

# THE BEACON

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EMERGENCY TRAINING

## The victims were fake, but EMT lessons learned were very real

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### OCEANFRONT

A girl has jumped from a second story balcony, followed by the Good Samaritan who tried to help her. The victim is unresponsive and her would-be savior is screaming in pain.

What do you do?

Hundreds of EMT crews from across the nation recently came to Virginia Beach for the 62nd annual International Rescue and Emergency Care Association conference to be tested by real-life drills like the reenacted scenario above.

"The situation is chaotic and can shake your nerves," said paramedic Anne Morse. "You can't let that get to you. It can't interfere with your job."

The conference, which was held June 22-27, provided classes and training in vehicle extrication, technical rescue and emergency medical services.

Each team participated in three scenarios to test their



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Last month's emergency care conference provided classes and training in vehicle extrication, rescue and medical services.

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## RESCUE

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skills and overall preparedness in case of a water rescue; a car bomb explosion in a parking garage; and a fall from a second story balcony with injured bystanders.

"We are happy to be hosting such a prestigious competition in our hometown," said Jack Dye, the 68-year-old Virginia Beach Basic Life Support team captain. "This not only helps EMTs to better their skills, it serves the public, too, because we are better prepared to help people."

"Going through these situations helps us be better prepared for real life trauma," said 62-year-old Ron Bauman, an alternate team member. "If you can learn to figure out reaction and response now, then it comes natural in the field."

Virginia Beach had two teams in the competition - Basic Life Support and Advanced Life Support. Each team had three members and an alternate. For the past five years of the competition, both teams have placed in the top three. Team members had high hopes since this year's competition was on their home turf.

"We want to come away num-



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**Anne Morse attends to victim Jeanne Mason, of Minnesota, during a mock car crash during The International Rescue and Emergency Care Association conference.**

ber one and represent Virginia Beach well," Dye said. "We have something to prove."

The Virginia Beach team, which typically doesn't change members, competes about four times a year, according to Dye.

Ultimately, the Advanced Life Support team took first place and the Basic Life Support team took fourth place. "We had hoped to do a little better ... but at least the ALS team did very well," Dye said.

In total, about 200 people from across the nation competed with their respective advanced and basic life support teams. The Virginia Beach teams and one other western Virginia team were the only all-volunteer squads.

"We are proud of our people and all we do," Dye said. "We have a great EMS service and we care about the people of our city."

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