



SPRING/SUMMER 2026

NEWSLETTER

SERVING THE COMMUNITY SINCE 1937

B-CC Rescue Squad Update

Demand for BCCRS Services Increases in 2025 -- Call Volume Up 2% Over 2024

BCCRS personnel responded to 8,991 calls in 2025 – an average of more than 24 calls/day – a 2% increase over 2024.

Among the most serious types of calls:

- Unconscious or decreased level of consciousness (941)
- Cardiac, chest pain, and stroke emergencies (670)
- Pedestrian/cyclist struck by a vehicle (52)

BCCRS by the numbers

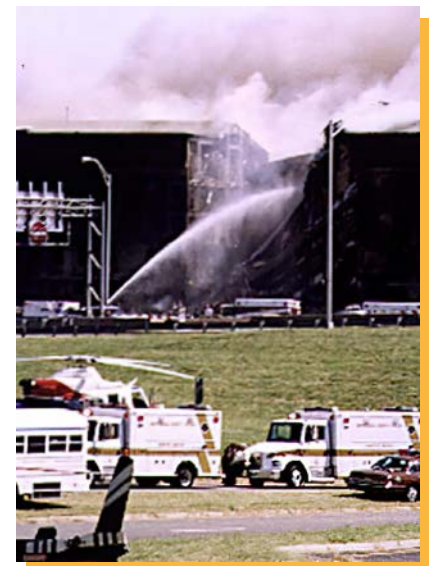
- **8,991 calls (unit responses) (2025)**
- **125+ active volunteers (EMTs, medics, firefighters)**
- **11 emergency response vehicles**
- **9,000+ hours of formal training**

Who We Are
125+ active volunteers
40+ firefighters
20+ paramedics
16 operational officers
11 emergency response vehicles

What We Do
 Provide EMS (ambulance and paramedic), firefighting, and rescue services in Bethesda, Chevy Chase and nearby areas
Only 24/7 ambulance in downtown Bethesda and Chevy Chase
 Provide supplemental service in Glen Echo (179), Cabin John (337), Potomac (167) and N. Bethesda/South Rockville (365) (calls in 2024)

25th Anniversary of the September 11 Attacks — BCCRS Response

On the morning of September 11, 2001, the 15 members on duty at the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Rescue Squad (BCCRS) gathered around the station's TV and watched as the horrific events unfolded at the World Trade Center in New York City. Less than an hour later, the station's alarms went off. Several BCCRS Advanced Life Support (ALS) units and one of the Rescue Squad's heavy rescue trucks, along with the BCCRS air truck, were dispatched to the Pentagon. They were the first units from Montgomery County to arrive at the disaster site. By 12:00 pm, more than 50 additional volunteer firefighters, rescuers, and paramedics reported into the station to ensure BCCRS could meet the BCC community's emergency needs while assisting at the Pentagon. In a 24-hour period, after the initial attack, a total of 70 volunteers and employees provided more than 1,200 hours of service.



We continue to honor all the firefighters, emergency responders, and civilians who lost their lives on that tragic fall day.



THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS



6TH ANNUAL RESCUE WEEKEND

BCCRS receives critical support from businesses and other groups who are committed to making our community better and safer. Key partners in 2025:

- **Strosnider's Hardware** for its annual round-up campaign
- **Nourish Bethesda**, which distributes food from the BCCRS station on Battery Lane
- **Bethesda Urban Partnership** for support at the Taste of Bethesda and helping to maintain the grounds around our station
- **Metro Bethesda Rotary** for designating BCCRS as a beneficiary of the Purple Tee Golf Classic and for a \$7,000 contribution
- **The Kelly Clarkson Show** and **ADT Security** for a \$10,000 donation
- **Jeni's Splendid Ice Creams** for its summer 2025 fundraiser benefiting BCCRS
- **Guiding Eyes for the Blind** for its participating in various events at BCCRS, including our Fall Open House
- **Hero Dogs** for participating in Rescue Day

On the weekend of November 1st and 2nd, the Rescue Squad, in conjunction with the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department, hosted our 6th annual Rescue Company Skills Weekend. This event focuses on enhancing the skills of rescue firefighters including search and rescue, rapid intervention, self-rescue, auto extrication, heavy lifting, rope rescue and others. Students from across the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service, the larger DC region and as far away as Colorado attended. A special THANK YOU to our sponsors: Amkus Rescue Systems - North Atlantic, Fire & Rescue Products of Harrisburg, LLC, Geyers Towing & Recovery and Rentals Unlimited for helping make the weekend a great success! Planning for next year's event is already underway.

Become a Volunteer Firefighter or EMT Join Today!

It's 4:27 p.m. and the alarm sounds. The call is a multiple car crash on the Beltway. They need your help. You jump into action with the rest of the crew. Nothing can match your excitement when you hear the alarm. The exhilaration of not knowing exactly what you'll be responding to, but knowing you have the training and tools to help. The satisfaction of knowing you may save a life tonight. Interested in becoming a member of the Rescue Squad?

Members are expected to stand one overnight duty shift per week from 7:00am to 7:00am and an occasional weekend daytime shift. Positions include volunteer EMTs, firefighters, and paramedics.

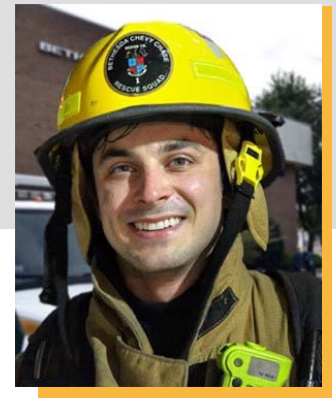
Members receive free training, free uniforms, an annual stipend, length of service awards (similar to a retirement program), and a Maryland income tax credit. Most important, you'll experience the joy and satisfaction of giving back to your community.



Mission Driven.
People Focused.

www.bccrs.org/join

Member Profile: Firefighter and Board Secretary Michael Ciamara



As a young legislative aide on Capitol Hill, Michael Ciamarra kept hearing from his friend and fellow staffer about the Rescue Squad. Responding to medical emergencies and fires sounded worlds away from his role advising a US senator on transportation and agriculture policy, Michael joined in 2017. His first call wasn't very exciting: a false alarm, essentially a practice run. But what impressed him so much was how the BCCRS volunteers treated every call as if it could be a major incident. They were ready for whatever they arrive to find.

Michael took EMT class, learned to drive an ambulance, and trained to be a firefighter. He also serves as secretary of the Rescue Squad's board of directors, helping oversee the day-to-day running of the organization. He now works in government affairs for Southwest Airlines.

"As a fresh new EMT, you're in charge, and you learn a lot of basics: crisis management, people management, how to deal with difficult situations," he says. Plus, he adds, "You get to do a lot of fun stuff and meet incredible people."



Volunteer and Live In the Station

BCCRS offers a Live-In program for volunteers. Key features:

- Semi-private rooms and separate living quarters.
- Free training through Montgomery County Fire/Rescue and Maryland Fire/Rescue programs.
- A stipend of \$1,000/quarter.

Learn more at: bccrs.org/join/live-in.

Alumni Profile: Hilary Gates



Hilary came to BCCRS in 2007 when she was teaching English and journalism at Walter Johnson High School and had several students who volunteered at BCCRS. Inspired by these young people, Hilary joined the Rescue Squad, and from early on she was hooked.

Hilary served on Thursday night crew, first as an EMT and then a paramedic. An educator by day, she continued that role at night, training new EMTs on all aspects of emergency medicine and operations. She remembers her time at BCCRS fondly: "On every shift, I got to work alongside changemakers who modeled persistence, compassion and excellence. I am so grateful to have been guided by the BCCRS ethos from the beginning."

Now living in California, Hilary splits her time between her role as director of educational strategy for Prodigy EMS, an online EMS education platform, and as co-founder of Six Minutes to Live, a nonprofit advocating for better cardiac arrest care. Not coincidentally, one of her co-founders is Bob Davis, a paramedic-turned-reporter whose USA Today series on cardiac arrest outcomes—which opened with the story of Julia, a young woman whose death Hilary witnessed on 16th Street—helped inspire change in Washington and throughout the nation.

What Makes BCCRS Unique?

BCCRS firefighters, paramedics, and EMTs volunteer because they want to make a difference. Not for a paycheck but for the opportunity to provide help when help is needed the most. To be part of something bigger than themselves. To bring a level of passion, professionalism, and compassion to our life-saving mission. To belong to a community of like-minded public servants who are making a difference in our community. BCCRS is unique in that it is the only local fire/rescue department in Montgomery County to be managed entirely and staffed primarily by volunteer personnel. What makes us unique?

- Most shifts are staffed with volunteer paramedics, firefighters, and EMTs – the equivalent of more than 50 full-time career positions.
- BCCRS staffs more front-line fire/rescue/EMS positions than any other local department in the county.
- BCCRS is the only department in the downtown Bethesda and Chevy Chase areas to operate 24/7 ambulance service.
- BCCRS often supplements County-provided service in neighboring areas. In 2024, we responded to hundreds of calls in North Bethesda/Rockville (365), Cabin John (337), Potomac (167), and Glen Echo (179).
- Finally, BCCRS is the only local department to fund most of its operational expenses through donations from individuals and foundations. That is why continued community support – especially from individuals like you – is so critical to the Rescue Squad’s continued operation and success.



To learn more, visit the Squad’s website at www.bccrs.org. To donate, please go to donate.bccrs.org or scan the QR code:

Governance and Finance



Charity Navigator gives BCCRS a 100% rating – earning us a Four-Star rating, and says: If this organization aligns with your passions and values, you can give with confidence.

charitynavigator.org/ein/520583872

Help Us Help You — Donate Today



bccrs.org/donate

BCCRS relies on generous individuals like you to fund most of our operational expenses.

94 cents of every dollar donated goes to operations, equipment, and other non-fundraising expenses.

Rest assured, your money will be well spent: BCCRS has a 4 -Star rating (the highest available) from Charity Navigator based on the Squad’s accountability and finances, leadership, and culture and community.