

Estill EMS celebrates 20 years of ALS

On Wednesday, July 13, Estill County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) celebrated 20 years of providing Advanced Life Support (ALS) to the residents of Estill County, Irvine and Ravenna.

The county has an estimated population of 14,500 people and 256 squares miles in land area.

Prior to 1977, the ambulance service was operated by two funeral homes located in Irvine. Cox and Lewis Funeral Homes used their hearses to transport patients.

In 1977 the Estill County Fiscal Court established the first county operated ambulance service. It was located at Cox Funeral Home on Broadway where two employees stated at the funeral home until they received a phone call for an emergency run or non-emergency transport.

The ambulance service was funded by the Estill County Fiscal Court and through a program called Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA). The county purchased two new van ambulances for emergency runs within the county and used the funeral home's hearse for non-emergency transports.

In 1979, the Estill County Fiscal Court purchased an old service station for the new home of the Estill County Ambulance Service. (It is presently being used by the Estill County Rescue Squad.) It had a small room for sleeping and a small office for billing. The restroom was located in the rear of the building, so employees would have to go outside to enter the restroom.

The ambulance service began with eight Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs), who worked 8 and 12 hour shifts.

On June 18, 1986, the Estill County Fiscal Court decided to create an ambulance taxing district to help offset the cost. The ambulance service had become a financial burden to the county, so the county created a board of directors to oversee the tax. The board was made up of three members from the county and one member from the city. The judge/executive appoints the three members to represent the county and the city mayor appoints one member. The board consists of a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary and treasurer.

Realizing the need for more room and better accommodations the ambulance board decided to build a new ambulance building in 1991. This station was built on property owned by Marcum & Wallace Memorial Hospital within city limits. The land was leased from the hospital.

The beautiful new building was an immense change from the old run-down gas station. It contained two bunk-rooms, full kitchen, full bath, two bays that would house three ambulances and two offices for billing. At this time, the ambulance service had four van ambulances and responded to approximately 2,500 calls per year, with eight full-time employees.

In 1996, the Estill County Ambulance Service went through some big changes. Estill County EMS became an Advanced Life Support (ALS) service on July 1, 1996. At that time the Estill County Ambulance Service formally changed its name to Estill County Emergency Medical Services.

After the name change and upgrading to ALS, Estill County EMS was able to provide paramedics to emergency calls through-



Those attending the ALS open house last week were able to see the equipment used inside the ambulance and out.

out the entire county. Estill County EMS started with three full-time paramedics each working a 24 hour shift and off 48 hours. This staffed one ALS ambulance which responded to all 911 calls. The ambulance service purchased Type III ambulances (box type) from then on. Later more paramedics were hired and more ambulances were stocked with ALS equipment.

In 2000, Estill County EMS purchased a second station in the county at 200 Whispering Woods to help with better response time on the other side of the Kentucky River. Estill County is roughly divided in half by the Kentucky River. At that time, there was only the two

lane bridge in Irvine crossing the Kentucky River within a 30 mile radius.

Estill County EMS made 2,800 runs with six full time paramedics, six full time EMTs, and 20 part-time employees that year.

In 2013 the agency outgrew the station that was built in 1991. It had gone from three employees in the station at one time to 12. With only two bedrooms and one bath, the station had to be expanded to accommodate the increase in personnel.

In October 2013, 3,000 square feet of living space was added. This included two more bunk rooms, capable of sleeping eight employees, a large day room,

a shift captain's office, director's office and two additional bath rooms. A large training room for in-house education for all employees was also added.

In 2015 Estill County EMS had grown to responding to approximately 4,200 calls with 12 full-time paramedics and two full time EMTs along with 30 part-time EMTs and paramedics. Estill County EMS answers all the 911 calls for pre-hospital emergency call, emergency and transport for Estill County. The agency currently has five stocked ALS ambulances, one stocked BLC ambulance, and a special response vehicle staffed with paramedic and ALS equipment. Two ALS am-

bulances and one ALS impact truck are staffed during peak times 12 hours a day.

Estill County EMS employees are mandated to have the highest in education and professionalism. Safety to our community is important to us as we always participate in community outreach events and special events. Estill County EMS is also a field education and internship site for multiple EMT and Paramedic programs across the state. Currently employees have competitive pay, hazardous duty state retirement, health, dental and vision insurance for full-time employees.



Teddy Stamper was one of the volunteers directing traffic on the Winchester Road where two trees had fallen into the road. New Fox Road also received some fallen trees on the road.

Hundreds attend CCEC Rally

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Taylor said his office has filed an open records request with Beshear to receive documents on the investigation.

The judge said the county is also working on a new host agreement with the landfill. It will increase the harshness of the penalties. It will require the landfill to install cameras that can be viewed in judge's office.

Taylor was going to be speaking on Tuesday afternoon at a legislative meeting in Frankfort, which included gas and oil well drilling. It would require drillers to get a permit and tell how close

to a stream and how deep they would be drilling.

There are 1300 students in the two schools across the road from the landfill, over 120 employees and also parents there every day.

"They're putting every student in those buildings in jeopardy, and we sure don't need that," stated Supt. Jeff Saylor.

He said his priority was the safety of the students and staff of Estill County Schools.

"Our air, water and land are under attack," said Pat Banks, Kentucky Riverkeeper.

If the NORM ever reaches

the Kentucky River, Banks said it will go downstream to one million people before it reaches Carrollton, Ky., where the Kentucky River flows into the Ohio.

Fitzgerald, of the Kentucky Resources Council, worked with the Estill Fiscal Court on the host agreement with the landfill back in the early 90s. Now, he wants some answers as to how this has happened.

"You've got to keep the pressure on to do the right thing," Fitzgerald stated. "We are not the happy dumping ground for your frack waste."

Fitzgerald suggested that

a state agency create a file at the local library so citizens would have access to their reports, "because we've been kept in the dark. That is not the way we do business."


Fitzgerald is currently working with Estill County on the new host agreement.

"Fracking is a second cousin of mountain top coal removal," he stated.

"We're in God's garden. This is what God has given us," said Father John Rousch of Stanton. "We are stronger together than we are separated."



Work continues on the Sweet Lick Creek Bridge near the Estill Springs School on the north end of Irvine as part of the re-construction of KY-89 North, Winchester Road. The road has been closed for over a week but is expected to reopen on Thursday, July 21st.



Leap onto the
Learning Express!

Back to School Night
West Irvine Intermediate
Monday, August 1
4 p.m. - 7 p.m.

3rd Grade Check-In - 4:00 p.m.
4th Grade Check-In - 5:00 p.m.
5th Grade Check-In - 5:30 p.m.

You and your family are invited to Back to School Night at West Irvine Intermediate. Students and families will have the opportunity to meet their new teacher, tour the school, visit the Resource Fair, pick-up their student's new drive-thru car tags and enjoy a FREE dinner.

Parents and guardians will also have the opportunity to review West Irvine Intermediate's Title 1 Parent Compact and Policy. We value your feedback and input. Your comments will play an active role in your child's education at West Irvine Intermediate. We can't wait to see you on August 1!

School Supplies
Don't forget the Family Resource Center can help with Back to School supplies! Please call 606-723-7733 for more information.