

## Scout Leaders



**Q: What can you tell us about your service response area and call volume?**

A: We are a non-profit volunteer service that specializes in special events in both Kenosha and Racine counties. We also serve in Kenosha County's MABAS system for large incidents and fire department medical rehab, and sponsor a majority of the Kenosha Special Response water rescue team. Our call volume averages 80 events a year.

**Q: What level of care do you provide and how are you staffed?**

A: We are an Advanced EMT level service and are staffed by seven Advanced EMT's, 10 EMTs, four support staff and a 15-member dive rescue team.

**Q. How many stations and apparatus does your service have?**

A: We have one station that houses two ambulances, a four-wheel-drive pick-up and our dive rescue boat.

**Q. Tell us something unique about your service and/or your response area.**

A: We cover many contracted special events so those don't tie up the municipal departments. We cover small events all the way up to being



the primary medical transport for the Ironman Triathlon. No event is too small or too big for us to help with.

**Q: Community outreach plays an important role in many communities. Can you give a few examples of programs you provide?**

A: We will go to schools in the summer to do demonstrations, go to Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops to help with merit badges. Our latest outreach started this year when there was an article in our local newspaper complaining that a local lagoon was an eyesore. Our dive team decided they would help clean it up. They

utilized some specialty equipment, including hazmat-rated gear and started pulling out all kinds of debris. This will become an annual project for our department.

**Q: Many of Wisconsin's fire and EMS services are facing recruitment and retention challenges. As a career department, what does your service do to retain personnel to reduce turnover?**

A. Since we are an all-volunteer department it's very hard to retain personnel. We try to make it fun and make everyone and their families welcome. Above all, we treat everyone with



respect, and encourage the volunteer mentality. We also accept non-EMTs for support personnel in the department if they are willing to go through training to become an EMT within a year. We will sponsor that individual through their classes, fully reimbursing them for classes after they have been on the department in good standing two years after becoming an EMT.

**Q: What do you foresee your service's main challenges to be in the next year and what are your plans to address them?**

A: Our main challenge is to bring in enough money to keep us operational. Seven years ago we had a fire in our station and all of our vehicles and equipment were destroyed. We found out that we were under-insured, but we were able to rebuild and become operational in five months. We rely on money from our contracted events and donations from the community. Currently, we would like to replace our 17-year-old ambulance so we are in the process of doing more fundraisers and working out mutual aid contracts with other departments.

**Q: Why did your service choose to become members of WEMSA? What member benefit does your service value most?**

A: Several of us have been going to the WEMSA conference since it started. Several past and present members have been on the planning committee for the conference. There are many benefits that we value, such as the conference, member buying and the magazine.

**Q: Can you give a historical perspective of your service and where you see your service heading in the next 5-10 years?**

A: A Milwaukee Journal article from March 2, 1947 about a train wreck that happened in Kenosha on February 23, 1930 stated: "At a combined speed of nearly 100 miles an hour, a passenger train and a freight train approached each other on parallel tracks of the North Shore electric lines. A motorist, intent on beating the freight train to the crossing, was struck by the passenger train, setting five coaches swaying. One of the coaches slammed into a freight car. In an instant there was grinding roar as

steel met steel in horrible, screeching bedlam. Fourteen persons died, 100 were hurt. The February sky flared with flashes from short circuited wires. The crackling electricity was drowned out by the raising wail of the injured, the dying, and the frightened."

One of the many people who offered medical help to those injured in this incident was Howard Gatley. Howard happened to be an executive with the Kenosha Boy Scout Council and had been trained in first aid. As a result of this accident, Howard Gatley, the Kenosha Boy Scout Council, and the Red Cross founded Scout Leaders Rescue. In fact, there is a picture of one of our ambulances in the 1942 Boy Scout's first aid merit badge books.

Since that time, Scout Leaders Rescue ownership has changed from the Boy Scouts of America and the Red Cross to an independent non-profit ambulance service provider. Scout Leaders Rescue has been a standalone organization since the late 70s.

In the next 5-10 years we look to increase our special contracts and MABAS agreements. In addition, we are looking to add an additional ambulance and to increase our membership.

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