

The Registry

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Sandy Bogucki, MD, PhD

Named Board of Directors Chairperson



At the NREMT Board of Directors meeting in November, 2005, Sandy Bogucki, MD, PhD was named Chairman of the Board of Directors.

Dr. Bogucki holds an impressive list of accomplishments that qualifies her for this position. She currently serves as the Associate Professor of Emergency Medicine at Yale University, where she is also a member of the Division of EMS.

In addition, she is the Associate EMS Medical Director and Fire Surgeon for the Branford (Connecticut) Fire Department.

Dr. Bogucki was a course developer and contract faculty member at the National Fire Academy before spending six months as a U.S. Fire Administration Visiting Scholar. She now serves as an appointed member of the NFA Board of Visitors. She is also a member of the Medical Advisory Committee for the John A. Redmond foundation of the IAFF, a principal member of the NFPA 1500 Technical Committee, chairs the NFPA 1582 Task Group, and serves on the Executive Board of the NFPA Fire Service Section.

In addition to serving on the Board of Directors of the National Association of EMS Physicians, Dr. Bogucki is also a member of the Editorial Board of Pre-Hospital Emergency Care. She represents the NAEMSP on the Federal Interagency Committee on EMS and serves on the Interagency Board for Equipment Standardization and Interoperability as well as various Department of Defense, CDC, NIOSH, and other panels.

She has numerous publications and presentations in the areas of medical support for fire fighters, line of duty deaths and serious injuries, and the development of advanced technologies for fire service and EMS applications.

Dr. Bogucki received her master's degree from the School of Public Health at Tulane University, her PhD in Microbiology from Texas A&M University, and her MD from Yale University.

Communicating the critical role that the NREMT provides for the EMS community, Dr. Bogucki states, "The National Registry is analogous to medical specialty boards that designate qualified physicians as 'board certified'."

In her new role as Chairperson, Dr. Bogucki will be responsible for ensuring that the organization remains mission-focused. Along with the Board, she will help establish a strategic plan, set policies that bear on the ability of the organization to achieve its mission, and oversee its budgets and finances.

"It is my great honor and privilege to assume the chair of the Board of Directors of the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians," Dr. Bogucki states. "Succeeding former Chairperson Chief Mary Beth Michos in this capacity presents a daunting challenge."

The NREMT Board of Directors looks forward to the leadership of the newly elected Dr. Bogucki and believes she will provide a positive impact to the role of the NREMT.

Computer Based Testing Only Months Away

The National Registry remains on course to provide all examinations via computer based testing (CBT) beginning January 1, 2007. We want to thank the entire EMS community who helped us prepare and make decisions regarding CBT this year. It has been the most researched decision in the history of the NREMT.

We want to thank the various decision makers at the state level. As of this publication only three states (Kansas, New Jersey and Wyoming) using the National Registry exam at the EMT-Basic level currently indicated they can not make the transition to computer based testing and will no longer offer national EMS certification. States that remain with the Registry will receive

By William E. Brown, Jr., Executive Director

the new benefits of CBT. They will offer a more fair examination experience to identify entry-level competency, in most cases next day exam results, on-line applications, increased examination security, and greater integrity to every EMT who takes computer adaptive testing.

The decision to move from pencil-paper tests was complicated for the NREMT and individual states. We recognized the many complex variables. If the change to CBT were easy we would have

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Computer Based Testing *continued from page 1*

done it years ago. The EMS community is now ready to make the change, and every NREMT candidate in the future will be thanking their State EMS Director and decision makers who had the courage and leadership to help the NREMT make this decision for the betterment of the entire EMS community. The Registry staff who visited with stakeholders in the 50 states during this decision-making period would like to express their gratitude. Particular thanks should go to the State EMS Directors who attended meetings and helped the NREMT and Pearson VUE find adequate sites to offer CBT for EMS candidates in this nation.

Test Writers Helped Add Over 3,000 Test Questions

We would like to thank the 96 educators, physicians and state regulators who came to the NREMT over the past two years to help write test questions for inclusion in the NREMT test banks. These writers came from 40 states and helped us add over 3,000 items to all five levels of NREMT certification banks. Each member drafted 20 questions and then came to Columbus, Ohio to work with others to assure every question had only one correct answer, that the distractors were attractive but wrong, the grammar was correct, no regional bias existed in the question, and the question was focused on a task related to the practice of the EMT. Each committee spent three days reviewing, editing and/or discarding items. We received many testimonials from these writers regarding their experience, and the NREMT is indebted to them for their service. The work of quality test question development will continue at the NREMT.

New Projects Planned to Get Ready for CBT

During 2006 we will continue with a variety of projects to assure a smooth transition from pencil-paper to CBT:

- Developing a menu-driven DVD for EMS educators, State EMS Offices, and applicants. The DVD will explain the entire application and test registration process.
- Hosting five additional item writing meetings.
- Visiting 25 states in 2006 to explain CBT. During the state visits, we will meet with educators and provide updates to stakeholders on what we're doing regarding CBT.
- Beta testing CBT in June and July in 13 states to assure all systems are functioning properly prior to our January, 2007 launch.
- Enhancing the NREMT website so that Education Program Directors can enter the site via secured passwords and qualify students for CBT.
- Permitting students to take the written examination at the end of an EMT-Basic course. At the Advanced Levels, candidates may be able to complete the practical examination, after class and laboratory portions are completed, provided this testing sequence is approved by their state.
- Programming our computers to post exam results in most cases within 24 hours for state licensing agencies and candidates.
- Providing capabilities for completing applications on the NREMT website.
- Providing the best possible customer service to help candidates understand what requirements are necessary to take the CBT examination.

The transition plan for computer based testing has over 300 steps that must be accomplished. We are expending great effort to assure this occurs as efficiently and smoothly as possible. 2006 will be a busy year. We are excited about the launch of CBT in 2007, and ask for your support as we phase out 36 years of paper and pencil testing.

Scoring Numbers Increase, Turnaround Time Decreases

What do you do when the number of applications you need to score increases considerably but it's not possible to add to your staff? You get creative. That's what the Certification Department, headed by Philip Dickison, resorted to last year when faced with a 12% increase in applications to score.

Committed to maintaining efficiency and excellent customer service, Phil assembled a team that successfully re-designed the processing and scoring of applications. As a result, the increase was not only absorbed, but the turnaround time *improved* from an average of 8 days in 2004 to 7.8 days in 2005. "I couldn't be happier about how successful the team was!" Phil says.

College students were also hired during the summer—the busiest time of the year for the Certification Department—to help with the increase in

applications. "This was a win-win situation," Phil explains, "because we were able to provide college students with employment, while keeping our costs manageable.

The Certification Department knows that one of the biggest concerns of exam candidates is how quickly their applications will be processed, especially since certification can determine when employment can commence. In 2005, applications for certification increased on all levels for a total of 138,000 that were scored.

As the NREMT transitions to computer based testing (CBT), Phil explains, the Certification Department intends on maintaining a high quality of customer service.

Help Turn \$20 into \$2 Million for Fellow EMS Workers

EMS & Rescuer Relief Fund Helps EMS Workers Affected by Hurricanes

As you read this article, home for many EMS workers from areas devastated by Hurricanes Rita and Katrina is an overcrowded motel room, an uninviting FEMA trailer, or a cot in the back room of a work station. Many of our colleagues have been separated from their spouses and children, as they have been forced to relocate to communities where schools were not damaged.

Although insurance may pay for part of the damage for many of those affected by the tragedies, the settlement often falls short of covering the full amount.

There's something you can do to help your fellow EMS brothers and sisters. The NAEMT Foundation has established the EMS & Rescuer Relief Fund to help EMS workers whose homes and lives were devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

EMS & Rescuer Relief Fund Administrator and Past NAEMT President Jim Allen says the fund is administered by the NAEMT Foundation, which is a nonprofit organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code. "All donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law," Jim says. "NAEMT is absorbing all the costs of administering the fund so that every dollar you give goes to help your colleagues in need."

At the end of 2005, the EMS & Rescuer Relief Fund had dispersed nearly \$120,000 to over 400 recipients. Thousands of EMS workers still need assistance. The final distribution of funds is scheduled for late spring or early summer. In order to reach qualified recipients, donations should be received by May 1, 2006. To allow 100% of the donations to go to needy workers, checks are encouraged to cut down on costs. The NAEMT Foundation pays the service fee for credit card donations and also provided seed money for the project.

"We have a moral, ethical and spiritual responsibility to help each other," says NREMT Executive Director William E. Brown, Jr. "If every EMS worker donated just \$20, we could raise \$2 million dollars. This is a wonderful opportunity provided by the NAEMT Foundation."

EMS workers from the devastated areas are heroic people who have set aside their own concerns to help others—not just for days, but for months now. The media has found other stories to report, the public has put the tragedies out of their minds, but EMS workers in Louisiana and Mississippi are still living the aftermath of the hurricanes every day. Please be a part of this extraordinary opportunity.

See donation form on page 3.

Meet Three EMS Workers whose Homes Were Destroyed

Bill Clark is the Chief of the Escatawpa Volunteer Fire Department in Mississippi and the Assistant Field Supervisor for the American Medical Response in Gulfport. The family had experienced flooding before, during Hurricane George. Thinking they would have a similar experience, they spent hours moving valuables to higher ground, including about \$10,000 worth of books and equipment Bill used as a teacher of First Responder classes. Bill's wife and three children loaded their car and headed to Illinois to stay with family. Bill stayed behind to work.

Regardless of the family's efforts, the house was flooded with six feet of water. "We were able to salvage some clothes and family portraits, but that's all," Bill says. "What we packed in the car when my family left for Illinois is all we have."

Six months later, the family of five lives in a 28' FEMA trailer parked on their property. "Living in tight quarters is hard," Bill says. The Clarks are waiting for paperwork from the city before they can move forward with rebuilding their home. In the meantime, Bill says people have been "wonderful." Friends have helped tear out the paneling and sheet rock in the brick house, and sprayed it with bleach to remove the mold. The increased cost of new building requirements in the area will make it difficult for the Clarks to rebuild. Even with insurance coverage, Bill estimates that it would still take \$30,000 to recover what they lost.

In spite of what the Clarks have experienced, their spirits are strong. "The kids have done quite well dealing with this," Bill says, who even donated \$25 to help those who were in a worse situation.



The Clarks pose in front of their FEMA trailer. In spite of the devastation, the family has remained in good spirits. Back row: Anthony (14), Linda, and Bill. Front row: Adrian (9), and Zack (11).

Wilson Regnier was helping Cameron Parish in Louisiana during Hurricane Rita when his home was bulldozed before he could recover anything. Wilson's home had floated 30 feet from its foundation onto the street. Ten days after the storm, Wilson said he saw the house standing. "I didn't have the boots I needed to go into the home," Wilson says. "I took the next day off so I could salvage a few things that had special meaning to me—a teddy bear from my daughter, mementos from my deceased dad. I came around the corner that day, and there was no house. I was never contacted. No one can tell me anything," Wilson says.

Wilson works for Acadian Ambulance Service in addition to working for the volunteer fire department in Cameron Parish for 31 years. During the hurricane, Wilson served as a heavy rescuer and dive rescuer.

Since the hurricane destroyed Wilson's home, he has "lived" at the Lake Charles ambulance station, sleeping on a cot in the back room. His wife has been staying with family in Houston. Unable to rebuild, the couple purchased a home north of Lake Charles. "With the new building regulations, there's not enough insurance money to rebuild my home," Wilson explains, estimating he still needs \$25,000 to \$30,000 to cover what he lost.

Wilson is quick to express his gratitude for the help and concern he has received. "I'm not used to asking for help," Wilson reflects. "But Acadian people have truly been a family to me. NAEMT and others have given immeasurable help. Those people need to know how much good they're doing."

An EMT Intermediate for the past ten years, **Byron Shoemaker** evacuated his home, located in St. Bernard Parish, Louisiana, the night before the storm. "I packed a duffel bag, thinking I'd be back in three days." That's what everyone thought, Byron recalls. When the levies broke, however, his home was flooded with 7½ feet of water.

Byron has been staying with family in Slidell. Like others, he will not recover everything he lost. "Flood insurance will only cover about one-third of the damage to my house," Byron says. "Homeowners insurance will pay for the roof." He estimates it would take about \$10,000 to \$15,000 more just to meet basic living conditions. "I probably have enough to finish the sheet rock and floors," Byron estimates. "This has been a difficult experience. I'm starting over from scratch."

"We have a moral, ethical and spiritual responsibility to help each other,"

— NREMT Executive Director William E. Brown, Jr.

Help Your Fellow EMS Workers Rebuild Their Lives. Please Donate by May 1, 2006

Donate online at www.NAEMT.org, donate by phone at 1-800-34-NAEMT, or send payment to: EMS & Rescuer Relief Fund, NAEMT, P.O. Box 1400, Clinton, MS 39060
(Make checks payable to EMS & Rescuer Relief Fund) Checks are encouraged to curtail costs.

Enclosed is a check/money order in the amount of \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Prov _____

Postal Code _____ Country _____

Email _____

Bill my credit card in the amount of \$ _____

Visa MasterCard American Express

Account Number _____

Signature _____

Please have companies who support the Fund (through matching donations or similar efforts) contact me.

In appreciation of your contribution of \$5 or more, you will receive a Steve Berry poster titled "Helping Our Own So That They Can Help Others." While supplies last. (Paid for by the NAEMT Foundation.) Thank you.

2005 NREMT Research Productivity

Published Manuscripts

Russ-Eft DF, Dickison PD, Levine R (2005). Instructor Quality Affecting Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) Preparedness: A LEADS Project. *International Journal of Training and Development* 9:4.

Pirrallo RG, Levine R, Dickison PD. Behavioral Health Risk Factors of U.S. Emergency Medical Technicians: The LEADS Project (2005). *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine* Jul-Aug 2005; vol. 20, no. 4.

Brown WE, Margolis GS, Levine R (2005). Peer Evaluation of the Professional Behaviors of EMTs. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine* Mar-Apr 2005; vol. 20, no. 2.

Abstracts Presented

Studnek J, Margolis GS (2005). Educational Background Correlates to Success on the National Registry of EMTs Written Certification Examination. Poster presentation at the Prehospital Care Research Forum at the annual symposium of the National Association of EMS Educators.

Margolis GS, Studnek J, Brazelton TB (2005). The Relationship of a State's Paramedic Program Accreditation Policy to First-Time Pass Rate on the National Paramedic Certification Written Exam. Poster presentation at the Prehospital Care Research Forum at the annual symposium of the National Association of EMS Educators.

Studnek J, Margolis GS, Levine R (2005). The Relationship Between Organizational Policy and EMT Seat Belt Use. Poster Presentation at the annual meeting of the Society of Academic Emergency Medicine

Studnek J, Margolis GS, Levine R (2005) EMT and Paramedic Rating of the Perceived Effectiveness of EMS Workforce Retention Strategies. Oral presentation by the Prehospital Care Research Forum and presented at EMS Today, the annual meeting of the Journal of Emergency Medical Services.

MacDonald D, Cone D, Bogucki S (2005). Occupational Injury and Health Maintenance in EMS. Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the National Association of EMS Physicians (awarded Best Poster Presentation) and oral presentation at the New England Society of Academic Emergency Medicine (awarded Best Oral Presentation).

Margolis GS, Dickison PD (2005). The Relationship between Paramedic Instructor Qualifications and Student Performance on the National Certification Written Exam. Poster presentation at the annual meeting of the National Association of EMS Physicians.

Research Department is Expanded

This past year, the Research Department was expanded to include a second EMS Research Fellow, Antonio Fernandez, who is from New York City, New York. Antonio joins Research Fellow Jonathan Studnek, who is from Albuquerque, New Mexico. Both Jon and Tony are pursuing doctoral degrees at The Ohio State University.

"The expansion of the fellowship program allows the NREMT to take on projects of greater magnitude, and that can have a greater impact on the EMS community," explains Associate Director Dr. Gregg Margolis. The Research Department is committed to improving EMS and the NREMT processes through research, Dr. Margolis points out. The focus of the research program for the coming year will be in the areas of competency assurance and patient safety, the future of EMS, and EMS workforce analysis.

In addition to taking on larger and more significant projects, the Research Department will continue our work on LEADS (Longitudinal Emergency Medical Technician Attributes & Demographics Survey) This project describes the attributes and attitudes of emergency medical services personnel throughout the United States. Sleep problems reported by EMS personnel were a specific focus of the study this past year. In addition, several abstracts were written and presented at national EMS meetings, and three manuscripts were published (see related article this page.)

Tell Us What You Think!

The National Registry is constantly looking for avenues to improve and deliver quality in the EMS certification process to assure the continued safety of the public. Your feedback is important to us. That's why we've developed two surveys in which you are invited to participate.

The Re-reg Requirements Survey seeks your opinion regarding the Re-registration requirements for the NREMT, and consists of eight questions.

The Continued Education Access & Utilization Survey seeks your opinion regarding access and utilization to continuing education for re-registration of your NREMT certification, and consists of nine questions.

Please help us make the re-registration process better for you.

Go to http://www.nremt.org/about/take_survey.asp and take one or both of our surveys today!

Practical Exam is a Significant Part of the Certification Process

As part of our responsibility to help protect the public, the NREMT continues to believe that verification of psychomotor skills is a very important part of the certification process for EMS professionals. As the NREMT prepares to transition to computer based testing January 1, 2007, the practical exam will remain an integral part of the NREMT certification process.

"The psychomotor evaluations will be updated in three areas," explains Associate Director Rob Wagoner. NREMT First Responder and Basic candidates must complete the entire, state-approved EMT course prior to taking either part of the NREMT-Basic examination (cognitive or psychomotor). Candidates may take the parts of the examination in any order if permitted by the program director and the State EMS Licensing Agency. The NREMT will not release results of the cognitive evaluation until the psychomotor evaluation is successfully completed.

Advanced level candidates (Intermediate and Paramedic) may take the psychomotor evaluation following completion of the didactic and laboratory portions of an approved program if permitted by the program director and the State EMS Licen-

ing Agency. Advanced level candidates must complete the entire, state-approved course prior to taking the cognitive evaluation.

As the NREMT implements the American Heart Association 2005 Guidelines for CPR and Emergency Cardiovascular Care, a transition period will run through December 31, 2006. During this transition period, the NREMT skill evaluation instruments will continue to reflect AHA Guidelines 2000 for CPR and ECC. However, instructions to skill examiners will be modified so that candidates who correctly perform to either 2000 or 2005 guidelines will not be penalized during the transition.

Looking beyond NREMT implementation of CBT on January 1, 2007, the National EMS Educational Standards are expected to be released in 2008. These standards may have an impact on the skills that a particular level of EMS provider possesses. The NREMT will review these changes and revise all practical examinations to reflect the knowledge and skills for each EMS provider identified in the revised standards.

\$5 Re-registration Increase

is the First in 36 Years

A \$5 fee increase for EMS providers re-registering at the Basic level will be implemented beginning April 1, 2006. In spite of the increase to \$15, the fees still remain among the least expensive of re-certification agencies.

The new fee will benefit registrants by allowing the NREMT to provide the following:

- Move to on-line re-registration so registrants can re-register and pay on-line. This will decrease the time involved for the re-registration process.
- Build the infrastructure necessary for on-line re-registration.
- Better manage the re-registration process.
- Maintain documentation for registrants.

More information regarding on-line re-registration will be available at www.nremt.org.

New re-registration fees effective April 1, 2006 are:

First Responder	\$10
Basic	\$15
Intermediate 85/99.....	\$15
Paramedic.....	\$20

New Brochures Help Registrants Prepare for Re-registration

New brochures have been designed to better communicate the re-registration requirements that are necessary on all levels of certification.

Since excellent customer service has been identified as a priority in the Re-registration Department, the brochures were designed to be more user-friendly and easier to read. Because re-registration requirements differ for each level of certification, brochures were developed for each of the five levels, from First Responder to Paramedic, and provide the details registrants need to maintain their certification. PDFs of the brochures are available on our website or by calling 614/888-4484.

Through re-registration, registrants demonstrate their continued competency, which maintains a critical standard and demonstrates professionalism. Certification is something registrants can take pride in—and that can make a difference in the lives of the public.

Jeffrey Scott

Named New Re-registration Coordinator



The NREMT is pleased to introduce Jeffrey Scott as our Re-registration Coordinator.

Jeff was the EMS Coordinator and Director of EMS Education for Lodi Community Hospital prior to joining the Registry. He has been a training professional and manager in EMS, with over 13 years' experience, and has a total of over 17 years experience in public safety. His employment history includes adjunct faculty positions with Ohio Fire Academy, Drive Team Ohio, and Doctors/OSU Hospitals. He is also a certified law enforcement instructor and police officer. Jeff has been a paramedic for 15 years and has been Nationally Registered since 1989.

Jeff is very active in community service organizations including serving as a board member for Ohio Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in Ohio; and volunteers for the U.S. Marine Corp League, the Young Marines Program. He plans to graduate in May with his Masters in Business Administration from Franklin University.

"My focus will be on getting on-line re-registration up and running to make the re-registration process faster and easier," Jeff says. In addition, he would like to see the number of re-registrants increase. "National re-registration is an important way registrants demonstrate to the public their commitment to continued competency as an EMS provider," Jeff explains. "We want to make sure we give re-registrants an efficient way to maintain this distinction."

Who Doesn't Want to Receive Safe and Effective Medical Care?

By William E. Brown, Jr., Executive Director

If your brother had a brain tumor, would you interview his neurosurgeon prior to his surgery? Would you feel a need to determine: 1. whether he graduated from a legitimate medical school?, 2. how many tumors he had removed ?, 3. is he Board Certified by the American Board of Neurosurgery?, 4. has he met his continued competency requirements?, 5. if he was licensed by your State Board of Medicine?, 6. is the hospital credentialing committee adequately assured that he practices safely and effectively in their hospital? Or, would you expect that since he was allowed to operate on your brother, experts have deemed that he is qualified to perform brain surgery!

Likewise, in EMS many different layers of protection tell your patients that you know what you are doing when delivering emergency medical care. Your patient may be very sick and injured, and what you do DOES make a difference between life and death! The NREMT works within the entire EMS system to help assure that you have enough knowledge and skills to deliver safe and effective care. We partner with your State EMS licensing agency to assure you have sufficient EMS education, are not a felon, and have met other important requirements. We examine you over an adequate sample of the knowledge and skills necessary to identify safe and effective practice. Once you receive a state license, your employer helps assure that you maintain adequate knowledge on the job. Every other year, the NREMT collects information from you, your training officer, and medical director that tells us you have completed enough education and have maintained competency as part of our re-registration requirements. When all these agencies--the state, the National Registry, your employer, and medical director--work together, we can be confident you have met the standards of competency to practice safely and effectively. If one of the links in the chain of public safety and competency assurance is weak, the result would be much like having an incompetent surgeon operate on your brother.

The NREMT is committed to helping the public understand that like the neurosurgeon, you, too, have demonstrated and maintained competencies that can make the difference between life and death.

