

Hello All,

I wanted to take this opportunity to say hello to everyone and thank you all for the opportunity to represent you as president of KEMTA. First and foremost I will always try to represent you, the members, not myself or any one group within EMS. I strongly feel the organization is only as good as the involvement of its membership.

KEMTA has many challenges ahead as does Kansas EMS. Today we have two State organizations with in the state. A day may come where we will have more interests in common than differences, when that day comes both organizations can examine an array of possibilities to better serve the memberships. Let's realize that many of us, including myself, are members of both organizations. Therefore we need not forget that no matter which membership we are speaking of, they are all Kansas EMS people. We, all of us, need to focus more on common interests than on our differences.

As our organization develops, as any organization does, we are expanding and changing. One area is an expansion of committees. We are going to divide and attempt to conquer some issues we have not addressed in the past. Our current committee structure will be one Board member as Chair and one Board member as Vice Chair. Until we develop larger committees, this will allow some continuity. As these committees develop they can chose their own leadership as they see the need.

The board has decided to develop a Student Membership Program. We are now offering the first year of membership to a new certified technician in the state free of charge. We want them to have the opportunity to become a part of the "Heart and Soul" of Kansas EMS. Our hope is that if they start out early in their career as an active member in our association they will continue this throughout their career. This can only make our organization stronger and more representative of the practitioners in the state. We are in the process of developing a fall "Weekend Workshop". Details will follow soon. A KEMTA list serve will be developed shortly thanks to Lance McGowan of Dighton. Lance is working hard to have this up and running soon. This will be a tool for all the members and will give the KEMTA Board a way to distribute information quickly to its members.

Currently there is a great deal of concern over testing. Whether it is discussion about the written test, I/O Solutions or National Registry, or the practical test, there are as many considerations as there are opinions about the right solution for Kansas. KEMTA has not taken a position for one test over the other. We have discussed the issue among members and find that currently there is no one overwhelming direction one way or the other. There is agreement that we can not continue on our current path. Regulations must become consistent with the current practices and I believe the BEMS is working in that direction. Reciprocity and accessibility are some other key issues that are all interrelated in one form or another to the written test. Rural vs. urban, border counties vs. central counties, technicians trying to gain Kansas certification vs. Kansas certified technicians trying to get certifications in other states, these are all legitimate concerns. Does one size fit all? Probably not, but any organization, including the BEMS would

have a hard time finding a solution that is perfect for all concerned. The one factor we all need to keep in mind is we must work together to find the best possible solution for all involved. This doesn't mean everyone will be happy, but what will be best for Kansas EMS must be the overriding factor. I think it is asking too much of the BEMS to be able to consider all these factors of such a complex issue alone. We all, KEMTA, KEMSA, Air Medical, Regions, and the BEMS need to work together to find a solution that best works for Kansas EMS, no one group can fully represent the concerns of all the technicians and services in the state. The only reason to look at how we got where we are today is so we do not repeat an error. Blame and accusations are unproductive and slow the process of improvement. I read a statement in one of the BEMS list serve's discussions, "Trust". One of the best ways we can trust each other is to give each other a fair opportunity to be heard and equal value given to the concerns presented. We should not look to the BEMS for all the answers nor should the BEMS feel they have all the answers. Kansas EMS has developed over the years because of the technicians who make it work on a daily basis. Let's all work together in a positive process to find the best possible solutions for Kansas EMS and not be too quick to change until we have studied the issue to the best of our ability, let's also not be entrenched in our former decisions that we are not willing to admit to a misjudgment. Remember it is our patients that either pay the ultimate price or receive the biggest benefit from our decisions.

The burden now falls back on YOU. Become an active member in the Association so that we can represent all the technicians. Contact a Board member for more information about their committee and become involved. I look forward to hearing about your involvement on the committees.

Randy L. Cardonell
KEMTA President