situations and hazards related to Farm Related Accidents. Identifying hazards such as fertilizers, pesticides, and silos, as well as stabilization of tractor overturns and equipment disassembly are some of the subjects covered. This class is a mix of classroom and field exercises and is taught on a regional basis.

Pre-requisites: Basic Extrication Course Hrs: 20/Min

Enrollment: 20

NOTE: Participants will be required to furnish and wear helmet, gloves, eye protection, and boots.

TRENCH RESCUE

Course Description:

The Trench Rescue Course is designed to impart knowledge and develop skills in order to properly shore trenches and to effect a cave-in rescue quickly with a minimum of danger to those involved. It will teach the student how to utilize equipment and resources already at their disposal as well as recognize the resources in the community that can be readily used in Trench Rescue. This class is taught on a Regional basis.

Course Hours: 20/Min Enrollment: 20

NOTE: Participants will be required to furnish and wear helmet, gloves, eye protection, and boots, and protection harness.

INSTRUCTOR I

(Extrication Series or EVOC/VFK/BBP Series)

Course Description:

The Instructor I course is designed to enable a student to teach a class from a prepared lesson plan. It prepares you to instruct the TARS basic squad level courses which include Vehicle

in 1 year of the initial Instructor class the additional discipline class fee is offered at half price. Concepts of learning, Extrication, Emergency Driving (EVOC/VFK) and Bloodborne Pathogens. Separate modules are offered and if attended with communication skills, instructors roles and responsibilities, teaching techniques, and the use of instructional materials are also subject areas included. This class is taught on a regional basis.

Course Hours: 24/Min Enrollment: 20

Pre-requisites: Must have a high school diploma or GED certificate and have been a member of an emergency organization for three years. Students should have been certified in squad level courses within the last two years and have a First Responder medical level training (or equivalent) rating. It is also preferred that a candidate have attended either the College Advanced Extrication or School Bus Rescue course for extrication instructor consideration.

Reference Material:

IFSTA Fire Service Instructor

TARS Instructor EVR Manual

Bloodborne Pathogen Instructor Guide

EVOC Trainers Manual

NOTE: The student may be required to give one five minute presentation on a (may be non-rescue related) subject of their choice. Any visual aids must be provided by the student. Another presentation may be required on an assigned topic. In the Extrication Series each student must provide and wear full protective gear for field exercises. Rescue tools are provided.

SWIFTWATER RESCUE I

Course Description:

The Swift Water Rescue I class will teach swift water dynamics, self rescue/swimming techniques, ropes and knots, rescue equipment, rescue board techniques, as well as, hands on in the water practice. It is recommended that students be experienced swimmers in good physical condition. This class is taught on a Regional basis.

Pre-requisite: First Responder or Equivalent

Course Hours: 24/Min Enrollment: 20

NOTE: The student will provide their own personal flotation device (Swift Water type V), diver's rescue hard sheath knife, swift water rescue helmet, water rescue gloves, diving booties (hard sole), water type whistle (no internal ball), throw bag, and sturdy footwear for shore work; (3 mm wet suit required) 1 throw bag.

SWIFTWATER RESCUE II

Course Description:

The Swift Water Rescue II course builds on the techniques learned in the basic class. This class is primarily hands-on in the water exercises. Heavy emphasis is placed on Swift Water boating operations and the rigging of rescue line systems for swift water applications. This class is taught on a regional basis.

Pre-Requisites: Swift Water Rescue I

Course Hrs: 20/Min- Enrollment: 20 - Max 30

NOTE: The student will provide their own personal floatation device (Swift Water Type V), dive/rescue hard sheath knife, Swift Water rescue helmet, water rescue gloves, diving booties (hard sole), water type whistle (no internal ball), throw bag & 2 green chem. sticks, and sturdy footwear for shore work; 3mm wet suit

DIVE RESCUE I

Course Description:

The Dive Rescue I course is designed to introduce qualified Scuba divers with underwater SAR techniques. Subjects covered include dive team equipment, procedures, and communications. Search patterns, recovery of victims, vehicles, and evidence are also taught in a mix of classroom and field exercises. This class is taught on a regional basis.

Pre-Requisites: Advanced open water certification, YMCA SLAM or equal, current first aid and CPR training.

Course Hrs: 24, Min Enrollment - 10 Max: 20

NOTE: See equipment requirement below on the Dive II.

DIVE RESCUE II

Course Description:

The Dive Rescue II course is designed to build upon the DR I class with a special emphasis on underwater evidence recovery techniques. With many units supporting local law enforcement efforts, this class covers important procedures that should be followed in searching, finding, and recovering evidence in the underwater environment.

Pre-Requisites: Dive Rescue I

Course Hrs: 24, Min Enrollment: 10 - Max: 20

*Required Individual Equipment: Participants are required to furnish the following equipment: mask, fins, snorkel, BC, regulator, octopus, gauges (depth, pressure, compass), two full tanks, weight belt w/weights, (Full) wet suit or dry suit, personal marker buoy, knife, dive light, dive watch, whistle, and P.F.D. Underwater cameras & standard cameras are helpful for evidence documentation.

Pres. Message Con't from Page 1 . . .

If you have new members or members that haven't been to a meeting please invite them to come. I am looking forward to seeing each of you at the meetings and visiting your squad buildings during travels. This organization that we are a part is great, but can be even better if we all participate. We need to support first our local squad functions, next our region call outs and activities. By doing all of these we can make TARS

BUILDING/STRUCTURAL COLLAPSE BASICS I

Course Description:

This program will address in a mix of classroom and field exercises the tools and techniques required to deal with light frame structural collapse in Search and Rescue Operations. Topics will include: Structural assessment, building types, deployment considerations, vertical, horizontal, laced post and raker shoring will be taught, as well as breaching techniques and the use of specialized cameras and listening devices for searching voids in collapse situation.

Course Hrs: 20, Min Enrollment: 20

NOTE: Participants should be in good physical condition and must provide and wear sturdy work shoes, hardhat and eye protection, heavy work gloves and construction type clothing in all field exercises. Each applicant needs to bring a hammer, tape measure, and nail apron as basic personal tools. Lodging and food are on your own

BIG RIG RESCUE

Course Description:

The Big Rig Rescue program is designed to impart knowledge and develop skills in extrication techniques needed for large trucks and big road rigs. Stabilization techniques, access points and typical cab construction are some of the subjects covered. This class is a mix of classroom and field exercises.

Pre-Requisites: Basic Extrication

Course Hrs: 20, Min Enrollment: 20 NOTE: Participants will be required to furnish and wear full Protective gear for all field exercises. Extrication coveralls are accepted but must do not meet NFPA standards. Rescue Tools will be provided.

SCHOOL BUS RESCUE

Course Description:

The School Bus Rescue program is designed to give students a well rounded education on bus construction and types of buses. Basic extrication procedures, intermediate procedures, and advanced rescue techniques are taught in a mix of field and classroom exercises.

Pre-Requisites: Basic Vehicle Extrication

Course Hrs: 20 Min-Enrollment: 20

NOTE: Participants will be required to furnish and wear full protective gear for all field exercises. Rescue tools will be provided. Lodging and food are on your own.

even stronger. We are made up of approximately 4,800 men and women from over 118 different organizations. If you think about the fact that the majority of our membership is volunteer, that's says volumes. To sum it all up in a few words "Desire to serve. Ability to perform, Courage to act."

God Bless you and take care of each other

Spotlight On Con't from Page 1 . . .

Managing and Insuring Your Liability: While all actions you take from suggestions above will help manage exposure to a degree, a few other areas should be considered. Adopt written Suggested Operating Guidelines that are reasonable and truly reflect what your mission is and how you go about performing it. Keep proper records up to date including your corporate recognition through State government. Be responsible and adequately insure your agency with liability insurance and don't forget your members. While most units place a worker's compensation policy in effect, many don't

realize if they are a volunteer department that will only cover medical costs and not replace earnings whether temporary or permanent injuries occur. So, consider accident & sickness coverage and accidental death benefits for your members. The fact will always remain that the emergency services is a dangerous business. No matter what we do, sometimes things will go wrong and the chips will fall where they may. Taking responsible actions to minimize accidents happening can make a big difference in prevention and having proper coverage can make a big difference when "Murphy" shows up on that call.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM - STEPHEN R. CARDEN, TARS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

I wanted to let each of you know that I have recently advised the TARS Executive Committee of my decision to retire from the position of Executive Director in 2010. That will be during my 20th year of service to the Association as an employee, and will give ample time for a replacement to be named and trained to fill the position.

I have found it to be an honor and privilege to serve and represent this organization. It will always be a highlight of my life experiences to have had this opportunity and I can only hope that I provided the level of performance that the organization deserves.

We have certainly seen many changes in the last two decades in the growth of our organization. Our training programs have increased over ten fold in their participation levels, and many communication tools such as this newsletter and the website have been implemented to stay in touch with and inform our members. The web-based training documentation system has been a huge success and our commitment to expand our support staff with a career training coordinator was a much needed step to keep programs current. Our associate membership category has more than doubled the number of agencies that TARS represents and provides a true example of

the interest and support shared for TARS from the varied fields of emergency service organizations.

Our strength as a statewide organization is based, I believe, in that diversity of membership. The wide range of services and affiliation at the local level span all across the spectrum of rescue, fire, EMS, EMA, and even law enforcement. The dedication of our individual members who volunteer their time as instructors for their local agencies and their service to their communities are the backbone of our successes.

I look forward to the next two years of working with our State Officers to search for, and interview potential candidates for this position. I also look forward to the challenges and opportunities we will have before us during that period in our daily operations. I want to thank each of you for the help, friendship and support you have given to me over the years. I know and trust you will offer the same help, friendship and support to my successor, whereas that is a key part to their ability to advance this organization into the future.

*"Thank each of you for your continued service to this organization and your community.
May God Bless each of you."*



Tennessee Association of Rescue Squads

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