

# May



## Time to Celebrate EMS Week!

From the start of the year through the spring, your community outreach activities have focused on helping others. **Now, it's time to shine the spotlight closer to home on the men and women in your EMS service.**

EMS Week—**May 17-23** this year—is the best time of year to honor and celebrate your EMTs and paramedics, dispatchers and billers, supervisors and educators—everyone who helps make your EMS service run smoothly all year long.

Here are a few ideas for EMS Week activities you can do to recognize your personnel:

- **Everyone's a major league player when it's Heroes Night at the ballpark\***
- **The best way to a medic's heart? Through his or her stomach, of course! Invite everyone to an employee picnic, awards luncheon or dinner**
- **Remember the fallen with a Table of Honor\***
- **Attend the EMS Memorial Service in Roanoke, Virginia\***
- **Work with elected officials to present an official EMS Week or EMSC Day Proclamation in your town or state capitol\***
- **Plan a trip to Washington, DC, to lobby on behalf of EMS and attend national EMS Week activities**
- **Nominate one of your best employees for a Star of Life award from the American Ambulance Association**
- **Attend the annual Congressional Fire Services Institute dinner**
- **Ride in the EMS Memorial Bike Ride\***

\* Denotes online resource at [www.emsweek.org](http://www.emsweek.org)



## Community Partners

### Congressional Fire Services Institute 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL DINNER AND CAPITOL HILL VISITS

April 1-2, 2009 • Washington, DC

The annual National Fire and Emergency Services Dinner, hosted by the Congressional Fire Services Institute (CFSI), attracts more than 2,000 fire and emergency services leaders, members of Congress and Administration officials each year. Prior to the dinner, CFSI hosts a two-day series of educational seminars on Capitol Hill, and attendees are encouraged to meet with their members of Congress. Roundtable discussions are held featuring members of Congress and Administration officials from the Department of Homeland Security and the United States Fire Administration.



### American Ambulance Association STARS OF LIFE CELEBRATION AND MEDAL PRESENTATION CEREMONY

May 3-6, 2009 • Washington, DC

The American Ambulance Association (AAA) pays tribute to paramedics and EMS personnel who exemplify what is best about their field. These appropriately designated Stars of Life are selected by their peers to represent them in Washington, DC. The highlight of the program is an Awards Banquet and Medal Presentation ceremony. In addition, the Stars meet on Capitol Hill with their congressional representatives. For more information, call **(703) 610-9018**.



### NATIONAL EMS MEMORIAL BIKE RIDE

May 16-22, 2009

The National EMS Memorial Bike Ride raises awareness of the National EMS Memorial and the National EMS Memorial Service, which honors those members of the EMS community who have lost their lives in the line of duty. **[www.muddyangels.org](http://www.muddyangels.org)**



### Don't Forget EMSC Day!

May 20, 2009

This annual observance draws attention to the specialized need for pediatric emergency care to ensure that every child in the nation receives the highest quality emergency care possible.



## RESOURCES

**American Ambulance Association**  
**[www.the-aaa.org](http://www.the-aaa.org)**

**Congressional Fire Services Institute**  
**[www.cfsi.org](http://www.cfsi.org)**

**National EMS Memorial Bike Ride**  
**[www.muddyangels.org](http://www.muddyangels.org)**

**National EMS Memorial**  
**<http://nemsms.org>**

**EMSC**  
**[www.ems-c.org](http://www.ems-c.org)**

# May

## Columbus First Responders LARGER THAN LIFE

**F**irefighters and emergency workers were everywhere—and larger than life—last May in Columbus, Ohio.

“We wanted to do something to honor emergency services during EMS Awareness Week,” said China Dodley, public information officer for the Ohio Department of Public Safety.

Dodley had recently returned from a business trip to New York where she had seen posters of firefighters on every available public space—buildings, bulletin boards, subway walls, even stair risers. “They were everywhere I looked,” she said. Dodley took the poster idea home with her, then



decided to do it one better.

“I thought, why stop with posters?” she said, and soon found herself talking with Clear Channel Communications, which owns eight digital billboards across the city. Dodley asked whether they had space to donate on any of the billboards during EMS Week. The answer was yes—not only on all eight boards, but for the entire month.

Department of Public Safety photographers rode along with firefighters and EMS crews to snap photos of the first responders in action. From hundreds of photos, the department chose four action shots that showed the range of

services that emergency workers provide. The images were sent to Clear Channel for display, and posters were printed and distributed to the city’s libraries for posting on bulletin boards.

“The emergency crews were excited to see themselves honored this way,” said Dodley, “and we had a great response from the city.”

Dodley advises other communities who want to do something similar to start early—and tap into community resources. “Make the calls,” Dodley said. “Find a partner and offer to run their logo along with your images. You might be surprised how many people out there would love to help.”



## MEMORIAL DAY PROJECT: Kids Don't Float

When you're done with EMS Week, remember that Memorial Day weekend is a great time to focus on drowning prevention with the Kids Don't Float campaign. The campaign was started by the Safe Kids, Homer, Alaska, coalition. Kids Don't Float provides lifejackets for boaters and swimmers on near docks and other open water access sites, as well as an educational component for kids in local schools. The Alaska program has grown to more than 400 sites across the state, with 12 documented children's lives saved. Learn more at [www.usa.safekids.org/water/](http://www.usa.safekids.org/water/)



# HEALTHY HEROES

## Work Out Year-Round

The Forum Fitness Center of Lexington, North Carolina, loves its local EMTs, so last year it offered a membership discount to public safety workers through a program it calls Healthy Heroes.

“For \$150, we offered a six-month membership and five personal training sessions,” said Forum sales manager Cherubina Hicks. But that’s not all. The Forum also hosted a Health and Public Safety Appreciation Day to honor the men and women who serve on the city’s front lines. “We wanted to not only promote Healthy Heroes, but also to work with a charity that would benefit emergency service workers,” Hicks said.

Instead of a charity, however, the Forum opted to offer a scholarship to a local student planning a public safety career. To raise money, Hicks planned a motorcycle charity ride with a \$25 entry fee, and a \$7-a-plate barbecue chicken dinner. “Unfortunately, we didn’t learn until later that a very popular restaurant in town was

holding its charity event the same day,” said Hicks. As a result, the Forum’s scholarship event raised only \$300—but Hicks hopes the event will be better attended in the future.

Meanwhile, the Healthy Heroes promotion will continue, and Forum member and Davidson County medic Max Leihenseder, who works out at the gym, encourages colleagues to join him. “It’s important we stay on top of our health because of the stress and physical requirements of our job,” he said.

Other Forum members are glad he’s there, too. Recently, one of them collapsed during a workout, and Leihenseder jumped into action. “He just passed out, so I stayed with him until the crews arrived and worked with them to get him stabilized,” Leihenseder said.

“That’s one of the reasons we wanted to give back to emergency workers,” said Hicks. “They do so much to help us every day, but they never really get the thanks they deserve.”



## National EMS Memorial Honors Line-of-Duty Deaths



For the past 17 years, EMS providers who have died in the line of duty have been honored each May at the National EMS Memorial Service. The 17th Annual National EMS Memorial Service will take place on **May 23, 2009, at 6 pm (EDT) at the First Baptist Church in Roanoke, Virginia.**

During the service, a family member or agency representative receives an American flag that has flown over the US Capitol (denoting the honoree’s service to the country); a white rose, representing undying love; and a medallion, signifying eternal memory.

The National EMS Memorial is composed of the Tree of Life and the Memorial Book. The Tree of Life is a representation of an oak tree, symbolizing strength. The name, agency, and date of loss of each National EMS Memorial

Service honoree is engraved on a bronze oak leaf, which is then added to the Tree of Life. The Memorial Book contains a page for each National EMS Memorial Service honoree. These pages contain photos, biographies, and agency patches for each individual honored. The Memorial Book is kept on display near the Tree of Life.

During this year’s memorial service weekend, the pages for each of the 2009 honorees will be mounted and displayed next to the Tree of Life. At the conclusion of the weekend, these pages will be added to the Memorial Book.

This is the last year that the National EMS Memorial Service will be held in Roanoke. Beginning in 2010, Colorado Springs will be the new home of the National EMS Memorial Service and the National EMS Memorial Tree of Life.

Learn more at <http://nemsms.org>