

Raleigh and Wake County – Ambulance, Rescue Squad, and EMS History

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Last updated: October 25, 2021

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Introduction

This document presents an overview of ambulance, rescue squad, and EMS service history in Raleigh and Wake County. It also provides detailed historical information on pre-rescue and pre-EMS ambulance services, including:

- Funeral home ambulances
- Ambulance Service of Raleigh
- Beacon Ambulance Service.

Timelines

Pre-History

1865 - America's first ambulance service is instituted by the U.S. Army.

1869 - America's first city ambulance service (utilizing horse drawn carriages) is instituted in New York City by Bellevue Hospital.

1870 - Prussian siege of Paris used hot air balloons to transport wounded soldiers. This was the first documented case of aeromedical transportation.

1899 - Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago began to operate an automobile ambulance which was capable of speeds up to 16 mph.

1910 - First known air ambulance aircraft was built in North Carolina and tested in Florida. The aircraft failed

after flying only 400 yards and crashing.

1928 - Julien Stanley Wise implemented the first rescue squad (Roanoke Life Saving Crew) in the nation in Roanoke, VA.

Source: GHEMS

1935-1939

1935 - Raleigh City Directory lists three ambulance services:

- **Brown's Funeral Home** - 115 Hillsboro.
- **Martin-Yelverton Co.** - 104 S. Dawson.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc.** - 222 W. Hargett.

1940-1949

1940 - Raleigh City Directory lists the following ambulance services:

- **Brown's Funeral Home** - 115 Hillsboro.
- **Lightner's Funeral Parlor (c)** - 127-129 E. Hargett.
- **Martin-Yelverton Co.** - 104 S. Dawson.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc.** - 222 W. Hargett.

1940s - Prior to World War II, hospitals provided ambulance service in many large cities. With the severe manpower shortages imposed by the war effort, it became difficult for many hospitals to maintain their ambulance operations. City governments in many cases turned ambulance service over to the police or fire department. No laws required minimal training for ambulance personnel and no training programs existed beyond basic first aid existed. In many fire departments, assignment to ambulance duty became an unofficial form of punishment. (GHEMS)

1945 - Raleigh City Directory lists the following ambulance services:

- **Brown's Funeral Home** - 115 Hillsboro.
- **Lightner's Funeral Parlor (c)** - 312 Smithfield.
- **Martin-Yelverton Co.** - 104 S. Dawson.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc.** - 222 W. Hargett.

1947 - Raleigh Fire Chief discuss creating a rescue squad. The idea isn't pursued, due to a change of (fire department?) administration. (MJL)

1949 – First rescue squad organization in North Carolina formed in Winston-Salem.

1950-1959

1950 - Raleigh City Directory lists the following ambulance services:

- **Brown's Funeral Home** - 115 Hillsboro.
- **Haywood's Ambulance Service (c)** - 322 E. Cabarrus.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc.** - 222 W. Hargett.
- **Pennington-Smith Funeral Home** - 104 S. Dawson.

1951 - Helicopters began to be used for medical evacuations during the Korea war. (GHEMS)

1952 – Emergency medical call service for Raleigh placed in service, April 1, 1952.

- Established by Wake County Medical Society.
- Telephone number 6623.
- Call any time, day or night, if person seeks attention by doctor.
- Four purposes for new service:
 1. “To help Raleigh residents locate their family physicians when the need arises.
 2. “To help local citizens, particularly newcomers, secure the names of possible family doctors—before an emergency arises.
 3. “To provide the services of a doctor as quickly as possible if an emergency.
 4. “To make available, where needed, the services of an ambulance.”
- Need for “some sort of emergency medical service for Raleigh has been pointed up by two cases, which during the past 16 months, resulted in the death of one person and the prolonged suffering of another.”
 - First occurred in November 1950, when a “Negro truck driver” was pinned in his vehicle after an accident and “immediate medical treatment by a doctor could not be obtained.”
 - Second occurred when a 50-year-old “Negro woman” died several weeks earlier, after her daughter tried in vain to “secure a number of doctors.”
- Recent survey by Raleigh Times showed “several other cities in the State are about in the same position as Raleigh with regard to emergency medical service.”
 - Hospitals in Durham, Charlotte, Winston-Salem, Charlotte, Asheville have emergency rooms open 24-hours a day, but “no ambulance or emergency call service.”
 - Ambulance service in those cities, as in Raleigh, is provided by morticians.
 - Winston-Salem is working on a similar “call service” as in Raleigh.
- Source: RT, 3/29/52

1952 - **Wake Forest Rescue Squad** organized.

- Organized by local fire and police departments, reported newspapers.

- Equipped with a respirator purchased through local citizens, and first disposed to fire department.
- Drownings are a notable focus, with three drowning deaths having occurred in the area that year. And though the fire department has a respirator, recovering the victims to be revived has been hindered because a boat had to be found, in each case.
- Boat is bought for the new squad, and a trailer is built.
- Squad operated until at least 1957. Had stopped operating by 1965, when the squad was re-organized.

1953 - **Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad** organized. Also called **Raleigh Rescue**.

- Incorporated on August 27, 1953.
- Operated/hosted by Raleigh Fire Department, but includes dozens of volunteer members, including Raleigh firemen.
- Also receives \$100 a month from the county.
- Housed at Station 1 as a two-piece unit: light rescue truck (panel van) and heavy rescue truck (Civil Defense rescue truck).
- Provides first aid and rescue service in primary capacity.
- Later provided patient transport services, in limited/specific capacity, such as:
 - By mid/late 1960s, provided emergency transport services when funeral home ambulances or private ambulate services were unavailable.
 - Also provided emergency transport from incidents where they were dispatched alongside an ambulance, and the number of patients was greater than the ambulance on scene could transport.
 - Squad also provided transport service, both emergency and non-emergency, for fire department members, and some of their family members. This ranged from transporting injured firemen from fires, to taking retired members to doctor's appointments.
- By 1972, squad operated exclusively by fire department.
- In 1974, second rescue unit added.
- Served as back-up for Wake County EMS beginning in 1976, and continued for about fifteen years.

Notes:

- N&O story on May 6, 1966, sheds some light on the squad's role with patient transport. At a car accident in Raleigh, the police dispatcher called Raleigh Ambulance Service. They later called back and said no ambulances of theirs were available. The dispatcher then called the Raleigh squad, and Overby's Funeral Home. The first-arriving unit provide the transport, which was the Raleigh squad. It appears the Raleigh squad served as back-up or alternate, in the event the primary Raleigh ambulance provider(s) were not available.

See Appendix for more history.

1955 - Raleigh City Directory lists the following ambulance services:

- **Brown-Wynne Funeral Home** - 308 St. Mary's.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc.** - 606 St. Mary's.

- **Pennington-Smith Funeral Home** - 104 S. Dawson.

1955 – **Cary Fire Department** places Civil Defense rescue truck in service.

- Operated by all-volunteer Cary Fire Department.
- Built from an ex-military, mobile machine shop.
- Carries \$8,000 worth of equipment including 5,000-watt portable generator, 2,500-watt generator, two-way radio, \$600 resuscitator, block and tackle, ropes, a portable oxygen acetylene cutting torch, in all "196 different pieces of equipment, all new."
- Only Civil Defense rescue truck operated by a volunteer fire department in North Carolina.
- Source: MJL.

Other Civil Defense rescue services in Raleigh/Wake County:

- The **Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad** operated a 1953 Reo Civil Defense rescue truck, equipped with "torches, power saws, gas masks, helmets, and first aid equipment."

Related was a Civil Defense unit in Garner:

- The **Garner Fire Department** added in 1962 an emergency power unit that was painted white and had Civil Defense logos. The 1952 GMC panel van was equipped with 120 volt, 5000 watt AC generator, flood lights, smoke ejector, clean up tools, pails, brooms, shovels, and "extra oxygen cylinders for emergency smoke problems, heart attacks, etc., at doctor's call." (MJL)

1956 – New form of artificial respiration, mouth-to-mouth, is developed.

1959 - Researchers at John's Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, MD developed the first portable defibrillator as well as perfected CPR.

Source: GHEMS

1960-1969

1960 - Raleigh City Directory lists the following ambulance services:

- **Brown-Wynne Funeral Home Inc.** - 308 St. Mary's.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc.** - 600-606 St. Mary's.
- **Pennington-Smith Funeral Home** - 104 S. Dawson.

1962 - **Wendell Rescue Squad** incorporated. (7/23/62)

See separate document for more history.

1964 - Raleigh phone book lists the following ambulance services:

- **Brown-Wynne Funeral Home** - 308 St. Marys.
- **Capitol Funeral Home** - 1012 E. Hargett.
- **Lightner Funeral Home** - 312 E. Smithfield.
- **Mitchell Funeral Home Inc** - 600 St. Marys.
- **Overby Funeral Home** - 2415 Hwy 70 E.
- **Pennington-Smith Funeral Home Inc** - 104 S. Dawson.
- **Raleigh Funeral Home** - 322 E. Cabarrus.
- **Whitley Funeral Home** - 114 3 Wendell NC.
- Apex
 - J. W. Albright Funeral Home** - S. Salem.
 - Apex Funeral Directors** - 105 W. Chatham.
 - 24 hours service
 - courteous & trained
 - Attendants – Modern rates
 - Each car equipped with oxygen

1965, January – Report published from a two-year study of ambulance service in North Carolina. The study was started on April 1, 1963.

Questionnaires were mailed to 718 ambulance providers, the majority of which were funeral homes. They were asked questions in categories of (a.) organization, (b.) area served, (c.) availability of service, (d.) equipment, (e.) services rendered, (f.) personnel, (g.) communications, (h.) records, (i.) financial, (j.) auto accidents, and (k.) opinion. Plus other data, including call details for one specific week of service.

Also contacted were 183 hospitals and 52 nursing homes, 100 county governments and 355 incorporated towns and cities, and 119 users of ambulance service (during a single week in October 1963). They were also asked both categorical questions as well as for general opinions. The medical care facilities also provided data.

The results were published in January 1965 as *Organizing Ambulance Service in the Public Interest*. It included seven pages of recommendations, notably of standards and principles and the recommendation to implement via legislation.

The 126-page bound book is described as a "research project conducted by the North Carolina Hospital Education and Research Foundation Inc., in cooperation with the Institute of Government and the Department of Hospital Administration of the School of Medicine of the University of North Carolina." The study was financed by the Division of Community Health Services of the United States Public Health Service.

Robert R. Cadmus, M.D., was the study's principal investigator. John H. Ketner was the project director.

The study also included a long list of advisory committee members, ex officio, special advisors, and staff.

The study was prompted by changes in the state's ambulance service. In at least ten communities, notes the introduction, funeral homes had discontinued service. Local governments were notified, but were poorly suited to solving the problem. Queries to academic institutions and reviews of literature found no easy answers, either. Nobody had studied ambulance problems on a statewide basis, and along the lines of the problems faced in North Carolina.

Auto accidents are also a growing concern, due to the recently developed interstate highway system, the limited access roads (which made communicating about and locating accidents harder), and the maximum speed limit having been raised.

The report concludes (or confirms) that state and local governments in North Carolina should be authorized to help provide supervised ambulance service.

Cited data includes:

- 905 vehicles were used to transport patients. Half were combination hearse-ambulances.
- 99% of providers said they covered large areas, either town plus rural or entire county/more than one county.
- 96% of users were satisfied with the service. Only two criticism were noted: another attendant need, and, once, the driver didn't know the way to the hospital (!).
- 83% of providers were funeral homes. Only 16% were rescue squads. Of the squads, 84% were private non-profit organizations and 16% were government-related.
- 63% of providers did not provide first aid at the scene. They were "load and go" and with half of those noting the reason that "police or bystanders insisted the patient be transported at once."
- 33% of providers said they had considered discontinuing service in the past year. Three-quarters of those cited financial reasons.
- 26% of calls were for non-emergency reasons.

Sources:

- *Organizing Ambulance Service in the Public Interest*
- N&O, 3/16/65.

1965, October – Six of seven funeral homes in Raleigh cease ambulance service.

- The owners contended that “deficit operations were no longer worth the advertising and good will that furnishing ambulance service brought. The number of unpaid bills was increasing, and falls calls were coming more and more numerous. It was inconvenient to maintain personnel on duty 24 hours a day. Competition was also not proving to be healthy.” (N&O, 11/20/66)
- Only **Overby Funeral Home** continues operating ambulance service, with two ambulances. Ceasing operations are likely these services listed in the 1964 phone book: Brown-Wynne FH, Capitol FH, Lightner FH, Mitchell FH, Pennington-Smith FH, and Raleigh FH.
- This is also a statewide trend. In June 1966, fifty-one funeral directors in nine Piedmont counties notify city and county governments that they’ll cease ambulance service. (N&O, 7/19/66).

Raleigh funeral home memories:

Gray Funeral Home (renamed from Overby Funeral Home):

- Operated four ambulances as a convalescent service during late 1970s to early 1980s.
- Acquired one or two of Clayton Rescue Squad's van ambulances, when the squad disposed of them. (JT)
- Fleet included:
 - 1969 Cadillac/Superior combination car.
 - 1971 Cadillac/Superior combination car.
 - 1969 Superior/Pontiac 48-inch high-top ambulance.
 - Came from somewhere out west.
 - Had a B&M Super Chief siren (prevalent out west), instead of a Federal.
 - 1972 Cadillac/Superior 54-inch high-top ambulance.
 - Bought new by C&M Ambulance in Salisbury.
 - Later wrecked.
 - Both the 1969 and 1972 had squad benches instead of the flip-down seats, uncommon in high-top coaches.
 - Source: DJ.

Mitchell Funeral Home on St. Mary's street:

- Had first Superior Coach "straight ambulance" owned in Wake County.
- Built on Cadillac professional car chassis at the Superior plant in Lima, OH.
- White in color.
- Purchased circa 1961 and operated for a number of years.
- Source: SA.

1965, November 1 – **Ambulance Service of Raleigh** begins operation.

- Operated by Gene Clark.
- Later named **Raleigh Ambulance Service**.
- Has four ambulances, either immediately or within a few months.
- Answers the majority of Raleigh ambulance calls, including "police calls."
- Loses money from the beginning, due to patients who won't or can't pay.
- Source: N&O, various.

1965 - **Wake Forest Rescue Squad** incorporated. (1/19/65)

See separate document for more history.

1966 – National Highway Safety Act enacted.

- In 1965, more people died that year in auto accidents (some 50,000), than in eight years of the Vietnam War. President Johnson that year signs into the law the National Highway Safety Act.
- National Highway Safety Administration created.
- Each state directed to develop a regional EMS system.
- North Carolina Governors Highway Safety Program charged with assisting in the funding of

such a program in North Carolina.

- Soon after the law is enacted, the United States Department of Transportation released national standards for the design and equipment of ambulances, and training for ambulance attendants.
- Sources: Pratt, GHEMS

1966 - The National Research Council publishes a research paper, "Accidental Death & Disability - The Neglected Disease of Modern Society". Also known as "The White Paper", it's catalyst for improving the delivery of pre-hospital care to present day. An excerpt from the report states: "Expert consultants returning from both Korea and Vietnam have publicly asserted that, if seriously wounded, their chances for survival would be better in the zone of combat than on the average city street." (GHEMS)

1966 - Dr. Pantridge in Belfast, Ireland, started to deliver pre-hospital coronary care using ambulances. His research showed that his program significantly improved patient survivability in out-of-hospital cardiac events. (GHEMS)

1966 - Raleigh phone book lists the following ambulance services:

- **Ambulance Service of Raleigh Inc.** – 500 Pershing Road – 828-0737.
- **Overby Funeral Home**, Raleigh.
- **Screws & Hudson Funeral Home**, Zebulon.
- **Wendell Rescue Squad**.
- **J. W. Albright Funeral Home**, Apex.

1966 - Ambulance service issues and events in Raleigh include:

- City adopts ordinance regulating ambulance service in Raleigh on April 18, 1966. (N&O, 4/19/66)
- **Raleigh Ambulance Service** and **Overby Funeral Home** subsequently awarded licenses.
- RAS continues to lose money, on patients who won't or can't pay for transport costs. Owner Gene Clark requests city and county subsidies, and/or help collecting unpaid bills, and eventually threatens to (but doesn't) stop answering certain call types on April 30, unless he receives some assistance.

1967 – North Carolina General Assembly passes Ambulance Services Act, under Chapter 130, Article 26, Regulation of Ambulance Services.

- Legislation authorizing counties to “assure adequate and continuing ambulance service” is placed into the law on the Friday before May 6. The bill grants counties power to “grant franchises, subsidize private companies, or set up public operations to ensure that ambulance service continues.” Counties have the power to levy taxes without vote, if money is needed to finance such services. A grandfather clause provides that a county can grant a franchise to any private firm presently offering service, if it meets the “specifications of the law.” The bill “sets

up various requirements of personnel and equipment for ambulances licensed under the law.” (N&O, 5/6/67)

- Licensing regulation for operators of ambulances is adopted by the state board of health. The rules include a thirty-one point list of equipment features that ambulances must contain. There’s also a fourteen-point list of sanitary standards. Permits to operate ambulances must be obtained on an annual basis. (N&O, 10/13/67)

From Pratt:

- “This act placed the regulatory responsibilities of EMS under the North Carolina State Board of Health and provided the board authority for adopting standards for equipment, inspection of medical equipment, and supplies required for ambulances. In addition, the law required that ambulances have permits and the board adopted regulations setting forth the qualifications required for certification of ambulance attendants.”
- “The 1967 law also created an Advisory Committee on Ambulance Service to assist the North Carolina State Board of Health in developing standards for use in Article 26. The advisory committee consisted of nine members and representative of:
 - North Carolina Funeral Directors Association Inc.
 - Funeral Directors and Morticians Association of North Carolina Inc.
 - North Carolina Ambulance Association Inc.
 - North Carolina Medical Society
 - North Carolina Hospital Association
 - American Red Cross
 - North Carolina State Association of Rescue Squads Inc.
 - North Carolina Association of County Commissioners
 - North Carolina League of Municipalities”
- “This advisory committee still exists today and has expanded in membership to represent the many EMS stakeholders.” It’s now named the North Carolina EMS Advisory Council.

Memories from Stephen Acai:

- The legislation was the first such in the state and established minimum equipment requirements for ambulance and training standards for "Ambulance Attendants".
- Each county Board of Health was responsible for implementing the rules and regulations established by the State.
- The State Board of Health, Department of Epidemiology, Accident Prevention Section was the agency to whom county and local governments reported to.

1967 - The American Ambulance Association publishes an article that states that as many as 25,000 Americans are either crippled or left permanently disabled as a result of the efforts of untrained or poorly trained ambulance personnel. (GHEMS)

1967 - St. Vincent's Hospital in New York City starts the nation's first mobile coronary care unit. The program at first used physicians, then paramedics. (GHEMS)

1967 - Ambulance service issues and events in Raleigh that year include:

- **Ambulance Service of Raleigh** is renamed from **Raleigh Ambulance Service**. They receive a rate hike in February, but are still losing money. They warn the city and county in January that

they could go out of business, if they don't receive some financial assistance. The company soon demands an annual subsidy for their services.

- **Ambulance Service of Raleigh** merges with **Ambulance Service** of Rockingham County in April. The Raleigh company is dissolved, and the Rockingham County company continues to keep the Raleigh services operating. Original owner Gene Clark owns a majority share of the merged company.
- **Ambulance Service of Raleigh** stops answering county emergency calls on August 21, and halts city emergency calls on September 18. County officials arrange temporary service from Wake Memorial Hospital, Overby Funeral Home, and three rescue squads. City officials use the Raleigh Rescue Squad and Wake Memorial Hospital. **Overby Funeral Home** continues ambulance operation. County officials study alternatives to subsidizing the Raleigh ambulance firm.
- In October, county officials decide to contract with a private ambulance firm, to provide service to those county areas without it. They request proposals and then bids from a number of firms, including **Ambulance Service of Raleigh**. The process takes a number of months.

1968 - Ambulance service issues and events in Raleigh that year include:

- **Ambulance Service of Raleigh** awarded county contract, for service in Raleigh and county areas where funeral home ambulance service isn't available. The annual subsidy is \$31,780, though the initial contract expires June 30 and must be renewed. The contract states that ASR will provide 24-hour service with three ambulances that meet state regulations, and will answer all calls from police, sheriff, and highway patrol, and all other emergency calls. They will charge \$20 for transport within Raleigh, and add 65 cents per mile one-way, if transporting outside the city limits. (N&O, 4/5/68)
- County plans to subsidize funeral homes in Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon with \$1,500 annually, so they'll continue ambulance service. (N&O, 4/5/68)

1968 – American Telephone and Telegraph starts reserving the digits 9-1-1 for emergency use. (GHEMS)

1969 – EMT classes first taught in Raleigh-Durham area.

- Beacon Ambulance and future Wake EMS member Fred Loy is part of the pilot program. (FL)

1969 – Nation's first paramedic program started by Miami Fire Department. Shortly after, the nation's first out-of-hospital defibrillation occurs. The patient survived and left hospital neurologically intact. (GHEMS)

1969, July - **Beacon Ambulance Service** renamed from Raleigh Ambulance Service. The company is sold on July 3, 1969, with owner Gene Clark selling to Charles Daughtery of Murfreesboro and John Atchinson of Washington. The new owners sign a contract with the county, to guarantee that ambulance service is provided in Wake. The contract requires that they answer all calls from the police, sheriff, or highway patrol, and all other emergency calls. They [continue to] receive a \$31,776 subsidy from the county.

Daughtery, who assumed management of the service, formerly worked with an ambulance firm in Fort Lauderdale, FL. He purchased two of the three ambulances from RAS, and planned to add another in the

next several weeks. The company planned to maintain the same staff of twelve full-time attendants, and occupy the RAS office at 202 New Bern Avenue. (N&O, 7/4/69)

Newspaper advertisement on August 2, 1969: “New Management. 24 hour service. Oxygen equipped. Two-way radio. Cadillac ambulance. Trained-courteous attendant. Competent convalescent transport. Air-conditioned comfort. Charles Daughtry owner. 202 New Bern Avenue. Phone 828-0737.”

Newspaper advertisement on June 16, 1970: “New Location. 24 hour service. Oxygen equipped. Two-way radio. Cadillac ambulance. Trained-courteous attendant. Competent convalescent transport. Air-conditioned comfort. C. T. Daughtry General Manager. D. T. Goodwin Manager. 209 Hillsborough Street. Phone 818-0737.”

Beacon locations included:

- 202 New Bern Avenue 1969 phone book
- 209 Hillsborough Street 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973 phone books
- 3207 Hillsborough Street 1970 phone book, later cited as location for **Ambulance Aid Inc.**
- 615 N. Boylan Avenue 1974 phone book
- 207 Oberlin Road 1975 phone book
- 811 Hillsborough Street 1976 phone book

Beacon memories:

Fred Loy:

- **Raleigh Ambulance Service** bought by two men from Washington, DC, who renamed the company: Ted Bacon and Chuck Daughtry.
- Loy started working at Beacon in 1968. He had joined Clayton Rescue Squad in 1964. He was one of their first paid employees, the other being M. J. Johnson, now a Raleigh fireman.
- At that time, the only rescue squad outside of Raleigh that was transporting was Wendell, with Norman Dean and his crew. They had the first SWAB ambulance in the county.
- In 1968, Loy was offered a chance to purchase part interest in the company. He later sold his part to Jim Huffstetler and Albert Brown.
- Loy was later one of the original Wake EMS employees, and later one of the first shift supervisors.

Resident next door, July 1973 to March 1978:

- Beacon Ambulance Service operated from an office beside Boylan Apartments, which is beside/backs up to present State Employees Credit Union.
- They operated four to six vehicles.
- Two Cadillac ambulances, one Pontiac ambulance, two to four Chevy Suburban (ambulances?) operated at any given time.
- Responding vehicles left the building using the rear parking lot, to Hargett Street.

Jason Thompson:

- Beacon stationed an ambulance at the Garner police station at night. Before this time, Clayton Rescue covered a lot of the “Garner district.”
- Beacon also provided service in Durham, with an ambulance housed at Durham Fire Station 1.

1970-1979

1970, by – Funeral homes are getting out of patient transport business. Raleigh phone book that year lists only two funeral homes (Raleigh, Wendell) under Ambulances. Raleigh city directory lists none under Ambulances.

Raleigh ambulance memories:

- **Banks Ambulance Service** operated in Raleigh for a very short time, likely in the 1970s. The uniform shirt had burgundy shoulder tabs. They operated a Ford van ambulance, which was equipped with a red beacon. In 1983, Mrs. Banks (no longer married to Mr. Banks) was living in north Raleigh and trying convert the vehicle to an animal ambulance, but was never able to get the permits from the city to operate. (oh)

County ambulance company memories:

- **Community Ambulance Service** (Zebulon area) operated an older Cadillac as a convalescent unit, a 1967 Cadillac/Superior that was metallic blue.
- Gene Lambert remembers helping Weldon “Doc” Beddingford answer calls in his 1967 “straight MM blue” ambulance. Riggy Massey, who now operates Massey Funeral Home in Zebulon, also ran calls for “Doc.” Gene would skip school to run calls. (GL)

County funeral home memories:

- **J. W. Albright** and **Apex Funeral Directors** (Apex) operated ambulances.
- **Bright Funeral Home** (Wake Forest) operated an ambulance service.
 - As profiled in the Raleigh Times on January 21, 1971, Mrs. Betty Lane Bright was Wake Forest’s only female ambulance driver. She started working in July 1964 because her husband needed a hand running their funeral home as it grew. She was now a licensed funeral director and ambulance driver.
 - “A jumpsuit that’s found a permanent resting place near her bed and a fully equipped ambulance are the tools of her trade.” She shares ambulance calls with her husband, but “lately quite a few early morning callers [have asked] for her personally.”
- **Lewis Funeral Home** (Wendell) had one hearse/ambulance combination, and after ceasing ambulance service, retained it for funeral service.
- **Screws & Hudson Funeral Home** (Zebulon) operated an ambulance.
- **Suggs Funeral Home** (Fuquay-Varina) operated ambulances for some time, including a convalescent service that continued long after Fuquay-Varina Rescue Squad started.
- **Whitley Funeral Home** (Wendell) operated an ambulance.

1970 – **Ambulance Aid Inc.** is listed in Raleigh phone book.

- They are listed along with **Beacon Ambulance Service**, which is also operating a medical rental and sales division by that year.

- Address of Ambulance Aid is 3207 Hillsborough Street.
- Founded, owned, operated by H. Lee Gupton.
- One ambulance was a raised-roof International Carryall manufactured in Springfield, OH.
- Gupton had the unit equipped per the recommended ACOS ambulance equipment list, before the same became the first national equipment standard.
- Source: SA.

Newspaper advertisement on September 28, 1970:

- Now serving Raleigh and Suburban Wake County. Ambulance Aid, Inc. 613 W. North Street.
- Private ambulance and oxygen service. Convalescent and sick room aids.
- OHIO Medical Oxygen – Sales and Service – Hospital & Convalescent Beds – Patient Fitted – Wheelchairs – Walkers – Delivery – Installation – Instruction – Included – First Aid Supplies
- Local owned & operated. Exclusively private service. 24 hour service. Radio dispatched. Trained technicians.
- Phone 828-2382.
- Fully equipped ambulance – Our facilities are open for public inspection – Our business is better patient care – We accept BankAmericard and MasterCharge.

1970 – First volunteer paramedic program started in Charlottesville, VA. (GHEMS)

1971, circa – **Overby Funeral Home** ceases ambulance service. They are not listed in the 1971 phone book.

1971 – **Ambulance Aid Inc.** at two locations (613 W. North Street and 3207 Hillsborough Street) listed in Raleigh City Directory, along with **Beacon Ambulance Service** at 209 Hillsborough Street. The company is not listed in the Raleigh phone book for that year, nor appears in any directory or phone book in 1972 or later.

1971 - **Cary Area Rescue Squad** created. Incorporated on October 29, 1971.

See separate document for more history.

1971 - **Apex Volunteer Rescue Squad** created. Incorporated on September 8, 1971.

See separate document for more history.

1971 – The television show Emergency! debuts. It contributes to changing public attitudes concerning the fire service and emergency medical care. When the show first aired, there were only twelve medic units in the entire country. Four years later, at least 50% of the population of this country was within 10 minutes of a medic unit. (GHEMS)

1972 - **Furina Rescue Squad** created. Legal name is simply **Furina Rescue Inc.** More commonly called **Fuquay-Varina Rescue Squad**. Incorporated on April 21, 1972.

See separate document for more history.

1973 – North Carolina Office of Emergency Medical Services established, placed in Division of Facility

Services.

- Funding is appropriated to “improve training, transportation, hospital emergency rooms, and communications consistent with the fifteen federally recognized components of an EMS system.”
- One chapter of the law consolidates rule-making authority over ambulances and personnel in the Medical Care Commission.
- One chapter of the law authorizes trained EMTs to perform advanced first aid and limited medical procedures under rules and regulations of Board of Medical Examiners.
- Source: Pratt.
- Office doesn't become fully operation until 1974, under James O. Page. (SA)

1973 – The Star of Life is published by the DOT. (GHEMS)

1973 – First national civilian air medical transport service started at St. Anthony's Hospital in Denver. (GHEMS)

1973 - EMS Systems Act (public law 93-144) is passed by Congress, which funds 300 regional EMS systems. (GHEMS)

1974 – Last year that a funeral home is listed as an ambulance service in the Raleigh phone book.

1974, November – Beacon Ambulance Service facing issues, as reported in the Raleigh Times:

- Company is providing service to more than 250,000 people in Wake and Durham counties.
- Headquarters at 615 Boylan Avenue.
- Three owners, including Jim Huffstetler.
- Transport fee is \$40, which has caused “shock and surprise” among patients.
 - Fee increases to \$50, if not paid within fifteen days.
 - Beacon could lower fee to \$30, if county took over collections.
 - Since the county is already set up for bill collections, it would be more efficient and they'd be able to collect eighty percent of the bills, estimates Huffstetler.
- Nearly fifty percent of customers fail to pay their bill, for transport costs.
- Outstanding bills for last fiscal year totaled \$118,000.
- In January, Beacon will cease service to city of Raleigh unless county commissioners agree to either (a.) continue \$8,400 month subsidy or (b.) take over Beacon's bill collections.
- Question county commissioners currently facing: “Does Beacon provide the service that makes it financially worth saving for Wake?”
- Some customers complain of response times, while “doctors and nurses who work in direct contact with Beacon in hospital emergency room” say the firm is doing good and “even better than good.”
- Except for two Raleigh fire department rescue units, Beacon has the only ambulances in Raleigh.
- Beacon serves entirety of Wake County, while the towns of Apex, Cary, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon each have rescue squads.
- Beacon handles more than 30 calls a day, splitting 16 ambulances between Wake and Durham.
- For Wake County to replace Beacon, says Emergency Preparedness Coordinator Russell Capps, it cost at least \$550,000 initially. Beacon owners think the figure is closer to \$1 million, with each ambulance costing close to \$20,000 each.

- Plus, the service fee for each transport would still be as high, or even higher, to prevent loss of income.
- Training of attendants also noted. Effective January 1, 1976, says state head of Emergency Medical Services James Page, at least one attendant on every ambulance will have to be a certified EMT.
 - That amounts to 81 hours of instruction on such skills as “treating shock, giving oxygen to heart attack victims, fixing splits and moving patients with broken backs and ruptured spleens.”
- Some Beacon attendants are already EMTs, or in the process of becoming certified. Their ambulances are already stocked with the required equipment.
 - Both beds, blankets, and stretchers, but “equipment which checks a person’s vital signs such as blood pressure, oxygen tents for cardiac victims and obstetric kits for mothers giving birth.”
- On Monday, the Commissioners are expected to approve Beacon’s contract.
- Source: RT, 11/16/74.

1974, November – Beacon continued:

- On November 18, 1974, county commissioners extend an increased subsidy to Beacon, through July.
- The action is done “to avoid losing ambulance service in the county.”
- Near or at the end of the contract, the county will “ask for bids on ambulance operations” in Raleigh.
- Beacon is expected to be one of the bidders, and there may be others.
- As an informal part of the agreement, Beacon will reinstate ambulance service in Garner.
- Collection of unpaid bills is still a problem.
 - The chairman of the Rescue Squad Commission, Commissioner Vassar Shearon, said “the county needs to work out some way of helping a private ambulance service collect unpaid bills.”
 - This could be helped by trying to get state legislation passed, to help collect payments.
 - The county also needs help from the insurance industry, to “assure that insurance payments for ambulance service go for that purpose.”
 - Rescue Squad Commission is “local group of citizens interested in coordinating emergency services.”
- Source: RT, 11/18/74.

1974 – First Hurst tools added in Wake County, at Cary and Wendell rescue squads. The hydraulic rescue tools are soon added at other rescue providers, including:

- 1974-75 - Raleigh FD
- 1977 - Garner RS
- 1979, by - Raleigh-Durham Airport FD
- 1979 - Knightdale RS

1974 - **Zebulon Area Rescue Squad** created. Incorporated on February 28, 1974.

See separate document for more history.

1975 – The American Medical Association recognizes emergency medicine as a specialty.

1975 – The National Association of EMTs is formed.

1975 – The University of Pittsburgh & Nancy Caroline MD, is awarded a contract to develop the first nationwide paramedic training course.

Source: GHEMS.

1975 – Ambulance issues in Raleigh:

- Beacon Ambulance has operated ambulance services under a subsidy from the county since 1968.
- Contract expires July 1, 1975.
- Beacon may get another contract, but “only because other plans offered would require more than a month to” implement.
- Wake County Emergency Preparedness Office head Russell Capps tells Rescue Squad Commission members that a proposal from the former state EMS division head, James O. Page, “looks promising.”
- But it would takes months to develop, and the commissioners must decide by July 1 on “what to do.”
- Capps says, after the meeting, “I don’t think we’ve got but two choices—either the county going back with Beacon, or the county getting in the business July 1.”
- Page proposes a subscription service.
 - Families in Raleigh and county areas not served by squads would pay \$18 to \$20 per year, for a subscription service.
 - Others would pay an ambulance fee, if they’re not subscribers.
 - The county would collect unpaid bills.
- Commission “seemed less interested in a proposal” offered by “public safety consultant” H. Lee Gupton.
 - Tells the commission that it’s time the county “took over ambulance service.”
 - Offered a proposal with an initial expenditure of \$400,000.
 - County would collect bills, and keep proceeds.
 - County would operate system completely.
- Capps reads letters of endorsement from:
 - John A. Paar, cardiologist who is chairman of the Equipment and Facilities Committee of Wake County Emergency Medical Services Council.
 - David Millward, physician advisor for Beacon of two years.
 - His letter says that “while Beacon seemed to be doing a good job two years ago, in the past six to eight months it had become apparent that the quality of service had declined.”
 - Attorney representing Beacon at the meeting made no apologies for the company, and noted “everybody wants ambulance service, but nobody wants to pay for it.”
 - Beacon ambulance officer Albert Brown defends his company against complaints.
 - “If an ambulance is lacking a particular splint or other piece of equipment, it is probably because the ambulance has already answered a number of calls and the equipment is still on the patient in a hospital emergency room.”

- Brown says Beacon has received complaints about convalescent calls, in which they won't transport a person "unless they are paid something first."
- He says Beacon can continue to provide service for the same amount of money, "if you want the same kind of ambulance service you've had, which is a get-by system."
- Attorney notes that if Beacon continues under the present subsidy system, they will have to "take a closer look at whether calls are legitimate ones."
 - "If you want better than what you've got, then we're going to have to sit down and talk about it some more."
- Observer who runs Wake Medical Center outpatient service comments:
 - "I see some things that definitely need to be improved," but she wouldn't elaborate.
 - "They're not even saying they're providing a first-class service."
- Source: RT undated, before 1, July 1975.

1975 – Ambulance issues continued:

- Three ambulance services seeking contract to provide ambulance service in Raleigh, as contracted by Wake County, after July 1.
- Proposals for service are submitted by:
 - H. L. Gupton, public safety consultant.
 - Provide ambulance service, but
 - Contract with administrators and EMS personnel.
 - System would be under direct county control, and they would get all proceeds.
 - Initial estimated cost of \$469,000.
 - Net cost of \$275,000, with collection rate of 70 percent estimated for expected 22 calls per day.
 - James Page, former head of state EMS division.
 - Non-profit operation franchised by the county.
 - Financed largely by subscriptions.
 - Families would pay about \$18 to \$20 per year.
 - Non-subscribers would pay a transport fee, and county would be responsible for collecting.
 - County would pay the costs on bills it doesn't collect.
 - Capps says would only work if at least half of the 40,000-50,000 families subscribe.
 - County or corporation could buy or lease the ambulances.
 - Beacon Ambulance.
 - Planning three separate proposals.
 - One offers same amount county pays, \$18,400 per month.
 - Another provides for county to take over billing and collection.
 - Third offers to sell Beacon system to county.
- Beacon's contract expires July 1.
- County commissioners plan to negotiate a new (Beacon?) contract by June 30.
- Source: RT undated, before July 1, 1975

1975 - **Garner/St. Mary's Rescue Squad** created. Incorporated on January 13, 1975.

See separate document for more history.

1976 – Statewide notes:

- Basic life support (BLS) rules created for North Carolina ambulance services, published as a document by the state’s Medical Care Commission. (Pratt)
 - Effective January 1, 1976, at least one attendant on every ambulance must be a certified EMT. (RT, 11/16/74)
- State Medical Board adopts rules to allow advanced skills for EMTs, via the certification of Mobile Intensive Care Technicians. (Pratt)

1976, March-April - Raleigh Fire Department/Wake County “rescue medic” program proposal created.

Context:

- Funeral homes haven't been transporting patients for about a decade. Various private ambulance companies have come and gone.
- The current provider for Raleigh residents is Beacon Ambulance Service. They also answer calls in northwestern Wake County.
- The Raleigh Fire Department's two rescue squads can also provide patient transport and serve as back-up when Beacon ambulances are unavailable.
- New state regulations require at least one EMT on an ambulance, so both the Raleigh squad and Beacon members (all? Some?) certified.
- The first responder program with the Raleigh Fire Department, and certifications for all firefighters as EMTs, are still some years away, however.
- Outside of the city, there are rescue squads operating in Apex, Cary, Wake Forest, Wendell, and Zebulon. Some of those have been around for over a decade; others are fairly new.
- Beacon's been receiving a subsidy from the county, and they have asked for an increase the prior year. This and other issues have both city and county officials considering their options for the best combination ambulance and medical service for Raleigh residents.

Proposal:

- Thus the proposed Rescue Medic program, a city-county initiative to add Emergency Medical Technician-staffed ambulances to the Raleigh Fire Department.
- Four two-person medic units at Station 1, Station 10, Station 6 or Station 14, and Station 4 or Station 15.
- The department's two rescue squads would be located at Station 2 and Station 9. And their response areas would include some territory outside the city limits.
- Locations are based on the highest concentration of ambulance calls in the city limits, and all would be within five minutes of a “rescue vehicle.”
- County would pay 65-percent and city 35-percent of programs \$424,000 operating costs. Fees from ambulance service would offset cost by \$100,000.
 - Current cost of ambulance service to county is about \$104,00 per year, for Beacon contract.
- County would purchase four new ambulances, to be housed in city fire stations.
 - City would also provide two rescue units for use in the program.
- City would hire and train twenty-four new firemen for the program.

- City would take over Beacon’s service area, which includes Raleigh and parts of Wake County that stretch west to the Durham County line.
 - About 70 percent of the county’s population, some 187,000 people, live in that area.
- Created by Consultant Lee Gupton for the Wake County Office of Emergency Management, including staffing, equipment, response projections, and alternate models.
- Proposal jointly funded by Raleigh and Wake County.

See entire proposal on web site: <http://legeros.com/ralwake/photos/weblog/pivot/entry.php?id=4292>

1976, March-April – Rescue Medic notes:

- Wake County Rescue Squad Commission recommends the city-county proposal.
- City Council adopts the city-county proposal.
 - Council members are strongly critical of Beacon’s service.
 - Says Councilman and former Fire Chief Jack Keeter, “We have today operating in the city of Raleigh what we think is an inadequate ambulance service.” And “If we can save a life by proper medically trained personnel, I think our money is well spent.”
 - Keeter notes that the city’s four (?) squads are being used to back up Beacon on many calls. The proposed ambulance system would “relieve the squads of that burden.”
 - Beacon President James W. Huffstettler defends charges.
 - City squads back up Beacon on orders of Raleigh Fire Chief.
 - “It’s an unnecessary waste of the taxpayer’s money,” he says.
 - “If Beacon had \$300,000, we could offer the same type of service that the city is seeking.”
- The following week, Wake Emergency Preparedness Director Russell Capps formally presents “three proposals for ambulance service for Raleigh” at a luncheon meeting of the county commissioners.
 - He includes the city-county ambulance plan.
 - He also proposes almost tripling the present subsidy to the county’s seven volunteer rescue squads, from \$350 month to about \$1,000 a month.
 - The county “would then be spending about \$1.10 per capita for the volunteer squad service and service for Raleigh.”
 - Cost to the county, after fees are collected, would be about \$287,440.
 - One commissioner objects to the cost, and the county taking over a service that’s been “provided by private enterprise” at “a much lower cost.”
 - But it’s noted that both “laws requiring extensive training” and “federal grants available only to government operations” were forcing private operators out of business.
- Three of seven commissioners support the plan.
 - Elizabeth B. Cofield, Robert B. Heater, and John C. Williams say they’ll vote for the proposal, when it’s presented on April 20.
 - Others are undecided, or think it may be too expensive.
 - Waverly F. Akins, Vassar P. Shearon, and J. T. Knott Jr. are concerned by the cost, and they’re not sure how they’ll vote.
 - Akins says “As far as the cost, it looks a little ridiculous to me.”
 - And, “If we are going to be putting that kind of money into ambulance service, the whole county is going to be demanding it.”
 - George R. Goodwin is also unsure, but “he wants the best ambulance service possible, even if it costs more than county’s present operations.”
- Four proposals will be presented to the county on April 20:

- Rescue Medic proposal.
- County-operated ambulance system, estimated to cost \$298,000 after fees for service are collected.
- City-operated ambulance system, paid by county at cost of \$255,000 after fees.
- Renewing contract with Beacon, for about \$100,000.
- Source: RT undated articles (three of them), ?/?/76.

1976, April – Wake County Board of Commissioners rejects a proposed city-county ambulance on April 20, 1976, and instead votes to create a county-financed ambulance service for Raleigh and northwestern Wake County .

- The Raleigh City Council approved the plan two weeks prior, but the commissioners were split on approving the city-county plan, or continuing to subsidize Beacon Ambulance Service Inc.
- The compromise vote, for county-only service, was four to one.
- The estimated cost of the new service was set at \$388,000, a figure based on purchasing four new ambulances and hiring about twenty-six people to operate them.
- After collecting ambulance fees, the net cost for the county was estimated at \$298,000.
- This contrasted with the county’s \$345,000 cost before collections, of the city-county plan. And the Beacon subsidy would have cost \$194,500.
- Source: N&O, 4/21/76.

1976, August - **Wake County EMS** placed in service on August 15, 1976.

- They respond to nineteen ambulance calls.
- They respond in less than five minutes to twelve of the calls.
- Five of the calls are automobile accidents.
- Two EMS stations are opened:
 - Station 1 at McDowell and Martin streets (EMS 1, EMS 4).
 - Station 2 at the Wake County Home on Whitaker Mill Road (EMS 2, EMS 3).
- Third station on Six Forks Road to open in several weeks, with EMS 3.
- Original staff consists of twenty-six employees:
 - Director, Chief Supervisor.
 - Three Shift Supervisors.
 - Twenty-one field EMTs.

See separate document for more history.

1976, August - Beacon Ambulance Service loses its contract and \$8,400 subsidy from Wake County on August 15.

- Owner James Huffstettler creates a new company, **Medical Transport Services**, which provides convalescent transport on a “cash and carry business.”
 - The new company is located at 2232 Wake Forest Road.
- The assets of his former company are seized by the IRS in September, which wants to collect \$25,000 in unpaid federal taxes.
 - The company has six ambulances, along with medical and office equipment.
 - They are sold at auction starting on the Wednesday after September 28, 1976.
 - Local fire departments and rescue squads are notified of the auction.

- Huffstettler had previously asked the county for both an increase in monthly subsidy, and help collecting unpaid bills. Neither request was granted.
- Source: N&O, 9/28/76.

Medical Transport Services operates four ambulances for a while:

- Two 1972 Pontiac/Superior 54-inch ambulances
- 1970 Cadillac/Miller-Meteor 48-inch ambulance
- 1967 (?) Oldsmobile/Cotner-Bevington combination car (hearse/ambulance).

Other convalescent services that have operated in Raleigh over the years/decades have included:

- **AMR**
 - Took over Nova Medical Transport.
- **Capital EMS**
 - Operated out of a building along the railroad tracks on Jones Street.
- **Garner Rescue Squad**
- **Johnston Ambulance Service** (now called **JAS**).
 - During the 1990s, they were based in the same building as an all-hours veterinary clinic on Wilmington Street.
- **Mobile Medical Care**
 - Successor to Medical Transport Services around 1978.
- **Nova Medical Transport**
- **Piedmont Ambulance**
- **SAS Ambulance**
- **Samaritan**
- **Southeastern Medevac**
- **Triangle Ambulance**

1976 - Raleigh FD begins training firefighters as EMTs, for eventual city-wide First Responder program.

See Appendix for more history.

1976 - **Six Forks Rescue** created. Incorporated on December 30, 1976.

See separate document for more history.

1977 - **Knightdale Area Rescue Squad** created. Incorporated on March 30, 1977.

See separate document for more history.

1977-1978 – **Raleigh-Durham Airport Crash-Fire-Rescue** becomes a rescue provider as approved by NC OEMS. They start answering medical calls in late 1977 or early 1978. They were not a first responder agency, but did have rescue equipment as required by the state.

Dale Johnson memories:

- At that time Cary Area Rescue responded to calls in the terminals and the South Ramp area, while Six Forks Rescue Squad responded to the areas north of the airport. At that time medical emergency at the airport were called in directly to the fire station or to the police department. RDU CFR responded to the call and determine if transport was needed.
- Usually, only one person responded on medical calls, but in the case of something like a cardiac arrest, we would try and send some help. At any rate, I spent quite a bit of time by myself pumping on someone's chest or wishing that the ambulance would hurry up. And of course, in those days, the rescue squads, like the fire departments, were very territorial!
- I remember one night spending over thirty minutes on an Eastern Airlines 727 doing CPR with a stewardess helping me.
- In early 1978, medical calls were answered in either CT-1 (1957 Chevrolet pick-up) or CS-11 (1975 Plymouth Fury station wagon). For a while, we had one of the “big green boxes” for the medical kit. Since we didn’t know exactly which unit we would take at any given time, the green jump kit was kept in the station.
- In 1979 CT-1 (now called CFR-1) was replaced by a 1979 Chevrolet K-30 with the utility body. Shortly after that, the station wagon went to the police department.

Early fire department-based rescue providers:

- **Wake-New Hope FD** had a 1974 Chevrolet 3500/Murphy rescue-body unit. It was almost the same body as the Raleigh rescue trucks of similar vintage. It had a 350 engine and a three-speed manual transmission. The Murphy body was later remounted on a 1991 or 1992 Chevrolet 3500 with a 454 engine. Though it looked like an ambulance, it carried the Hurst tool and motor along with other miscellaneous tools. WNHFD had a Hurst tool by 1980, with an original Chrysler power unit and the large jaws “like the one Six Forks had.” The department was also discussing entering the patient-transport business, a proposal that was controversial among its members. The idea was dropped when Wake County EMS was organized in 1976, and began providing service. (OH)

1979 – The Journal of Emergency Medical Services (JEMS) starts publication.

1979 – The American Ambulance Association is formed.

Source: GHEMS.

1980-1989

1980 – National Registry of EMTs publishes first standard national exam for EMT-Intermediate. (GHEMS)

1980 - Raleigh FD first responder program expands city wide, April 1, 1980.

See Appendix for more history.

1981 - **Northern Wake Rescue & EMS** created, renamed from WFRS.

See separate document for more history.

1982 - **Fairview FD** becomes first Wake County fire department to offer First Responder service. Chosen due to location between four rescue districts: Apex, Cary, Fuquay-Varina, and Garner. Service starts in March 1982.

For more first responder memories, see

<http://legeros.com/ralwake/photos/weblog/pivot/entry.php?id=6442>

1982-83 - New UHF radio system installed for county EMS agencies and rescue squads.

1983 – Volunteer rescue squads grapple with manpower shortages during daylight hours.

- In August, the chiefs of the volunteer squads adopt a new procedure to deal with the problem of slow response times. After the initial call, if no member answers within three minutes, the squad is called again. If no member answers within three more minutes, another squad is called.
- There are three-three ambulances available in Wake County. (RT, 9/5/83)

1984 - **Wake County EMS** implements EMT-Paramedic.

- County rescue squads soon begin receiving training for personnel, and/or deploying Wake County paramedics for their units.
- Some county squads continue using WCEMS paramedics through 1999.
- Alternate year is 1983. (N&O, 9/10/91)

1985-86 – **Garner Police Department** becomes First Responder.

- Garner FD declined to provide the service.
- Police dispatched to all EMS calls within town limits.
- Continued until about 2000 or 2001, when Garner FD assumed duties within town.
- See Garner Rescue Squad history (www.legeros.com/history/ems) for more.

1986 – Paramedic service added (or at least paramedic training started) at **Cary, Garner, and Six Forks** rescue squads. (N&O, 9/10/91)

1987 – Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) technology debuts. (GHEMS)

1989 - **Rescue, Extrication, & Delivery Specialists** or **REDS** incorporated. (May 11, 1989).

Memories:

- Chief/leader is David Pease, founder and longtime member of Garner Rescue Squad.
- First members train at Garner Rescue Squad building.
- Later housed at former rescue squad building at 110 Pearl Street. (OH)

1989, November - **Garner EMS and Rescue Squad** renamed from Garner-St. Mary's Rescue Squad.

- Change is filed with Secretary of State three years later, on December 31, 1992.

1990-1999

1990 - The Trauma Care System Planning & Development Act is passed by Congress. (GHEMS)

1990 – Citizen’s committee recommends that the county place paramedics at all six rescue squads for three years to provide uniform service. The cost is estimated at \$500,000 for nine paramedics and their supplies. (N&O, 9/10/91)

1990 – **Furina Rescue Squad** ceases operations, after town votes to cease funding. (N&O, 11/1/90)

1990 - **Wake County EMS** establishes service at RDU Airport (EMS 6), first unit stationed outside city limits, December 1990.

1991 - **Fuquay-Varina Area Rescue Squad** created, provided second-duty service. Incorporated on February 6, 1991. Wake County EMS assumes first-duty (primary) service in district.

See separate document for more history.

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
Apex Rescue	\$75	\$150	\$35	1,021
Cary Area Rescue	\$255	\$295	\$40	2,100
Fuquay Varina Rescue	none	none	none	n/a
Garner EMS and Rescue	\$148	\$208	\$45	2,000
Knightdale Rescue	\$148	\$178	\$35	1,000
Northern Wake Rescue and EMS	\$148	\$178	\$35	1,400
Six Forks Rescue	none	none	none	1,300
Wendell Rescue Squad	none	none	none	952
Zebulon Area Rescue	none	none	none	1,100
Wake County EMS	\$148	\$208	none	17,000

1992 – Wake County EMS begins providing EMS service in Wake Forest with EMS 10 in August 1992, while a reorganization of **Northern Wake Rescue & EMS** is underway. Wake County EMS 105, a supervisor, is also located in Wake Forest and later Rolesville, for a period time.

1993 – Legislation adopted that required the NC OEMS to develop a statewide trauma system. (Pratt.)

1993 – County commissioners approve a plan allowing all county residents the option of paying annual subscription fees, the way that those served by rescue squads have done for years. Residents can pay \$50 per year, or be billed between \$109 and \$300 for calls. (N&O, 3/2/93)

1993 – Paramedics added at **Wendell** and **Zebulon**, after July 1. (N&O, 3/2/93)

1993, November – **Raleigh Fire Department** implements EMT-D program on November 29, 1993. The program was initiated with the full support and guidance of Wake County EMS. (MJL, WCEMS web site¹)

1994 – Paramedic response is implemented county-wide, in a program with provisions from Medical Director Donald Vaughn:

- Home agency can provide paramedic coverage on their own (Wake County, Cary, Garner, Six Forks).
- Wake County would send a single paramedic and paramedic equipment to ride on a home agency ambulance, with EMT or EMT-I as driver/partner.
- Wake County would deploy a full paramedic ambulance as primary unit in that district.
- Wake County EMS sends paramedics to Apex, Knightdale, Wendell, and Zebulon.
- Source: Hammerstein.

1995 – Legislation adopted that required the licensing of EMS providers. (Pratt)

1995 - **Wake Forest EMS** created, renamed from Northern Wake Rescue & EMS. Name change filed August 28, 1995.

See separate document for more history.

1995 - **Rolesville EMS** created. Incorporated on February 2, 1995.

See separate document for more history.

1995 - Based on success of Raleigh Fire Department EMT-D program, Wake and Orange counties propose a First Responder-Defibrillator program. It received approval by the North Carolina Medical Board in 1996 as a local county option. **Apex Fire Department** was first agency to provide service. **Hopkins Fire Department** performed the first patient defibrillation. (WCEMS web site²)

1997 - **Fuquay-Varina EMS** created, renamed from Fuquay-Varina Area Rescue Squad. Name change filed March 25, 1997.

See separate document for more history.

1997 - **Cary Area Emergency Medical Services** created, or **Cary EMS**, renamed from Cary Area Rescue Squad. Name changed filed June 30, 1997. Also by that time, they had ceased providing technical rescue services.

¹ <http://www.wakegov.com/ems/system/Pages/firstresponder.aspx>

² <http://www.wakegov.com/ems/system/Pages/firstresponder.aspx>

1997 - **Apex EMS** created, renamed from **Apex Volunteer Rescue Squad**. Name change filed October 27, 1997.

1998 – County commissioners as county staff to develop short-term improvement plans, to provide EMS service to Holly Springs and Wake Forest. The county has received complaints from both towns about inadequate service. Holly Springs has asked to start its own EMS service, and has purchased two ambulances and equipment. The town has also asked the county for help financing the service. Currently, ambulances from Apex and Fuquay-Varina answer calls in Holly Springs. In Wake Forest, the rescue squad is disbanding by March 31. That will leave only one county ambulance to serve the town. Wake Forest officials want a second ambulance. The commissioners also discuss hiring a consultant to study the county system and make recommendations county-wide. (N&O, 2/3/98)

1998 – County commissioners approve the structure of a twenty-five member task force, to oversee a study of EMS services in Wake County. (N&O, 3/11/98)

1998 - **Wake Forest EMS** disbands in March 1998. Squad was providing second-duty coverage, non-paramedic after Wake County EMS 10 as first-duty unit. Corporate dissolution is filed November 25, 1998.

1998 - **Holly Springs Fire Department** begins EMS service on April 1, 1998.

See separate document for more history.

1999 - Wake County receives results of consultant’s study of EMS system. Read document at <https://legeros.com/ralwake/docs/wcfc/tridata/1999>

Snapshot of Wake County EMS System, from the above TriData *Comprehensive Assessment of the Wake County Emergency Medical Services System Final Report*, which was submitted to Wake County EMS on June 16, 1999:

Agency	Ambulances	Square Miles	1995 Pop.	Personnel	1998 Calls	1998 Revenues
Wake County EMS	12 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paramedic Thirteenth to be added by July 1, 1999 	103.9	206,835	140+ paid	25,169	\$6.2M (budget)
Apex EMS	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First duty, paramedic Second duty, paramedic Third duty, EMT intermediate and basic 	107.4	23,177	3 F/T, 20 P/T, 23 vol	1,688	\$402,900
Cary EMS	4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First duty, paramedic Second duty, paramedic Third duty, EMT intermediate and basic Fourth duty, EMT intermediate and basic 	64.5	74,016	11 paid, 27 vol.	3,646	\$740,000
Fuquay-Varina VRS	1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First-duty provided by Wake County EMS 9 Second-duty, non-paramedic 	82.6	20,580	15 paid, 23 vol.	560	\$160,693
Garner EMS	3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First duty, paramedic Second duty, paramedic Third duty, EMT intermediate and basic 	92.4	35,680	7 F/T, 23 P/T, 45 vol.	3,168	\$755,000

Holly Springs DPS	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First duty, paramedic (WCEMS paramedic plus EMT basic) 	40	4,532	10 paid	406	\$125,033
Knightdale EMS	2	<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
Rolesville EMS	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First duty, paramedic • Second duty, paramedic 	42.7	7,612	2 paid, 25 vol.	710	\$201,000
Six Forks VRS	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First duty, paramedic • Second duty, paramedic • Third duty, EMT intermediate and basic • Fourth duty, EMT intermediate and basic 	95.1	61,793	20 paid, 42 vol.	1,963	\$361,000
Wendell VRS	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First duty, paramedic (WCEMS paramedic plus EMT intermediate) • Second duty, EMT intermediate 	50.2	10,396	4 paid, 17 vol.	1,327	\$182,000
Zebulon VRS	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First duty, paramedic (WCEMS paramedic plus EMT basic) • Second duty, paramedic • Third duty, EMT intermediate or basic 	41.5	7,548	3 paid, 40 vol.	1,254	\$195,000

2000-2009

2001 – **Fuquay-Varina EMS** ceases operation on April 1. (N&O, 2/17/01)

2001 - **Zebulon EMS** created, renamed from Zebulon Area Rescue Squad. Name change filed July 27, 2001.

2003 - **Wendell EMS** created, renamed from Wendell Rescue Squad. Name change filed April 25, 2003.

2005 - **Eastern Wake EMS** formed in July 2005, as a merger of Knightdale Area Rescue Squad, Wendell EMS, and Zebulon EMS.

Filings with Secretary of State:

- Knightdale Area Rescue Squad merger filed May 12, 2005.
- Zebulon EMS merger filed May 12, 2005.
- Wendell EMS renamed Eastern Wake EMS. Name change filed April 21, 2005.

Notes:

- The three departments began discussing a merger after the three departments received budget cuts in 2004-05.

- After numerous meetings with the three Boards, each agency voted to move forward with the merger. A steering committee consisting of three members of each agency and the County Manager were put together to spearhead these efforts. They were tasked to write policy and procedures, bylaws, personnel policies and to put together a budget on behalf of all three departments. The name of Eastern Wake Emergency Medical Service, Inc. (EWEMS) was chosen by a vote of t
- Wendell EMS was formulated as the first EMS agency in Wake County in 1962 and they were chosen to be the surviving agency. Wendell officially became Eastern Wake EMS on May 1, 2005. Knightdale and Zebulon folded into Eastern Wake EMS on July 1, 2005. During this process we worked closely with Dr. Myers, our system Medical Director, and Ryan Lewis, the system QA Coordinator, for the Wake County EMS System on how many ambulances are needed in Eastern Wake County to provide the service and where those ambulances need to be positioned in order to improve response times. We took an EMS System approach instead of a territorial approach as we made these decisions.

2006 - Radio systems are changed from UHF to 800 mhz VIPER system, January 2006.

2006-2007 - Dispatch notes:

- Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) systems added to Wake County EMS System units.
- Single EMS dispatcher center implemented. County-wide, EMS units are dispatched from Raleigh/Wake Emergency Communications Center. Prior process had four points of contact: Raleigh/Wake, Cary, Apex, Holly Springs.
- Source: Legeros blog comment, April 18, 2006.

2007 - **Wake County EMS** adds Major Operations Support Unit and begins providing rehab at fires and major incidents. First call answered on April 17, 2007. County-provided rehab was previously provided with a Special Services unit that was housed at and operated by Western Wake Fire-Rescue.

2007 - New Wake County EMS System unit numbering effective November 28, 2007:

- Wake County EMS - Assigned EMS 1-39, Chief 100s, Chief 200s, District 1-3, MD1/2/20.
- Apex EMS - Assigned EMS 40s, Chief 400s, and Unit 410.
- Cary EMS - Assigned EMS 50s, Chief 500s, and District 5.
- Eastern Wake EMS - Assigned EMS 60s, Chief 600s, and District 6.
- Garner EMS - Assigned EMS 80s, Chief 800s, and Unit 810.
- Rolesville EMS - Assigned EMS 150s, Chief 1500s, and Unit 1510.
- Six Forks EMS - Assigned EMS 120s, Chief 1200s, and Unit 1210.
- Series 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 reserved for future assignment.

See Appendix for more information.

2008 - **Rolesville EMS** merges with Eastern Wake EMS. Merger document filed May 13, 2008.

2009 - **Wake County EMS** adds Advanced Practice Paramedic (APP) program, January 6, 2009.

2010 - **Garner EMS & Rescue Squad** ceases EMS operations on/around May 31, 2010.

- Service assumed by Wake County EMS.
- Squad ceases providing rescue services.
 - Squad received annual stipend from town, for rescue services within Garner.
 - Service assumed by Garner Fire Department.
- Squad's remaining operation is providing non-emergency medical transport services.

2010 (?) - Holly Springs loses county subsidy for salaries of three paramedics, to staff the fire-rescue ambulance.

2010 – **Apex EMS** merges with the town of Apex. Becomes part of the fire department, then separate town department.

2011 - **Six Forks EMS** ceases operation. Service assumed by Wake County EMS. Organization files corporate dissolution with the state on July 27, 2011.

2011 - **Garner Rescue Squad** merges with **REDS**.

2011 – **Wake County EMS** assumes coverage of Holly Springs response area.

2018 – **Apex EMS** ceases operation. Service assumed by Wake County EMS. Town department disbanded.

2019 - Wake County EMS System adopts new unit numbers on July 1, 2019, for ambulances based on geographic region and 12/24 hour designation.

2021 – Wake County EMS becomes sole provider in county, taking over the areas previously served by **Cary EMS** (which ceases EMS operations) and **Eastern Wake EMS** (which ceases operations).

Appendixes

Appendix A – Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad

The Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad was organized in 1953, by a group of firemen and civilian volunteers. They formed after the fire and police departments were criticized for a delay in extricating a driver pinned under a truck on Hillsboro Street. There was also criticism after a drowning in the Neuse River several miles from Raleigh. The body was not recovered for a week, until City Manager W. H. Carper asked Captain Jack Keeter to help. Keeter and three others— Asst. Chief Lee Matthews, fire department friend Bob Biggs, and future police officer Andy Povlosky—borrowed a boat and recovered the body.

The first organizational meeting was held in January 1953. The Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad received a state charter on August 27, 1953. Organizational meetings were held, and rules and

regulations were established for operations and levels of service. A Red Cross first aid course was taught to some twenty-five firefighters and civilians.

Money from the city and the county Civil Defense office was provided to purchase a panel truck, along with two boats and motors. Rescue squad members built furnishings for the truck, and constructed a boat trailer. Local businesses donated money and materials, and several citizens also contributed money and equipment.

The rescue squad was housed at Station 1 and responded both in the city and the county. It carried equipment for rescues, drownings, and basic first aid. Though not intended to compete with ambulance services, the rescue squad proved helpful in mid-1960s, when area funeral homes stopped providing patient transport and private ambulance services started operating. The rescue squad's early equipment even including diving gear. Members were photographed in March 1962, assisting with a vehicle recovery at Longview Lake.

Though the rescue squad was organized as a volunteer agency, Capt. Keeter persuaded the city to designate two fire-fighters as rescue officers. Harold Jones and Roma Wilder were appointed and sent to a rescue school in Maryland. They worked on opposite shifts and drove the rescue vehicles. If they needed a second person, they pulled a firefighter from one of the companies at Station 1. The volunteer members were subject to call, but primarily participated in body recovery efforts in local lakes and rivers.

Wake County also provided \$100 a month for the rescue squad. Both vehicles and the boat trailer were stored at Station 1. By 1972, the number of assigned firefighters had expanded to four and the rescue squad was operated exclusively by the fire department. In 1974, a second rescue unit was placed in service at Station 9. They were also utilized to transport firefighters and their family members to hospitals. After the formation of Wake County EMS in 1976, the rescue units served as back-up when no county ambulances were available.

The Raleigh Fire Department continued to purchase transport-capable rescue units until 2002, when the first non-walk-in rescue unit was delivered. They retained a walk-in reserve rescue until 2013.

Source: MJL.

Legeros notes:

- The squad was proposed in 1947, under Fire Chief W. Ralph Butts. There wasn't time to grow the idea, as a change of administration occurred.
- The idea was resurrected upon the hiring of City Manager William "Bill" Carper. He took office in August/September 1950.
- Carper's name isn't Harper, which has been misspelled in earlier documents.
- Carper had experience organizing rescue squads in Virginia.
- The fire department visited rescue squads in Winston-Salem, Greensboro, and four Virginia locations.
- The Raleigh Emergency Rescue Squad was originally intended to have forty to fifty volunteers, plus a couple assigned firemen.
- The first organization meeting was held in January 1953. The vehicles were delivered in October and November of that year.
- Their Reo Civil Defense rescue truck was a 1955 model, not the long-cited 1954 model year.

Memories:

- Raleigh Fire Department rescue members at Station 1 circa 1974 wore long-sleeve dress shirts and ties at all times, and didn't have to participate in station chores. Source: Oral history.

Appendix B – First Responder Program in Raleigh Fire Department

In 1976, the Raleigh Fire Department started implementing the First Responder and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program. Special training for instructors was first, followed by long hours of classroom and practical training. Personnel at Station 1 and Station 3 were the first to be trained, and they started using their skills in the field the following summer.

They received instruction on skills such as patient assessment, airway management, rescue breathing, and spinal immobilization. The trainers had attended classes at Wake Technical College, and included Ray Bradford, Wilbert Dunn, Leotha Forte, Dave Godfrey, Jesse Glenn, Harold Jones, and Bill Sykes.

Firefighters started using their new skills, such as life-saving cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), in the field around August 1977. By that time, the first group of trainees had received their EMT certifications, and the first trauma kits had been added to apparatus.

Also that year, the eight recruits hired on April 4 became the first firefighters required to pass EMT certification as a part of training. They received fire training at Station 2 and the drill tower, and attended EMT classes at Station 9. The following year, the recruits hired in June 1978 received partial EMT training. The classes were halted, since they would receive the training later along with other members of the fire department.

A second group of firefighters underwent EMT training in 1978. This effort stalled, as officials discussed the availability of extra pay for completing certification. The additional compensation was not approved. The EMT program remained optional, though nearly all firefighters eventually participated.

The Raleigh Fire Department participated in a pilot program sponsored by the International Association of Fire Fighters and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. It required the nearest fire engine to respond to every emergency call in Raleigh involving a life-threatening situation.

By late 1979, planning was underway to staff each of the fifteen fire stations with at least one engine, ladder, or rescue unit with at least two firefighter/EMTs. During this time, Engine 3 was conducting a test of the program. They worked with Wake County EMS to test the plans and revise the procedures.

On April 1, 1980, the First Responder Program was expanded city-wide. Fire units staffed with firefighter/EMTs were dispatched to life-threatening emergencies, such as heart attacks and vehicle accidents. They performed basic patient care until a Wake County EMS unit arrived to provide extended or advanced patient care and transportation to the hospital.] Some 270 firefighters were licensed as EMTs.

The 1977 recruit class was the first to receive EMT training. It was added to their curriculum at the last minute. In 1985, the sixteen recruits hired on July 29 became the first firefighters required to maintain EMT certification as a condition of employment.

New Wake County EMS System unit numbering effective November 28, 2007:

Wake County EMS

Ambulances - EMS 1 through EMS 39, including Holly Springs ambulance now EMS 17
District Chiefs - District 1, District 2, District 3
Admin Chiefs - Chief 100 through Chief 109
Operations Chiefs - Chief 200, Chief 201
Special Event Chief - Chief 202
Medical Director Staff - MD-1, MD-2, MD-20

Apex EMS

Ambulances - EMS 41 through EMS 49
Admin Chiefs/Officers - Chief 400 through Chief 409
Non-System Supervisor - Unit 410

Cary EMS

Ambulances - EMS 51 through EMS 59
District Chiefs - District 5
Admin Chiefs/Officers - Chief 500 through Chief 509

Eastern Wake EMS

Ambulances - EMS 61 through EMS 69
Admin Chiefs/Officers - Chief 600 through Chief 609
District Chiefs - District 6

Garner EMS

Ambulances - EMS 81 through EMS 89
Admin Chiefs/Officers - Chief 800 through Chief 809
Non-System Supervisor - Unit 810

Rolesville EMS

Ambulances - EMS 151 through EMS 159
Admin Chiefs/Officers - Chief 1500 through Chief 1509
Non-System Supervisor - Unit 1510

Six Forks EMS

Ambulances - EMS 121 through EMS 129
Admin Chiefs/Officers - Chief 1200 through Chief 1209
Non-System Supervisor: Unit 1210

Agencies 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, and 14 reserved for future assignment

Source: Legeros Fire Blog

Sources

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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!