

GENERAL NEWS

Ambulance Service tends to the needs of Nicholas residents

By Sandy Gibbs
The Carlisle Mercury Staff
 "CALLABLE" When someone becomes ill unexpectedly the response is, quite often, to call an ambulance.

Very few people ever stop to think about just how that ambulance gets to their home so quickly or what kind of person is taken to get into the ambulance business.

Ronald McDonald, owner and operator of the Nicholas County Ambulance Service, knows what the demands of the job are.

During 1990 the ambulance service has made 540 runs to date. Nearly half of those runs involved transporting a patient to Lexington. That's about two runs to Lexington every three days.

"Whenever we make a run to Lexington," McDonald said, "We have to leave at least two people on duty here. So you can see that we're here 24 hours a day, 7 days a week."

McDonald, his wife Joyce and Allen Sparks, half of the service's other husband and wife team, are the only full time employees.

Joyce McDonald does the book work and goes on 30 percent of the ambulance runs. Most of the calls, McDonald said, involve elderly persons or automobile accidents. Most auto wrecks are alcohol related, McDonald added.

Through the service provides care throughout Nicholas County, the majority of the runs are inside the Carlisle city limits.

McDonald is quick to point out that location doesn't affect speed of service very much. "We can be in Myers Station ten minutes after the phone rings."

McDonald says the demands of the job sometimes cut into activities most people take for granted, such as sleeping.

"The phone will ring at three in the morning, when you've just gotten to the point of sleeping real well, and you have to go make the run. By the time you're finished your adrenaline is flowing and you're so wound up there's no point in trying to sleep again."

In order to ensure continuous contact, all of the ambulance service employees are equipped with two-way radios.

In addition to the McDonalds and Sparks, Bobby Kelly, Calvin Denton, Lemar Mann and Sparks' wife Vicki are on duty part time.

When asked why he got into such a rigorous business, McDonald responded, "Well I like the job. I like serving the public."

Sparks feels that the general public is unaware of just what goes into the job. "I've been doing this for five or six months and the public doesn't realize the importance of the job. Before I started doing this I didn't understand the importance of the people. I do enjoy the work, although I don't know what it is about it. Some times lives are in my hands. Personally I feel this ambulance service does a tremendous job."



The Carlisle Mercury's Sandy Gibbs Photo
 Ronald McDonald, left, Joyce McDonald, and Allen Sparks, along with Sparks' wife Vicki (not pictured) are the only full-time employees of the Ambulance Service. Thus far in 1990, the service has made 540 runs.

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