

2008 READERS' CHOICE

Best First Aid Squad: Morristown Ambulance Squad

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Contributing Writer

BEST FIRST-AID SQUAD

Winner: *Morristown Ambulance Squad*

Compassion and a hearty soul are key ingredients for the success of the volunteers at Morristown Ambulance Squad, said Karen

Johansen, president of the squad.

The all-volunteer squad works hard and truly cares about the community, she said. There are some 25 active members who go on about 2,000 calls a year.

"We could use about 25 more volunteers," Johansen said, "but we do the best we can with what we have." She said members include

moms, dads, students, teachers, business people, computer techs and more.

"We run the gamut," Johansen said. "Just as the town of Morristown is very diversified, so are we."

The Morristown Ambulance Squad has served the Morristown community since 1961. The non-profit organization provides free emergency medical services to residents, visitors and businesses of Morristown.

"Today, when a lot of people have to have two jobs just to survive, we try hard to maintain the fact



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that we don't charge patients," Johansen said. "We want to exist on donations, and we want our volunteers to take care of their neighbors."

Johansen, who has been on the squad 21 years, said the squad takes members as young as 16 and has three ambulances.

Johansen said the squad is one of two first aid squads in the county that have overnight duty crews. There are a number of volunteers who don't live in town, so by having members sleep at the squad sometimes, they are able to answer calls 24 hours a day.

The squad provides numerous services to the community, including:

- Responding to medical emergencies by providing pre-hospital emergency medical care.
- Working with Mobile Intensive Care Units, which provide advanced life support.
- Providing scheduled transportations between health-care facilities and home for non-ambulatory residents without charge.

- Training and public awareness at health fairs and town functions.

- Remaining on emergency standby during fires, sporting events and town functions.

"We do more with less," said Dominick Sandelli, captain.

"It's like a small company with few employees," Johansen said. "You have to work really hard, and you do everything, from mopping floors to doing bills, secretarial work and management work."

Johansen finds the work very satisfying.

"It's diverse and interesting," she said.

"No two motor vehicle accidents are the same. No two chest pains are the same. You are always doing something different."

Johansen added that she felt the community appreciated the squad, because "even though the town has grown and it has a big-city attitude in a lot of places, we are still treating people like people, with compassion."

Morristown Ambulance Squad is at 16 Early St., Morristown. Call (973) 538-1783.

**Thank You Morris County for voting us
"Best First Aid Squad" for 2008!**

MORRISTOWN AMBULANCE SQUAD

Volunteers for Community Service Since 1961



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Ambulance Squad and be part
of a winning team. No
experience necessary.

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