

Knightdale Area Rescue Squad

Knightdale EMS

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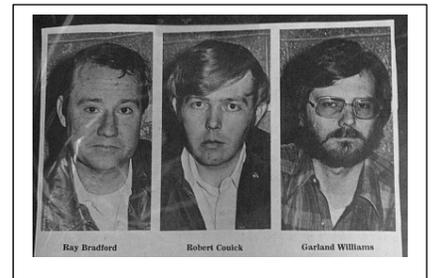
Pre-History

See main Wake County rescue squad history document.

1977-1979

1977 – March or earlier

- Until that time, Wendell Rescue Squad covered Knightdale.
- After attempts to form a Wendell RS substation in Knightdale failed, Robert Couick and a handful of others met in the Knightdale Elementary Gym. They elected offices and created the rescue squad.
 - Gold Leaf Farmer, March 24, 1977:
 - Meeting with approximately twenty-three people held, Weds., March 23.
 - Motion made to form a squad, after “length discussion on whether Knightdale had enough people” who were interested in volunteering to create/operate a squad.
 - Officers were appointed: Robert Couick as Chairman of Steering Committee, Ray Bradford as Asst. Chairman, and Garland Williams as Secretary-Treasurer.
 - Officers authorized to prepare by-laws to present at next meeting, March 28, at Knightdale fire station at 8 p.m.
- With help of Knightdale Jaycees, they borrowed some \$16,000 and purchased a 1977 Dodge van ambulance.
 - White with orange stripe.
 - Single beacon on roof, twice electronic sirens above cab.
 - Delivered May 22, 1977.
- They set-up shop in the upstairs of the Knightdale fire station, where they operated for six months.
- Source: GLF? 2/24/83



1977 – March, 30 – **Knightdale Area Rescue Squad** articles of incorporation filed with the state. (3/30/77)

- Eighteen charter members.
- All members were required to attend and pass the state EMT course within one year of acceptance into the squad.

- Founding members:
 - R. Bishop
 - Ray Bradford
 - R. Cockman
 - Robert Couick
 - T. Gray
 - S. Hildebrand
 - D. Hinton
 - Merton King
 - C. Lloyd
 - M.J. Morgensen
 - P. Morgensen
 - M. Murray
 - P. Potts
 - D. Stephenson
 - A. Watson
 - G. Williams
- Source: WS-PPT

1977 – March/April

- Started as first responder service, prior to purchasing ambulance. (Oral history)

1977, October – Squad formally begins service on October 1, 1977, with a single Dodge ambulance, and operating out of the second floor of the Knightdale Fire Department. Phone service and sleeping quarters were provided by the fire department, along with an internal parking spot in one of the station’s five bays. (WS-PPT).

1977 – November (?)

One month into operation...

- They have 35 members.
 - Twenty-four are already EMTs, and the rest are taking courses to get certified.
 - Have two people each night at the firehouse, to work night shift.
- Operate from Knightdale fire station.
- Have purchased a fully equipped 1977 Dodge ambulance and a boat.
 - Bank note co-signed by Mayor Billy Wilder.
- Construction underway of a 2,500 square-foot building, with a goal of costing no more than \$7,000.
 - Ended up costing \$15,000, with squad owing no money afterward.
 - Squad doing most of building work themselves. Construction coordinated by Merton King, squad member and Raleigh firemen.
 - Materials supplied at cut rates by local supplies.
 - Building site on First Avenue donated by Billy Adams or Adams Tractor Company.

- EMS station started as two-bay building.
- Three-bay addition later added, and original section converted into other functions.
- Building funded largely through donations, a “gospel singalong” fundraiser at Meredith College Theater, and a subsidy from the county.
 - Squad’s first radiothon raised \$3,000, considered small compared to what Wendell was raising at the time (\$25,000).
 - County will contribute \$1,000 per month to squad, and match funds on purchase of communications equipment.
- Community initially somewhat reluctant to fully support the new squad. “It took us about three years to get established here,” remembers Couick.
- Source: Undated newspaper article.

1978, February – Squad building on First Avenue is completed. (WS-PPT)

1978, March – Acquired first crash truck.

- “Unit was responsible for assisting in extricating patients from motor vehicles and/or any type of incident where tools [were needed that were] not normally carried on an ambulance.” (WS-PPT)

1978, September - Bought a second ambulance.

- 1978 (?) Chevrolet/Swab SE-120.
- Build #3635.
- Work order May 1978, built September 1978, delivered September 1978.
- Cost \$26,000.
- Built by SWAB, of “modular type” and “not a van converted for use as an ambulance.” (WS-PPT) (Swab records)

1978 - Other developments;

- Bought a boat.
- Gave the squad “water rescue capability long needed due to the many ponds and lakes in the area.” (WS-PPT)

1979 – Notes:

- Acquired its first Hurst Power Tool. This further expanded the ability of the squad to “deal with persons trapped in or under vehicles, tractors, etc.” (WS-PPT)
- Acquired 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.” (WS-PPT)

- During its first year of operation, the squad answered 440 calls, “ranging from simple complaints such as colds and the flue, to full cardiac arrests, shootings, stabbings, and motor-vehicle accidents.” (WS-PPT)

1980-1989

1980 – Notes

- Answered about 550 calls. (WS-PPT)

1981 – New ambulance:

- 1981 Chevrolet C30/Swab RDK-1822
- Build #4204
- Chassis built May 1980
- Ordered July 1981
- Built 1981
- (Swab records)

1981 – Developments:

- Squad building remodeled and enlarged to 3,000 square-feet.
 - Enlarged to provide more space for personnel and equipment.
 - Capacity increased to six vehicle bays, sleeping provisions for nine people, a large meeting hall, a kitchen area, and a lounge area.
 - Building can now support 24-hour staffing. (WS-PPT)

1982 – Notes

- Squad achieved certificated in EMT-Intermediate level treatment by 1982, allowing members to “administer Intravenous (IV) fluids and drugs, perform advanced airway management techniques, and defibrillate patients.” (WS-PPT)

1982, March – Crash team formed.

1983, February 24 – Developments:

- Robert Couick is Chief. He works as detective with Garner Police. He previously served with Wendell RS.
- Has nearly \$350,000 in assets.
- Answers average of 475 calls per year.
- Covers 12-mile by eight-mile area. Estimated population is 3,000.
- 1977 Dodge ambulance sold, replaced with new modular ambulance that cost \$38,000.
- Vehicle financed in part by \$30,000 raised last year in door-to-door solicitations.

- Solicitations are squad's primary fundraising channel. No longer relies on bake sales and barbecues. Instead, they canvass neighborhoods once a year for donations. It's "awful time consuming" says Couick, but it "promotes a good image for the squad in the community."
- Everything is paid for, except 30-year loan on remodeled headquarters.
- Two luxury items purchased: \$2,000 video system for training and \$3,500 computer for "keeping track of everything from the squad's finances to the number IVs members have given in a particular month."
 - Squad is only one in Wake County storing information on a computer.
 - "We try to run this like a business" says Couick.
 - Rescuers also follow up their calls with letters and surveys.
 - Questionnaire asks if squad personnel were "courteous, neat in appearance, and considerate of their belongings."
- Squad has twelve EMTs and nine EMT-Intermediates. They train twice each month, and spend at least 55 hours at its headquarters.
 - Each member must spend four nights per month at the squad building on duty call.
 - Each night of the week, a three-person team sleeps overnight from 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
 - Squad is only one in the county that requires its member to spend their duty at the squad building.
- Source: Newspaper article

1984 – Notes:

- Answered some 450 calls.
- Countywide response time averaged 7.1 minutes in 1984.
- Knightdale's average was 6.5 minutes.

1985, February - New crash truck placed in service on February 6, answers first call on February 11.

- Financed entirely by donations.
 - Raised \$30,000 in about three weeks, and salvaged about \$30,000 of equipment from old crash truck.
 - Installed most of the equipment themselves, and received much help from Bob Couick, who is no longer a squad member but lives in Knightdale.
 - Crash truck is equipped with a Hurst power tool, power generator, two 1,000 watt quartz lights, and a winch. Also aboard are radiation detection tools, rappelling gear, and various hand extrication tools.
 - They plan to add an air compressor and air bags for lifting vehicles.
- Operated by "crash team" and they know of no other squad in the state with a team that specializes in heavy rescue as Knightdale's does.
 - Members are Lt. Billy Adams, Jimmie Sauls, James Pope, Steve Spence, Maylon Baker, Charles Dean, and Bob Holleman.

- Members are not EMTs, but specialize in extrication. Other duties include “directing traffic, radiation detection and conducting dragging operations for recovering bodies from water.”
- Always two members on every emergency call. If full crash crew not needed, they help EMTs in any way they can.
- Source: GLF, 2/21/85.

1985 – Notes:

- Chief is Kip Boatwright.
- Answered 626 calls.

1986 – New ambulance.

- 1986 Chevrolet C30/Swab SE125D
- Build #4585
- Delivered 1986
- (Swab records.)

1986 – Notes:

- Chief is Kip Boatwright.
- Squad has 25 people.
 - In recent years, to help cope with increasing calls, squad requires at least 70 percent of members to live in immediate Knightdale area.
 - Cadet program started in January.
 - Tries to have someone stationed at the building during the day, to get calls out faster.
 - That way, county doesn’t have to page all members to get someone to respond.
- Daytime calls rising, notes unnamed/undated article. During past two years, call volume has increased 70 percent.
 - Anticipated growth in and around Knightdale.
 - Eight-eight state moratorium on expanding town’s sewer system recently lifted.
- Squad’s territory covers some 60-70 miles:
 - From Neuse River on the west (except for chunks along Poole Road to Barwell Road), to SR 1003 and Marks Creek Road on the east, and from Old Milburnie Road area on the north to the Shotwell area on the south.
 - Serves as backup in Garner and Wendell, and in Wake Forest and Raleigh less frequently.
 - Last month answered six mutual calls in Wake Forest, Garner, Raleigh, and Wendell, because “they couldn’t get their ambulances out.”
- County gives each volunteer squad \$28,000 per year. This year, Knightdale’s share was increased by \$1,000.

- Additional funds come from local donations.
- Squad buying third vehicle, which will cost about \$45,000.
 - During recent week, squad had to borrow an ambulance from Garner three times, because of mechanical malfunctions during a busy period.
- Source: Undated, unknown news article.

1989 – With fewer volunteers available during daytime hours, two full-time, paid members are hired in 1989. (WS-PPT)

1989 – New ambulance.

- 1989 Chevrolet/3500 Swab SE-120
- Build #3635, remount of 1978 body
- Chassis built April 1989
- Work order #44220, May 1989
- Built April 1989
- (Swab records)

1990-1999

1991 – Nine volunteer rescue squads in Wake County abandoned tradition of free ambulance service and begin charging fees for transporting patients. (N&O, 6/10/91)

Snapshot of rescue squads, from September 10, 1991, News & Observer:

Rescue Squad	BLS fee	ALS fee	Lifetime Membership	1990 Calls
Knightdale Rescue	\$148	\$178	\$35	1,000

1991 – New ambulance.

- 1991 Swab 130-D
- GM product chassis, built September 1991
- Build #4204, remount of 1981 body.
- Work order #45924
- Built September 1991
- (Swab records)

1993 – In association with Wake County EMS, squad begins providing 24-hour paramedic service. (WS-PPT)

1994 – Squad changes name to **Knightdale Emergency Medical Service**, to be more representative of the services being provided. (WS-PPT)

1997, January – Squad transferred responsibility for rescue services within its response area to the three fire departments that covered its area: Knightdale FD, Wake-New Hope FD, and _____ . (WS-PPT)

1999 – Snapshot:

Agency	Ambulances	Square Miles	1995 Population	Personnel		1998 Calls	1998 Revenues
Knightdale EMS	Two	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First duty, paramedic (WCEMS paramedic plus EMT intermediate) • Second duty, EMT intermediate 	60.8	20,427	4 paid, 17 vol.	1,316	\$176,550

2000-2005

2000, October – Squad begins operating with its own second-duty paramedics on October 1, 2000. (WS-PPT)

2005, May – Squad merges into new organization named **Eastern Wake EMS**, with merger document filed with state on May 12, 2005.

See Eastern Wake EMS research notes for more information.

Sources:

- Oral histories
- Newspaper articles, as cited
- Wayne Schultz PowerPoint Slides (WS-PPT), <http://www.knightdalehistoric.com/wp-content/uploads/2008/03/Rescue.pdf>

Help Wanted!

This document is part of a project to research and record the history of rescue squads and EMS providers in Wake County.

You can help in any number of ways, including:

- Read this document and visit the project web site, www.legeros.com/history/ems
 - What’s good about what we’re doing?
 - What could be improved?

- What haven't we thought of?
- Proofread this document as casually or extensively as desired:
 - Misspelled names?
 - Wrong makes or models of vehicles?
 - General timeframes that seem off?
 - Etc.
- Supplement this document with things that you remember, or stories you've heard.
 - Jot your thoughts in an e-mail.
 - Send a long, detailed e-mail.
 - Write things down on paper and send via postal mail.
 - Talk to the project organizers in person, at your convenience.
 - Etc.
- Share any scrapbooks, newspaper clippings, old photos, or old documents that you have, or can find.
 - Want some blasts from the past, to help you remember?
 - Visit <https://www.facebook.com/WakeEMSHistory>
- Suggest particular people that we can contact, for more information.

Contact Mike Legeros or Jeff Hammerstein at any time. Thank you in advance!