Bar Harbor firefighter experiences life’s uncertainty first hand

You never know what life has in store for you from day to day, and nowhere was that more obvious than in the small coastal town of Bar Harbor one day last fall. As the afternoon unfolded, the Bar Harbor Fire Department found itself responding to four different calls, two of which were critical cardiac patients. For these two patients, treatment at a cardiac specialty care center quickly was crucial.

One of the patients was 49-year-old Jai Higgins, a lifelong Bar Harbor resident who works as a firefighter/EMT. After experiencing chest pain, he drove himself to the emergency department where physicians discovered he was having a major heart attack. They immediately called for LifeFlight to transport Jai to Eastern Maine Medical Center. In the meantime, a second patient collapsed on the town dock and went into full cardiac arrest. Upon arriving on scene, the rescue team from the fire department quickly made a second request for LifeFlight.

Though they were in a small town on the coast, both of these patients needed the same care

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Bar Harbor firefighter

In September of 1998, after months of work by a few dedicated people at Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems and Central Maine Healthcare Corporation, LifeFlight of Maine flew its first mission, saving the life of a man who was injured in the remote woods of Hancock County.

This fall will mark our 15th year caring for the people of Maine and we want our patients, friends and supporters to help us celebrate the 15,000 lives we’ve touched since 1998.

In addition to open house events at Central Maine Medical Center and Eastern Maine Medical Center (see page 5), LifeFlight is also hosting a semi-formal chef’s gala on October 12 at the Owls Head Transportation Museum.

This special night will feature a feast of tapas made by some of Knox County’s best chefs, including culinary artists from Cafe Miranda, In Good Company, The Slipway, The Landings, 40Paper and 3Crow.

After guests enjoy a variety of gourmet selections, a short program will highlight powerful testimonials from some of our most amazing patients. The program will be followed by handcrafted desserts from Laugh Loud Smile Big and Beth’s Buns. A signature LifeFlight cocktail will be served, and dancing to the ever popular Tony Boffa Band will top off the evening.

Throughout the event, guests are invited to tour one of LifeFlight’s helicopters which will be on display inside the museum, surrounded by aircraft of an earlier era.

Seating is limited and tickets are already selling quickly. Tickets are $125 per person or you can purchase a table of 8 for $1,000. Organizations also have the option of giving one of the 8 tickets to a flight crew member who would sit at the organization’s table for dinner. You can purchase tickets via phone at 207-230-7092 or online at www.lifeflightmaine.org.

Sponsorship opportunities are also available, ranging from $500 to $15,000. If you would like more information on becoming a sponsor, email bduppermacy@lifeflightmaine.org.

Join our team as a volunteer

As a nonprofit organization, LifeFlight depends on volunteers of all kinds to help support our mission of providing critical care transport to people in Maine where and when they need it.

Our next big fundraising event is the 15th Anniversary Chef’s Gala planned for October 12 at the Owls Head Transportation Museum. We’re going to need a lot of help to pull this one off, especially on the day before and day of the event. We’re looking for volunteers to help set up tables and chairs, decorate, direct traffic, park cars, check coats, register ticket holders, serve drinks, bus tables, help in the kitchen and clean up.

This is a great opportunity to get involved with an organization that serves the entire state of Maine, and meet people from all walks of life.

If you’d like to volunteer for the gala, call us at 207-230-7092 or email cdelorimier@lifeflightmaine.org.

Volunteers from Islesboro, Rockland and Augusta have helped out at LifeFlight events like the golf tournament and a special pediatric party.

Sign up today! Call 207-230-7092
Email cdelorimier@lifeflightmaine.org

Bar Harbor firefighter

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that would be available to them in a larger urban area. They needed the big cardiac center to come to them. LifeFlight brings a high level of experience and knowledge, as well as ICU-level medical equipment, directly to the patient, wherever they are.

In the aircraft, the flight crew used an IV pump to administer important medications and evaluated Jai’s heart rhythm with an advanced monitor specially designed for air medical transport. Just after take off, Jai’s heart slipped into ventricular fibrillation (or v-fib), a lethal cardiac rhythm the flight crew could see thanks to the specialized monitor. Flight medic Carl Zenk was able to quickly administer a shock to defibrillate Jai’s heart and bring it back into a normal rhythm.

Today, Jai feels great. He just achieved the rank of captain at the fire department and he plays the drums in a local band. Thanks to the care he received from MDI Hospital, LifeFlight and EMMC, he can spend time with his wife, watching their three children become accomplished musicians themselves.
LifeFlight has recently launched a new Facebook page, a Twitter feed, YouTube channel and LinkedIn profile. However you like to get social, look for us and become a part of our online community.

We'll be posting and tweeting about upcoming events and training opportunities for emergency medical services; sharing great photos; and highlighting some of our moving stories of patient survival and recovery.

Since LifeFlight was launched in 1998, its leaders, crew and staff have worked to create an organization that serves everyone in Maine, no matter where they are, no matter when they need it. It’s a statewide, team effort that involves everyone from the 9-1-1 dispatchers to the first responders and paramedics at the scene to the nurses and physicians in community hospitals to the specialists at Maine’s three trauma centers. The one thing all of these emergency medical providers have in common is to deliver the very best care to the people of Maine.

We are creating an online community of people who share our vision of Maine as a place in which every person, in every community, has access to critical care and medical transport when they need it. We want to hear your stories, see your photos, listen to your concerns and answer your questions.

To hear more, like us on Facebook (https://www.facebook.com/LifeFlightOfMaine), follow us on Twitter (@LifeFlightMaine), connect with us on LinkedIn (http://www.linkedin.com/company/lifeflight-of-maine-foundation), or visit our YouTube channel (http://www.youtube.com/mainelifeflight).

We look forward to meeting you in the social media universe!

Like, follow and connect with us on the social media channel of your choice

15th anniversary open house events scheduled for Bangor and Lewiston at the end of September

Friday, September 27, 2013
3:00pm to 6:00pm
Central Maine Medical Center, Lewiston

Saturday, September 28, 2013
10:30am to 1:30pm
Eastern Maine Medical Center, Bangor

Join us at our open house events to enjoy tours of the helicopters, refreshments and powerful patient testimonials. Crew members will be on hand to answer questions and guests can get their picture taken with the aircraft.

For more information, call 207-230-7092 or visit www.lifeflightmaine.org.

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**Successful summer season of community fundraising**

LifeFlight is there for everyone in Maine, whether you are on an island or in the back woods, whether you have a heart attack or suffer serious injuries in a car accident. This summer, people in Maine have proven that they are there for LifeFlight as well. Since June, local communities and generous individuals have helped us raise more than $70,000 through a variety of fundraising events, most of which will go directly to support LifeFlight’s mission of saving more lives.

Our 5th annual golf scramble, this year held at Martindale Country Club in Auburn, raised nearly $38,000 and, for the first time ever, hosted a full field of golfers - 144 in all! It was a beautiful day that began with a visit from the helicopter followed by words of support from Governor Paul LePage. After a few hours of friendly competition and camaraderie, everyone enjoyed a delicious buffet and live auction. Next year’s event has already been scheduled for June 23, 2014 at Martindale.

In August, the third annual Talon Harwood Memorial Ride saw 300 bikers come together for a cruise to Pemaquid followed by food and entertainment at the Pittston Fairgrounds. This fun event raised more than $11,000 for LifeFlight, but the real highlight was the moving marriage ceremony of event founders Julian and Betsy Harwood at the lighthouse on Pemaquid Point.

The first annual Islesboro Crossing for LifeFlight was also held in August when 38 swimmers and their support paddlers tackled the challenging 3-mile journey across Penobscot Bay from Lincolnville to Islesboro. These hardy athletes, led by event founder Jessie Davis, not only completed one of the longest open water swims in New England, but they raised an astonishing $23,000 in the weeks leading up to the event.

None of these events would be possible without the generous donations of time and effort given by dozens of volunteers. Thank you to everyone for your hard work and dedication. We can’t do it without you!

Golfers from across Maine enjoyed a day on the links at Martindale Country Club for the 5th annual golf scramble (top), which raised more than $25,000. This year’s Talon Harwood Memorial Ride (middle) took bikers to Pemaquid Point before returning to Pittston Fairgrounds for music, prizes and a BBQ. Donations for the event totaled more than $11,000.

Swimmers and their personal support paddlers, nearly 70 in all, head off toward Islesboro shortly after sunrise in our first annual Islesboro Crossing. The group swam and paddled 3.1 miles across Penobscot Bay and raised more than $23,000 to support LifeFlight’s mission of providing critical care transport to people across Maine.
LIFEFLIGHT FOUNDATION

DISPATCHES is a publication of The LifeFlight Foundation, which provides fundraising and public relations support to LifeFlight of Maine, the state's only medical helicopter service.

The LifeFlight Foundation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service Tax Code. It is governed by an elected board of trustees who represent medical, business, legal and educational fields throughout the state.

LifeFlight also aids the development, training and funding of Maine's major air medical needs, such as trauma training statewide, construction of hospital helipads, and installation of weather reporting, navigational and communications systems across the state.

The Foundation's office is located in the town of Camden at 13 Main Street, 2nd floor. You can reach us at 207-230-7092 or info@lifeflightmaine.org.

Donations are tax-deductible.

LIFEFLIGHT OF MAINE

LifeFlight of Maine is a nonprofit statewide critical care medical helicopter service jointly owned by Eastern Maine Healthcare Systems and Central Maine Healthcare Corporation. LifeFlight's two helicopters, based in Bangor and Lewiston and operated by Era Helicopters, cover the entire state and offshore islands.

LifeFlight complements and supports the work of local EMS and hospital personnel in caring for the critically ill or injured. Each base is staffed by a highly qualified team of pilots, mechanics, flight nurses and paramedics. More than 15,000 patients have been safely transported since LifeFlight's founding in 1998.

LifeFlight was fully re-accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems in 2011.

CONTRIBUTORS

Melissa Arndt
Marketing and Educational Outreach Manager
The LifeFlight Foundation

Christine DeLorimier
Development Assistant
The LifeFlight Foundation

Brandy Dupper-Macy
Outreach and Training Assistant
The LifeFlight Foundation

Renee Johnson
Development Associate
The LifeFlight Foundation

Thomas Judge, CCT-P
Executive Director
The LifeFlight Foundation

Amy Root
Director of Development
The LifeFlight Foundation