

1. Looking for CEUs? Here's some upcoming conferences to help get you caught up on your credits. NYS Fire Chiefs (www.nysfirechiefs.com) offer over 16 CEUs at their Fire 2011 Conference June 15-18 at the Turning Stone in Verona. Mountain Lakes EMS Initial Assessment Conference (www.nenyems.org) will be at the spectacular High Peaks Resort in Lake Placid September 8-11. The NYS Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue Association (www.nysvara.org) annual Pulse Check conference is in Albany September 23-25. Vital Signs is in Syracuse October 13 – 16 (www.vitalsignsconference.com).
2. Michael Tayler, RN, EMT-P, Trauma Program Manager at the Bureau of EMS, is leaving (will have left by the time you read this) for SEMO. Lee Burns, Acting Bureau Director noted Tayler will be greatly missed by DOH. We wish him well, and will certainly continue to see him in his new role.
3. Trying to keep up on Medicaid issues affecting EMS? A couple URLs you might want to bookmark: www.health.state.ny.us/health_care/medicaid/program/update/main.htm offers update summaries. Also, OMIG (the feared Office of the Medicaid Inspector General) runs a compliance alerts list server at www.omig.ny.gov/data/content/view/215/300/.
4. In what may be the largest New York EMS swap ever, the Bureau is hastily preparing to process TOAs (Transfers of Operating Authority) for AMR and Rural Metro following sales of both companies. The TOAs include 10 operating certificates affecting 13 REMSCOs who will have to review and endorse the transfers. The Bureau hopes to streamline the process by electronically transmitting the mounds of paperwork involved.
5. The Finance Committee compiled budget templates from Regions and Program Agencies and will this summer put finishing touches on a \$23.2 million 2012-2013 budget proposal, slightly less than last year. This is of course, a big joke since the budget is already set at a tad over \$18 million. The joke, in actuality is on all of us, stemming from a flaw in Article 30 that requires this annual exercise in futility. 'Nuf said.
6. On the budget subject, the current fiscal year (2011-2012) \$18.3 million EMS appropriation has been subjected to a State ordered 10% cut. The Bureau has been permitted to accomplish this \$1.3 million reduction by eliminating optional municipal services plan (also known as Article 6) funding. Good news for Program Agencies, Regional Councils, and Bureau Operations. Bad news for the many County Health Department budgets, some of whom heavily utilize Article 6 monies.
7. Some notes from the legislative committee: SEMSCO voted to endorse Senate Bill # 4765 (Assembly companion 7244) that would eliminate the seatbelt exemption for volunteer firefighters; with a message that the bill should be extended to include all EMS and fire vehicles. They also endorsed S2491 and A3980 that would require CPR training in every high school curriculum. Details can be had by entering bill numbers (i.e., S4765) into www.nysenate.gov/legislation.
8. In an abrupt reversal of their 1998 decision not to include the Star of Life on NYS EMS plates, the Department of Motor Vehicles last month released newly designed plates with, whattayacallit? The Star of Life. See www.nydmv.state.ny.us/emerg.htm.
9. Here's a little ditty for gossip mongers: the Bureau is considering using the National Registry Exam for initial paramedic certification. Note the words, "considering" and "initial." More information is needed such as how many medic candidates already take the Registry exam, how many remain nationally certified, and what the costs would be. While preliminary and largely speculative, it is about time someone in NYS government starts to realize the inefficiency of reinventing every wheel. Given our financial straits,

- the Bureau clearly can't and (and shouldn't) compete against the resources of the National Registry to build and revise exams at every certification level. Golly geezers.
10. While we're on the subject of training, a little note for students and Course Sponsors: the new curriculum is not YET in place in NYS. The Bureau is concerned that Sponsors may be using new curriculum textbooks and teaching materials to the disadvantage of students given the wide gap between new and old. Caution; warning; don't do it.
 11. A snippet from the evolving ePCR situation. How will agencies that can't afford an ePCR (electronic PCR, if you didn't catch the lingo) system get up to snuff on the new platform? Good question for which there is no good answer. Yet. Possibilities include an electronic "fillable" version of the next iteration of the paper PCR which, by the way, will be a four (that's right, your eyes read that 4 correctly) page document when released (Version 6). Currently 70% of all PCRs are currently electronically submitted. The remaining 30% represent a smattering of larger services, with a majority being pretty small services that may or may not be able to play ball in the electronic field. Yet undecided is whether ePCRs will someday be mandated. Gad zooks.
 12. A brief update on the NFPA 1917 Standard for Automotive Ambulance Committee proceedings. A draft document was approved by Committee and is set for a final work over during an October meeting in Baltimore. One additional opportunity for public comment will happen before final approval next February. If all proceeds as expected, the document will be approved at the June 2012 NFPA meeting and take effect for ambulances built after January 2013. Keep an eye out for the final draft document in October. Trick or treat!
 13. A new policy statement # 11-04 on fentanyl is up on the Bureau website. Surf to www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/ems/policy/policy.htm.
 14. The PIER Committee decided to begin forwarding nominations for the Annual NYS EMS Awards to the NAEMT and AAA for consideration, starting in 2012. Because deadlines all currently collide, next year's NYS EMS Award submission deadline will be March 31 instead of the long standing June 1. Start thinking now of a peer or colleague you could nominate for State and potentially National recognition!
 15. Medical Standards and SEMAC heard some interesting presentations. One discussed progress on electronic health records connecting EMS with ED charts. The Rochester region has a kewl electronic health record project underway with a promising EMS interface. Another from a couple District Attorneys with statewide expertise in DWI blood draws. Meetings are forthcoming to potentially revise the DOH blood draw policy statement (some feel it may conflict with usual interpretations of the law). Yet a third, somewhat bizarre presentation came from the Cardiac Advisory Committee which we may affectionately rename as the "deaf ears and heavy heart committee." Having last year requested the CAC revise their risk adjusted criteria for cardiologists treating post cardiac arrest patients in the cath lab, it seems no action was taken. Hence, post arrest patients resuscitated in the field and brought to interventional cardiology centers for immediate treatment rarely get the recommended care in New York State, thanks to CAC criteria that publicly penalize cardiologists if these critically ill patients proceed to die. The CAC, acting as though they had never heard this before, said they would take it under advisement. On another note, the CAC announced that they have no plans to designate PCI (percutaneous coronary intervention) centers in NY. This essentially gives the green

- light to REMACs to designate appropriate centers for patients in need of immediate PCI (i.e., roto rooter or cath lab interventions).
16. In other business, SEMAC voted to remove therapeutic hypothermia post ROSC (Return of Spontaneous Circulation) from demonstration (research) project status. If approved by the Health Commissioner, this would allow it as a regional EMS optional protocol, giving post arrest patient cooling a wider distribution across NY. Ice, ice, baby!
 17. The vampire who seemingly absconded with proposed rules to allow prehospital administration of blood and blood products has reappeared. Some three and a half years later, the regs have surfaced in the Governors Designated Review Office and are proceeding through the correct processes for approval. Perhaps they'll be out in time for you to celebrate as a vampire this Halloween.
 18. The Epilepsy Foundation of America, in partnership with CentreLearn, is offering a free training program "*Online Epilepsy and Seizure Response for EMS.*" This one hour program describes seizures associated with epilepsy, appropriate EMS response and considerations for deciding if further medical care is warranted. The EMS course is CECBEMS accredited for 1.5 hours of Basic Level CEU. A certificate can be printed upon completion of the course. Access the program at www.epilepsyfoundation.org/firstresponders/index.cfm, click on the red "Access Trainings" in the right hand column, select the EMS 1.5 CEU option. Use Promo Code 03-Epilepsy Foundation of Northeastern NY to waive the registration fee.
 19. The Training and Education Committee voted to revise the CLI course by adopting a curriculum called, "We Play the Way We Practice," with an adjusted time schedule and addition of helmet removal. Don't bother looking for a copy; Google hasn't even heard of this puppy.
 20. Some superb roadway safety tools were released by the Responder Safety Institute this past May. Check out www.respondersafety.com/Training/Downloads.aspx for the first three downloads (all dated May 2011).
 21. A slate of 2012 officers has been proposed for SEMSCO including Chair Mark Zeek (Adirondack-Appalachian REMSCO), First Vice Chair Daniel Blum (Westchester REMSCO), and Second Vice Chair Rich Brandt (Hudson Mohawk REMSCO). Elections at the next meeting.
 22. SEMAC and SEMSCO meetings for 2011 are over. On paper, that is. In reality, September 13-14, 2011 will be the next meeting which is part of a contract including a January 24-25, 2012 meeting. Both are scheduled at the Hilton Garden Inn, 235 Hoosick Street in Troy, NY 12180. Check the Bureau meeting web page beforehand for an agenda www.health.state.ny.us/nysdoh/ems/meetings_and_events.htm and to make sure your flight (i.e., meeting) has not been delayed or cancelled. Bring lunch money, too: the only sustenance available is water and mints.

These notes respectfully prepared by Mike McEvoy who previously represented the NYS Association of Fire Chiefs on SEMSCO before (finally) being replaced by Mike Murphy. Contact Mike at McEvoyMike@aol.com or visit www.mikemcevoy.com. If you want a personal copy of these "unofficial" SEMSCO minutes delivered directly to your email account, surf to the Saratoga County EMS Council at www.saratogaems.org and click on the "NYS EMS News" tab (at the top of the page – or you can simply click here to be taken directly to the source: www.saratogaems.org/NYS_EMS_Council.htm). There, you'll find a list server dedicated exclusively to circulating these notes. Past copies of NYS EMS News are parked there as well.