

Northwest Fremont EMS, Inc.
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The Pulse

of Northwest Fremont EMS, Inc.

Providing emergency medical services to residents
and visitors of Northwest Fremont County.

110 South Bend
Canon City, CO 81212-9772
www.nwfems.com

Fall/Winter 2011 Newsletter

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Billing Volunteer Found!

Northwest Fremont EMS is always looking for volunteers to assist with the work of running the organization. NWFEMS is deeply grateful to Suzanne Cook who has agreed to do billing for NWFEMS. Without the work of dedicated volunteers like Suzanne, NWFEMS could not exist. The positions of Secretary and Fund Raising Director remain open. If you would be willing to serve in one of these positions (or know someone who would), please contact Vice President Curtis Eulert at 275-1765 or e-mail vicepresident@nwfems.com.

Annual Meeting Summary

The 2011 NWFEMS Annual Meeting was held on August 6. The meeting included reports on NWFEMS activities for the past year, including the Treasurer's report. In addition, board member elections were held with the following results:

- Curtis Eulert was re-elected as Vice President,
- Tonya Hecox was re-elected as Treasurer, and
- Chris Hecox was re-elected as Medical & Training Director.

If you need an ambulance, call 911.

Aspirin, The “Wonder Drug”

The research on aspirin is promising: The well-known “wonder drug” may help to both prevent and treat heart attacks.

A study of more than 87,000 women found that those who took a low dose of aspirin regularly were less likely to suffer a first heart attack than women who took no aspirin. Women over the age of 50 appeared to benefit most. While earlier research has shown that aspirin can help prevent heart attacks in men, this was the first study to suggest a similar result for women.

One study found that both women and men taking only 30mg of aspirin daily—one tenth the strength of regular aspirin—helped prevent heart attacks as effectively as the usual 300mg dose. The smaller dose caused less stomach irritation.

Aspirin also reduces the chance that women who have already had a heart attack or stroke will have, or die from, another one.

Aspirin may increase the chances of survival after a heart attack, if it is taken quickly. A major study showed that taking a low dose of aspirin within the first hours of an attack reduced deaths by 23%. However, you should not take aspirin to either treat or prevent a heart attack without first discussing it with your doctor. Aspirin is a powerful drug with many side effects. It can increase your chances of getting ulcers, kidney disease, liver disease, and stroke from a hemorrhage.

Only a doctor who knows your complete medical history and current health can judge whether the benefits you may gain outweigh the risks.

-- Chris Hecox, RN, NREMT-Paramedic

Who’s Who at NWFEMS

- **President:**
Chris Hecox – president@nwfems.com
- **Vice President:**
Curtis Eulert – vicepresident@nwfems.com
- **Secretary:**
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You can also go to nwfems.com and click on **Contact Us**.

Moving?

For address changes or corrections, call Ann Eulert at 719-275-1765, e-mail newsletter@nwfems.com or write to:

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AHA Update

On December 15, 2011, the American Heart Association released an update to its heart disease and stroke statistics. Here are some highlights from the update:

- Cardiovascular disease is still the leading cause of death in the US.
- The death rate from stroke has fallen. Stroke has gone from being the 3rd leading cause of death to the 4th.
- 68% of US adults (and 32% of children ages 2-19) are overweight or obese.
- 33% of adults engage in no aerobic leisure-time physical activity.

The American Heart Association defines ideal cardiovascular health based on seven health factors: smoking status, weight, physical activity, healthy diet, cholesterol, blood pressure, fasting glucose levels, and the absence of a diagnosis of heart or blood vessel disease. Based on that definition, the new data shows that 94% of US adults have at least one factor rated at the “poor” level and 38% have at least three “poor” ratings.

Keeping Up-to-Date

The volunteer professionals at NWFEMS must meet the same educational and certification requirements as paid professionals, so they work hard to keep their skills up-to-date.

- Chris Hecox, Tonya Hecox, and Ann Eulert attended the Colorado State EMS Conference November 3 – 6, 2011.
- Tonya Hecox completed her Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support recertification.
- Chris Hecox, Tonya Hecox, and Ann Eulert completed several EMS-related on-line classes.

EMS Has Come a Long Way

Do you know anyone who has grown up thinking that dialing 911 has always been the way to call for an ambulance?

In fact, it was 1966 when the National Academy of Sciences issued a report recommending that a single nationwide telephone number be designated to summon an ambulance. In the same report, they also noted that at least half of the nation’s ambulance services were being provided by morticians who transported patients in the back of modified hearses. This report also recommended the development of national standards for training ambulance personnel.

EMS has come a long way since then. Its ranks now include dedicated full-time professionals with extensive training in pre-hospital care. Modern EMS providers do much more than just transporting patients, or even performing CPR and splinting broken bones. Today’s EMTs are trained to check vital signs, control bleeding, and identify conditions that need rapid transport to a level I or II trauma center. Volunteers from NWFEMS can start IVs, give life-saving medications, run and interpret EKGs (both 3-lead and 12-lead) in the field, and much more.

In today’s world, when you dial 911 and request an ambulance, you get much more than just transportation. You get trained experts who can provide life-saving treatments. You get an assessment that allows you to bypass the waiting room at the hospital. You get access to advanced prehospital care, including transport by a helicopter if needed.

So, if you are one of those people who remember eight-track tapes and the original Star Trek series (or if the names Johnny Gage and Roy DeSoto sound vaguely familiar), you have lived through a quiet explosion of tremendous advances in the field of prehospital care – a trend that will no doubt continue as we move into the future.

Strategies for the New Year

New Year's resolutions almost always include making healthy lifestyle changes such as eating better, starting an exercise program, losing weight, or quitting smoking. Unfortunately, most New Year's Resolutions fall by the way side after a few weeks. Below are some tips for increasing the odds of success in making positive changes in your life:

- **Plan for the long term.** Consider the healthy habits you want to develop to be a permanent lifestyle change. It's OK if it takes a while to get there – maybe even several years. For example, don't "go on a diet" because that means someday you will "go off" that diet. Instead, develop healthy eating habits that you can stick with forever.
- **Be prepared.** Read a book. Talk to someone who's been there. Do some research on the web. Make sure you understand what it will take to accomplish your goals.
- **Set realistic goals.** Once you know what your long term goals are, break them down into smaller mini-goals that you are confident you can achieve. Decide which one to work on first. Once you have achieved (and celebrated) your first mini-goal, you can start to work on the next one.
- **Develop strategies.** When you notice that you are not sticking with your plan, take a minute to figure out why. If your exercise program goes out the window when the weather is bad, what can you do indoors? If a headache is the problem, can you reduce the intensity of your workout?
- **Write it down.** Identify concrete things you can do to move towards your first mini-goal. For example, if your goal is to eat more healthy foods and your mini-goal is to add an additional green vegetable to your diet once a week for the next month, then write down that you will add steamed broccoli to your dinner on Tuesday. What vegetable will you have the next week? Decide if it will be spinach, green beans, cabbage, or something else you enjoy. Writing it down makes it more real and helps you focus.

- **Plan for setbacks.** The odds are that you will have relapses. That does not mean that you have failed or that you should give up on your goal. Develop a plan ahead of time for what you need to do to get back on track after a relapse. Write it down. People often stop smoking more than once before they are permanently successful. Be persistent and have a Plan B, C, and D. Remember that a setback only becomes a failure if you give up.
- **Be flexible.** Assess your progress frequently. If something is not working for you, rethink your goal and your strategies for getting there. Find what works for you.
- **Reward your successes.** Pick something that motivates you (and is compatible with your goals) and use that to celebrate when you reach your mini-goals. Blow bubbles with a grandchild, light a scented candle, or put out some catnip and watch a furry friend go crazy.
- **Focus on positives.** Instead of thinking about the foods you must avoid, focus on the ones you can enjoy. When you find yourself tempted by a cupcake, think about how much you enjoy fresh blueberries.
- **Get support.** Many people find that they are more likely to stick with their plan when they share it with others. Consider signing up for motivational e-mails, joining a group, such as Weight Watchers or a hiking club, or finding an exercise buddy.
- **Know when to get professional help.** If you are over 50 years old or have health issues, consult with your doctor before you make significant changes such as starting an exercise program or making a major change to your diet. If you are over 30% above your ideal weight or if your health issues are serious, you may need to be in a clinically supervised program.

Did you notice how many of these are things you should do BEFORE you make any changes? Serious preparation increases the odds that a year from now you will be looking back on 2012 and celebrating your successes – and looking forward to more successes in the years ahead!