

## New ambulances welcomed into Bethany

By Kevin Roberts  
Special to the Coastal Point

The Bethany Beach Volunteer Fire Company, founded in June of 1948, is a volunteer organization with 77 members and a Ladies Auxilliary of almost 30 members. Through their coordinated efforts, the men and women of the company monitor every property from the Indian River Bridge, down the coast to the Maryland state line, and as far west as the Route 54 bridge west of Fenwick Island. At their disposal are 13 different vehicles, from a 1952 truck, painted in classic fire-engine red, to their top-of-the-line Pierce Sky Arm and Dash trucks. And, this week, the company's latest vehicles will officially come home.

The newest additions to their rescue arsenal are two brand new 2008 Horton F450 ambulances. The Ford 450 ambulance, built by Horton Emergency Vehicles, is a top-of-the-line, fully customized emergency response vehicle and can be seen in use by emergency personnel all over the country. And to celebrate the arrival of these vehicles, the men and women of the BBVFC will be hosting a housing ceremony and open house, open to the public, on Saturday, April 11, at 10 a.m.

"The vehicles are already here, and are operational, but we want to provide an opportunity for the public to see them, and celebrate the expansion of the company," said Fire Captain Mike Suit. "The fire department will be present, along with the ambulance crew, to meet and greet and show the new ambulances. We'll also be taking kids inside the ambulances and trucks, so it will be fun, as well as informative."

Bethany's Emergency Medical Service, or EMS, is a collaborative effort between Bethany Beach, South Bethany, Fenwick Island and the Sea Colony Recreation Association. Their primary ambulance is on-duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year, with a staff of seven career EMT's, firefighters and a supervisor. The reserve ambulances are staffed by volunteers who all undergo rigorous training and certification.

They all work in collaboration with surrounding emergency response teams, such as the Millville, Ocean City (Md.) and Roxanna fire companies, providing support as it is needed. They also work with state and Sussex County EMS and police and, of course, the Emergency Operation Center which operates the area's 9-1-1 call center.

In the last 12 months, BBVFC emergency response personnel have handled 332 fire calls and 426 requests for emergency medical services. They have received calls pertaining to everything from small restaurant fires and vehicle accidents, to full-scale structure fires. They have even travelled into neighboring Rehoboth and Ocean City to assist with large-scale structure fires, such as the fire in Henlopen Hotel in February of 2009. They even have a boat at their disposal.

They are also currently in search of a full-time career firefighter/EMT supervisor. The supervisor will manage emergency services and directly supervise the seven full-time FF/EMT's and two ambulances, and they will also be responsible for administrative tasks, such as scheduling, inspections and routine equipment checks.

Delaware State law requires that applicants have a Delaware EMT-B level certification and are on the current registry. The job also requires completion of Firefighter 1 and 2 (or equivalent Delaware training), five years of EMS experience, a valid driver's license, and a background/medical check. Questions about the position may be directed to Chief Brian Martin at (302) 462-6235.

Information on the Bethany Beach Fire Company, their EMS team, and their Ladies Auxilliary can be found online at [www.bethanybeachfire.com](http://www.bethanybeachfire.com). Station 1 can be contacted at (302) 539-7700, and Station 2 in Fenwick Island at (302) 539-8100. For emergencies, of course, dial 9-1-1.

Parking for the April 11 ambulance housing ceremony and open house will be behind the fire hall, off Hollywood Street.



Coastal Point • File Photo  
Brice Hickman works from the back of one of Bethany Beach's new ambulances.