

LETTERS

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untested devices and medications from flooding the market. So much for the notion of EMS laissez-faire.

July Letters Revisited

In the July 1986 *jems*, William Taylor asked three questions of me in his "Letter," *Save the Dinosaurs*, which I am pleased to answer. First, if my home was burning, no I would not call a public utility model (PUM) system, because PUM systems do not provide fire suppression services. Second, if my boat (which is my home) was about to be vandalized, I would first fire a warning shot and, failing to achieve the desired effect, I would shoot the intruder. (Often sailing far from the protection of law enforcement agencies, many "boat people" assume responsibility for their own protection.)

Third, if I was trapped in a car with possibly serious internal injuries, yes I would have someone call a PUM system because in a PUM system a) trained dispatchers with paramedic experience receive every call and manage every response, emergency and non-emergency, from a single control center; b) a paramedic unit is *always* sent, even if the caller makes the situation sound like a minor fender-bender, and in a PUM system I will *never* be refused transport nor handed off to a BLS crew, no matter how benign my condition may seem; c) extrication equipment and trained personnel (usually from the fire department) will also be sent and will work with PUM paramedics in a practiced and fully coordinated manner; d) a superbly trained and nationally regis-

tered paramedic team with well-maintained, state-of-the-art equipment will arrive within eight minutes or less (that's an average response time of about four minutes in most PUM systems); and e) on-line medical control will be furnished by emergency physicians trained in the system's protocols (others aren't allowed on the radio in a PUM system).

Are you so arrogant that you cannot imagine that I and those who share my views believe in ourselves and in the work that we do? And what made you think I haven't already had occasion to call a PUM system in a medical emergency?

Jack L. Stout
The Fourth Party, Inc.
Miami, Florida

Feeling Like an "Octopus"

I really enjoyed reading Avery Leonard's, "My Day With The Octopus" (June 1986 *jems*). I have only been a dispatcher for two years and it is very rewarding within my heart.

In an entirely volunteer organization with only one dispatcher at a time, we get really busy. Other volunteers are close by in such cases.

It's true, however, that I do not feel the community realizes our importance to our ambulance or fire services. I have had advanced first aid training - it's one of our requirements. It is also true that we are under tremendous "stress" at times. Not only do we worry about our crews in the field but also about our patients and families.

I use to work for a nursing home but had to quit because of my legs - my hearing and vocal cords, however, are fine so I can still help people. Thank you for making me feel so proud of what I do.

Eve L. Haist
Durand, Michigan



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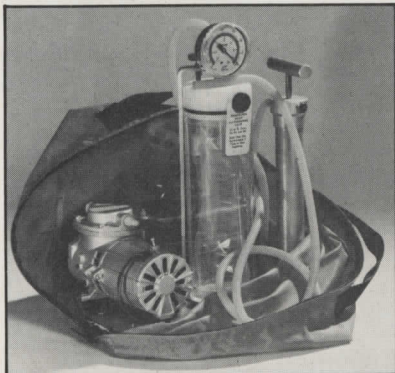
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