



NEWS

FROM THE
FANWOOD RESCUE SQUAD
www.fanwoodrescue.com



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2010

Media Contact: Tom Kranz
Email: email@fanwoodrescue.com
Phone: 908-967-3275

SQUAD MEMBER TURNS FAMILY TRAGEDY INTO POSITIVE FORCE FOR VOLUNTEER EMTs

(Fanwood, NJ) – When Fanwood EMT Ian Lewis’ wife Melissa died suddenly on March 15, his world came to a halt.

“I felt like someone ripped my heart and lungs out,” Lewis wrote shortly after her death. “I have never in my life been so unable to function.”

Ian and Melissa Lewis, both volunteer EMTs for a number of years in Edison, moved to Fanwood in 2007. Ian, soon after settling into the neighborhood, joined the Rescue Squad while Melissa stayed home with their two young children, Wesley, 4, and Elana, 2. But, her EMT roots ran deep, remaining a life member of Edison First Aid and Rescue Squad #1, and being supportive of her husband’s continued volunteerism in Fanwood. She also kept her hand in the EMS community as a part time safety instructor.



So her death, on the first day of her new job as health and safety manager for a company in Rahway, was a cruel irony. At age 33, she had no history of health issues, apparently suffering a pulmonary embolism that shut down her breathing and heart within minutes.

In response to questions about how to best honor Melissa's memory, Ian and the family asked mourners to make donations to the Fanwood Rescue Squad. And donate they did, a total of \$2,760 as of early April. Lewis suggested it would be fitting legacy that the money be used to help train EMTs at a time when state funding for volunteer EMT training has been cut because of the state’s budget crisis. Thus, the Melissa Lewis Training Fund was born at the Fanwood Rescue Squad.

“I can’t think of a better way to remember Melissa than by using money donated in her name to help our EMTs earn the continuing education credits they need to remain certified,” said Tom Kranz, EMT and President of the Fanwood Rescue Squad. “This certainly will help close the funding gap.”

As of April 1st, the state stopped funding elective courses that account for half of the credits EMTs need to recertify every three years. The courses now have to be paid for either by volunteer squads or by the volunteers themselves.

“This new fund will help us provide training for our volunteers,” said Kranz. “We are counting on the continued generosity of our community to keep the fund going through the coming months.”

Those interested in donating to the Melissa Lewis Training Fund of the Fanwood Rescue Squad may do so either at the squad’s website, www.fanwoodrescue.com, or by sending a check to:

Fanwood Rescue Squad
Treasurer
123 Watson Road
Fanwood, NJ 07023

###