

PORTAL RESCUE NEWS

January 1995

Number 10

Editor - Robert Morse

Election

The Annual Meeting and Election of the Board will be held on Thursday, February 9, 7:30 PM at the Portal Library. This is your chance to have a say in the policies and operations of Portal Rescue. This year, for the first time, the three or possibly four, (see page 5) "outside" directors (of the 9 total) will be nominated and elected by the community at large. Any resident of our service area who agrees to serve and is nominated at the Annual Meeting is eligible to be elected by a majority vote of those present at the meeting.

This is your opportunity to express your interest in *your* fire and EMS service. This may be of additional interest to some of you because of the management changes that will be coming in the new year. (see following article)

PORTAL RESCUE Annual Meeting & Election of Board of Directors

**Thursday, February 9
7:30 PM
Portal Library**

Changing of the Guard

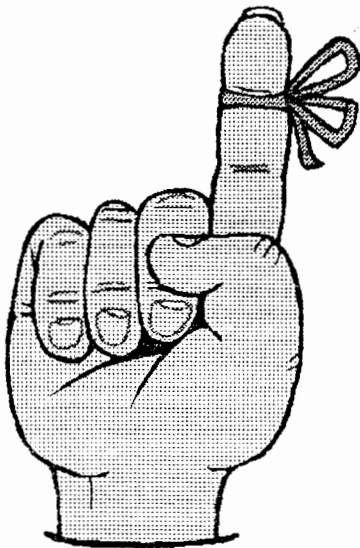
Bob Morse and René Blondeau, president and vice-president respectively, of Portal Rescue for a number of years have announced that they will be stepping down when their terms expire after the upcoming election. Both have grown a bit tired and feel that "new blood" must now take over and guide

the organization. They feel that the period of growth and change they presided over helped to build an organization that is strong, well equipped and well suited to the needs of the community. Now it is up to others to carry on.

1994 in Review

- 1994 will long be remembered as the year of the "Rattlesnake Fire". It dominated everyone's thoughts throughout the month of July. It also provided Portal Rescue with a welcome addition to income. We helped with suppression in the early days of the fire and this, along with a record number of other fires resulted in over \$9,400 of fire income this year. For more information see financial details on the following pages.

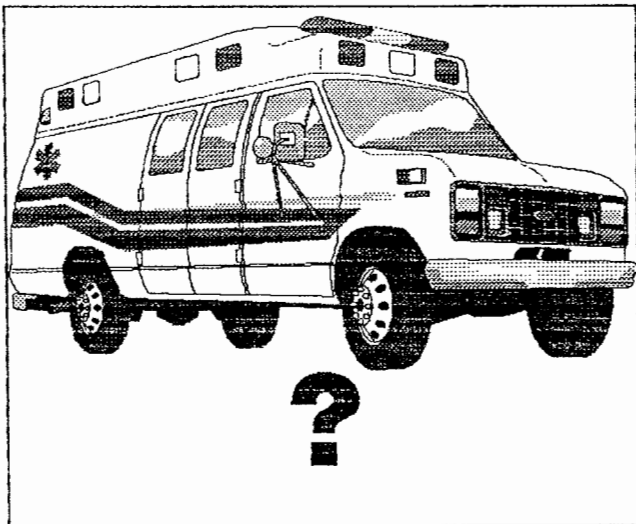
- Both fire and EMS calls this year were at record levels and were more than 30% above our prior averages. We responded to 11 fires, 2 search and 52 emergency medical service calls during the year. Of the latter, 29 were medical and 23 were trauma. Forty resulted in the patient(s) being transported to the hospital; 23 by ground ambulance, 5 by air ambulance and 12 by private vehicles.



**ANNUAL
MEETING**

● This year we worked to meet the training, record keeping and equipment requirements of the national agency whose ratings determine fire insurance premiums. The outcome of this was a Class 9 rating (effective August 1, 1994) for the Portal community which resulted in an average reduction in fire insurance premiums of about 15% for structures within 10 miles of our fire station. Total annual savings for the affected properties exceed the community's investment in the fire function since it's beginning in 1989. If you haven't already notified your insurance agent of this change be sure to do so to benefit from this premium reduction.

● One of the more worrisome developments of 1994 was the costs and problems brought on by an expanding set of government regulations affecting medical services at any level. These regulations have the noble intent of protecting our EMTs from the nasty things that might be out there in the world but at a considerable cost in dollars, in bureaucratic hassle and in record keeping. It costs us several hundred dollars per EMT to meet these requirements and the cost is the same whether that EMT responds to two calls or to twenty per year. It is also the same for the professional who works full time in the emergency medical field. The economics of scale are at work here — in reverse.



● Another regulatory problem that has arisen recently is the fact that our rescue vehicle is NOT a registered ambulance and according to Arizona regulations we should NOT be using it to transport patients to meet another ambulance, as we have been

doing. Arizona Department of Health Services is now threatening to hold us to the letter of the law. Such strict interpretation creates problems for us and for those we serve. We are currently negotiating with the state to come to an understanding that will take into account the special circumstances that we face with regard to transport. The outcome is uncertain at this time but we feel confident that we will continue to be able to provide emergency care which includes transport in *truly* life threatening situations.

● At the end of 1994 the Portal Rescue roster had 21 names on it; 15 EMTs and 14 Firefighters (many are both). There were 3 new EMTs added during the year (Jeff Gee, Gerry Hernbrode and Max Rothpletz). Another significant development during the year was certification of two of our members (Joan White and Debbie Rothpletz) as basic EMT instructors. This means that we will be able to conduct our own classes "in house" with all the attendant advantages.

Training Grant

We are pleased to announce that we have received a \$1,000 grant from the Valley Telephone Cooperative Foundation, which is a not-for-profit organization that targets education as a focus for support. We appreciate the grant which is to be used for training personnel associated with emergency services. Portal Rescue is the first recipient of a contribution of this nature from the Foundation. Specific plans for the use of this grant will be made by the new Board to be seated following the Annual Meeting.

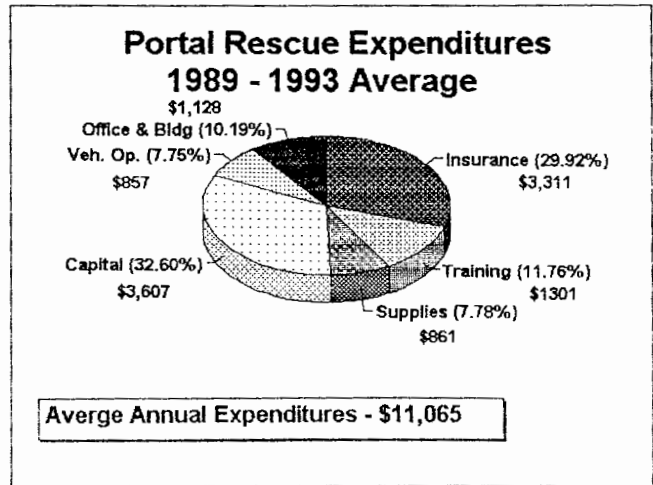
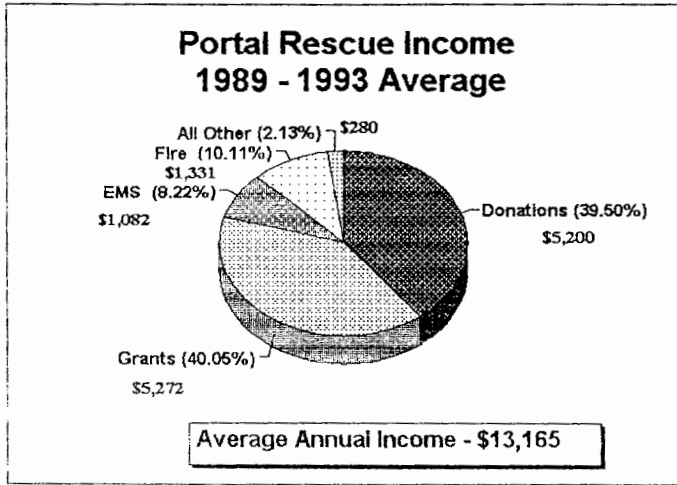
A Bit of History

Occasionally we are asked questions relating to the origins and background of Portal Rescue and therefore perhaps a quick review is in order.

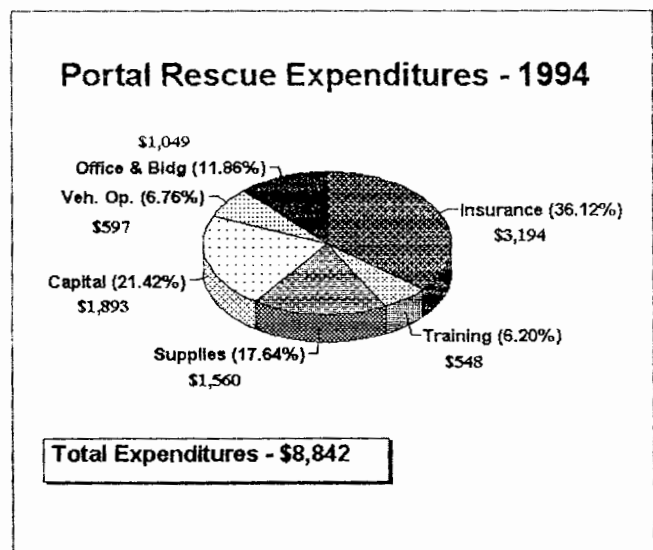
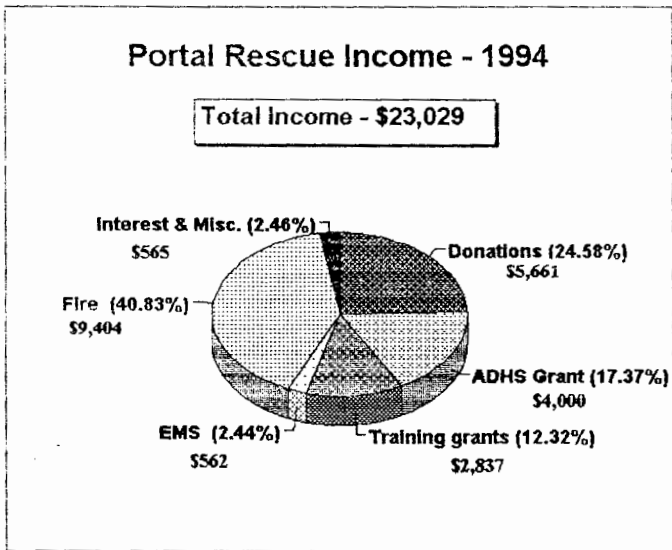
Portal Rescue originated as, and still is, a wholly volunteer community service that started providing emergency medical services in 1980. It grew slowly until 1988 when we incorporated and, in early 1989, obtained a Rescue vehicle and began receiving some funding from the Arizona Department of Health Services. So quickly said; but *so* much time and effort went into those accomplishments. The incorporation was necessary in order to make Portal Rescue an entity that government agencies would recognize. (continued, page 5)

PORTAL RESCUE Inc.
CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL REPORT - 1994

<u>INCOME</u>	
General Fund Donations	5,661.00
'94-'95 AZ Dept. Health Services Provider Grant	4,000.00
EMT training reimbursement ('93 expense) grants	1,837.00
Valley Telephone Training Grant	1,000.00
Payment for EMS Services	562.00
Payment for Fire Services	9,403.79
Interest Income	530.91
Miscellaneous Income	34.50
TOTAL INCOME	\$23,029.20
<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	
Capital Equipment	1,893.49
Supplies	1,559.57
Vehicle Maintenance & Operation	597.32
Vehicle Insurance	2,116.00
Property Insurance	865.00
Workers Compensation Insurance	212.69
Building Utilities & Operation	303.18
Office Expense & Phone	745.83
Training	548.43
Miscellaneous	212.20
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$9,053.71
<u>BALANCES</u>	
Cash or CDs on Hand Jan. 1, 1994	14,844.48
Year to Date (Income - Expenses)	13,975.49
Current Bank Balance	1,819.97
Certificates of Deposit	27,000.00
Restricted Funds - Valley Telephone Training Grant	1,000.00
Restricted Funds - Well Fund balance	538.24
Current Available Funds (LIQUID ASSETS)	\$27,281.73
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>	
Donated Equipment @ Book	41,290
less Accumulated Depreciation	17,968
Current Value - Donated	23,322
Purchased Equipment @ Cost (Bldg @ \$30,000 Book)	69,022
less Accumulated Depreciation	16,810
Current Value - Purchased	52,212
Equipment @ Depreciated Value (FIXED ASSETS)	\$75,534
LIABILITIES	0
(NET WORTH)	\$104,354
RECEIVABLES	\$216



NOTES: Above figures do not include Income (Donations) and Expenditures to build the Fire Station. Investment in the Fire Station property totals about \$27,000. As shown above, donations and grants are our only significant sources of income. Operating Income averages only about \$2,400 per year. Insurance and Capital (tools, equipment etc.) are our major expense items.



NOTES: 1994 Income was larger than normal because of unusually heavy Fire activity and income this year.

Once we became "legal" a year of appeals, letters, phone calls and negotiations brought us a gift of our 1979 Blazer which had been "retired" by the Sheriff. We converted this ourselves to make it our response vehicle. It enabled us to carry the basic equipment (which is all we had) necessary to respond to a medical emergency. Prior to this we responded in our personal vehicles and our total stock of equipment was stored in Blondeau's pump house.

Due to our good working relationship with the Department of Health Services we were offered a van to replace our Blazer as our primary response vehicle in late 1991. It was in terrible shape but it did have the space to enable us to transport a patient for the first time. Once again, a lot of work by many people reconditioned the vehicle and it served us admirably for almost two years. It was, in turn, replaced in 1993 by a full-fledged ambulance retired by the Douglas Fire Department and literally "given" to us. We are not certified to operate it as an ambulance but we can and do transport patients to meet other ambulances when needed.

In 1989 we proposed starting a fire department and, with strong community backing for the idea, a fire truck was obtained in a cooperative agreement with Arizona State Land Department. Substantial amounts of equipment were donated by various sources to make the truck functional. This truck was subsequently replaced by our present fire truck, a more capable and reliable one which we purchased. Still later we built a 400 gallon water trailer which is, in effect, another engine.

Other than several government grants since 1988, all funding has come from community donations and from money earned. We are not a taxing district and obtain no funds from the county. Some of the earned funds came from EMS services to non-residents but most came from payments from the Arizona State Land Department for our fire suppression efforts on wildland fires outside of our immediate geographical area. We are still a wholly volunteer organization and all of our services are provided to residents of our local area without charge.

Perhaps our most visible addition is the fire station which was built on donated land and with local volunteer help in 1991. It serves not only to garage our four vehicles and store our supplies and equipment but also as a meeting place for classes and community events.

Coming Changes in EMS

Within the next two years we expect to see fundamental changes in the training of Basic EMTs. One of the major changes will be an assessment based approach to patient care, rather than the diagnostic approach under the old curriculum. In other words, "treat the symptoms, don't try to diagnose". Basic EMTs will be trained to assist patients who already have a prescription for nitroglycerin, metered dose inhalers, and auto-injector devices for anaphylactic reactions.

Basic EMTs trained under the new curriculum will require medical direction, which, in our case, means they will be in phone or radio contact with, and work under the direction of, a doctor in the emergency room of Tucson Medical Center.

The new curriculum remains at 110 hours minimum and current EMTs will require re-training and re-certification. It may be 2 years before these changes are fully phased in but the objective is improvement in the EMS system and that means improved service to *you*, the recipient.

By-Law changes ?

The membership will vote at the Annual Meeting on a proposed change in the By-Laws which would change the make-up of the Board of Directors to 5 members of Portal Rescue and 4 "outside" members (instead of 6 and 3). This change is intended to bring more talents and community interest to the Board. If approved, 4 "outside" directors will be elected at the upcoming meeting.

