



June 2004 - Memorial Day Edition

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Striving for Safety on Seven Mile Island

Avalon Chief of EMS, Kevin Scarpa has been busy preparing for the summer season. For cardiac emergencies, more AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators) are now strategically located throughout Avalon and Stone Harbor.

“When someone is in cardiac arrest, a prompt and efficient response is critical,” Scarpa explains.

“We now have AEDs in all the churches on seven mile island. We also have units at the Senior Center, Community Hall, Borough Hall, 39th Street tennis courts, and Public Works building. The police and the beach patrol have had AEDs since 2001. The goal is to have 25 units in place around Avalon and Stone Harbor. Recently, the 20th was put into service.”

Obviously, with all these units in various places on the island, the question is “Who will know how to use an AED?” Scarpa has an answer to this question.

“Many church ushers have taken the American Heart Association’s ‘Heart Saver (AED),’ a two hour course that teaches how to use the equipment. Wherever an AED is located, someone will be familiar with assisting a patient before police and rescue arrive.”

Scarpa explains that to accomplish these goals, donations made to Avalon Rescue Squad have been used along with other contributions.

“We have been very fortunate to have families, trusts, and foundations make AEDs available to us. Those who have generously donated to us are the Glenmede Foundation, Kenelm Foundation, The Eckhardt Family, Holsten Tennis Trust, and the Ann Grillo Family.”

Scarpa’s efforts on behalf of community continue. New this year, is a radio program designed to assure visitors’ and residents’ personal and property safety.

Scarpa’s first broadcast in March was heard on 1630AM. The 17-minute “loop” of recorded information updated as needed, can be heard by residents and visitors of Stone Harbor, Avalon, Townsends Inlet, Sea Isle City, and Strathmere. It’s purpose is to

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provide information on potential emergency situations, such as flooding, storms, and blackouts.

To hear this emergency broadcast, one needs to be mindful of keeping radio batteries on hand in the event of a power failure. Scarpa suggests “a dynamo or ‘crank’ radio, or a solar powered radio be an inclusion in property owners’ emergency supplies. In the meantime, check older radios to be certain yours can receive the 1630AM signal.

“1630AM is an efficient way for people to have the latest information on what may be occurring on the island. If a blackout occurs, 1630 AM will convey what is happening,” notes Scarpa. He acknowledges the grant from the New Jersey State Police Office of Emergency Management that made this emergency advisory radio system a reality.

“We applied and received an \$18,000 grant, but the system in place actually cost \$21,000. We don’t think we would ever have an extended power failure, but decided that a four-day battery back-up would be prudent, increasing our sense of security,” explains Scarpa.

Tune in! Become familiar with 1630AM. Tune in! Hear the latest weather reports from National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Tune in! Be in the know should an emergency situation occurs. – Betsy Henry

Editor’s note: Ever notice how extremely involved individuals have time for ... just about everything? On Saturday, May 15, Kevin Scarpa attended graduation ceremonies at St. Joseph’s University, in Philadelphia where he earned a Masters of Science degree in Public Safety Administration. On Saturday evening he responded to a Rescue call in Avalon Borough. On Sunday morning he was reviewing files in Avalon’s Rescue office. Scarpa is never too busy to return a phone call. He continues to plan, upgrade, and deliver safety services in the quest for islanders’ protection.

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